Santa Clara County Opioid Overdose Prevention Project

Improving prevention, treatment, and education, for a safer Santa Clara County.
A National Epidemic

Drug overdose has become the leading cause of accidental deaths in the United States. In 2017, over 49,000 people died from opioid-related overdose. That’s 134 people every day.

In 2017, California lost 2,196 people to opioid overdose. Of those deaths, 429 involved fentanyl, which is a highly potent synthetic opioid.

How did this happen?

Healthcare Provider Overprescribing
Changes in pain management treatment practices resulted in an increase in the prescribing of opioids. These were marketed by pharmaceutical companies as non-addictive substances.

Ease of Access to Opioids
Even when prescribing rates went down for healthcare providers, opioids like fentanyl were still available online through global markets. Illicit opioids like heroin are widely available in local communities.

Lack of Access to Treatment
Over 2.5 million Americans have a substance use disorder related to prescription pain relievers or heroin. There is a shortage of evidence-based treatment services, especially in rural areas. Societal stigma associated with substance use has slowed the progress of improving access to treatment.
Closer Look: Santa Clara County

With a total population approaching 2 million, Santa Clara County is culturally and socioeconomically diverse, and represents nearly 5% of the state of California.

In 2015, one in four Santa Clara County residents reported having misused their prescription drugs at least once. The most common misused prescription drug was pain relievers. A 2015 assessment estimated that 15,707 people in the county have an opioid use disorder, and 12,616 of those people are don’t have access to treatment services for opioid use.

In 2017, there were 70 opioid related overdose deaths in Santa Clara County, and 16 of those deaths involved fentanyl.
In response to the alarming increase in opioid use, high prescription rates, and opioid related overdose, the California Healthcare Foundation created the California Opioid Safety Network. This partnership helped put boots on the ground by founding county-based coalitions. We are now fighting the epidemic one community at a time.

In October 2015, the Santa Clara County Opioid Overdose Prevention Project, or SCCOOPP, joined to support the community in their fight against drug related overdose and substance use disorders. The Santa Clara County Coalition was developed with support from Behavioral Health leadership and the Board of Supervisors.
How We Can Impact the Epidemic

Decreasing the number of opioid-related deaths requires a multi-faceted approach. SCCOOPP works to target many different areas to ensure we address the many areas that opioid use can impact our community.

Community Outreach and Education

Treatment

Provider Education
Community Outreach and Education

Our Strategies

Prevention Education
We are developing opioid education curriculum for universities, community colleges, and youth to prevent opioid misuse before it starts.

Overdose Prevention
Naloxone (Narcan©) is a medication used to reverse the effects of an opioid-related overdose. We can prevent overdose deaths by making naloxone education and medication available through high impact community placement with law enforcement, in prisons, rehab centers, college campuses and community members.

Community Outreach
We provide education to community members on the safe storage and disposal of medications, and guidelines on safe opioid medication use.
Provider Education

Our Strategies

**Buprenorphine Certification Training Programs**

Buprenorphine (Suboxone®) is a medication used in the treatment of opioid use disorder. We are committed to increasing the number of physicians certified to prescribe this medication through hosting certification courses periodically throughout each year.

**Safe Prescribing**

Educating providers on using less opioids, alternative pain treatments, tapering opioids to safer levels, using buprenorphine as a lower risk opioid for treating pain, and promoting safe prescribing guidelines. We have been working closely with county hospitals and clinic systems to facilitate provider adherence to safe

**Naloxone Pharmacy Protocols**

Developing and implementing pharmacy protocols to automatically dispense naloxone kits and education for anyone prescribed opioids over a certain dose amount.
Treatment

Our Strategies

Expanding Medication Assisted Treatment
Medication Assisted Treatment uses FDA approved medication and evidence based practices for treatment of opioid use disorders. We are working to ensure that treatment services are readily available to community members.

Strengthening Partnerships
Strengthening referral programs between the emergency department and existing treatment services provides increased opportunities for community members to access substance use treatment.

Improving and Implementing Treatment in County Jails
Expanding services in the county jail for incarcerated community members already utilizing substance use treatment services and starting treatment services for inmates who want to receive treatment for opioid use disorder.
What can you do to help address the opioid epidemic?

1. Use medications properly.
   This includes not taking more than your physician prescribes.

2. Dispose of unused medications properly
   Drop off sites can be found at dontrushtoflush.org

3. Help end the stigma surrounding substance use disorders.
   Stigma around substance use disorders only creates barriers to recovery. Addiction is a medical disease, not a moral failing, and everyone can be an advocate for treatment and recovery.

4. Carry naloxone (Narcan®)
   Getting trained to use naloxone is quick, simple, and could save someone’s life. SCCOOPP offers free Narcan training and kits, email
Get Involved

Addressing the opioid epidemic requires collaboration across Santa Clara County. To join the effort or learn more about opioids and overdose prevention:

Find us on Facebook: Facebook.com/SCCOverdosePrevention
Go online at www.sccgov.org/sccoopp
Email us at SCCOOPP@hhs.sccgov.org

If you are looking for treatment or help with substance use, you can go online at www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd or call (800) 488-9919

Resources:

National Institute of Drug Abuse          The Urban Institute
California Opioid Surveillance Dashboard  American Journal of Public Health
2017 Behavioral Health Services Substance Use Assessment

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