



WAYNECOUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

Wayne County Health Department Overdose Prevention Program

July 2019 – June 2020
Yearly Summary Report
for Wayne County

INTRODUCTION

The increase of opioid misuse in Wayne County led to the creation of the Overdose Prevention Program in 2018. Effective Overdose Prevention Program models have been centered on connecting overdose victims with a Peer Support Specialist (“PSS”), offering Syringe Exchange Programs, providing Narcan training and Narcan kits, and utilizing Medication Assisted Therapy (“MAT”). The Overdose Prevention Coordinator (“OPC”) of Wayne County was designed to facilitate substance misuse intervention for public health, identify and utilize resources to achieve related goals, and assist with the development of effective strategies with stakeholders and key informants.

While the entire world is currently fighting to beat the invisible enemy of the COVID-19 pandemic, Wayne County continues to address increasing opioid misuse. This summary highlights the data collected and emerging key issues through the Overdose Prevention Program. It will identify areas of concern for those that misuse opioids, discuss program development, describe outreach, distinguish areas of improvement and more.

OVERALL DATA

Since beginning the position in August 2019, the current OPC collected thorough data to properly analyze the impact opioid misuse is having on Wayne County. From July 2019 to June 2020, the Overdose Prevention Program received a total of 207 referrals. 95 of the 207 overdoses occurred in their home.

Of the 207 total overdose referrals, Wayne County had the following concerns identified:

- 16 overdose referrals were duplicated referrals which means that the overdose victim had a previous overdose report within the calendar year,
- 7 were under the age of 18,
- 33 referrals were fatalities, and
- 11 were homeless.

Receiving 191 unduplicated referrals is an increase from the 2018-2019 year of 143 overdose referrals.

Of the Wayne County overdose population, Caucasians comprise the majority of overdose victims, as shown in Figure 1.

