

How can health communications campaigns contribute to reducing opioid overdoses?

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NIH HEALing Communities Study

- Multi-site (MA, NY, OH, and KY) community-engaged implementation research study
- 3 main components include: community engagement, the opioid overdose reduction continuum of care, and **communications campaigns**
- Study goal: to reduce opioid overdose deaths by 40% over the course of the study

Webinar Objectives

1. Developing a health communications campaign

- Communication basics
- Campaign topics and messages
- Addressing stigma

2. Disseminating a communication campaign

- Media strategies
- Promoting local substance use services
- Engaging the community

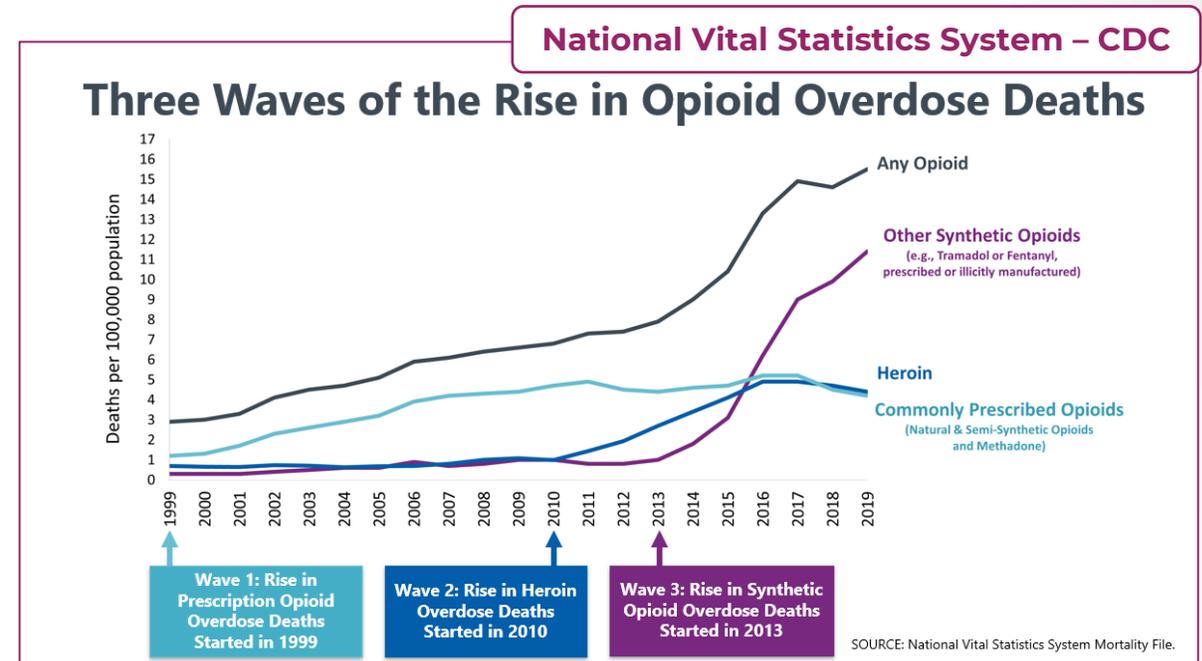
3. Evaluating a campaign

- Methods and data sources
- Why is evaluation important?

Problem statement

Opioid overdose deaths in the United States have nearly tripled in the last decade

- More than 2 million Americans have opioid use disorder (OUD)
- Every day, more than 130 people in the U.S. die of an overdose from heroin, fentanyl, or prescription opioids
- According to preliminary CDC data, over 100,000 individuals died of a drug overdose in the US between April 2020 and April 2021 – highest ever recorded



Citations

- <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>
- https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs_press_releases/2021/20211117.htm

Why health communications?

Support the uptake of **evidence-based practices** to reduce opioid overdose deaths through community-based communications strategies that:

- Disseminate information
- Change stigmatizing attitudes
- Influence behavior

Evidence-based practices to reduce opioid overdose deaths

- Opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution programs
- FDA-approved medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)
- Prescription drug monitoring programs (safer prescribing)

What is a health communication campaign?

