

2023

Project Period:
April 2023 - August 2023

RODA

RIVERSIDE OVERDOSE DATA TO ACTION

FENTANYL HARM REDUCTION AWARENESS EDUCATION PROJECT



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PARTNERS:



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Partnerships

The **Desert Healthcare District**, in partnership with **Riverside University Health System - Public Health**, created an action plan to address the high overdose deaths plaguing the Indio community by implementing a harm reduction education project. The project sought to leverage existing, local community partners already providing an array of support services and resources to those most at risk for potential overdose and death. The Riverside Overdose Data to Action (RODA) team partnered with the District to set priorities and deliverable areas of focus related to implementation of this project.



Desert Healthcare District (DHCD) was founded in 1948 with the intention of creating Desert Hospital, the first public hospital in Palm Springs. Since 2018, when the District and Foundation launched a Behavioral Health Initiative, the Board has allocated \$3 million to support behavioral health services and programs. That was followed in 2019 with a valley-wide behavioral health needs assessment, commissioned by the District and Foundation.

A new five-year strategic plan, adopted by the Board, included as its No. 3 goal: to proactively expand community access to behavioral/mental health services and jump started a Coachella Valley District led Behavioral Health Initiative involving over 38 stakeholder organizations including Riverside University Health System-Behavioral Health.

Riverside University Health System - Public Health works to promote and protect the health of all county residents and visitors in service of the well-being of the community by creating healthy communities, promoting healthy behaviors, and connecting and investing in people. The Public Health department is made up of over 700 doctors, nurses, health educators, nutritionists, communicable disease and community program specialists, managers and fiscal and support staff that implement a wide range of services and resources from immunization programs to overdose morbidity and mortality surveillance. The Riverside Overdose Data to Action (RODA) team partnered with DHCD to set priorities and deliverable areas of focus related to implementation of this project.

The work of **ABC Recovery Center** located in Indio, California was a critical community partner with this project as their team provided the Fentanyl harm reduction education sessions to the community members most at risk for potential Fentanyl related overdose incidences and deaths.



ABC Recovery Center has a 60+ year history of successfully providing addiction intervention treatment support services to those suffering from substance use disorders including addictions that put the user at a high risk of overdose/death. Their expertise and experience as a provider of wellness and healing support services across all stages of recovery was an invaluable asset as a subcontracted provider of the necessary harm reduction education/implementation workshops and education sessions as scheduled and coordinated by the DHCD team. The DHCD team has collected and analyzed the data as it related to the deliverables to inform future planning and development to address the Fentanyl crisis.

Organizational Participants



The **Coachella Valley Rescue Mission** serves people experiencing homelessness, hunger and life challenges through emergency services, recovery programs and community outreach.



College of the Desert is a public community college in Palm Desert, California. COD enrolls about 12,500 students, of which around one third attend college full-time. The college is federally recognized as a Hispanic-serving institution, receiving Title V grants.



Martha's Village & Kitchen is one of the largest providers of homeless and impoverished services in Coachella Valley and Riverside County offering unique life-changing programs based on the nationally recognized "continuum of care model" breaking the cycle of homelessness and poverty.



Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine offers medical services at no cost to uninsured adults. As a community safety net, VIM treats the whole person by addressing chronic diseases, acute conditions, preventative medicine, diet, and emotional health.

PROJECT BACKGROUND


Introduced into society in the 1960s, Fentanyl quickly became a popular intravenous drug. Although legally produced and disseminated in the United States, Fentanyl is distributed into society illegally across various mechanisms including theft, fraudulent prescriptions, and other unlawful distribution methods. Since 2011, fatal overdoses and law enforcement encounters, heavily associated with Fentanyl fraudulent distribution, and trending upward.

