



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

August 3, 2024

# CDPHE OVERDOSE PREVENTION + FENTANYL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

INITIAL FINDINGS // QUALITATIVE & SECONDARY RESEARCH BRIEFING

## OVERVIEW

- [HB 22-1326](#) directs CDPHE to develop, implement, and maintain an ongoing statewide prevention and education campaign to address the fentanyl education needs in the state.
- [Cactus Communications](#) is the primary contractor for this project. Subcontractors include [Hispanidad](#) and [Linhart PR](#).

## BUDGET

- \$3.7 million

## PROJECT TIMEFRAME

- March 2024 - June 2025



## OBJECTIVE

Create an awareness and education campaign designed to reach diverse Coloradans and reduce fentanyl-related overdose across the state.

## CHALLENGE

Focus our work to ensure that the behavior(s) we are asking our audience to take after seeing campaign materials have low barriers and high potential impacts on our objective.

## APPROACH

Use secondary and qualitative research to identify those behaviors that have low barriers and high potential impacts on our objective.

This presentation will focus on initial findings from our **first five Research Activities**

	Research Activity	Status	Process Details	Utilization
1	SECONDARY RESEARCH REVIEW	Complete	We conducted a thorough review of previous CDPHE research, publicly available national research studies, and publicly available Colorado studies.	Immerse ourselves in existing research, literature, to lay the foundation for our process and to help focus our work moving forward.
2	EXISTING CAMPAIGN REVIEW	Complete	We reviewed over 30 campaigns, including national campaigns, Colorado specific campaigns, and a variety of out-of-state campaigns.	Assess previous campaign work to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for our work moving forward.
3	EXPERT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY	Complete	We surveyed ~150 experts in the field, who came from a wide range of background in terms of both professional experience and lived experience.	Engage a large volume of experts in the field using their knowledge to help clarify findings from secondary research and develop hypotheses for our campaign direction.
4	EXPERT STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	Complete	We spoke with a diverse range of experts in the field (n = 16), who worked at a variety of roles within the CO government and non-profit organizations.	Re-engage with a core group of experts in the field to gather additional insights and context regarding the finding from previous phases.
5	FOCUS GROUPS	Complete	We conducted 3 waves of interviews and focus groups composed of People with Lived/Living Experience, Affected Friends/Family, and First Responders/Care Providers.	Glean additional insights from, and test initial theories and hypotheses with those who are most familiar with the subject of overdoses.
6	BELIEF AND BEHAVIOR TRACKER	In Progress	We are in the process of collecting data from a survey of ~600 Coloradans that represent the general population. This survey will ask respondents which Personal, Environmental, and Behavioral Factors they are most inclined to take.	While our initial research with experts guided our thinking it is essential that we prioritize these quantitative findings and meet Coloradans where they are.
7	CAMPAIGN MESSAGE TESTING	Not Yet Started	After we align on a campaign concept and direction, we will conduct a quantitative study to test these campaign messages with Coloradans.	Gather insights that will be used to refine and optimize campaign messaging to be as effective as possible.
8	INDEPENDENT CAMPAIGN ASSESSMENT	Not Yet Started	This quantitative study will be conducted by an independent third party (RTI Research). The study will be designed after we align on the campaign concept and direction.	Quantify the long term impact of our campaign after it is launched in market.

In Summary

**Driving behavior change means touching on these**

**three key categories**

### **Behavioral Factors**

*(Actions and Skills)*

- Increase bystander intervention in overdose scenarios
- Address the barriers to action in overdose scenarios

### **Environmental Factors**

*(Conversations and Social Norms)*

- Open dialogue around substance use disorders, what causes them, and effective treatments
- Make the topic feel relevant to all Coloradans to create a social norm