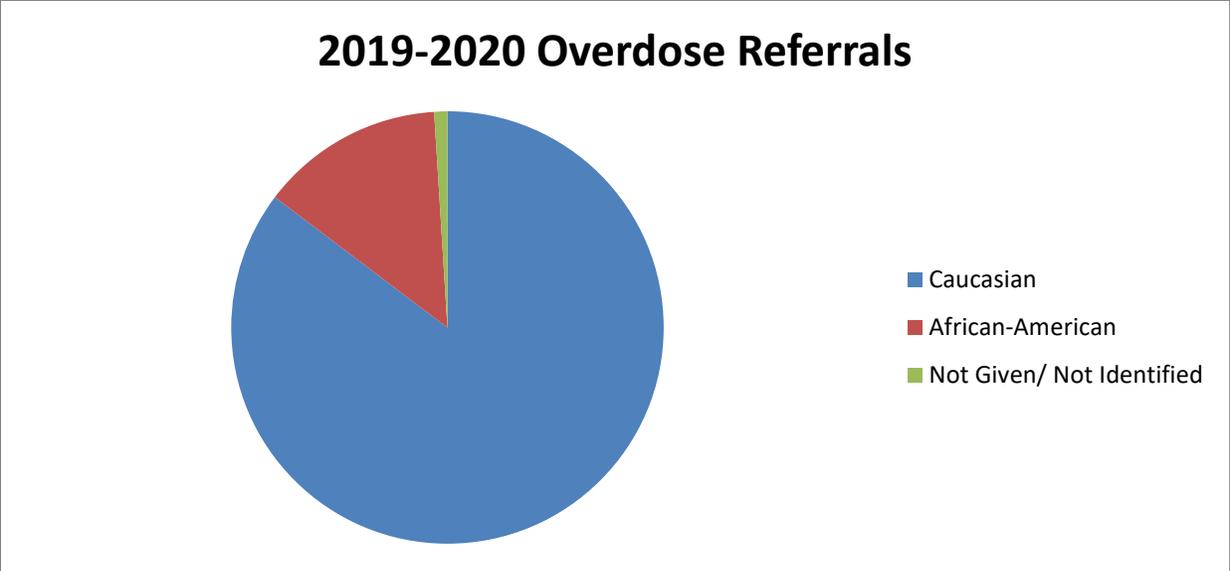


Figure 1: 2019-2020 Overdose Referrals by Race

As displayed in Figure 2,

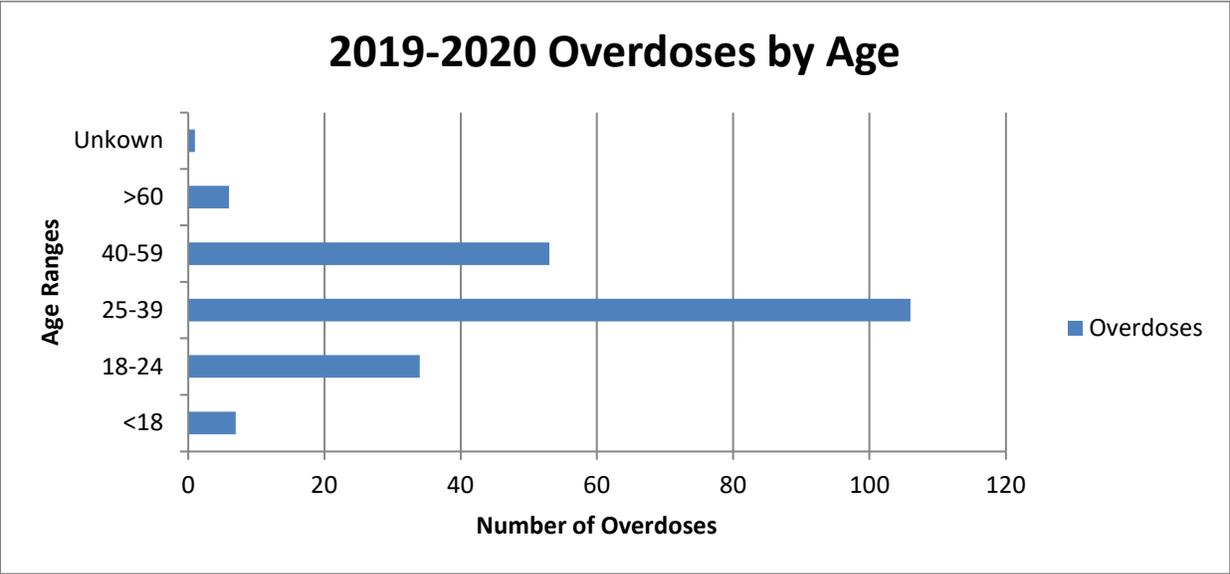


Figure 2: Number of Overdoses by Age

106 overdose reports ranged between ages 25-39, followed by 53 overdoses in the 40-59 age category. Both age ranges make up 77% of the total overdose reports for the year. Ironically, opioid misuse was not the only health indicator for these age ranges. The impact of COVID-19 felt worldwide caused the Wayne County Health Department (“WCHD”) to track COVID-19 cases within Wayne County, and the leading cases of COVID-19 have been ages ranging 25-49.

OVERDOSE REFERRALS

The overall goal for the Overdose Prevention Program in 2019-2020 was to link one-third of the identified overdose victims to treatment. Of the 191 unduplicated referrals, 22 were identified as being involved in treatment, which does not meet our standard of service.

However, of the 22 connected with treatment, the program experienced several successes. One notable achievement was bridging a high-risk individual that overdosed six times in the last year to applicable services. Another accomplishment was developing a relationship with a couple that could not find proper and affordable resources for treatment. Through consistent communication, both individuals are now in treatment and receiving services through Vocational Rehabilitation. Another referral was a suicide attempt. Through the Overdose Prevention Program, this person received the support needed to not only get into treatment but to graduate high school. Therefore, continuing to improve on identified challenges should yield results towards our overall goal.

Challenge #1: Improve engagement of victims with a PSS who provide access to identified resources.

During the 2019-2020 year, the PSS were primarily utilized through the 4 Day Movement, Inc., a local non profit organization. At the onset, they employed two certified PSS and a supervisor, who is also certified in peer support. The efforts of the 4 Day Movement PSS model were sustainable through an Eastpointe grant which provided funds for services rendered.

