

Heroin Response Work Group

Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

As a result of initial meetings to discuss strategies for mitigating the impact of heroin abuse in Colorado, a *Heroin Response Work Group* is being formed as part of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention.

The dramatic increase in the availability and abuse of heroin in Colorado necessitates coordinated and collaborative efforts across multiple disciplines, especially among and between prevention providers, treatment providers, and law enforcement.

This includes enhancing partnerships with local community efforts that are addressing strategies to mitigate the impact of the opioid epidemic.

Leadership support at the highest levels of local and state government is paramount to implementing successful strategies.

The purpose of the Heroin Response Work Group is to work collaboratively to:

- Coordinate on prevention best practices related to heroin availability and use across local communities in the state.
- Improve access to opioid treatment, especially for Medication Assisted Treatment for opioid dependence.
- Improve connections between law enforcement agencies and treatment providers.
- Coordinating of data collection and reporting on heroin in Colorado.
- Enhance information exchange about heroin availability and abuse in Colorado among and between law enforcement, treatment providers and prevention providers.
- Support and expanding current efforts that are proving effective in mitigating problems associated with heroin.
- Implement a concentrated and targeted initiative on mid- and street-level heroin traffickers and dealers.
- Provide training on heroin trafficking and on the use of Narcan/Naloxone for various audiences.

The five priorities for the initial phase of work are:

1. Collect and analyze data on the trends related to heroin availability and abuse in Colorado from various data sources to help shape response strategies.
2. Identify best practice approaches to preventing, intervening with, and treating opioid abuse; including heroin addiction.
3. Enhance the connection between law enforcement and treatment providers.
4. Gain an understanding of heroin abuse in Colorado with information collected from individuals who have experienced heroin addiction to inform strategies for prevention and treatment.

5. Implement regular information exchange about heroin availability and abuse in Colorado among and between law enforcement, treatment providers, and prevention providers.

As of early May 2016, the Heroin Response Work Group consists of representatives of the following:

- Colorado Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment/Prevention Services Division
- Colorado Department of Human Services/Office of Behavioral Health
- U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration/Denver Division
- Colorado Attorney General's Office/Office of Community Engagement
- Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force
- Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

Additional representation is welcome.

The Heroin Response Work Group is supported by two staff temporality assigned to assist in accomplishing the priorities above.

For more information, or to become a member of the work group, or to receive regular information about the efforts of the work group, send a message to info@corxconsortium.org