

**Health Director's Report  
January 9, 2020**

**Division / Program: Health Education & Community Transformation Division / Linking Communities to Care for Opioid Use Disorder: Sustaining and Expanding the Success of Peer Navigators in Durham County (Accreditation Activity 20.2: The local health department shall collaborate with community health care providers and agencies to reduce barriers to access to care.)**

**Program Description:**

- Durham County Public Health was recently awarded state grant funds from the Injury & Violence Prevention Branch of the Division of Public Health. The award – AA491 – is to support **Community Linkages to Care for Overdose Prevention and Response**. The award began on December 1, 2019 and will continue through August 31, 2022. Durham's application continues efforts to support a post-overdose response team for opioid use disorder. The funding will allow Durham County to build upon infrastructure recently established to use peer support specialists to link opioid overdose individuals with opioid detoxification, medication, and recovery support through a partnership with the Durham Recovery Response Center, Duke University Health System and the Durham County Detention Center. The grant also has a focus on expanding housing resources for individuals with opioid use disorder.

**Statement of Goals:**

- The overall purpose of this program is to connect more Durham County residents who are struggling with opioid use with comprehensive, evidence-based care, which acknowledges social determinants of health and responds to current housing challenges. The intent of these collaborative efforts is to:
  - Reduce opioid overdose visits and fatalities in Durham County
  - Engage key stakeholders across Durham County to help respond to the opioid crisis and address social determinants of health for individuals affected by opioid use disorder
  - Meaningfully engage with persons with lived experience or in recovery and other harm reduction specialists to support post-overdose response teams

**Issues:**

- **Opportunities**
  - The proposed project aligns with the “Connect to Care” priority area within the state Opioid Action Plan, by both expanding a key component of Durham County's post-overdose response team and increasing efforts to connect justice-involved persons to care.
- **Challenges**
  - This project will build upon a previously awarded North Carolina State grant (RFA #A361) through the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch to the Durham County Department of Public Health. Although the infrastructure already exists,

the most significant challenge related to the project involves the brief interval between acceptance of the grant award and the release of funds.

- Another anticipated challenge involves contracting out a new Program Coordinator role within program deliverable deadlines detailed in the grant timeline.

### **Implication(s):**

- **Outcomes**

- Outcomes of the project are speculative at this point. However, through work to strengthen Durham's Post-Overdose Response Team (PORT), we anticipate a significant increase in patients linked to community resources for OUD treatment and housing that will increase the likelihood that patients are sustained in treatment and recovery.
- Plans for evaluating the success of the project are clearly defined and will involve collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Evaluation data will focus on engagement outcomes, opioid overdose patient outcomes, and qualitative data on facilitators and barriers to project implementation and opioid overdose patient recovery within the project.

- **Service Delivery:**

- This project will include the following actions:
  - Follow-up with patients who arrive at Duke University Medical Center and Duke Regional Hospital having experienced a non-fatal overdose within 72 hours of the overdose event.
  - Support post-overdose response within 72 hours for patients who have survived an opioid overdose, but refused transport to the ED.
  - Support existing reentry programs to link or refer people to care services once released from incarceration and provide care service referrals to those individuals identified with opioid use disorder (OUD) upon their release.
  - Meaningfully engage with persons with lived experience or in recovery and other harm reduction specialists to support post-overdose response teams.
  - Enhance local capacity to train area Emergency Department (ED) providers on peer support services and increase recruitment of patients appropriate for referral to existing Peer Navigators.

- **Staffing:**

- 3 part-time Peer Support Specialists (contracted through Durham Recovery Response Center)
- 1 part-time Contract Program Coordinator
- Durham County EMS Community Paramedics
- 2 contract external evaluators
- 1 DCoDPH Injury Prevention Public Health Education Specialist
  - The majority of funding will support the new Program Coordinator position and continued support of existing Peer Support Specialists, all of

which will be contracted out through other agencies.

- **Revenue:**

Funds awarded under Agreement Addendum 491 are distributed over a period of 33-months, spread across four fiscal years. The amount awarded is \$275,000.

**Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies:**

The following actions will take place throughout the first year of the grant:

- Sustain employment of peer support specialists and provide monthly mentorship to ensure their continued effectiveness
- Continued convening of the Durham Joins Together to Save Lives opioid response task force, including presentation of evaluation findings
- Initiate program coordination contract
- Planning meeting with Duke Regional Hospital Emergency Department providers
- Monthly program coordination meetings to facilitate provider training and recruitment to peer support
- Attend Addiction Medicine Conference
- Duke Health System Emergency Department provider training
- Process and outcome evaluation
- Data analysis to assess program effectiveness

**Division / Program: Health Education and Community Transformation/World AIDS Day (Accreditation Activity 10.1 the local health department shall develop, implement and evaluate population-based health promotion/disease prevention programs and educational materials for the general public)**

**Program description:**

- In observance of World AIDS Day, the Health Education and Community Transformation Division partnered with CAARE, the Healing Center and NC Central University Student Health Services to host World AIDS Day (WAD) on Sunday December 1, 2019. The World AIDS Day event was held at CAARE, the Healing Center from 5:30pm-7:30pm. Angela Vick (community advocate) and Tim Moore served as the event hosts.
- The program consisted of three generations of HIV+ individuals telling their personal stories of acquiring the disease, community support, stigma, treatment and access to care. The audience had an opportunity to discuss next steps for reducing stigma, increasing pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) utilization, barriers for those lost to care and strategies to reach them, testing and knowing what your results indicate (including understanding false positives). The Mayor of Durham presented a WAD Proclamation. A Proclamation from the governor of NC was also presented and read.

**Statement of goals:**

- To raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and the many people impacted by the disease.
- To address and reduce the stigma of HIV/AIDS.
- To increase support for people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide.

- To improve education about HIV/AIDS, treatment and care.
- To inform people that HIV/AIDS is a chronic disease with available treatment and resources.

**Issues:**

- **Opportunities**
  - Collaborating with agencies within the HIV Committee
  - Sharing proclamations from State and Durham City Government.
  - Discussing current prevention and treatment options available for HIV/AIDS
  - Reducing stigma around HIV/AIDS.
- **Challenges**
  - The original plan for the event was changed less than 25 days before the event. An alternate plan was arranged, but the changes reduced attendance.
  - WAD is internationally recognized as December 1. This year, that date fell on the Sunday following the Thanksgiving holiday.

**Implication(s):**

- **Outcomes**
  - A total of 86 community members were present at the World AIDS Day event
  - Information about community resources, condoms and refreshments were provided; on-site testing for HIV was offered
- **Service delivery**
  - A flyer and organizational e-mail blasts for agencies within the HIV Committee were provided to promote and share event information.
- **Staffing**
  - Health Education and Community Transformation – Tim Moore, Annette Carrington, Dennis Hamlet and Ashley Bueno.
  - CAARE – Dr. Hinton, Carolyn Hinton and Rita Ferrell.
  - NCCU Student Health – Jamal Percy
- **Revenue**
  - NA

**Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies:**

- Start planning for 2020 World AIDS Day event early in the year.
- Better integrate the community into planning for the next World AIDS Day event.
- Introduce the new Eliminating HIV Epidemic position and related activities.
- Become more creative in our approach to hosting a World AIDS Day event that peaks the interest of a wide swath of the Durham community.

**Division / Program: Community Health / School Health/Education about Vaping at Riverside High School**

**(Accreditation Activity: Activity 10.3 The local health department shall employ evidence-based health promotion/disease prevention strategies, when such evidence exists)**

**Program description**

- Vaping, which is the use of e-cigarettes, is in the news these days and has become a major public health concern. Devices such as JUUL, a brand of e-cigarette, are widely used by adolescents. All JUUL products contain a high level of nicotine; a single JUUL pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of regular cigarettes. Unfortunately, according to CDC, approximately two-thirds of JUUL users aged 15 – 24 do not know that a JUUL always contains nicotine. Because nicotine is highly addictive, it can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s. Given the concerns that surround use of e-cigarettes in adolescents, Riverside High School has worked to increase awareness of the issue among parents and students through a variety of methods. The Riverside school nurse, Cheryl Parsons, RN, has been an integral part of the awareness campaign.
- Coffee with the Principal, a program at Riverside High School in Durham, provides parents the opportunity to meet with Principal Williams to discuss current events and issues that affect the students. In October, the school nurse Parsons joined Principal Williams and the parents to discuss vaping and its harmful health effects on adolescents. The discussion also focused on what is being done at Riverside to address the growing problem and what parents can do to help.
- Several articles on vaping have been published in the ‘The Pirates’ Hook,’ the Riverside student newspaper. In one article, school nurse Parsons expressed concern that parents don’t fully understand the extent of e-cigarette use among the students. “They don’t really understand how many kids do it and that their child could be doing it.”
- A student panel on vaping, held in October 2019, was well-attended by students, teachers, and parents.