### **Personal Factors**

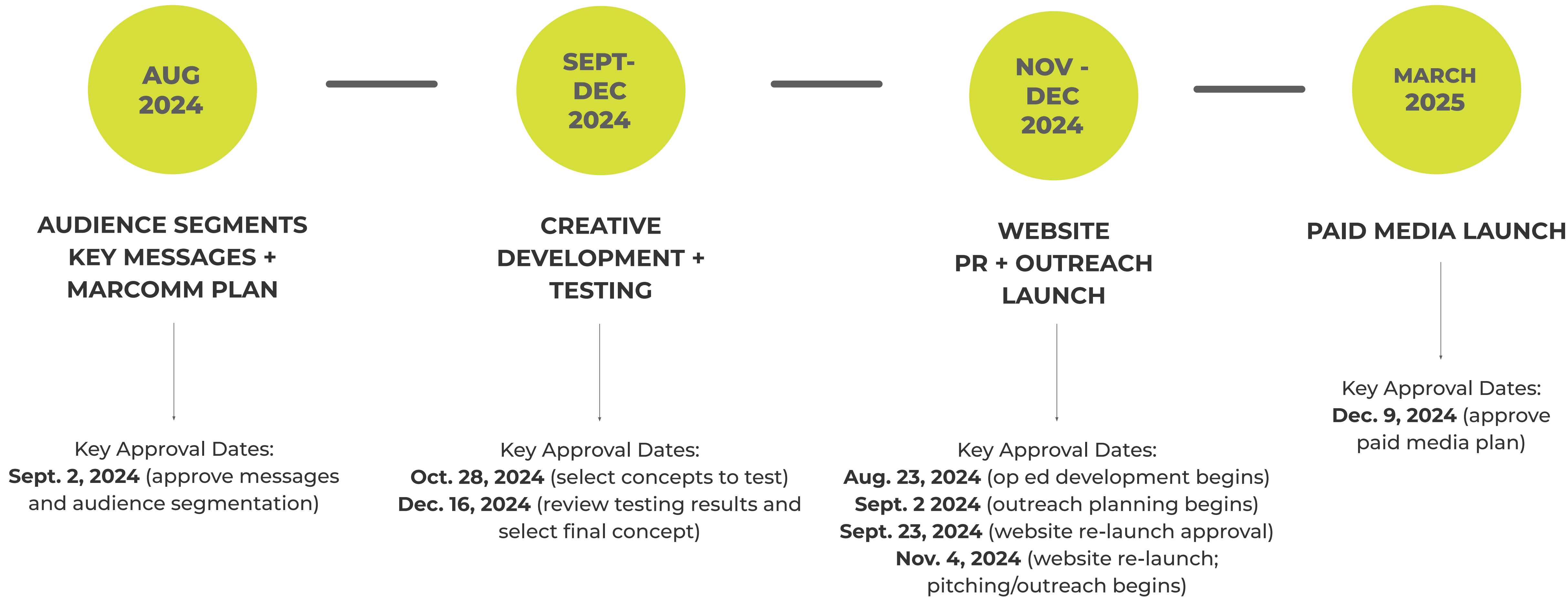
*(Knowledge and Attitudes)*

- Educate Coloradans on common misconceptions around Fentanyl, Narcan, and overdoses
- Address to the source of the issue by teaching the basics of harm reduction, trauma, and the pillars of recovery

Our final research activities will provide a quantifiable campaign direction .

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UPCOMING TOUCHPOINTS



**THANK YOU.**



Appendix

# Supporting Information

## Data and Context

Key Finding:

Secondary research highlighted the need to **increase bystander overdose intervention**.



Key Finding:

**Our focus groups reiterated the need for action, but also highlighted the need to overcome barriers to action .**

*“People fear the consequences for themselves. Anything that can be done to break down those barriers will go a long way in getting the bystander to act.”*

*“It can be traumatizing to have to administer Narcan and work to help save an individual who is overdosing.”*

*“At the very least, call 911. Offer what you can even if it isn’t more than just a phone call.”*



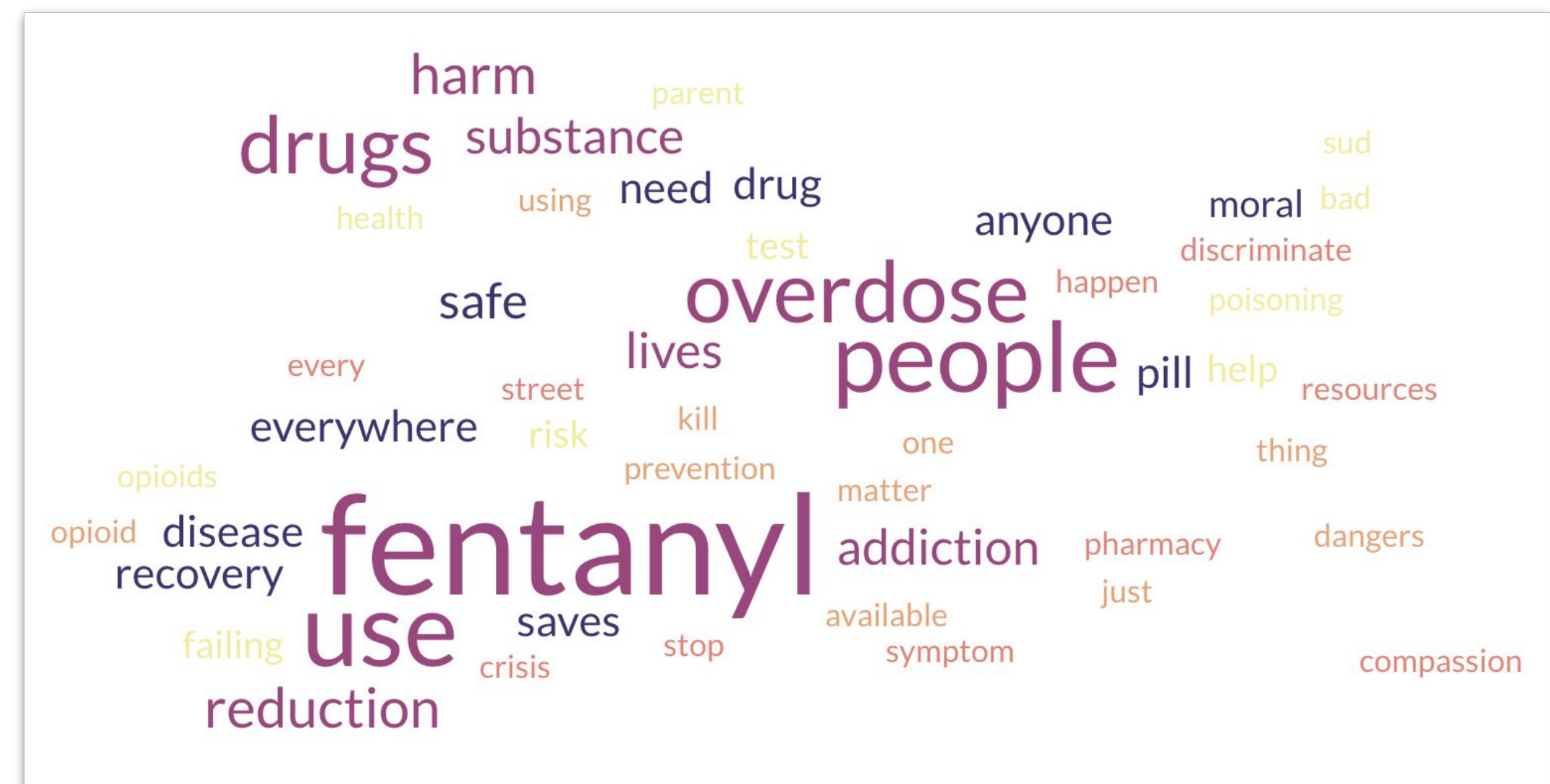
Key Finding:

**When we surveyed experts on the topic we heard the need to go beyond awareness to education .**

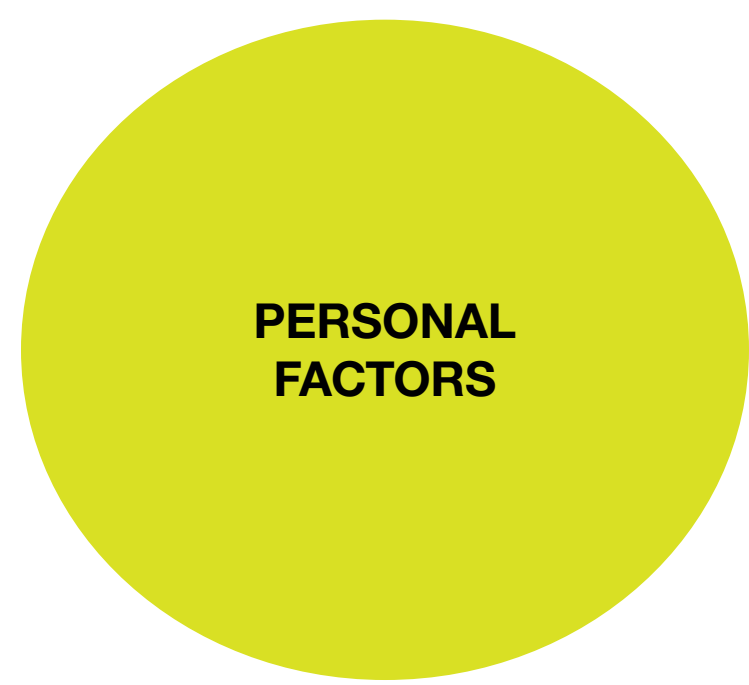
Q4: What do you believe are the three most important messages that the general populace of Colorado needs to hear and learn from this campaign?

***“The myths regarding fentanyl”***

***“You cannot overdose by touching fentanyl”***







Key Finding:

**Experts explained the need to educate Coloradans on the root cause of overdoses: SUD**

*Q: If more people in Colorado understood/knew about \_\_\_\_\_ it would have major positive impacts on the overdose crisis.*

***“Harm reduction”***

***“Narcan’s relatively easy ability to save a life.”***

***“The pillars of recovery”***

***“Trauma”***



Key Finding:

**Key stakeholders emphasized the need to increase the conversation about SUD among Coloradans .**

*“Stigma isn’t just a feeling, it’s a real barrier to care, almost as high as a concern of cost. People not wanting to be found out about their addiction, people not wanting to know others to know that they are struggling with substance use disorder.”*

*“Not talking about something doesn't make it go away. We're seeing more and more [overdose] deaths and making it a broader conversation is so important. [We need people to be] open to having the conversations in a way that isn't judgmental.”*

Key Finding:

**Focus group participants brought up the need to  
humanize the issue while breaking stigma and  
misconceptions.**

*“[We need to] show that drug use is not just isolated to one group of individuals. There is a wide spectrum of who and how they are affected. White Suburban vs Black Urban.”*

*“Conversations in general are helpful. The more we talk about it the more we can normalize the feeling and potentially make it so that people don’t suffer alone”*

*“[We need to] get the conversation to the point where it is focusing on the people as just that... PEOPLE.”*