Anticipated Solution: Expand access of the PSS model within local mental health agencies.

Towards the end of the 2019 calendar year, a private practice mental health agency was added to the program. One to One with Youth, Inc., employed 27 PSS along with clinical mental health staff. This recent addition has proved to be a valuable asset to the program for several reasons. Their ability to provide billable services such as peer support and access to additional behavioral health services has increased long-term sustainability. In addition, the agency is listed as an Eastpointe provider with the ability to access Integrated Payment and Reporting System (“IPRS”) funds from the state. Eastpointe, a managed care organization (“MCO”) for Wayne County, is dedicated to working with individuals and families across this region that struggle with substance abuse, mental health and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As a mental health agency, this immediately connects overdose victims with a treatment option and avoids the process of repeat assessments when they encounter different entities involved with connecting them to treatment.

Challenge #2: Increase referral sources. One of the OPC tasks is to collect referrals from partnering entities to encrypt, if needed, and forward to a certified PSS. The majority of referrals for 2019-2020 were from first responders, even though strides were made to improve referrals from Wayne UNC Healthcare, community members and providers.

Anticipated Solution: Throughout this year, the Overdose Prevention webpage, under the WCHD website, was developed to increase community awareness and engagement. A page for self-referrals was added to make the referral process easier for individuals, families and agencies such as Wayne UNC Health Care for example. Having a referral form on the webpage of the Overdose Prevention Program provides a convenient way for anyone to make a referral as the form is submitted confidentially to the OPC. The Overdose Prevention webpage also allows marketing of other substance-related programs within Wayne County.

Challenge #3: Receiving referrals in a timely fashion for the most effective outcome upon contact.

Figure 3 shows a graph based on the date the overdose occurred.

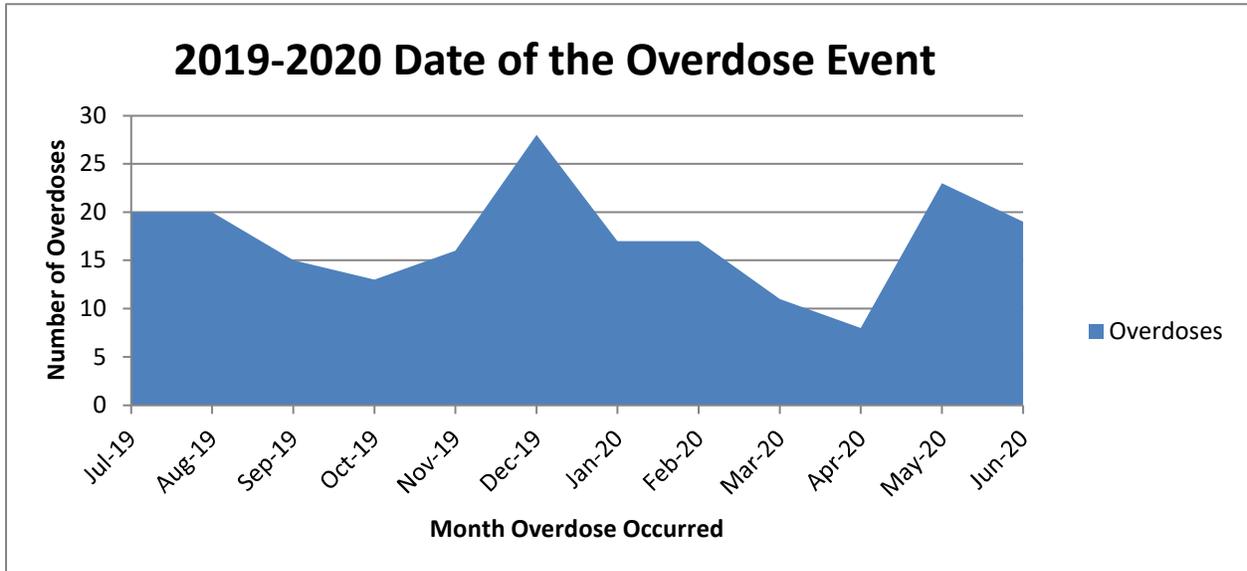


Figure 3: Overdoses by Date of the Overdose Event.

