

## **News Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

August 30, 2022

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### **Overdose Prevention Group Meets Monthly**

Through a grant from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) is working with local and state partners to assist with drug overdose prevention efforts. The Overdose Data to Action Committee (OD2A) is a group of local partners from nine counties in SWNPHD that meet monthly to discuss plans and activities. Their focus is to address issues identified during the committee's strategic planning sessions held last year.

“This committee is working on several issues around overdose prevention. Data gathering, training and education, stigma, and harm reduction are all part of current efforts,” explains Heidi Wheeler, Assistant Director at SWNPHD. “Committee members bring together resources from many work environments, including healthcare, emergency medical services, behavioral health, social services, law enforcement, and schools.”

Two national agencies, The Opioid Response Network (ORN) and C4 Innovations, are assisting SWNPHD and the committee with a project directed toward inmates. The project seeks to provide individuals with mind-body mental health support during incarceration that upon release will give them positive strategies to address common problems that contribute to their addiction. Local jails and corrections staff are working with SWNPHD and local counselors to provide this and other resources to inmates.

Future activities for the OD2A Committee include seeking other funding sources, developing a peer support network, collecting more robust data, and increasing local resources. The Nebraska Medical Association has been working with SWNPHD, ORN, and C4 to find additional grant money and provide guidance on projects and activities already in place.

Community members interested in participating in overdose prevention efforts or joining the OD2A Committee can contact Heidi at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook and Instagram or view the website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. Call (308) 345-4223 one number three locations, McCook, Imperial, and Ogallala.

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