**Statement of goals**

- Increase overall knowledge of e-cigarettes among students, parents, and teachers, including how e-cigarettes work, what they look like, health risks, regulation of sales, prevention, and resources for more information.
- Provide culturally appropriate materials to increase overall knowledge of vaping and e-cigarettes.
- Provide information in the form of flyers, posters, and bulletin boards in the school to increase awareness of the issue.

**Issues**

- **Opportunities**
  - To collaborate with Durham Public Schools and Riverside High School to provide facts about e-cigarettes to students, parents, and teachers.
  - To expand the role of school nurse to encompass that of nurse leader and health expert in the schools.
- **Challenges**

- To impress upon the students the health consequences of using e-cigarettes.
- To remain current on the topic of e-cigarettes and vaping in order to provide relevant information.

### **Implication(s)**

- **Outcomes**
  - The school nurse is involved in providing health information re: vaping to parents, students, and teachers.
  - The school nurse is seen as an expert on health topics by students, parents, and teachers.
- **Service delivery**
  - A variety of timely health topics can be addressed in the schools by the school nurses through collaboration with and the support of school administration and staff.
- **Staffing**
  - The school nurse participated in the vaping events during school hours. Attendance by the school nurse is also possible at after-hours school events.
- **Revenue**
  - No revenue is realized; this service is offered freely to students, parents, and teachers who choose to participate.
- **Other**
  - School nurses are the ideal health leaders to coordinate and implement programs that provide all types of health information to the school communities they serve. Addressing the health needs of all students through awareness campaigns, health fairs, panel discussions, and other venues is a key part of the role of the school nurse.

### **Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies**

- Continue to review feedback from the E-cigarette awareness campaign at Riverside.
- Introduce similar programs into other DPS middle and high schools.

**Division / Program: Nutrition / DINE/ Durham Public Schools Teacher Trainings**  
**(Accreditation Activity 10.2 - The local health department shall carry out, develop, implement and evaluate health promotion/disease prevention programs and educational materials targeted to groups identified as at-risk in the CHA)**

### **Program description**

- DINE is a school- and community-based nutrition education program targeting SNAP-eligible Durham families.
- The DINE in Schools program delivers nutrition education and other wellness initiatives in Durham Public Schools (DPS).
- In addition to educating school-aged children and their families, the program works to empower teachers to model healthy behaviors for their students and to equip them with resources for incorporating nutrition and healthy cooking instruction in their schools.
- The DINE School Team recently provided three trainings to teachers and other school staff.

## Statement of goals

- To inform teachers and staff about the DPS wellness policies and encourage them to be role models of healthy behaviors in their classrooms.
- To demonstrate to DPS teachers and before-/after-school staff how to meet and reinforce math and literacy standards through healthy hands-on cooking using limited resources.

## Issues

- **Opportunities**
  - The DINE in Schools program primarily serves school-aged children in Durham Public Schools, however DINE nutritionists have limited time with the students (~30-60 minutes per month).
  - Classroom teachers and other school staff spend much more time with the students and therefore have a great opportunity to impact student wellness via direct education, role modeling and creating healthy environments and/or policies in their classrooms and schools.
  - The principal of Lakewood Elementary expressed interest in a “healthy role modeling/ healthy celebrations” training for Lakewood teachers.
  - The Durham Public Schools Hub Farm periodically hosts district-wide professional development days for DPS teachers. The Hub Farm staff invited DINE to provide training at one of these days, providing the opportunity to reach teachers from across the district.
  - Durham Public Schools Community Education runs before- and after-school programs at schools across the district. Before-/after-school managers and group leaders are required to attend a certain number of workshops per year. DINE in Schools has been invited to lead a workshop for three consecutive years, providing the opportunity to reach before-/after-school staff from across the district.
- **Challenges**
  - Attendance at the trainings varied. The trainings that provided teachers or staff with professional development credit had a higher attendance rate than the optional training.

