



Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)-Supported  
Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP)

## Data-Driven Strategies

# Using ODMAP Data to Target Prevention Activities

This program brief highlights the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness's (APW) use of Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) data to target a broad range of substance use prevention and education activities to ZIP codes with the highest rate of overdoses.

ODMAP is a free, Web-based platform designed to support the collection and surveillance of suspected fatal and nonfatal overdoses. Overdose data is linked to a national map to support strategic analysis. Access to near real-time data can help communities mobilize prevention and intervention responses.

APW is a program of BHcare, a Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (RBHAO) serving the south-central region of Connecticut. APW received Statewide Opioid Response (SOR) funds from the state of Connecticut to implement an overdose substance abuse prevention and awareness campaign. APW delivers services using the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework.<sup>1</sup> APW utilized two individual strategies from the framework (providing information and enhancing skills) and two environmental strategies (enhancing access/reducing barriers and physical design) to inform its campaign approach and implementation.

APW obtained ODMAP data through its partnership with the Connecticut High Intensity Drug Trafficking

Area (HIDTA) program. APW worked with Connecticut HIDTA's program officer and analyst to obtain overdose data from ZIP codes in the 36 towns in their region. Connecticut has robust statewide overdose reporting, thanks to the Statewide Opioid Reporting Directive (SWORD) initiative established by the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS). Data was provided from the initiation of the Connecticut SWORD program and for the period during which the state enacted COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

### SWORD

Initiated in April 2019, Connecticut's SWORD program requires EMS providers to report suspected opioid overdoses to Connecticut's Poison Control Center, which inputs the data into ODMAP, helping ensure local community access to statewide data. <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Emergency-Medical-Services/EMS/OEMS---SWORD>

<http://www.odmap.org/>

To make the most effective use of SOR funding, APW targeted the campaign to the highest-need communities. APW analyzed ODMAP data to identify ZIP codes with the highest overdose incidents. In addition to ODMAP data, APW met with stakeholders from a broad range of sectors (law enforcement, fire departments, health departments, health care providers, Sex Workers Alliance Network, alders, and community residents) and attended task force and coalition meetings in the region. Regions that had received SOR mini-grants were excluded from the campaign to avoid duplication of efforts.

## Campaign Messages

All campaign messages came from Connecticut's statewide materials. These included:

- Change the Script Campaign ([www.drugfreeCT.org](http://www.drugfreeCT.org)) on education, prescription drugs, safe medication storage and disposal, and overdose prevention and naloxone.
- LiveLoud campaign (<https://liveloud.org/>), focused on prevention and destigmatizing opioid addiction.
- Language Matters from the CT Alcohol and Drug Policy Council's Language Matters campaign ([https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/topics/LanguageMatters\\_2.pdf](https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/topics/LanguageMatters_2.pdf)).

## Campaign Activities

### Direct-Mail Prevention Education

APW directed educational materials to the hot-spot locations where overdoses occurred most frequently. Working with a direct marketing company, APW purchased a mailing list for the targeted ZIP codes to distribute 5x8-inch postcards. Information from the Connecticut statewide campaign was customized with the APW logo and information on local treatment and drug disposal locations. APW provided the direct marketing company with the

digital files and its nonprofit bulk to produce and distribute to the targeted ZIP codes.

### Educational Materials in Local Businesses

APW utilized its networks to identify local businesses with which it could collaborate to display educational information on counter change mats. APW then created inserts with information targeting the customer population:

- Inserts on safe disposal of pet medications and locations of local medication drop boxes were displayed at veterinary practices.
- Inserts with information from the LiveLoud campaign and details on the local syringe exchange and community treatment options, including medication-assisted treatment, were displayed at local corner stores.
- Inserts with information on safe prescription disposal and from the Language Matters campaign were displayed at health care offices.

APW also purchased advertising space to provide information from the Change the Script campaign on paper placemats and menus. APW worked with a



company that sold placemats and menus to identify businesses in the service region that might place campaign messages.

## Wellness Bags With Educational Materials

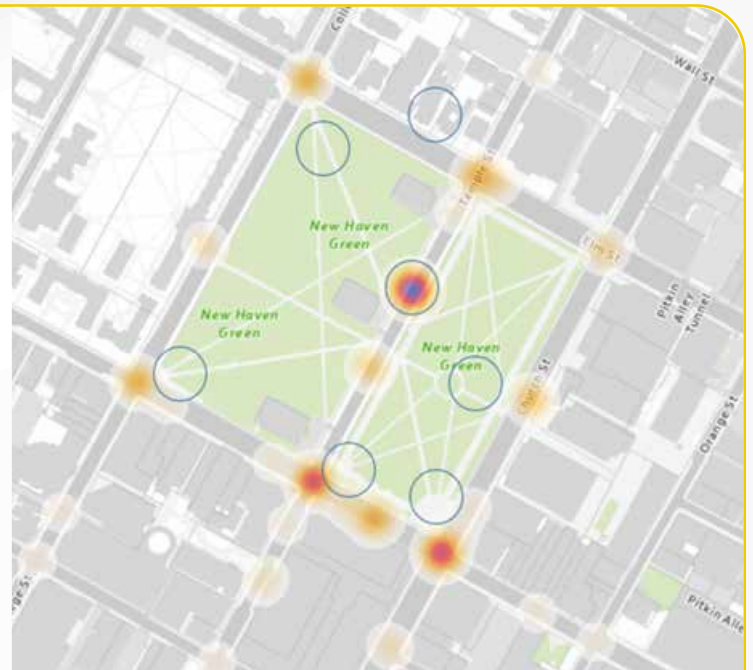
APW worked with local health departments to target the distribution of wellness bags to community members' homes. These wellness bags included statewide campaign materials such as notepads; informational brochures; drug disposal bags; and COVID-19 resources, thermometers, and masks.