A communication campaigns utilizes a purposeful promotional strategy to change knowledge, attitudes, or behavior in a specific target audience through marketing and advertising

Key features:

- Aim to generate specific outcomes
- Aim to reach a specific population or audience
- Identify a specific period of time
- Identify organized set of communication activities



Developing a health communication campaign

Creating a health communication campaign

Step 1. Define goals and objectives

- What is the goal(s) of your campaign?

Step 2. Define your audience

- Who do you want to reach?

Step 3. Craft messaging and content

- What are your key messages?

Step 4. Select strategies and tactics

- How will you reach your audience(s)?

Step 5. Track and evaluate impact

- What data will you collect and how?

Planning a health communication campaign

Market research

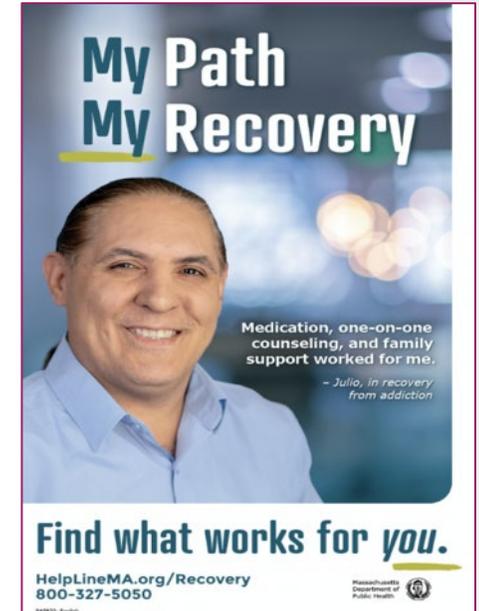
- Understand your target audience's characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviors, and barriers to behavior change

Campaign scan

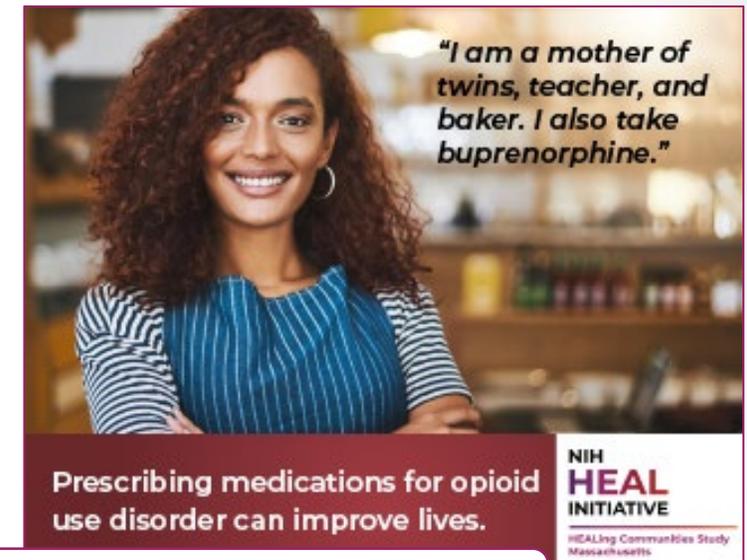
- Identify existing relevant campaigns
- Determine common themes (messages, imagery, audience, etc.)
- Identify opportunities for improvement or tailoring

Message testing

- Conduct interviews or surveys with target audiences to test campaign messages, materials, and dissemination strategies



MY Path, MY Recovery – MA DPH



MOUD Awareness – HEALing Communities Study

Defining your audience

Who is most affected by the problem?
Which subgroups may have a higher risk?

Analyze each audience

- What are the environments, situations, or settings in which the targeted behavior occurs or should occur?
- Are there any cultural, linguistic, numeracy, or literacy factors influencing the audience that will receive your message?
- Are there any barriers or difficulties to communicating with each group?

General population	People with lived experience
	Providers
	Community leaders

Also consider:

- Age
- Race and ethnicity
- Gender
- Language
- Housing status
- Socio-economic status

Defining campaign objectives

What is your primary goal?