## Implication(s)

- **Outcomes**
  - A teacher training on school wellness was held at Lakewood Elementary School for Lakewood teachers on October 17 and reached 2 teachers.
  - A staff training on reinforcing academic standards through hands-on cooking was held at Spring Valley Elementary School for any DPS elementary before-/after-school staff on November 5 and reached 22 staff members.
  - A teacher training on meeting academic standards through hands-on cooking was held at Eno Valley Elementary School for any DPS teachers (pre-K through high school) on November 12 and reached 14 teachers.
- **Service delivery**
  - DINE nutritionists planned and provided the trainings for DPS teachers and staff.
  - The October 17 teacher training was school-specific (“Wellness at Lakewood”). This session reviewed DPS wellness policy components, explained how to be healthy role

models for students, and provided ideas for healthy foods and activities for school celebrations.

- The other two sessions were on “Cooking with Math and Literacy” and reviewed how to meet or reinforce math and literacy NC Essential Standards through hands-on cooking. Ideas and resources were shared for how to prepare healthy foods with students using limited resources and equipment. Teachers and school staff participated in hands-on cooking activities to illustrate the connections between cooking and academic standards.
- **Staffing**
  - Each teacher training was provided by two or three DINE School Nutritionists, who are all Registered Dietitians.
- **Revenue**
  - No revenue is generated through this educational outreach.

#### **Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies**

- The DINE School Team will continue to work with Durham Public Schools to provide teacher and staff trainings. The DINE program will continue its valuable collaborations with the DPS Hub Farm and DPS Community Education.
- A DINE-led teacher training is already being planned for February 2020 as part of a district-wide professional development day.

#### **Division / Program: Pharmacy & Health Education / Safe Syringe Program**

**(Accreditation Activity 10.1 -The local health department shall develop, implement, and evaluate population-based health promotion/disease prevention programs and materials for the general public.)**

#### **Program description**

- On April 2, 2018, the DCoDPH Pharmacy launched the Safe Syringe Program based on the guidance and program requirements from the NC Division of Public Health.

#### **Statement of goals**

- To offer new needles, syringes, and injection supplies to reduce the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C in the community.
- To offer free HIV and Hepatitis C testing and follow-up care.
- To offer education, treatment information, and referrals to community members.
- To provide a safe method of disposal for used needles and syringes.

#### **Issues**

- **Opportunities**
  - Reduce the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C by offering new needles, syringes, and injection supplies.
  - Reduce the risk of bacterial infections (i.e. endocarditis) that occur when injection supplies are reused.
  - Connect participants with community resources including treatment options, health care, and housing assistance.
  - The following items are provided in the Safe Syringe Kit:



- 10 sterile 1.0mL syringes with fixed needles
- Alcohol swabs
- Tourniquet
- Condoms
- Sharps Container
- Additional injection supplies
- Participant ID card
- Printed material for harm reduction and ancillary services
- Fentanyl testing strips and Naloxone kits are also offered with each SSP Kit.
- **Challenges**
  - Ensure that used needles and syringes are properly discarded in a puncture proof container. Sharps containers are included with SSP Kits and participants are encouraged to use of them and return the container to the DCoDPH Pharmacy.
  - Ensure that used needles and syringes are not deposited in the medication drop box in the HHS lobby.

## Implications

- **Outcomes**
  - The following statistics have been collected for November 2019:
    - Unique individuals: 3
    - Total contacts: 11
    - Syringes dispensed: 140
    - Syringes returned\*: ~100
    - Sharps containers dispensed: 2
    - Fentanyl strips dispensed: 2
    - Naloxone kits distributed (with SSP): 5
    - Naloxone kits distributed (non-SSP): 23
    - Naloxone reversals reported: 3
  - Year-to-date statistics, FY19-20:
    - Unique individuals: 24
    - Total contacts: 49
    - Syringes dispensed: 860
    - Syringes returned\*: ~329
    - Sharps containers dispensed: 18
    - Fentanyl strips dispensed: 29
    - Naloxone kits distributed (with SSP): 15
    - Naloxone kits distributed (non-SSP): 137
    - Naloxone reversals reported: 5

\*“Syringes returned” metric includes needles/syringes returned directly to staff regardless of usage (i.e. substance use, medical use, prescription use)

- **Service delivery**
  - Planning and implementation was completed by the Opioid Response Committee with guidance and support from the NC Division of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch.
- **Staffing**

- Pharmacy, Health Education, and Bull City United team members have received training from the NC Division of Public Health and the NC Harm Reduction Coalition regarding harm reduction strategies and Safe Syringe Program practices.