Fentanyl is 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine. Similar to Morphine, it is legally prescribed to patients with severe and/or chronic pain patients that do not receive relief from other prescribed opioid drugs. Taking Fentanyl over time can lead to tolerance issues. Tolerance occurs when you need increased dosage and/or increased frequency of a drug to get the desired effects. Increased tolerance impacts fatal overdose outcomes.¹

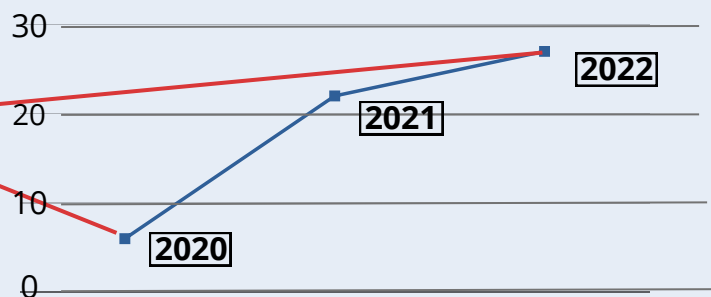
In 2022, Centers For Disease Control provisional data indicated that more than **two thirds (68%)** of the reported **107,081** drug overdose deaths in the United States involved synthetic opioids other than methadone, principally illicitly manufactured fentanyls (IMFs).²

Local Fentanyl Use

FENTANYL USE - SNAPSHOT OF INDIO

 **350%**
IN FENTANYL
OVERDOSE DEATHS
FROM 2020 TO 2022 IN
THE CITY OF INDIO³

Fentanyl Overdose Deaths by Year



¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, March 3). Fentanyl Drug Facts. National Institutes of Health.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, June 29). Illicitly manufactured fentanyl-involved overdose deaths with detected xylazine - United States, January 2019-June 2022.

³Riverside Overdose Data to Action. (2023). Riverside County, CA - Overdose Dashboard. countyofriverside.maps.arcgis.com.



Riverside County Overdose Data to Action data dashboard shows the number of overdose deaths within the community of Indio, California. The data revealed high incidence trends by age, race, drug of choice, location, and informed the targeted population and the development of a collaborative action plan. The **action plan** included:

1

LEVERAGE

Leveraging the existing local community stakeholder experience and strengths by convening with local City of Indio officials, law enforcement, community based organizations and community groups that currently interact with or directly serve this community to understand current practices and to support the expansion of harm reduction education strategies in order to impact and potentially reduce the number of overdose deaths impacting this community.

2

SUPPLY DISTRIBUTION

Utilization of existing harm reduction supplies/educational materials for dissemination to community members through established community outreach networks which include Fentanyl testing strips and Naloxone/Narcan nasal units.

3

TRACKING

Creation of tracking methodology to identify the number of harm reduction education contacts made, training participants, outreach activities, the impact of increased knowledge of harm reduction options, and overdose deaths within this project timeline.

⁴Riverside Overdose Data to Action. (2023). Riverside County, CA - Overdose Dashboard. countyofriverside.maps.arcgis.com.

⁵ibid.

City of Indio Demographics

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY - 5 YEAR ESTIMATES (2017-2021)⁶

DEMOGRAPHICS	# OF INDIVIDUALS	% OF POPULATION
Total Population	88,542	
Persons 25 to 34 Years of Age	12,320	13.9%
Persons 35 to 44 Years of Age	11,674	13.2%
Male Persons	43,651	49.3%
Female Persons	44,891	50.7%

RACE/ETHNICITY	# OF INDIVIDUALS	% OF POPULATION
Hispanic or Latino (or any race)	58,935	66.6%
Persons 25 to 34 Years of Age	29,607	33.4%

INCOME AND POVERTY	# OF INDIVIDUALS	% OF POPULATION
Persons in poverty (200 percent of poverty level)	29,987	34.2%
Median Household Income	\$59,399	

PROJECT TARGET POPULATION

Based on the RODA data, the most vulnerable community members community members at risk for Fentanyl related overdose death incidents, in the City of Indio, were **Latino Males ages 25-44.**

Project Outreach Activities

- 1 Coordinated/scheduled activities utilizing a network of community organizations that currently serve the City of Indio community for the presentation of harm reduction awareness education sessions which include how to employ harm reduction supplies in the event of an overdose occurrence. A primary community organization providing these services is ABC Recovery Center. ABC Recovery Center has a 60+ year history of providing substance use/misuse and recovery services to those in need of support. ABC Recovery is located in the City of Indio and has extensive experience serving that community.
- 2 Targeted community outreach activities consisted of joining community providers, who conduct direct outreach to homeless encampments, in an effort to reach the most vulnerable community members at the greatest risk for a potentially fatal Fentanyl related overdose incident.

⁶U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates Public Use.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical when engaging with people who use drugs.