However, Figure 4 shows a view by the date the overdose referral was received.

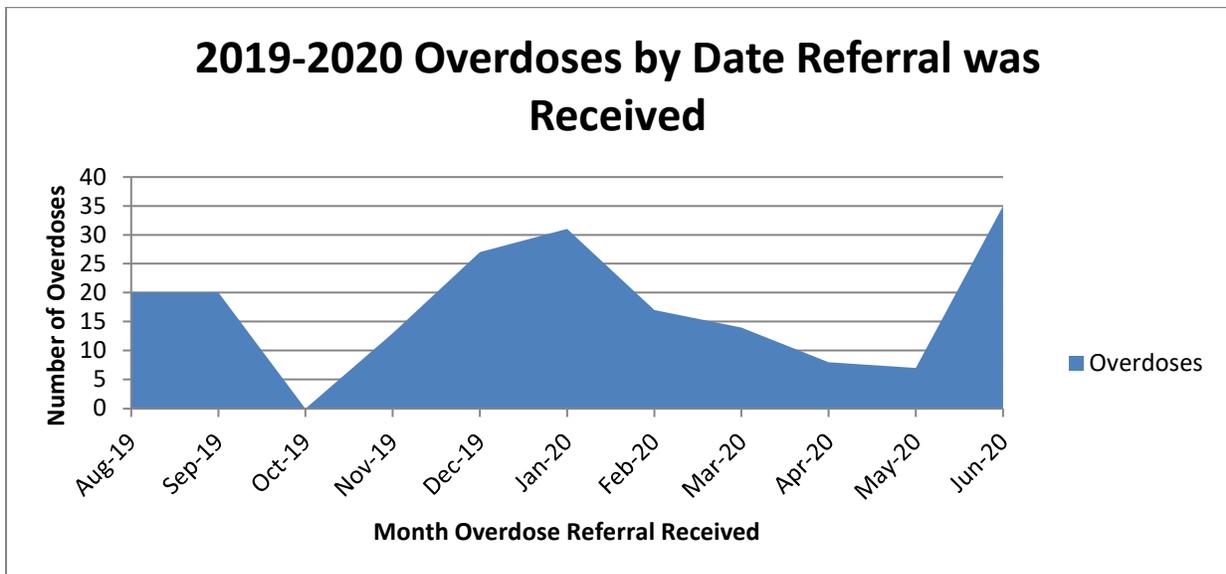


Figure 4: Overdoses by the date referral was received.

It is a challenge to really grasp the full impact of the Opioid misuse within Wayne County. Figure 3 shows what is actually happening and Figure 4 shows the timeframe the referrals are handled.

Anticipated Solution: Continue building connections to increase awareness of the Overdose Prevention Program and the need for prompt referral of overdoses. Striving to receive referrals within 24 hours of

the event helps with locating the referral timely for engagement and determining the true nature of the impact of overdoses in Wayne County.

To take this a step further, strides were made to build a relationship with Wayne County Emergency Medical Services (EMS). As of June 2020, the Overdose Prevention Program is receiving the EMS total of overdose calls throughout Wayne County. In the future, cross referencing this data with the number of referrals received from first responders determines areas of need for more awareness, and assists with evaluating the true local impact of opioid overdoses.

NARCAN

Another ongoing task of the OPC is to offer Narcan training and Narcan Kits, as they are available. Narcan is the only FDA approved form of Naloxone for emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose. Designed for the average person to administer, Narcan breaks down the opioid, excretes it, allowing respiration to return.

Since October 2019, 15 Narcan Trainings were conducted with a total of 134 first responders, local agencies and community members trained. A total of 49 Narcan kits were assembled and delivered. Each kit contained two 4 mg. of Nasal Narcan, a CPR shield, gloves and a Narcan brochure.