#### **Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies:**

- Statistics from the Safe Syringe Program will be monitored and reported to the Board of Health monthly.
- The Opioid Response Committee will continue to work with the NC Division of Public Health to improve our program and develop strategies to further our goals.

#### **Division / Program: Pharmacy / Needle Disposal Box**

**(Accreditation Activity 10.1 -The local health department shall develop, implement, and evaluate population-based health promotion/disease prevention programs and materials for the general public.)**

#### **Program description**

- In September 2018, DCoDPH Pharmacy installed a Needle Disposal Box in the lobby of the HHS building.

#### **Statement of goals**

- To offer a safe method of disposal for used or expired needles and syringes.

#### **Issues**

- **Opportunities**
  - The following items are accepted in the box:
    - Used or expired needles and syringes
    - Used or expired medications with attached needles (i.e. EpiPens)
  - Reduce environmental concerns caused by improper needle disposal.
  - Reduce accidental needle sticks caused by improper needle disposal.
  - Reduce the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis C by disposing of needles after each use coupled with offering new needles, syringes, and injection supplies through the Safe Syringe Program.
  - Reduce the risk of security personnel being exposed to used needles by placing the disposal box before the security checkpoint.
- **Challenges**
  - Ensuring that used needles and syringes are not deposited in the medication drop box. Both drop boxes have clear signage in English and Spanish.

#### **Implications**

- **Outcomes**
  - Quarterly statistics, FY19-20 Q2
    - ~8,430 needles/syringes returned
  - Year-to-date statistics, FY19-20
    - ~16,860 needles/syringes returned

- Previous year statistics, FY18-19
  - ~12,083 needles/syringes returned
- **Service delivery**
  - Planning and implementation was completed by the Pharmacy Manager and Allied Health Division Director.
  - General Services installed the drop box in the HHS lobby with input from Security and General Services.
- **Staffing**
  - Pharmacy staff will regularly monitor the drop box and empty when necessary.
  - Piedmont Biomedical is contracted to dispose of the used needles and syringes.

**Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies:**

- The disposal box will be monitored regularly and emptied when necessary.
- Statistics from the Needle Disposal Box will be monitored and reported to the Board of Health quarterly.

**Division / Program: Pharmacy/ Medication Drop Box**

**(Accreditation Activity 10.1 -The local health department shall develop, implement, and evaluate population-based health promotion/disease prevention programs and materials for the general public.)**

**Program description**

- On March 15, 2018, the DCoDPH Pharmacy partnered with Project Pill Drop to install a Medication Drop Box in the lobby of the HHS building.

**Statement of goals**

- To offer a safe method of disposal for unused and expired over-the-counter and prescriptions medications.

**Issues**

- **Opportunities**
  - The following items are accepted in the box:
    - Over-the-counter medications
    - Prescription medications
    - Prescription patches
    - Prescription ointments
    - Vitamins
  - Reduce environmental concerns caused by flushing unwanted medications.
  - Alleviate prescription drug abuse from expired medications left in medicine cabinets.
- **Challenges**
  - Ensuring that used needles and syringes are not deposited in the drop box. The needle/syringe disposal box is located next to the medication drop box.

**Implications**

- **Outcomes**
  - Quarterly statistics, FY19-20 Q2

- ~12 lbs of medication disposed
- Year-to-date statistics, FY19-20:
  - ~42 lbs of medication disposed
- Previous year statistics, FY 18-19
  - ~105 lbs of medication disposed
- **Service delivery**
  - Planning and implementation was completed by the Pharmacy Manager and Allied Health Division Director.
  - General Services installed the drop box in the HHS lobby with input from Security and General Services.
- **Staffing**
  - Pharmacy staff will regularly monitor the drop box and empty when necessary.
  - Assurant Waste Disposal is contracted to dispose of the medications.

**Next Steps / Mitigation Strategies:**

- The drop box will be monitored regularly and emptied when necessary.
- Statistics will be monitored and reported to the Board of Health quarterly.