Equipping individuals with life-saving tools, and information to create positive change in their behaviors, can work to potentially save their lives. Harm reduction is a key pillar in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Overdose Prevention Strategy.⁷

1 Meeting with the Mayor and representatives of the City of Indio to discuss overdose/death trends affecting the community, the community organizations currently providing support to this impacted population and to share the type of harm reduction awareness platform that would be impactful.

2 Convening with City of Indio stakeholders to identify current harm reduction awareness strategies in place and specific locations for direct intervention workshops.

3 Desert Healthcare District (DHCD) Team coordinated the scheduling of harm reduction awareness training and supply dissemination focused in identified locations within the City of Indio (Community centers, service providers, schools, etc.).

4 Ten trainings, led by identified community partners. Information was presented in English/Spanish through in-person/virtual platforms.

5 DHCD Team coordinated participation by community partners to continue to present harm reduction awareness information/materials at identified community events to expand reach of shared learning opportunities.

6 The District team analyzed the data reports to highlight project results. Information will be utilized to inform future activities and/or expansion opportunities.

⁷ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.). Harm reduction. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

PROJECT GOALS

Project Goals and Results

GOAL 1

Convenings with City of Indio representatives

RESULTS

- Initial project discussion with City of Indio Mayor and Indio PD representatives to understand from their perspective the needs of their community related to this issue on 1/23/23 and 5/2/23.
- Presentation of Fentanyl Harm Reduction Awareness Education Project to City of Indio, City Council on 6/21/23.

GOAL 2

DHCD team coordination of harm reduction awareness and supply dissemination trainings in the City of Indio through partnership agency participants

RESULTS

- Identified connections made to secure collaborative partnerships to provide trainings to community members outreach to organizations.

GOAL 3

Ten harm reduction awareness education (10) trainings led by ABC Recovery Center team members presented in English/Spanish through in-person/virtual platforms to reach 150 community members.

RESULTS

- 8 of trainings presented to 154 of participants.

GOAL 4

Targeted community outreach activities that consisted of joining community providers who conduct direct outreach to homeless encampments in an effort to reach the most vulnerable community members (500 individuals) at the greatest risk for a potentially fatal Fentanyl related overdose occurrence.

RESULTS

- 181 community members (86 direct and 95 indirect contacts) were reached through 7 community outreach activities.

TRAINING SESSIONS

8

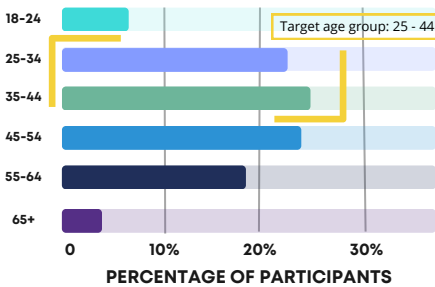
TRAINING SESSIONS ADMINISTERED

154

INDIVIDUALS REACHED

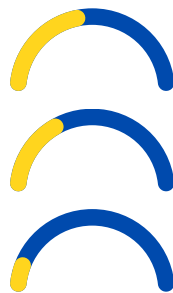
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

TOP 3 IDENTIFIED RACIAL GROUPS



47% of participants were in the targeted age group

AGE



47% of participants identified as Hispanic

37% of participants identified as White

15% of participants identified as Black or African American

47% of participants were in the targeted race group

RACE/ETHNICITY

83% of participants identified **Indio** as their place of residence

CITY OF RESIDENCE



58% of participants identified as male, 40% female, and 2% as other

GENDER

PARTICIPANT PRE/POST TEST - TAKEAWAYS FROM TRAININGS

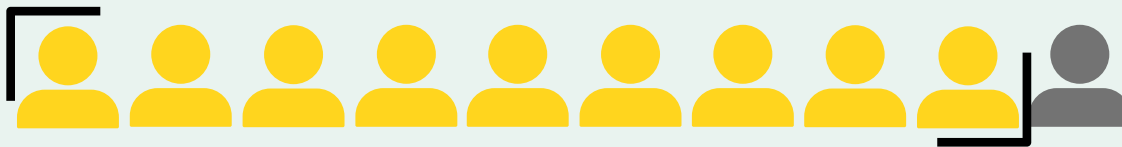
Total Number of Survey Participants : 154

35%

84%

OF PARTICIPANTS HAD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL FENTANYL OVERDOSE RATE

OF RESPONDENTS INCREASED THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO ADMINISTER NALOXONE



Nearly 9 in 10 participants understood that anyone 18 or older can purchase and/or carry Narcan to help respond to an overdose

7 in 10
PARTICIPANTS UNDERSTOOD THAT NALOXONE CAN SAVE A PERSON FROM OVERDOSING AND IS SIMPLE TO ADMINISTER

OUTREACH EVENTS

7

OUTREACH EVENTS

181

INDIVIDUALS REACHED

The below map highlights ABC Recovery's 7 outreach event locations and the organizational participant that they partnered with to reach individuals.