Challenge #1: Maintain an adequate supply with sufficient expiration date. As of June 2020, the Narcan inventory consists of 62 boxes. Of those, 12 boxes expire January 2021, 14 expire April 2021, and 36 expire May 2021, making the remaining stock less than a year of expiring.

Anticipated Solution: Using Figure 5 as a framework, strategically supply Narcan in areas of Wayne County most affected until funding is secured allowing more Narcan for distribution.

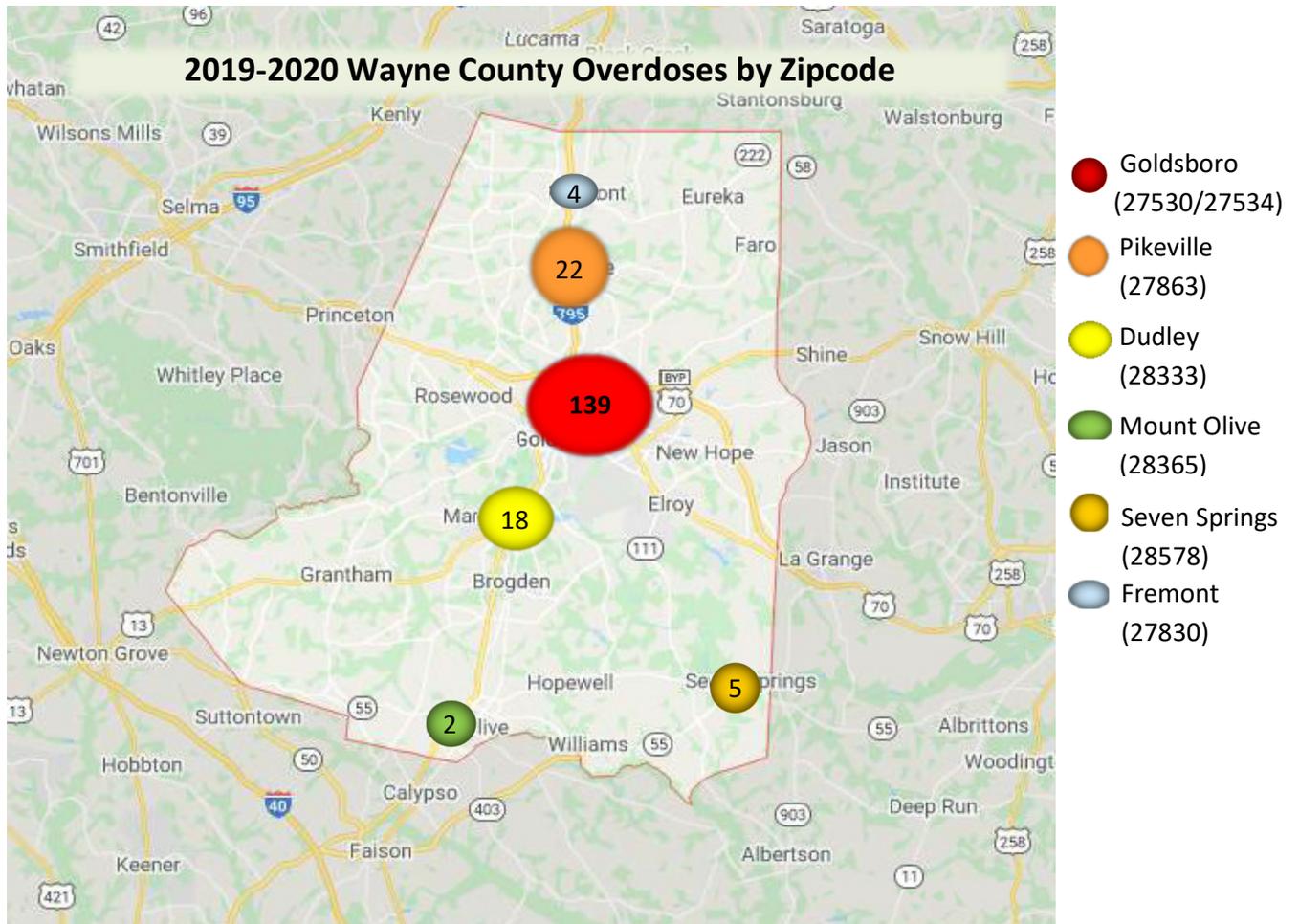


Figure 5: 2019-2020 Wayne County Overdoses by Zipcode

**Not included in this map are Wayne County residents that live in an area/zipcode that borders the county such as:

- Snow Hill, 1 overdose;
- LaGrange, 4 overdoses;
- Princeton, 3 overdoses;
- Four Oaks, 1 overdose; and
- 8 overdoses had no identified location.

Challenge #2: As shown in Figure 5, Pikeville and Dudley are growing areas of concern showing a need of expanding the Overdose Prevention Program into more rural areas of the County.

Anticipated Solution: Through data collection and tracking, the OPC will increase efforts to provide overdose education, Narcan training and kits to areas identified with growing concerns of opioid misuse. Expansion to more communities will enlighten more individuals and families of the risks and resources associated with this crisis.

WAYNE COUNTY S3 – Healthy Communities Initiative

The North Carolina Division of Public Health (“DPH”) uses Preventive Health and Health Services (“PHHS”) Block Grant funding to administer Healthy Communities. The aim of this program is to reduce the burden of chronic disease and injury in North Carolina. This funding enables county health

departments to implement community-based interventions that address health behaviors. One of the two main requirements for WCHD is to implement safer syringe initiatives throughout the county, thus the creation of the Wayne County S3 in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. (The “S3” stands for “Syringe Support Services” due to implications suggested when using “Syringe Exchange Program”). Starting February 26, 2020 and targeting people who inject drugs, Wayne County S3 is a fixed site located at the HGDC Community Crisis Center, 607 S. Slocumb Street, Goldsboro, NC 27530. This specialty outreach program serves the target audience on the second, third, and fourth Wednesday of each month from 1:00 – 3:00 PM. This outreach offers two sizes of syringes, biohazard containers for proper disposal, educational materials, and information on treatment and local resources. The program is facilitated by the OPC and a PSS so that immediate access to community resources can be provided.

