



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Foster County Public Health

# **Opioid Response Background, Foster County Opioid Settlement Funds Plan & Future Strategies Proposal**

**October 2024**

## **Background:**

Foster County Public Health (FCPH) has received opioid response funding since 2019. These funds have been associated with North Dakota's State Opioid Response (SOR), administered by the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division (BHD), and funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Since 2019, opioid response efforts have included information dissemination to work towards reducing the stigma surrounding opioid (mis)use disorder (OUD), medications for opioid (mis)use disorder (MOUD), harm reduction strategies, and recovery services. A local medication-assisted treatment (MAT) clinic was established and continues to be a well utilized service in the county. Community education started initially and has continued in the areas of safe use of medication, medication take back efforts and locations, availability of naloxone, and general information about mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and recovery support services. Local partnerships with law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, the local healthy community coalition, and other community organizations have been integral to the success of these opioid response efforts.

Current SOR efforts for FCPH include these overall strategies of increasing access to naloxone, reducing harm related to opioids, increasing access to recovery support services, and preventing opioid (mis)use. Some of the specific activities within these strategies include providing naloxone education and distribution to community members and businesses, sharing comprehensive messaging (mainly through newspaper and social

media), promoting medication safety with Take Back events and locations, distributing medication disposal products, providing education on medication safety, overdose, stigma reduction, and increasing availability of peer support services locally.

### **Opioid Settlement Funds Plan:**

Foster County Public Health proposes Opioid Settlement Funds be used for the following allocation plan:

- 1.) Enhance/Establish Peer Support Services locally.
  - a. Provide funding for launch of peer support specialist locally to sustain services for those with OUD, and any co-occurring substance (mis)use disorder (SUD) and/or mental health conditions.
  - b. Bring together potential partners to develop a plan for implementation, including the local Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) clinic and/or other local providers.
  - c. Develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with peer support specialist (PSS), which will include next steps, timelines, and responsible parties.
  - d. Review local and state data, disseminate information to appropriate partners.
  - e. Develop educational and promotional materials to disseminate.
  - f. Regularly scheduled review with community partners.
- 2.) Youth Education Prevention Program research, development, and implementation. Efforts that fall within this area may include enhancement of current substance use prevention programs or implementation of additional evidence-based programs to include opioid and all substance use/misuse.
- 3.) Explore naloxone integration through additional avenues, such as local emergency services.

Dependent on availability of additional funding in the future, FCPH will regularly review plans, data, and local partnerships and adjust allocation plans as needed. FCPH will continue to research and implement new and promising practices for harm reduction programming as funding allows.