- The overall changes you wish to cause or results you want to achieve with your communication efforts

Objectives

- Measurable steps to reach your goal that form a clear statement of what you are trying to accomplish
e.g., Increase access to and availability of naloxone

Key messages

- A short, memorable sentence or 2 that conveys exactly what you want your target audience to know and understand
e.g., Get naloxone and learn how to use it

Images and graphics

What to use:

- Images that represent the population trying to reach
- Opioid pills in prescription bottle
- Prescription pad
- Hopeful person
- Generic Emergency Department or ambulance images

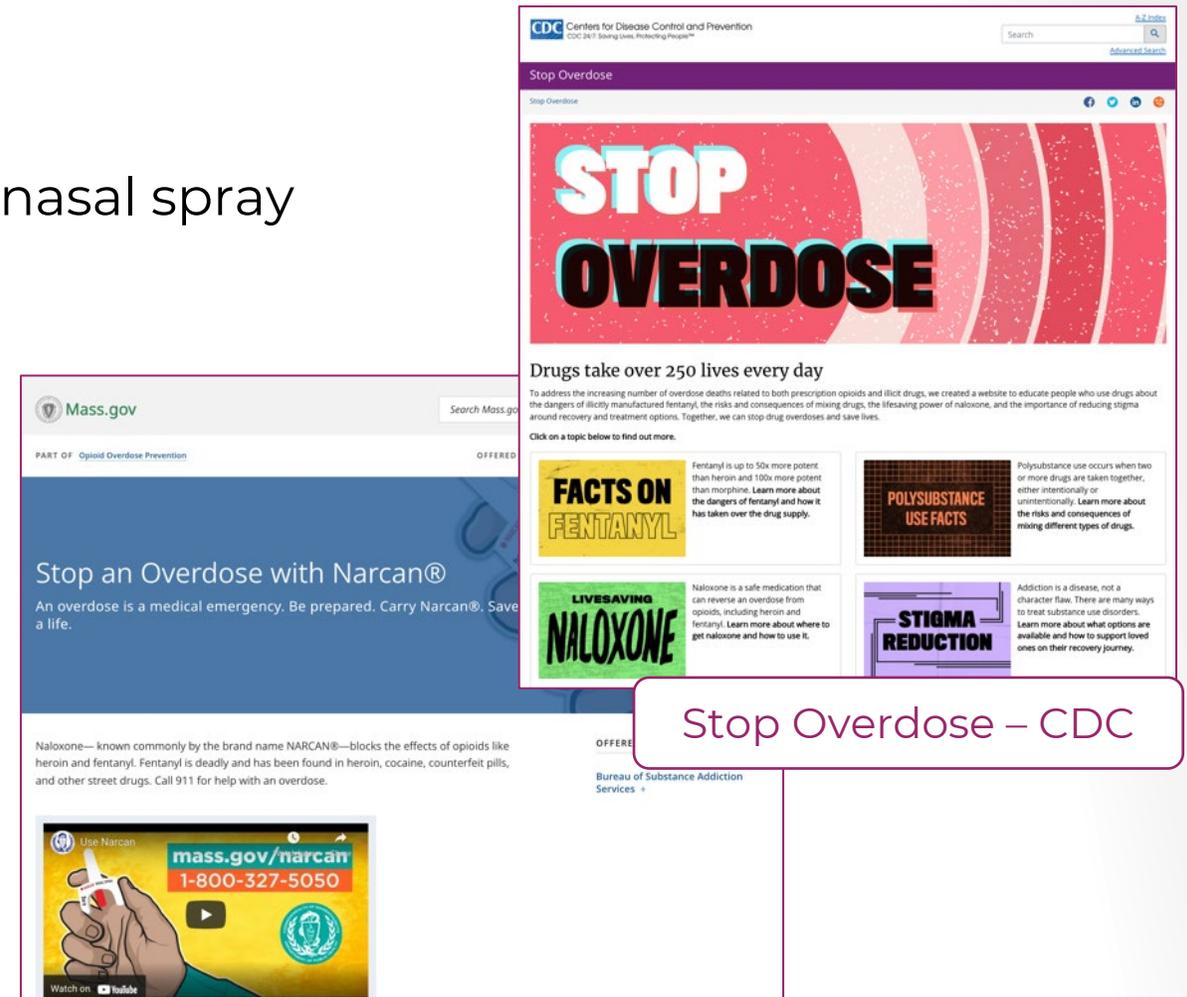


What to avoid:

- Non-relatable images that imply wealth
- Images of people that can be relapse triggering – crushed pills, people passed out, person in prison, etc.
- Gimmicky images that contribute to stigma and lack of seriousness about substance use

What does an OUD campaigns look like?

