



Saving Lives Before We Lose More Lives

OPIOID OVERDOSE FATALITY PREVENTION

Opioid use disorder affects people of every age, race, class, and gender. **No community is untouched by the economic and emotional toll of the opioid epidemic.** Now, the epidemic has intersected with the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating an already challenging situation. Stressors from COVID-19 such as isolation, grief, anxiety, job uncertainty, and eviction can increase substance misuse and overdose. In Arizona, the death rate from suspected opioid overdoses has spiked along with the pandemic.

In 2019, nearly four Arizonans per day lost their lives to suspected opioid overdose. The rate began rising in March 2020. In June and July 2020, confirmed fatalities from opioid overdose had reached six per day. **Blue Cross® Blue Shield® of Arizona, via Mobilize AZ, is working to save lives before we lose more lives.**

SAVING LIVES by replacing stigma with knowledge

Stigma and judgment surrounds substance use and addiction. The fact is that struggling with opioid misuse — or any substance — is a symptom of an illness. When we treat addiction as the chronic condition it is, we have the power to help save lives. It all starts with knowing the facts.

77%

of BCBSAZ employees have attended training sessions on opioids and substance use disorder on topics including harm reduction and cultural dimensions of opioid use disorder treatment.

7,200

network providers receive our newsletter and guidance for co-prescribing naloxone with any opioid.



EMPLOYEES



CUSTOMERS



MEMBERS



PROVIDERS



COMMUNITY



We've engaged with customers and members via newsletters and our website, which houses our overdose prevention flyer and other valuable information to understand, prevent, and respond to opioid and substance use disorder.

\$3.51 MILLION

in grants has expanded substance use disorder resources and care.

Mobilize AZ's ongoing education and awareness campaign spans the full range of stakeholders, arming people with accurate information that dispels stigma and galvanizes action.

SAVING LIVES by equipping people to recognize and respond to an overdose

Knowing how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose is something anyone can learn. It gives people the power to confidently respond in a crisis — just like knowing CPR does. Through Mobilize AZ efforts, hundreds of Arizonans now know how to prevent an overdose from becoming fatal.

Mobilize AZ and the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center joined forces to provide on-demand video training and a supply of Narcan to customer and community organizations. We've engaged with organizations ranging from shelters serving veterans and survivors of domestic abuse to municipalities and companies in the construction and a variety of industries.



WHAT IS NALOXONE / NARCAN®?

The drug naloxone (brand name Narcan®) is used in an emergency to prevent an opioid overdose from becoming fatal. It comes in two forms: nasal spray (intranasal) and injection (intramuscular). It is not a controlled substance and has been administered more than 30,000 times in Arizona (June 15, 2017 – November 13, 2020).

SAVING LIVES by meeting people where they are

The Mobilize AZ grant program amplifies the impact of community organizations that are working to prevent, treat, and support recovery of opioid and substance use disorder. Our investment of **\$3,518,868** to date has expanded capacity to provide more people with access to services and support when and where they need it.

A mobile medication assisted treatment clinic, funded by a Mobilize AZ grant, offers an array of free services statewide to address substance use. Among the services, we handed out over **900 opioid overdose reversal kits**. A grant to Flagstaff Shelter Services enabled the organization to connect vulnerable individuals with behavioral and physical health services vital to their well-being and ability to stabilize in housing. Flagstaff Shelter Services reported an **81% reduction** in substance use/misuse and a 48% decrease in emergency room visits among the 448 clients who engaged with the organization's Housing-focused Care Teams (the project funded by Mobilize AZ).

The rise of opioid-related deaths can be countered by communities working together. By replacing stigma with knowledge, knowing how to respond in a crisis, and meeting people where they are, we can save lives.

