

Possible Uses for Funds from the Florida Opioid Allocation and Statewide Response Agreement

1. Expand Training for the Use of Narcan with Library Personnel:

Rationale: Public libraries are community hubs where people from all walks of life gather. Since our library has already equipped AED cabinets with Narcan, expanding training for library personnel is a logical next step. This will empower staff to act quickly in the event of an overdose, mainly since there have been incidents of opioid overdoses in the library's public restrooms. Library personnel can play a crucial role in saving lives by enhancing their readiness and response capabilities.

2. Create an Outreach Program Allowing Residents to Receive Narcan at Fire Stations:

Rationale: Fire stations are trusted and accessible places for the community. By creating an outreach program where residents can receive Narcan for home use, we can equip families and loved ones with the tools to prevent fatal overdoses. Fire crews frequently encounter overdose patients, and providing Narcan to concerned family members could make a significant difference. This program could be promoted through informational materials, such as printed cards or brochures, that fire personnel distribute during emergency responses.

3. Distribute Narcan to Employees Who Frequently Encounter the Public:

Rationale: While first responders are trained to handle overdose situations, many other city employees, such as those in public works, engineering, construction, solid waste, and stormwater departments, also encounter the public regularly. These employees may find themselves in situations where they are the first to witness an overdose during their regular shift. By distributing Narcan and providing training to these employees, the city can extend its emergency response capabilities across all departments.

4. Include a Distribution/Education Point at Local Events:

Rationale: The city hosts numerous events throughout the year, providing an excellent opportunity to engage with the community. The fire department, which often has a booth or presence at these events, could use this platform to distribute Narcan or sign residents up for Narcan training classes. This approach increases access to Narcan and educates the public on its use, contributing to a safer community.

5. Create a Resource Guide for Overdose Patients:

Rationale: After an opioid related emergency, individuals and their families may need guidance on what steps to take next. The creation of a resource guide, distributed by fire rescue personnel and available at public buildings, would provide valuable information on local services and support systems for those struggling with opioid addiction. This guide is critical in connecting patients and their families with the help they need to begin recovery.

6. Creation of a Scholarship Program for Employees to Train in Mental Health Programs:

Rationale: Mental health is a critical component of addressing the opioid crisis. By using funds to create a scholarship program, the city can support Training employees in mental health services or counseling. This training could be extended beyond the fire service to other city departments, ensuring a broader impact and fostering a workforce better equipped to handle the mental health aspects of opioid addiction and recovery.

7. Extend training in the Use of Narcan Deployment to Faith Based Groups:

Rationale: Faith based groups often engage with vulnerable populations and can play a significant role in responding to opioid emergencies. Extending Narcan Training to these groups would increase the availability of Narcan and ensure that more people in the community are prepared to act in an emergency. This initiative would also strengthen partnerships between the city and these community organizations, enhancing overall community resilience.

8. Creation of an Outreach Program from the Fire Department to Local High Schools:

Rationale: Educating young people about the dangers of opioid use is essential in preventing addiction. The fire department could establish an outreach program at Northeast High School, incorporating opioid education and Narcan training into existing programs like D.A.R.E. or C.P.R. classes. This proactive approach would raise awareness among students and empower them with the knowledge to prevent or respond to overdoses.

9. Partnering with Opiate Recovery Services to Distribute Narcan:

Rationale: Collaboration with opiate recovery services can help identify individuals who would benefit from having Narcan available at home. By partnering with these services, the city can ensure that vulnerable populations, including those in recovery, can access Narcan. This initiative could also be integrated into the city's emergency preparedness plans, ensuring that these individuals are supported during hurricanes when emergency services might be delayed.

10. Creation of a Drug Disposal Program in the City:

Rationale: Proper disposal of unused or expired medications is crucial in preventing misuse and accidental overdoses. The city could use these funds to establish a drug disposal program, allowing residents to discard medications safely. This program could involve contracting with a disposal service and setting up disposal sites at convenient locations. By removing unused medications from homes, the city can reduce the risk of these drugs being misused and contributing to the opioid crisis.

These initiatives leverage the funds from the Florida Opioid Allocation and Statewide Response Agreement to enhance community safety, provide critical resources, and support ongoing efforts to combat the opioid epidemic.