Shortly after the initial start, the COVID-19 shut down in March 2020 brought the program to an immediate halt. Without participation and the ability to offer services at this fixed location, program staff were unable to expand this outreach program as originally planned.

Challenge #1: Wayne County S3 resumed June 17, 2020 which resulted in no participation for this year. As a new program, the challenge of low participant involvement is not uncommon for many syringe programs. A level of trust, rapport, and consistency are key components that take time to develop.

Anticipated Solution: With syringe support services being a subcommittee within Wayne County’s Coalition for Addiction and Life Management (“CALM”), marketing strategies are being developed to distribute information at various locations. It is important to understand that using an unclean needle can lead to blood infections or other communicable diseases, such as Hepatitis C or AIDS, which costs the county thousands of dollars to treat.

In addition, participation is expected to increase by expanding the program to include a peer support exchange, a goal for the upcoming year. This will serve several purposes: 1) increase engagement of referrals with the PSS; 2) provide an environment that allows time to build rapport for access to treatment when ready; and 3) provide another avenue of locating referrals.

Challenge #2: Funding for supplies. As of now, due to federal and state funding restrictions on allowable purchases, the WCHD has supplied syringes, biohazard containers, condoms, and educational material. While attending the Syringe Exchange Academy training hosted by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, it was suggested to expect each participant to need an average of 100 needles every two weeks.

Most syringe exchange programs offer additional supplies to include tourniquets, cookers, water, etc.. These extra supplies increase safety from disease but will increase cost to maintain.

Anticipated Solution: Look into less restrictive funding opportunities that will allow the purchase of extra supplies for the Wayne County S3.

