



INTERACT FOR HEALTH

A Catalyst for Health and Wellness

Opioid Harm Reduction

Request for Proposals

March 2020

GENERAL INFORMATION

The United States continues to be in the middle of an opioid epidemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdoses killed more than 67,000 Americans in 2018. Greater Cincinnati has been disproportionately affected by the opioid epidemic. The region consistently has one of the highest overdose rates in the country.¹ In addition, fentanyl and other synthetic opioids combined with other illegal substances are growing more prevalent. In 2018, illicit fentanyl or fentanyl analogs were involved in nearly 73% of overdose deaths in Ohio, often in combination with other drugs.²

In response to the opioid epidemic, Interact for Health has adopted a comprehensive approach to reduce the trend of opioid overdoses and deaths from opioids. These efforts include increasing access to treatment, recovery support, reducing the stigma of addiction and supporting harm reduction strategies. Research shows that a comprehensive approach can reduce substance use and related problems.³

¹ Scholl L, Seth P, Kariisa M, Wilson N, Baldwin G. Drug and Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths — United States, 2013–2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2019; 67:1419–1427. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm675152e1>

² Ohio Department of Health. (2019). 2018 Ohio Drug Overdose Data: General Findings.

Since 2012, Interact for Health has supported the planning and implementation of harm reduction programs. Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with drug use. Programs that are centered on harm reduction follow the guiding principle of “meeting people where they are.” They incorporate a spectrum of strategies, from safer use, to managed use, to abstinence, in order to improve the health and wellness of people affected by drug use.⁴ Harm reduction strategies Interact for Health will fund include syringe services programs and the distribution of naloxone, also known as Narcan, and fentanyl test strips.

RFP Goal

To expand existing harm reduction efforts and support new harm reduction programs in Interact for Health’s 20-county service area.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Surgeon General. (2016). *Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health*. Washington, DC: HHS.

⁴ Harm Reduction Coalition. (n.d.) *Principles of Harm Reduction*. Retrieved Jan. 15, 2020, from <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

DEFINITIONS

- **Naloxone, or Narcan**, is a medication that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose.
- **Syringe services programs** provide a range of services that include linking clients to substance use disorder treatment; providing access to and disposal of sterile syringes and injection equipment; and vaccination, testing for and linking clients to care and treatment for infectious diseases. People

who participate in syringe services programs are five times more likely to seek treatment for a substance use disorder.⁵

- **Fentanyl test strips** check for the presence of fentanyl and its associated analogs including carfentanyl in the unregulated drug supply. Fentanyl can be mixed with heroin, cocaine and

methamphetamine. If people are aware of fentanyl, they are likely to modify their behavior by not using the drugs, using the drugs more slowly, using the drugs with others who have naloxone, or changing their purchasing behaviors.⁶

⁵ Centers for Disease Control. (2019). *Syringe Services Programs*. Retrieved Jan. 15, 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ssp/index.html>

⁶ Sherman, S.G., Park, J.N., Glick, J., McKenzie, M., Morales, K., Christensen, T., Green, T.C. (2018) FORECAST Study Summary Report. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Available at https://americanhealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/Fentanyl_Executive_Summary_032018.pdf

RFP Overview

Interact for Health seeks to support harm reduction programs that reverse the trend of overdoses and deaths from opioids in Greater Cincinnati. These initiatives may include planning or implementing a new program or expanding existing harm reduction services currently offered. Examples of projects that will be considered:

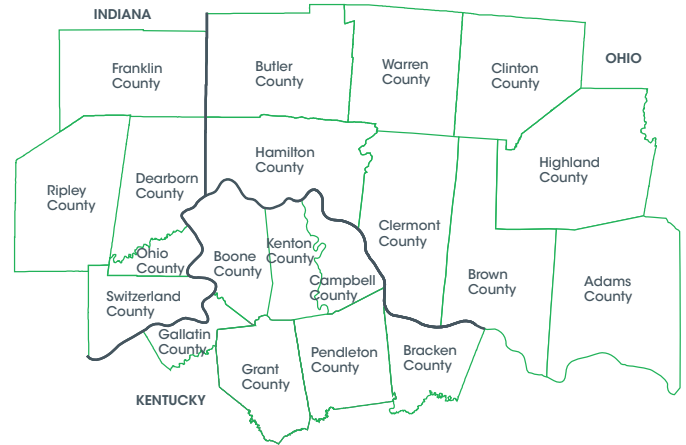
- Planning or implementing a new syringe services program.
- Expanding the services offered within a syringe services program to make it more comprehensive.
- Targeted distribution of Narcan and/or fentanyl test strips to people most at risk for an opioid overdose such as those:
 - Living in recovery housing.
 - Leaving criminal justice settings or treatment centers.
 - Using substances such as cocaine or methamphetamine who may be unaware of fentanyl being present in their drug supply.
 - Using a syringe services program.
 - Being discharged from the hospital after an opioid overdose.

