REDUCING STIGMA

Embracing Harm Reduction in Opioid Use Disorder

Stigma surrounding opioid use disorder (OUD) continues to be a barrier to those seeking care and resources

Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) provides services to those battling addiction through their Harm Reduction Program.

Harm reduction includes needle exchange programs, free naloxone distribution, and free fentanyl test strips.

This stigma is particularly prevalent amongst healthcare workers

First responders often experience compassion fatigue and frustration after treating patients repeatedly for opioid use and overdoses.

Challenges abound with the use of stigmatizing language among health care providers to address people with OUD.

Advoacy Work

Community Partnerships

- Conducting appreciative inquiry interviews with leaders from HCPH, UC Health, and Hamilton County Fire Department
- Establishing effective community partnerships

Video Training

A pre- and post-survey video training was given to 46 medical students at UCCOM.

Barriers

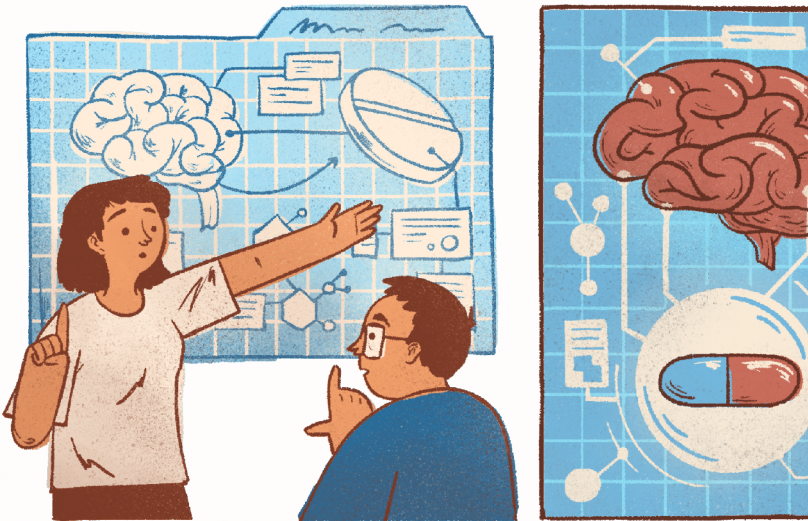Limited time and funding were challenges in reaching health care professionals for our video training session.

Policy Request: Legalize Xylazine Test Strips

01

Education and Awareness

Current Policy: Xylazine test strips are currently illegal in Ohio

- Results in significant increase in adverse health effects and barriers to care (Network for public health law)
- increases the strain and cost due to preventable injury and disease (Joseph Friedman et. al)

02

Building Empathy

Proposed Solution: Xylazine test strips should be made available to decrease harm within the community.

- Since the implementation of Hamilton County Health Department's distribution of fentanyl test strips, emergency department visits due to overdose calls have trended down overall.

- Xylazine continues to be rampant problem across Hamilton County 43% of drug overdoses show the presence of xylazine contamination.

HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH