



January 30, 2019

## **An Innovative Partnership to Combat the Opioid Epidemic Across the South Shore**

*Using a Trauma Informed Care framework to tackle opioid prevalence by collaborating across communities and using innovative best practices.*

The Cudahy Health, Police, and Fire departments in coordination with these agencies in the cities of South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, and Saint Francis have applied for an Emergency Preparedness Grant to assist our agencies in responding to the Opioid Epidemic. The communities initially applied for \$80,000 and received \$70,000. The City of Cudahy is the lead fiscal agent for the grant. Through this cooperative effort there are four main components that the communities will collaborate on:

- The first is utilizing and reviewing the real time reporting of overdoses through OD Map. This program is currently being used by our Fire Department to log overdoses as they happen within our community. The health department staff recently gained access to this mapping system to review where overdoses are occurring in our community and to monitor for spikes in overdoses. At this time there is no cost to use OD Map.
- The second component is to provide training for police, fire, and health in Trauma Informed Care. This training will help our first responders and health care workers to better recognize and respond to the various types of trauma that impact children and adults in our communities. These adverse experiences have been shown to contribute to substance abuse, mental health problems, domestic abuse and child abuse. Training will be provided in coordination with SaintA, a leader in Trauma Informed Care.
- The third component of the grant is to establish a Quick Response Team (QRT) that consists of a police officer, public health nurse, and recovery or peer support specialist. Each community will develop their own QRT. The QRT will review recent nonfatal overdoses and will attempt to make contact with the overdose victim or family members to offer assistance in obtaining treatment. This type of intervention program is relatively new but has been implemented with some success in communities such as Canton, Ohio.
- The fourth component is an awareness campaign. This will be done primarily through the use of social media.

We consider this to be a \$70,000 investment in addressing a crisis that does not seem to be abating. According to the American Public Health Association, every \$1 spent on mental health and addiction services saves \$7 in healthcare costs and \$30 in productivity and social costs. Of note, the South Shore communities saw 28 accidental overdose deaths in 2018, and there were 74 non-fatal overdoses reported by the police departments.

For more information, contact the Cudahy Health Department at 414-769-2239.

###