



Reverse the Course

Expand Harm Reduction & Address Stigma

Harm Reduction is a common public health concept; however, most people may not realize they're participating in a harm reduction strategy every day on their way to work by wearing a seatbelt. Simply put, it is avoiding the risk of harm, danger, or loss in a given situation. As it relates to substance use, harm reduction (examples to the right) is strategies, techniques, and resources meant to reduce the negative consequences of substance use and prevent overdoses.

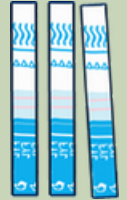
Beyond that, harm reduction is a philosophy and social justice movement centered on empowering people who use drugs (PWUD) and making sure they feel seen and respected. It begins with using [person-first language](#) because the language we use when talking about PWUD can perpetuate negative stereotypes and stigma.

Unfortunately, stigma has detrimental implications for PWUD. Due to stigma, they are more likely to be denied necessities like housing and employment. PWUDs are less likely to seek help or treatment for services or are more likely to not finish care, among other negative consequences. Leaving them vulnerable and at higher risk of overdose. Normalizing and expanding harm reduction strategies, techniques, and resources and simultaneously addressing stigma to reduce barriers for PWUD in Riverside County can significantly reduce substance use morbidity and mortality.

To learn more about harm reduction and the impacts of stigma, the [Inland Empire Harm Reduction](#) (IEHR) is a great resource for all things related to harm reduction. They offer different training such as Harm Reduction 101, Opioid Overdose Prevention and Response, Opioid and Fentanyl Awareness, and Harm Reduction for Crisis and Outreach Workers. If you are interested in scheduling a training with IEHR, contact Jasmine Castillo (Ja.Castillo@ruhealth.org).

Fentanyl Testing Strips

When used properly, fentanyl testing strips can detect unwanted fentanyl in drugs.



Never Use Alone Hotline (800) 484-3731

When alone, PWUD can call the hotline, and provide their name, EXACT location, and number. An operator will stay on the line during use and alert emergency services if the caller stops responding.



Naloxone Access

Naloxone can quickly reverse an opioid overdose. Train and equip PWUD, their friends and family, and anyone else likely to witness/encounter an overdose.



Good Samaritan Law

Many overdose deaths are preventable, yet people often fear arrest if they call 9-1-1 for help at the scene of a drug overdose. This law is designed to encourage people to seek medical care for the overdose victim and stay with them until help arrives by providing protections from arrest, charge, and/or prosecution for low-level drug violations.



Announcement!

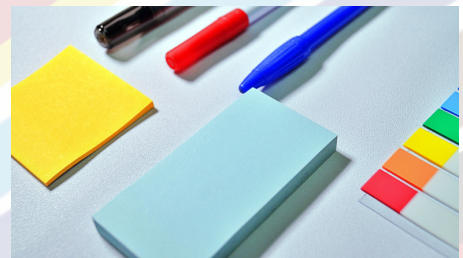
Overdose Prevention Collaborative Meeting

Registration is open for RODA's final Overdose Prevention Collaborative meeting!

Wednesday, August 17, 2022
10 AM - 12 PM

We would love additional feedback on the draft strategic plan before it is finalized and turned into action!

Click [here](#) to register today!



Success Story

Leave Behind Naloxone Program

What started as an idea from RODA's Overdose Fatality Review team came to fruition on March 15th, when Riverside County Emergency Management Services Agency (REMSA) launched the Leave Behind Naloxone Program! Thanks to [Administrative Policy 3310](#), EMS personnel are authorized to distribute Naloxone, the life-saving medication, to patients at risk of experiencing an overdose and to friends and family of those at high risk of an overdose. In addition to providing Naloxone, EMS personnel provides on-the-spot training to identify and respond to an overdose.

March 15th, 2022

June 30th, 2022



Since the Program's launch up through the end of June, 80 Leave Behind Naloxone kits have been distributed!

A policy protocol was established to allow EMS Agencies to order Naloxone directly from the California Department of Public Health by way of the Naloxone Distribution Project (NDP). Many other entities within Riverside County participate in the NDP program; however, REMSA's Leave Behind Naloxone Program expands and provides direct access to those at the highest risk of overdose. RODA intends to use the Leave Behind Program to inspire the future development of policy & systems-level change that supports increased access to care and services for people who use drugs.



