



Rock County Overdose Fatality Review Report



June 2022–June 2024

BEGINNING

After a record number of overdose deaths in Rock County in 2021, the need for an Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) Team became evident. The first meeting of our team occurred on June 2, 2022.

MISSION

Rock County Overdose Fatality Review Team will work to reduce overdose deaths in our county. This will occur through an evidenced-based process that improves service systems and resources.

PURPOSE

- Develop an understanding of the causes and incidences of overdose deaths in the county
- Recommend changes to law, policy, and practice that relate to drug overdoses
- Inform public health and public safety of emerging trends in overdose events
- Promote cooperation and coordination among agencies that investigate drug overdose deaths and provide services
- Develop plans for enhancing efforts of organizations that partner in local OFRs

Behind the numbers and the information you see in the following pages are real people who lived full, complicated lives. They are our family members, our friends, and our neighbors. And they were loved.



22
Cases
Reviewed by
OFR Team

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

16

Average
attendance
OFR meetings

76

Recommendation
ideas generated

50

Recommendations
moved forward

Common Overdose Themes Identified:

- History of childhood trauma/ACEs
- Current financial difficulties
- Recent stressful life events
- Untreated mental health conditions
- Physical health conditions
- Using alone
- No NARCAN® at the scene
- Occurring at residences

RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS

RECOMMENDATION	DETAILS	ACTIONS
Increase access to naloxone/NARCAN® and fentanyl test strips	Most overdoses involved fentanyl which can be detected with test strips and reversed with naloxone.	Hope Kit leave-behind program, vending machines, community trainings
Create a law enforcement/jail overdose risk alert system	Law officers were noticing behaviors indicating high overdose risk	Law officers can notify jail staff of inmates at risk for overdose so jail staff can reach out with services
Reduce stigma about carrying naloxone and using medication for opioid use disorder	Overdose deaths occurred where no naloxone was available and where relapses happened	Radio ads, billboards and bus signs, #Rock4Hope campaign

BY THE NUMBERS

45 yrs

Average age of those who died by overdose

70%

Percent of overdose deaths involving fentanyl

68%

Percent of overdose cases who were male

TRENDS IDENTIFIED

TREND	DETAILS	ACTIONS
Xylazine was detected in the local drug supply	Xylazine is a veterinary sedative that is added to fentanyl to enhance the effects. It causes blackouts, sedation and wounds.	Xylazine education shared with team, flyer created, Xylazine test strips advocacy
Cocaine laced with fentanyl causing fatal overdoses	Noticed an increase in fatal overdoses containing the combination of cocaine and fentanyl and cases where users were unaware that cocaine was tainted	Awareness campaigns including bar coasters, posters and billboards

Thank You

On behalf of Rock County Public Health, we would like to express our gratitude to all of the OFR team members and to the family members who provided interviews about their loved ones.

We appreciate you!



@rockcountyphd

www.co.rock.wi.us/departments/public-health