- Naloxone
 - also known as Narcan® or Kloxxado™ nasal spray
- Harm reduction
- Treatment (general, MOUD)
- Stigma



Stop Overdose – CDC

Stop an Overdose with Narcan® – MA DPH

What does an OUD campaign look like?

KNOW OVERDOSE

Take it easy
Go slow and use less at first to test the strength of your drugs.

Use naloxone (Narcan®) to save lives: Naloxone is a medicine that reverses overdose from opioids including heroin, prescription pain pills, and fentanyl.
Get free naloxone (Narcan®) + overdose prevention training: injectable naloxone is available at local syringe access programs. Nasal spray naloxone is available at CDBG Pharmacy, 1380 Howard St.

harmreduction.org/dope

LET'S TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER, SAN FRANCISCO

Know Overdose – DOPE Project, San Francisco

KNOW OVERDOSE

"Narcan could be the difference between life and death. It only takes a couple minutes to be properly informed. I've used it more times than I can count."

—Kaitlin, harm reduction worker, 5th Street

Use naloxone (Narcan®) to save lives: Naloxone is a medicine that reverses overdose from opioids including heroin, prescription pain pills, and fentanyl.
Get free naloxone (Narcan®) + overdose prevention training: injectable naloxone is available at local syringe access programs. Nasal spray naloxone is available at CDBG Pharmacy, 1380 Howard St.

harmreduction.org/dope

LET'S TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER, SAN FRANCISCO

Keep him safe in your home.
Dispose of unused opioids.

www.fda.gov/DrugDisposal

FDA Remove the RISK

Remove the Risk – FDA

PREVENT OVERDOSE DEATHS

ABOUT 3,000 NEW YORKERS DIE FROM DRUG OVERDOSE EVERY DAY

SAVE A LIFE CARRY NALOXONE

YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE WITH NALOXONE
An emergency medicine that prevents overdose death from prescription painkillers and heroin.

AVAILABLE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION

To find a pharmacy that provides naloxone without prescription, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health/naloxone
If you need help, support, or referral to treatment, call 888-NYC-HELP

Save a life. Carry naloxone – NYC Health Department

GO SLOW

Fentanyl is here. Have a plan.

- 1. CARRY NALOXONE
- 2. GO SLOW
- 3. NEVER USE ALONE
- 4. If you must use alone, have someone check on you
- 5. Talk to friends and family about what to do if you overdose
- 6. Test for fentanyl

— REMEMBER TO CALL 911 —

GoSlow.org

Go Slow – BMore POWER, Baltimore

Adjusting a campaign to current challenges

COVID-19 pandemic | Fentanyl supply

6 Ways to Support People with an Opioid Use Disorder during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Get trained and carry Naloxone (Narcan®) to reverse an overdose. Learn how: [HEALTogetherMA.org](https://healtogetherma.org)
2. Call them. Offer compassion, encouragement, and support.
3. Encourage them to seek treatment (if they are ready) and to seek prevention services at a local syringe services or harm reduction program.
4. Encourage those already in treatment to stay engaged by calling their provider about telehealth appointments and take-home medication.
5. Connect them with organizations offering virtual recovery support. Start here: <https://bit.ly/2vWT1St>
6. Learn how Covid-19 uniquely affects those with opioid use disorder. Start here: <https://bit.ly/3dtkn>

NO ONE SHOULD GO WITHOUT SUPPORT

You can help those with opioid use disorder who may be struggling due to COVID-19.

Learn more: www.HealTogetherMA.org/Brockton



Support people with opioid use disorder during this challenging time.

COVID-19 WE ARE CLOSED



NIH HEAL INITIATIVE
HEALing Communities Study
Massachusetts

MOUD Awareness – HEALing Communities Study

Naloxone – HEALing Communities Study

WARNING:
Fentanyl is being mixed into drugs and can be deadly.

Carry naloxone and save a life.

Addiction can happen to anyone. Treatment is available.

OASAS.ny.gov

NYS Helpline:
Call 877-846-7369 | Text 467369



Prevent Overdose – NY Office of Addiction Services and Supports

FAKE PRESCRIPTION PILLS • WIDELY AVAILABLE • INCREASINGLY LETHAL

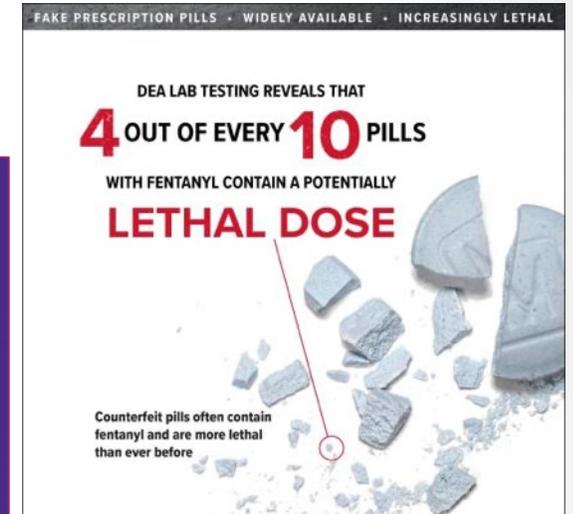
DEA LAB TESTING REVEALS THAT

4 OUT OF EVERY 10 PILLS

WITH FENTANYL CONTAIN A POTENTIALLY

LETHAL DOSE

Counterfeit pills often contain fentanyl and are more lethal than ever before



One Pill Can Kill – DEA

Why is stigma important?

Stigma keeps people from getting the best possible care

- The myth that addiction is a lack of willpower stops people from seeing their doctors and getting treatment that can help them rebuild their lives, relationships, and health

Stigma harms well-being and quality of life

- As a result of harmful attitudes and stereotypes, people with addictions often face devastating consequences like discrimination in employment, loss of housing, and poor treatment from health care professionals

Stigma leads to overdose deaths

- Fear of being judged or discriminated against can keep people from getting the help they need and increase their chances of dying from an overdose

STIGMA KEEPS PEOPLE FROM GETTING THE CARE THEY NEED

4 in 5

Americans with substance abuse disorders don't seek treatment.⁹



Addressing stigma with a communication campaign



I know that words matter when talking about addiction.

Support #StateWithoutStigMA

Using words like “junkie” or “addict” adds to the stigma of addiction. It can also be a roadblock to treatment and recovery.

mass.gov/StateWithoutStigMA

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

State without StigMA – MA DPH

Words Matter

Use these recommended terms to reduce stigma when talking about opioid use disorder.

Instead of...	Use...
• Addict	• Person with opioid use disorder (OUD) or person with opioid addiction
• User	• Patient
• Substance or drug abuser	• Person in recovery or long-term recovery
• Junkie	
• Substance dependence	
• Former addict	
• Reformed addict	

NIH HEAL INITIATIVE
HEALing Communities Study
Massachusetts

Opioid use disorder is not a choice.

Commit to End Stigma.

NIH HEAL INITIATIVE
HEALing Communities Study
Massachusetts

Stigma – HEALing Communities Study

Stigma-free language resources

- Addictionary®
www.recoveryanswers.org/addiction-ary/
- Words Matter (for providers)
www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/addiction-science/words-matter-preferred-language-talking-about-addiction
- Choosing appropriate language to reduce the stigma around mental illness and substance use disorders
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41386-021-01069-4>

Disseminating a health communication campaign

Dissemination strategies

- **Social Media**
e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, etc.
- **Digital ads**
e.g., Website banner ads, video pre-roll, etc.
- **Print ads**
e.g., Flyers, posters, banners, business cards
- **TV and radio ads**
- **Newspaper ads**
- **Billboards**



Media
Engagement



Website

Why engage the media?

Interpreting data bytes

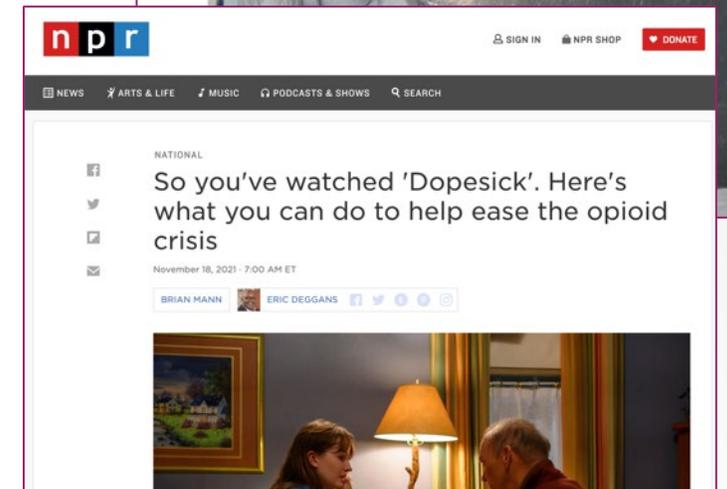
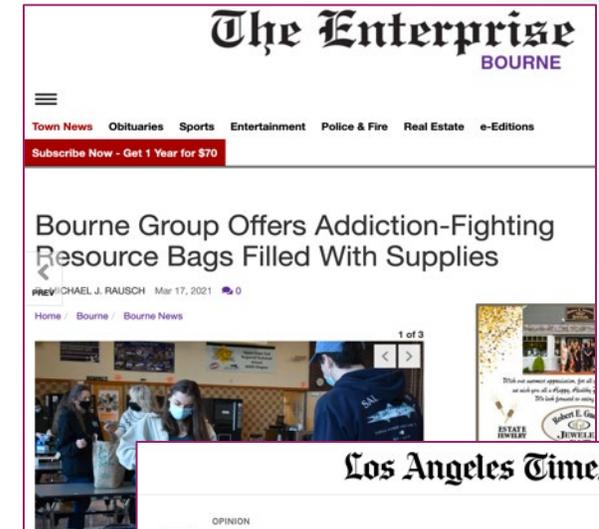
- Amplify experts in substance use disorder and solutions to address the health outcome
- Provide interpretation of new data released by your state health department or local organizations

Media portrayal of minority populations

- Discuss racial or ethnic differences in health outcomes as issues of inequitable access to treatment and recovery services

Addressing stigma

- Educate journalists to use person-first language and avoid using stigmatizing language
- Integrate personal narratives



Changing the Narrative Project

www.changingthenarrative.news

How to engage the media

Media interviews

- Conduct interviews to develop relationships with journalists or publications

Press release

- Highlight a new service or funding source

Op-ed

- Represent an opinion on a relevant issue to educate or persuade policymakers or community leaders

Media pitch letter

- Pitch a story that you want to more coverage, include your key messages

Media backgrounders

- Provide background information about a specific topic

Holidays & observances

- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day – April & October
- International Overdose Awareness Day – August 31
- National Recovery Month – September



National Recovery Month 2021

Why use a website?

Education

What is substance use disorder, how to use naloxone, treatment options available, safer prescribing guidelines, etc.

Linkage to services

Drug disposal locations, MOUD treatment providers, where to get naloxone, etc.

Get the community involved

Sharing campaign materials print or digital, email listserv, Community Voices Panel (asset testing)

Tracking

of users who visited a website, # of pageviews, # of unique pageviews, and the average time a user spent on the page

The image displays two screenshots from the NIH HEAL Initiative website. The top screenshot shows the home page with a dark purple header and navigation menu. The main content area features the slogan "Together we heal our communities" and a dropdown menu with options like "Opioid Use Disorder & Addiction", "Medications for Opioid Use Disorder", "Naloxone", "Stigma", and "Treatment & Recovery". A callout box identifies this as the "Website home page – HEALing Communities Study".

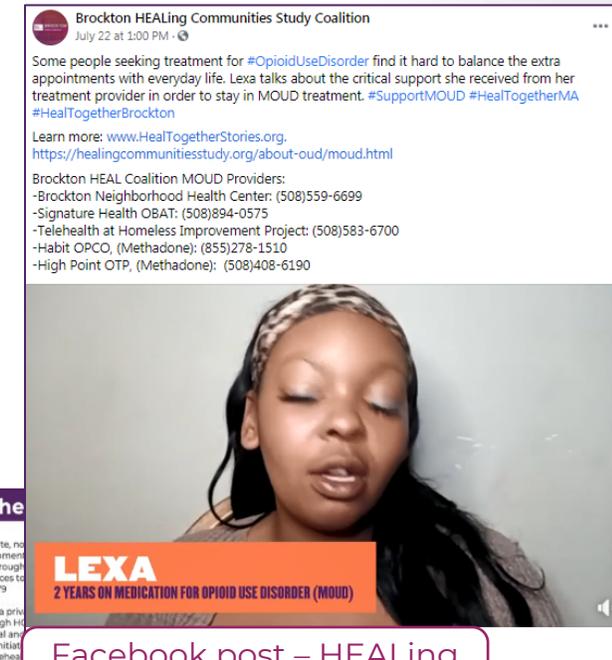
The bottom screenshot shows a resource map for Lowell, MA. The map is titled "Map of local resources sourced with the support of the HEALing Communities Study's (HCS) Lowell coalition of Massachusetts" and has 3,304 views. It lists three categories of resources: "Medication for Opioid Use Disorder" (including Lowell Community Health Center OBAT, Circle Health Bridge Clinic, CleanSlate Outpatient Addiction Medicine, and Column Health), "Naloxone" (including Lowell Community Health Center, Lowell Community Health Center Pharmacy, Lowell General Hospital, and Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery), and "Drug Disposal Locations" (including Lowell Police Department). A callout box identifies this as the "Resource map – HEALing Communities Study".

Community-driven promotion of local substance use services

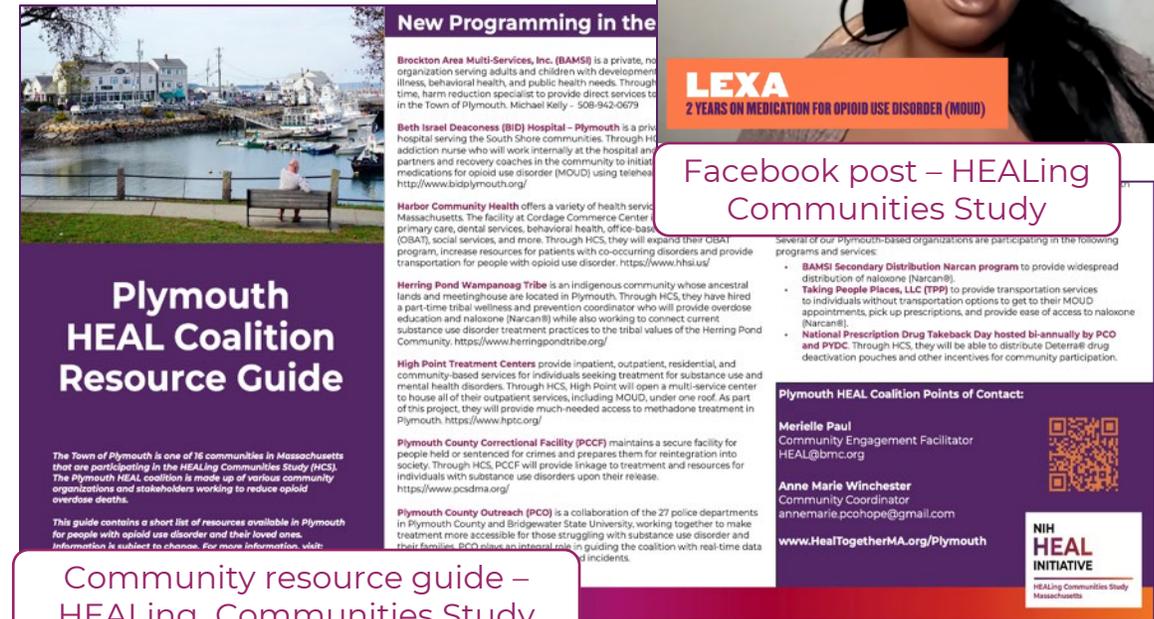
- Resource guides
- Custom materials
 - Social media posts
 - Print materials
 - Business cards
 - Bus ads
 - Flyers
- Community events and outreach



Bus ad – HEALing Communities Study



Facebook post – HEALing Communities Study



Community resource guide – HEALing Communities Study

Communications guidance for promoting local substance use services

Work with implementing organizations

- Engage the communications, marketing, and/or media relations departments of an organization



HOPE IS HERE.

