Tribal Opioid Response
Health Promotion and Education

“A person dies every 12-and-a-half minutes from an opioid overdose and that’s far too many.”

~ US Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Jerome Adams, MD, MPH; 2018 online article

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Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) Project

The Tribal Opioid Response project at United Indian Health Services, Inc (UIHS) is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and serves UIHS Consortium Tribes in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.
The project aims to address the opioid crisis in tribal communities by increasing access to culturally appropriate treatment; address stimulant misuse and use disorders; and adequately provide support services for opioid use disorder (OUD), including medication assisted treatment (MAT).

The project currently focuses on four main goals:

**GOAL 1**: Provide increased access to opioid-related prevention activities within our local tribal communities.

**GOAL 2**: Increase our local tribal community’s knowledge of traditional and other forms of pain management techniques that address better ways to cope with and manage chronic pain.

**GOAL 3**: Increase UIHS’ capacity to provide effective, culturally-driven treatment services to clients with opioid use disorder.

**GOAL 4**: Increase our local tribal community’s ability to prevent opioid overdose deaths.

The TOR Program works under UIHS Tribal Public Health Department and alongside the other Health Promotion and Education programs. It oversees and facilitates the Opioid Awareness Coalition.
TOR Project: Goal 1

“Provide increased access to opioid-related prevention activities within our local tribal communities.”

This is done by providing various trainings that focus on:

- Opioids ~ how they work, prevalence of opioids and strategies to address the epidemic.
- Historical and Intergenerational Trauma ~ impact on the AI/AN population and relation to substance use disorders
- Medication Safety ~ using as prescribe and proper disposal
- Cultural Activities that serves as a protective factors ~ promoting respect and sobriety, connect to healthy AI/AN role models

We also utilize Facebook to introduce Social Media Posts that address such things as: opioid misuse, dangers of opioids, overdose prevention, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)
**WHAT ARE OPIOIDS?**

- Powerful painkilling drugs
- Opioids slow down breathing and heart rate
- Opioids are very addictive
- Legal prescription opioids include: oxycodone, codeine, morphine, and hydrocodone
- Illegal street opioids include: heroin and fentanyl

**OPIOID SAFETY**

- Dispose of unwanted medication in medication drop box
- Keep medication in lock boxes at home
- Do not mix with alcohol/other drugs

**SIGNS OF OPIOID OVERDOSE**

- Loss of consciousness
- Unresponsive to outside stimulus
- Slow, shallow, or no breathing
- Blueish purple or grayish skin
- Vomiting
- Lips and fingertips turn blue
- Slow or no heartbeat
- Limp body

Naloxone is a life saving treatment

**ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOID USE**

**Pain Management**

- Natural Pain Relief
- Acupuncture
- Massage Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Chiropractic
- Exercise
- Meditation

About 80% of people who use heroin first misused prescription opioids

TOR Project: Goal 2

“Increase our local tribal community’s knowledge of traditional and other forms of pain management techniques that address better ways to cope with and manage chronic pain.”

This is accomplished through trainings and presentations on traditional forms of body management and structural movement, massage, tension release, traditional healing practices, as well as gathering, preparing and utilizing local plants as natural medicines and salves.
TOR Project: Goal 3

“Increase UIHS’ capacity to provide effective, culturally-driven treatment services to clients with opioid use disorder.”

Through various trainings for UIHS staff, we provide knowledge about the importance of providing culturally sensitive, stigma-reducing, opioid use disorder services; how cultural activities serve as protective factors to connect in the community and support healthy behaviors within the families for generations.
**TOR Project: Goal 4**

“Increase our local tribal community’s ability to prevent opioid overdose deaths.”

We provide training to first responders, security teams, health professionals and community members on how to identify opioid overdoses and safely administer naloxone. Through UIHS Clinic Outreaches, we also provide naloxone training and opioid educational materials to UIHS clients.

Upon completion of the training, each training participant is provided their own Narcan (naloxone) kit. Narcan is also available to all UIHS staff as needed and requested.
What does TOR have available?

**HOW TO USE NALOXONE**

1. **Ask** person if he/she is okay and **shout** their name
2. **Shake** persons shoulders
   - Firmly rub the middle of persons chest (sternum rub)
3. **Call 911** if unresponsive

**Signs of opioid overdose:**
- Failure to wake up/respond to voice/touch
- Breathing is slow, irregular, or has stopped
- Pupils appear very small (pinpoint pupils)

4. **Spray** Naloxone- 1 spray in 1 nostril at a time
   - **Peel**- back package to remove device
   - **Place**- and hold nozzle in either nostril
   - **Press**- the red plunger firmly
5. **Move** person to their side (recovery position)
6. If person does not show signs of response to voice, touch or fails to breath normally, **repeat dose**
   - It is okay to repeat dose every 2-3 minutes (if available) alternating the nostrils each time

*Person may be disoriented or slightly combative after Naloxone begins working*
What does TOR have available?

**MEDICATION LOCK BOX**

- Creates a safer home
- Protects prescription medications
- Prevents suicide and overdose
- Always have Naloxone
- Dispose of unwanted medication into medication drop boxes or drug deactivation kits
What does TOR have available?

How to use

The Deterra® System is a simple three-step process that deactivates drugs
Safe • Convenient • Effective

1. Tear open pouch and place unused medications inside
2. Fill pouch halfway with warm water and wait 30 seconds
3. Seal pouch tightly, gently shake and dispose of in normal trash

www.DeterraSystem.com
What does TOR have available?

Fentanyl Test Strips

How to use:
- Add Water
- Testing residue: add 1 teaspoon of water to your cooker after you’ve prepared your shot and stir well
- Testing powder: add water to an empty bag with residue in it and mix well
- Testing pills: break a piece off, crush it into powder, and mix into water
- Hold the blue end and dip wavy lines into the water for 15 seconds (sing “Happy Birthday” to yourself)
- Wait two minutes, until lines show up in the middle

Results:
- If you see only one red line in the middle of the test, it means that your drugs have fentanyl in them
- If you see two lines in the middle of the test, it means that the test strip is negative. The second line could be very faint, but that still means it is negative
The Opioid Awareness Coalition (OAC) was founded in February of 2019 by UIHS’ Tribal Public Health Department as a monthly community coalition group with UIHS leadership, our Tribal Partners, law enforcement, community partners, cultural leaders, and individuals with lived experience to combat the opioid epidemic in our region.
The Opioid Awareness Coalition developed a strategic plan that identified and prioritized the need for:

- Cultural activities, Ceremonies, Sweats
- Community education topics
- Methods of providing education to our tribal community
- Teaching of traditional gathering
- Utilization of herbs, teas and salves to address wellness, including pain management
- General training on opioids and addiction as an illness
- Cultural teachings
- Reducing stigma
- Alternative pain management options
OAC’s plan includes providing education through community events, youth and elder activities, traditional arts and crafts, working with schools, social media posts, talking circles, lived experience presentations, and sharing data with others. It also highlights the need of robust prevention activities, methods to manage pain, effective treatment services and ways to prevent opioid overdose deaths within our tribal communities.

OAC meets on the First Friday of each month

Community members are welcome to join!

TOR Team can be reached at 707.825.5070

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