

Implementing an Overdose Good Samaritan Law: The Example of Seattle, Washington

Caleb Banta-Green, ADAI, UW

We have been asked for practical information about how we implemented the 911 Good Samaritan Overdose law in Washington State. These steps and examples may be helpful to individuals and communities working towards a program in other regions.

1) IDENTIFY & RECRUIT PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

Organize allies among stakeholders who are concerned about overdose deaths: professionals in public health, law enforcement, state and local agencies, researchers, medicine; and among advocacy groups such as families of victims of overdose.

2) INITIAL MEDIA EVENT

The law was kicked off with a press conference with our State Attorney General, poison center medical director, state substance abuse treatment director, treatment provider, parent of overdose victim, and the ACLU.

<http://www.atq.wa.gov/pressrelease.aspx?id=25810#.UjCIVT9cJfw>

3) INFORMATION SOURCE

Have a go-to source of information and way of engaging the community in an ongoing way with updates and information:

- <https://www.stopoverdose.org>
- <https://www.facebook.com/stopoverdose.org>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/313824845349907/> Expanding Access to Naloxone

4) INITIAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Immediately get information out.

- [Syringe exchange](#) distributed wallet cards about what the law did and did not cover via wallet cards (transparency, accurate information, delivered to the right people)
<http://www.stopoverdose.org/docs/911%20Good%20Samaritan%20Wallet%20Card.pdf>
- Opiate medicine safety flier created by the WA Department of Health:
http://here.doh.wa.gov/materials/safe-use-of-prescription-pain-medication/33_PainMeds_E11L.pdf

5) POLICE

Involve police in spreading the word to officers and more broadly to the public.

Police blog: <http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/2012/04/06/help-curb-overdose-deaths-by-calling-911/>

Law enforcement newsletter: http://stopoverdose.org/NWHIDTA_IntelBullFeb2013.pdf

Police training video: <http://stopoverdose.org/law.htm>

6) ONGOING MEDIA

Op-eds and continually working with media and asking them to put info into every story about an overdose or drugs:

http://seattletimes.com/html/opinion/2018013581_quest19bantagreen.html

http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2021175920_apwashingtonheroin3rdldwritethru.html

7) EVALUATION

Evaluating the implementation and ultimately the outcomes of such laws is important. Self-reported evaluations as well as peer reviewed manuscripts are both valuable.

<http://adai.uw.edu/pubs/infobriefs/ADAI-IB-2011-05.pdf>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23900788>

8) ADVERTISING

Online advertising (e.g. internet ad networks and Facebook) does work to drive internet traffic to online resources including completing online overdose training.

9) NEVER STOP WORKING

Remain vigilant and look for opportunities to spread the word.

WHERE HAVE GOOD SAM & NALOXONE LAWS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED?

[Summary of Current Overdose Good Samaritan Laws in the United States](#)

Prepared by the Network for Public Health Law, July 2013.