HARM REDUCTION SUPPLIES



NARCAN NASAL SPRAY
WAS DISTRIBUTED TO

each distributed package contained 2 doses

144 INDIVIDUALS

FENTANYL TEST STRIPS WERE

two lines **NO FENTANYL**

DISTRIBUTED TO
182 INDIVIDUALS



one line **FENTANYL**

*Individuals that received harm reduction supplies may be duplicative

COMMUNITY OUTREACH LOCATIONS



PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

ABC Recovery Center outlined key project takeaways and the **Desert Healthcare District** highlighted recommendations to further address the Fentanyl crisis in Coachella Valley.

1

One on one contact with community members during outreach activities afforded the ABC Recovery Center team the ability to support individuals transition into recovery services.

2

ABC Recovery Center's partnership with Coachella Valley-Volunteers In Medicine – Street Medicine program helped reach and build trust within the unsheltered community.

3 Fentanyl testing strips were greatly appreciated by the community. Individuals felt that they could help to mitigate a potential overdose.

4 Community organization teams assisted in coordinating harm reduction trainings at their programmatic sites to help connect their clients to relevant Fentanyl educational information, Narcan, and Fentanyl strips.

5 The project team worked diligently to meet the project deliverables. Due to the five month timeline, there were challenges that arose that provided limitations to meeting all deliverables:

- In partnership with College of the Desert, ABC Recovery promoted their training and outreach events; however, students did not participate in scheduled events due to rescheduling challenges, time of year, and limited time for outreach.
- During the month of August, weather issues impacted ABC Recovery's ability to target homeless individuals because the storm caused many of Indio's homeless to vacate their regular areas.
- The City of Indio had limited outreach events that would accommodate a table or booth, hosted by ABC Recovery, for information sharing.

The project team learned from these challenges and have noted that in order to reach targeted populations, additional outreach would be needed to promote trainings and events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Creation of a Fentanyl Awareness Collaborative, made up of a cross section of local stakeholders, that meets quarterly/annually to generate ongoing supportive responses to high-risk areas of the community.

2 Setting up the necessary Naloxone/Narcan State Standing Order status in order to secure and distribute deliveries of harm reduction supplies to support community efforts.

3 Collectively seek funding to support future development of harm reduction programs related to Fentanyl.

4 Continued advocacy of Fentanyl focused policy development through legislative activity.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONAL PARTICIPANTS!

PROJECT TEAM

DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT

Jana Trew, MS	Senior Program Officer- Behavioral Health
Erica Huskey	Grants Manager
Meghan Kane, MPH	Senior Program Officer- Public Health
Eric Taylor	Account Manager

ABC RECOVERY CENTER

Ally Anderson, CADC	Program Director	Janelle Hughes	Coordinator
Lisa Wolfe, CADC - II	Program Manager	Brock Jenikovsky	Counselor
Tim Ashton	Coordinator	Joe Knyvett	Counselor
Crystal Calderon	Coordinator	Sarah Lawson	Counselor
Kris Corney	Counselor	Arlene Lopez	Counselor
Johnny Courrages	Counselor	David Proctor	Counselor
Magdalena Henley	Coordinator	Patsy Ramirez	Coordinator
Barbara Bell	Coordinator	Taylor Herd	Clinical Assistant

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT

Katie Chartier	Director, Student Success and Outreach
Andrea Torres	Administrative Assistant, Education Center

COACHELLA VALLEY RESCUE MISSION

Darla Burkett	Executive Director
Chris Dentice	Program Coordinator

MARTHA'S VILLAGE AND KITCHEN

Rosa Verduzco	Executive Vice President
Espy Ortiz	Vice President of Programs and Operations

COACHELLA VALLEY VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE

Rosa Lucas, NP	Founding Board Member
Cindy Cervini	Outreach Manager