

**DANE COUNTY 2022 EMERGENCY HARM REDUCTION AND PREVENTION ACT
DCDHS – ACS DIVISION**

Deaths involving opioids, particularly fentanyl have been steadily increasing in Dane County since 2016. In 2021, 149 people in Dane County passed away due to opioid-related overdoses – reflecting 86% of all overdose deaths. Opioid-related deaths in Dane County have increased more than 30% in the past five years. Overall, overdose deaths involving fentanyl are up close to 70% in that same time frame. Fentanyl was determined to be a contributing factor in over three quarters of the county’s overdose deaths in 2021. According to the Public Health of Madison and Dane County’s 2022 Annual Report on Drug Overdose Deaths, the age-adjusted drug overdose death rate among Black people was more than three times the rate among White people from 2018-2020. In comparison to other races, Black people have experienced sharp increases in drug overdose death rates in the past decade.

Funds from the settlement of lawsuits with opioid manufacturers have recently come through to Dane County. There was a total of \$1.5 million included in the 2022 adopted budget to support treatment and peer support activities. As a result of this settlement, the additional available funds will be used for harm reduction and overdose prevention activities. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration defines harm reduction as an approach that emphasizes engaging directly with people who use drugs to prevent overdose and infectious disease transmission, improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of those served, and offer low-threshold options for accessing substance use disorder treatment and other health care services. Two organizations that are heavily involved in these harm reduction activities in Dane County are Safe Community Coalition of Madison and Dane County (a.k.a.: Safe Communities) and Outreach.

Outreach will receive \$50,000 of these funds to strengthen the Pride in Prevention Coalition, creating increased awareness and prevention services to populations disproportionately impacted by overdoses and by fentanyl poisoning.

Safe Communities has access to a vast network of coalitions, providers, and recovery coaches by which it can make sure resources such as fentanyl test strips and naloxone can make it into the hands of those individuals who need it most. Safe Communities will subcontract with the African American Opioid Coalition of Dane County for \$100,000. This coalition is a project developed in collaboration with Safe Communities and was formed to address racial disparities affecting African Americans with respect to disparate impacts of opioid addiction on Black families and communities in Madison and Dane County. Safe Communities will also work with the dozen Senior Focal Points in Dane County to distribute up to \$15,000 worth of harm reduction tools and medication lock boxes for those in need. Safe Communities will also work with local providers serving those who are experiencing homelessness and with the Recovery Coalition of Dane County to distribute up to \$10,000 worth of harm reduction tools in each area. Finally, Safe Communities has also been coordinating with local school districts to implement the use of the Life Skills Training, a research based prevention curriculum for high school and late-elementary school age youth, The cost for the piloting of this curriculum is \$120,000.