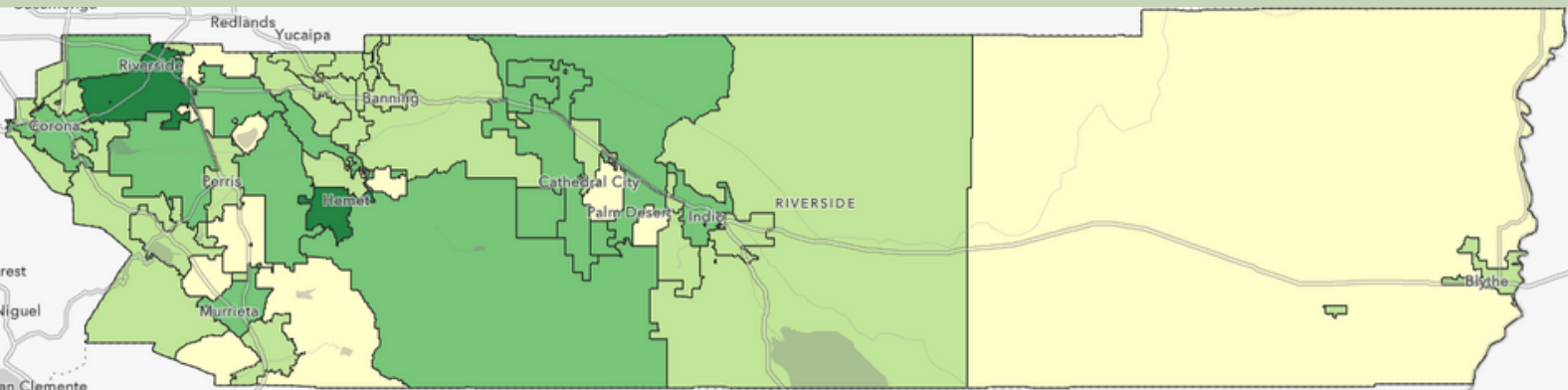
Overdose Data Dashboard

New Map!

Overdose Deaths by Riverside County Sheriff Station Boundaries (see map below) are now displayed on the [Overdose Data Dashboard](#). The new tab displays overdose deaths by year (on the left), fentanyl overdose deaths by year (on the right), and an interactive map in the center. A button in the upper right corner of the map allows users to display a legend that shows the number of overdoses that correspond to various colors on the map. Users can also select a station from the drop menu on the top right-hand side to change the density map to the boundaries of the selected station. The total number of overdose deaths and fentanyl overdose deaths will also reflect the station's jurisdiction.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts between the Riverside County Sheriff's Office (RSO) and RODA staff, the new tab was developed in response to a potential need to customize data specifically for RSO Station's administrations.

Do you have any data suggestions? Let us know! We're always seeking to improve!



External Publications

RODA Features

- This [article](#), "85 drug, alcohol arrests made during Coachella 2022 Weekend 1, but no overdoses reported" was published by the Desert Sun in April. RODA's very own Wendy Hetherington was interviewed to provide insight into overdose and emergency department visits in comparison to the previous Coachella & Stagecoach weekends in 2019.
- California Healthy Places Index (HPI) published a [case study](#) on their website about RODA adopting HPI to enhance data and inform action.
- The theme for Innovations Magazine Summer issue was "Connecting the Dots." As such, the Magazine included an [article](#) (pages 8 - 9) regarding how RODA utilizes linkages to care in overdose prevention.

Learning Corner

Recognizing an Opioid Overdose

- Small constricted "pinpoint" pupils.
- Reduced level of consciousness or loss of consciousness.
- Slow, shallow breathing.
- Limp body.
- Pale, blue, or cold/clammy skin.

Responding an Opioid Overdose

1. Call 9-1-1 immediately, all you have to say is "Someone is unresponsive and not breathing" and provide a precise address and/or description of your location.
2. Administer Naloxone (if available).
3. Try to keep the person awake and breathing, Perform rescue breathing if needed.
4. Put the person on their side, in a recovery position.
5. Stay with them until the emergency workers arrive.