



Delaware
New Castle County Division of Police
Hero Help – Addiction and Behavioral Health Project

10/01/19 Grant Start → 09/30/22 Grant End

Overview

New Castle County, encompassing an estimated 2018 population of 559,000 (U.S Census Bureau), has been disproportionately impacted by the abuse of illicit opioids and prescription drugs, as evidenced by high rates of overdose deaths from heroin and other opioids. In 2019, New Castle County Police (NCCPD) responded to 463 nonfatal overdoses and 69 fatal overdoses, a 9 percent decrease in non-fatal overdoses and an 8 percent decrease in fatal overdoses compared with 2018. However, this comes on the heels of a 44 percent increase in nonfatal overdoses and a 25 percent increase in fatal overdoses in 2017. The population that is particularly affected is composed of white males aged 33 to 35. The project features a comprehensive, locally driven response to the opioid epidemic by enhancing the current law enforcement diversion program, Hero Help, which assists non-violent drug offenders and their families.

Grant Focus

- Expand law enforcement diversion and first-responder models that connect individuals to substance abuse treatment and recovery support services.
- Employ the use of alternatives to incarceration programs for nonviolent drug offenders.
- Expand peer support services and recovery housing.
- Increase access to naloxone.
- Prioritize real-time data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
- Link data sets to identify trends and focus resources.
- Develop and disseminate research on opioid policies and interventions.

- Expand models of public health, behavioral health, and public safety information sharing and collaboration at state and local levels.
- Support children and youth affected by the opioid epidemic.
- Build capacity in underserved regions impacted by the opioid epidemic.
- Expand public awareness about opioid abuse.
- Educate public safety and criminal justice stakeholders about substance abuse.

Program Approach

Hero Help has integrated a comprehensive addiction and behavioral health team consisting of specialists into NCCPD's Patrol Division, with resources to mitigate impacts on crime victims through efforts to ensure seamless, collaborative initiatives. Among the program goals are the following:

- Promote a partnership between law enforcement and public health agencies, by expanding access to supervision, treatment, and recovery support services.
- Promote education and prevention activities by combining efforts of a Hero Help coordinator, substance abuse clinician, a registered nurse, a case manager, and a victim advocate who will focus on children impacted by the heroin epidemic.
- Train first responders and community members how to administer naloxone; and train and distribute naloxone to families impacted by a nonfatal overdose.
- Work in conjunction with NCCPD's Patrol Division to engage individuals within 24 hours after a nonfatal overdose or respond immediately to 9-1-1 calls for service.

Project Partners

- NET Kirkwood Recovery Center
- Delaware Division of Substance Abuse & Mental Health
- Delaware Department of Justice
- Recovery Centers of America
- U.S. Attorney's Office
- Dr. Daniel J. O'Connell, Center for Drug & Health Studies, University of Delaware

Contact Information

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