WAYNE COUNTY DETENTION SUBSTANCE MISUSE PROGRAM

In February of 2020, the Wayne County Detention Substance Misuse Program was born. This collaboration to provide Medication Assisted Treatment (“MAT”) in the detention center was forged between the Wayne County Detention Center (“WCDC”), Day Reporting Center, One to One with Youth,

Inc., Southern Health Partners, and Coalition for Addiction and Live Management (“CALM”). Inmates identified for MAT will be referred to the OPC in order to connect them with a PSS. The PSS will contact the inmate within the WCDC in order to identify needed resources, identify a plan to access those resources, and help the inmate access treatment. Ongoing services will be provided for inmates who become candidates for pre-trial release into the custody of the Day Reporting Center.

Challenge #1: The onset of COVID-19 in March 2020 caused only required personnel to enter the WCDC.

Anticipated Solution: Starting in June 2020, the focus shifted towards working with inmates under pre-trial release into the custody of the Day Reporting Center. The Day Reporting Center agreed to send the OPC a referral to connect them with a PSS.

COALITION FOR ADDICTION AND LIFE MANAGEMENT (CALM)

The OPC has been very involved with CALM, a nonprofit organization that serves Wayne County. During the 2019-2020 year, the OPC was instrumental in helping to develop the structure of the following subcommittees: Coalition Building/Media Outreach; Fundraising and Grants; Family Support Services; Law Enforcement Diversion; Syringe Support Services; and Recovery and Social Determinants. The OPC

- attended monthly meetings and subcommittee meetings;
- served as an advisor to all matters of CALM;
- assisted with development of the CALM website to include the self-referral form, which is submitted confidentially to the OPC; and
- assisted with the development of the G-Suite platform to be used as a communication tool for members of CALM.

Challenge #1: Building a stronger and active membership base for CALM. The coalition is represented by many stakeholders that are already involved in so many other aspects of our community.

Anticipated Solution: Continue to identify stakeholders and community members, through relationship building efforts, that are willing to take action towards the Wayne County Opioid Reduction Initiative.

Challenge #2: Developing an internal structure that will keep up with the growing demands and concerns of the organization and the county.

Anticipated Solution: Seek opportunities for capacity building, and funding if needed, to meet organizational and county demands.

EVENTS CALENDAR

The majority of the duties of the OPC have focused on opioid specific programs. However, it is known that people of all walks of life can develop an opioid misuse disorder. Developing a network helps connect with other populations where someone within may be struggling with substance misuse. Therefore, working collaboratively with the Mental Health Association and Eastpointe, a calendar of events was developed.

Our Challenge: COVID-19 forced us to alter our original calendar of events, cancelling opportunities scheduled at various locations throughout Wayne County.

Anticipated Solution: The challenge of COVID-19 forced a shift to online programming which posed to be a blessing in disguise. By moving to a webinar format, we were able to reach more people, yielding better results and leading us to more awareness of effective online marketing strategies applicable to future outreach endeavors.

Our calendar of events is listed below:

2020 Calendar

Eastpointe, Mental Health Association and the Wayne County Health Department

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Title/Location</u>	<u>Total Attendance</u>
December 9, 2019	“Holiday Stress” by Eastpointe Location: YMCA from 10:00 – 11:00 AM	7
January 23, 2020	“Warning Signs of Alcohol and Drugs” by Simplicity Counseling Location: Wayne County Public Library from 5:30 – 6:30 PM	6
February 20, 2020	“Violence Awareness” by Wayne Pregnancy Center) Location: Wayne Community College from 10:00 – 11:00 AM	13
March 23, 2020	“Unmasking Brain Injury” by Brain Injury Association of America Location: Webinar offered at different times during the day.	61
April 2020	“Grief, Death and Dying” by Eastpointe Location: Webinar offered at different intervals.	146
May 2020	“HIV Awareness” by Picasso Location: Webinar offered at different intervals.	105
	“Laughing Yoga” by Kimberly Williams Location: Webinar offered at different intervals.	187
June 2020	“Sickle Cell Awareness” by Piedmont Health Service and Sickle Cell Agency Location: Webinar offered at different intervals.	59
	“Alzheimer’s Awareness” by Dementia Alliance of North Carolina Location: Webinar offered at different intervals.	<u>51</u>
	Total	628