## Community Narcan Trainings

In collaboration with community partners in the target ZIP codes, APW set up virtual Narcan trainings and post-training Narcan pick-up locations. There was robust participation by community residents, library staff members, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, public works, city employees, educators, school nurses, businesses, and houses of worship and faith-based groups.

## New Haven Innovative Community Engagement (NHICE)

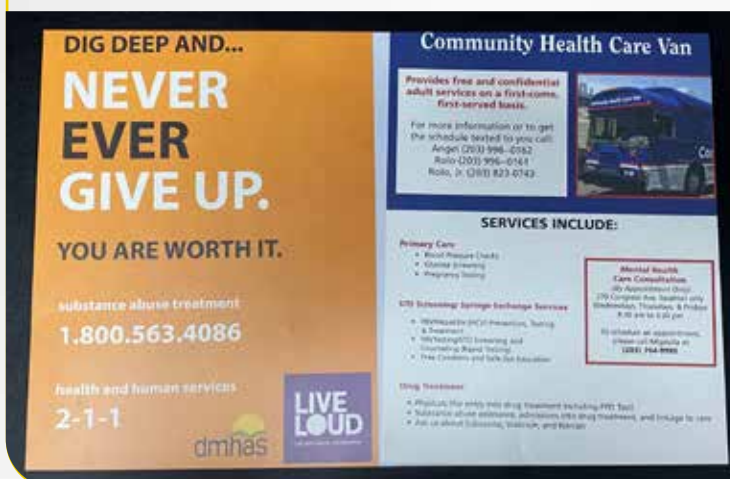
The city of New Haven has experienced a deluge of overdoses, including several large overdose clusters. In recognition of this crisis, as well as the role the city plays as a service center for vulnerable populations, the campaign includes a special focus on New Haven.



The goals of the campaign activities are to raise treatment awareness and develop a recovery-friendly community. APW used data from ODMAP and the New Haven Fire Department to identify overdose hot spots in the city. APW staff members then walked to these areas to observe where people congregated and where paraphernalia was discarded. They also identified 12 densely populated pedestrian areas in the city for displaying campaign materials. Early on, APW staff members met with the city aldermen to gain support for the initiative and presented the final campaign plans to the Board of Alders for approval.

Using materials from the LiveLoud campaign, the final plan includes:

- Double-sided street signs in English and Spanish.
- Sidewalk stickers.
- Bus shelter and trash can advertisements.
- Distributing campaign materials to area businesses.
- Installing a syringe disposal kiosk shaped like a tree. The syringe disposal tree will be designed to blend in with the landscape but also will stand out to those who use the kiosk.



## Evaluation Plans

There are several evaluation efforts to document the impact of the campaign, including monitoring website views from the targeted ZIP codes, determining the number of Narcan trainings and kit distributions, documenting the weight of prescription drugs collected at local drop boxes, documenting the weight of syringe tree disposals, and conducting focus groups with community residents on their awareness of the signage.

## Tips for Other Communities

- Be prepared to educate local businesses on the issue and the campaign. Many of the businesses where APW wanted to put change mats were small, locally owned businesses. Business owners were more receptive to displaying the change mats after they learned more about APW and the goals of the campaign.
- Be patient: Getting the approvals for street signage can take time. The NHICE initiative rollout took longer than anticipated because multiple levels of engagement and approval were required. APW needed to educate the community on the issue and the project goals; provide examples of signage to the city; and acquire needed approvals, including approval from public works on the sign sizes, locations, and installation dates.



Syringe tree mock up

- The nonprofit bulk rate can save money on postage costs. You can complete an application at [www.USPS.com](http://www.USPS.com) if you do not have one.
- Use a combination of online and local retailers to get the best prices on materials.
- Be sure that sidewalk stickers are anti-slip.

1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: "A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework." Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019.

Visit the COSSAP Resource Center at [www.cossapresources.org](http://www.cossapresources.org).

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This document was prepared by Pam Mautte, MS, CPS, MCHES, Alliance for Prevention and Wellness. Questions about the prevention and education campaign can be directed to Ms. Mautte at [pmautte@bhcare.org](mailto:pmautte@bhcare.org).

This work was supported by a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.