Interact for Health anticipates these grants will begin in spring 2020. These awards are expected to be **12- to 18-month grants**. Planning grants will be **no more than \$25,000** and grants for implementation or expansion projects will be **no more than \$75,000**. Interact for Health will award a total of \$400,000 with this request for proposals. The amounts awarded will vary by project. Desired applicants are community-based nonprofits or public health organizations.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be a public or private nonprofit or governmental organization.
- Provide services in at least one county of Interact for Health’s 20-county service area (see below).



If two or more organizations will be collaborating on the project, either organization may take the lead and serve as the fiscal sponsor, but representatives from each organization must participate in the proposal process.

Each state’s statutes contain language regarding the establishment of syringe service programs, Narcan distribution and disbursement and possession of fentanyl test strips. Please be sure to review the statutes before submitting your proposal.

Interact for Health’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

Interact for Health has a large service area with diverse communities, and is committed to expanding equity, diversity and inclusion among the grantees it funds. Interact for Health values organizations that have experience working in communities of color and low-income communities, and whose potential staffing of the project is representative of the community they are serving.

PROPOSAL SELECTION CRITERIA

Interact for Health will use the following criteria to select the most competitive proposals. Prioritized programs will demonstrate:

- How the opioid epidemic has affected their community, utilizing local data when possible.
- How efforts will reach people most at risk for opioid overdose or death.
- An understanding and commitment to secondary distribution of harm reduction strategies, as appropriate.
- New or innovative approaches to connect with hard-to-reach populations through targeted outreach or other methods.
- Existing relationships or the ability to engage key decision makers, public health officials, community partners and potential clients in the planning process.
- An authentic method of receiving input and feedback from people who use the services.
- A commitment to working in communities of color and communities whose residents have lower income, as appropriate to the geographic area.
- A clearly delineated budget with justification for each line item.
- A plan to sustain the project/program after grant funding has ended.

Timeline

Proposal workshop (includes Introduction to new online application process)	2-3:30 p.m., March 16
Proposal deadline	5 p.m., March 31
Site visits	April 16-17, 20-21
Notification of grant award	April 29

Grant Expectations

Grant recipients will be expected to complete an Evaluation Plan in partnership with Interact for Health's Evaluation Officer to measure the effectiveness of the grant.

Proposal Workshop

Interested applicants who have questions are invited to join the Harm Reduction Proposal Workshop **2-3:30 p.m. March 16** at Interact for Health, 3805 Edwards Road, Suite 500, Cincinnati, OH 45209. There is also an option to participate remotely via video conference. To register for both in-person and video, email Lisa Myers at lmyers@interactforhealth.org. Attendance is optional and not required in order to submit a proposal. Driving directions can be found at <https://www.interactforhealth.org/location-directions>.

Proposal Submissions

Completed proposals must be submitted no later than **5 p.m. March 31**, via Interact for Health's online grants management system. To begin the application process or to access a PDF of the required application questions, please visit <https://www.interactforhealth.org/requests-for-proposals>. If your organization has received a grant from Interact for Health in the past, you may already have an account. For assistance with the application process, please contact Senior Grants Manager Kristine Schultz at kschultz@interactforhealth.org.

Site Visits

Before selecting projects for funding, Interact for Health staff will conduct a site visit with the potential grantee. Representatives from collaborating organizations are required to attend the site visit. This meeting allows Interact for Health staff to hear more about the proposed project and ask any clarifying questions. Site visits will be conducted **April 16, 17, 20 or 21**. Applicants will be asked to indicate their preferred timeslot during the application process.

Questions

Interested applicants unable to attend the proposal workshop should direct questions to Program Officer Lisa Myers at lmyers@interactforhealth.org or 513-458-6629 or Senior Program Officer Sonya Carrico at scarrico@interactforhealth.org or 513-458-6647.