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Developing collaborative agency relationships helps form the foundation of the Overdose Prevention Program. The following agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) to support efforts of fighting the Opioid misuse within Wayne County during this calendar year:

- Wayne UNC Health Care –The Emergency Department agreed to work with the OPC for referrals of identified overdoses received within the Wayne UNC Emergency Department. Efforts have been made to continue communication in order to keep the Overdose Prevention Program on the forefront of concerns with the goal to receive more referrals from Wayne UNC in the future.
- Boys & Girls Club – In light of the increase of juveniles identified as overdose victims, the OPC welcomed the invitation from the Boys & Girls Club to pull together an Opioid focused program, which lead us to talk further with Positive Influences, Inc.
- Positive Influences, Inc. – A mental health private practice focused on youth under the age of 18. Positive Influences, Inc.’s SAIOP license was never used due to lack of referrals for this population, and they have agreed to expand their SAIOP license to operate within the Boys & Girls Club.
- Primary Health Choice, Inc. - Offers a unique blend of health care and mental health. They are a franchise located at many locations within the State of North Carolina that provides assisted care in the home as well as mental health treatment. In Wayne County, they employ a PSS and a License Clinical Addiction Specialist for substance misuse concerns. With a desire to grow their business in order to help the community, we are looking forward to working with them more in the next calendar year.
- One to One with Youth, Inc. – A private practice that treats mental health and substance misuse of all ages. With 27 PSS, they have a strong network of professionals within their organization that are ready to combat overdoses, opioid addiction, and other mental and behavioral health issues.
- 4 Day Movement, Inc. - A grassroots organization that focus on addressing the needs of Wayne County’s most vulnerable and distressed populations. The 4 Day Movement has entered into the second year assisting the Overdose Prevention Program with opioid related peer support services. The funding for this fiscal year was provided through Eastpointe .

By working together, we can help businesses grow which improves community options of services within Wayne County.

OTHER

Using the unique template from the former Wayne Action Teams for Community Health (WATCH) substance abuse taskforce, a pocket-sized resource guide was developed. This updated booklet is designed to guide those looking for local resource services around substance misuse. This booklet has been delivered to various agencies within the County as well as displayed on the Overdose Prevention webpage of the WCHD and the CALM website.

Prior to COVID-19, the OPC also attended several community events such as the Rosewood Community Event, SEIT Open House, HGDC Community Crisis Center Men’s Health Fair , the Bridge To Hope “ Hope Extended” , and the “Point in Time” count resource fair held at the Community Soup Kitchen of Goldsboro, Inc..

Lastly, the Eastpointe grant, as referenced earlier in this report, generated discussion regarding family support groups. Because of the Eastpointe grant, we could identify a facilitator of the group as well as purchase group facilitation manuals and equipment such as chairs, table and a podium with the goal to start the groups in the upcoming year.

CONCLUSION

Opioid misuse is ongoing and increasing. It is evident that there is still much to do towards fighting the opioid usage within Wayne County. As new programs are generated and existing programs increase in participation, a more effective Overdose Prevention Program will need to operate on a full-time basis to combat a full-time opioid concern.

Building trust and increasing communication are key components with all involved in order to improve the outcomes with the Overdose Prevention Program. In addition, documenting outcomes of implemented programs helps to evaluate effectiveness in order to provide a quality model for addressing the opioid misuse. Moving forward, it is important to continue the foundational efforts applied throughout this year of:

- building relationships with businesses and the community members that have identified themselves as wanting to take action towards our cause;
- remaining an active presence with CALM;
- continuing to evolve the MAT program within the WCDC;
- expanding availability of Narcan throughout Wayne County;
- increasing prevention and intervention programs designed to address increasing trends;
- creating a prompt, consistent referral system which helps improve engagement with the overdose victim;
- expanding and creating more opportunities for Wayne County S3; and
- continuing to offer educational opportunities that meet the demands of the community at large.

Following trends and identifying challenges helps create, develop, and provide a framework of a program that is applicable for all substance misusers. This broadcasts the message that Wayne County is here to help, leading a message of hope to community members seeking recovery.