800.327.5050

Identify one point of contact

- Promote one phone number or email to directly access services

Update organization website to list new service(s)

- Use plain language to explain service provided, hours, location of any new service to keep the website up-to-date

Connect with key aggregators

- Make sure service is listed on relevant aggregators such as the SAMSHA National Helpline or Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline
- Aggregators are other organizations that will include and promote the service on their channel

Engaging the community

Communication champion

- Who will lead your communications efforts and activities?

Local messengers

- Who are local influencers or leaders in your community who can champion the messages through their networks?

Community engagement enhances your campaign by providing:

- Broader perspective
- Support for your message(s)
- Help spreading your message(s)



Stories from the community

Stay in Medication Treatment –
HEALing Communities Study

Abraham talks about staying motivated to continue treatment by helping others who are struggling with opioid use disorder (OUD). Find local treatment and recovery services and learn how to and HEAL your community:

<https://www.HealTogetherStories.org>



Evaluating a health communication campaign

Monitoring and evaluating a campaign

What should you monitor?

- Resources invested in the campaign
- Number and quality of campaign activities
- Adherence to timelines and budgets

Methods for evaluating a communication campaign:

- Specific goals set prior to implementation
- Analyzing website traffic
- Survey testing

Data sources

Implementation tracking tools

Media buy metrics

Social media metrics

Website metrics

Why is evaluation important?

Identify challenges



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graph TD; A[Identify challenges] --> B[Identify needed resources]; B --> C[Share lessons learned]; C --> D[Adjust implementation and dissemination plans];
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Identify needed resources

Share lessons learned

**Adjust implementation and
dissemination plans**

Summary: How can health communications campaigns contribute to reducing opioid overdoses?

Education & awareness

- Increase knowledge and awareness of opioid use disorder, signs of an overdose, treatment options, and prevention strategies

Engaging the community & changing stigmatizing attitudes

- Change stigmatizing and negative attitudes in the community that may influence availability and adoption of substance use services and strategies to reduce overdose

Increase availability and utilization of evidence-based practices

- Increase utilization of services and strategies that are proven reduce opioid overdose deaths through marketing and promotion activities

Together, we can
HEAL
our communities.



Questions & comments

Thank you!

Educational and campaign resources

- SAMHSA www.samhsa.gov
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/opioids
- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.drugabuse.gov
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health - Bureau of Substance Addiction Services www.mass.gov/orgs/bureau-of-substance-addiction-services
- Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline www.helplinema.org



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



**National Institute
on Drug Abuse**
The Science of Drug Abuse & Addiction



**CENTERS FOR DISEASE™
CONTROL AND PREVENTION**



**The Massachusetts Substance Use
HELPLINE**

Campaign resources

- Stop Overdose www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose
- Remove the Risk – FDA www.fda.gov/drugs/safe-disposal-medicines/safe-opioid-disposal-remove-risk-outreach-toolkit
- One pill can kill – DEA www.dea.gov/onepill
- Stop and Overdose with Narcan www.mass.gov/stop-an-overdose-with-narcanr
- MY Path, MY Recovery – MA DPH massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/PROG-BSAS-YTH/SA5830.html
- State without StigMA – MA DPH www.mass.gov/state-without-stigma
- Save a life, carry naloxone – NYC Health Department (2016) www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/naloxone.page
- Prevent Overdose Campaign – New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports oasas.ny.gov/prevent-overdose-campaign
- Go Slow – BMore Power, Baltimore www.goslow.org
- Know Overdose Campaign – The DOPE Project harmreduction.org/our-work/action/know-overdose-campaign/
- HEALing Communities Study www.healingcommunitiesstudy.org/