

ACT AMERICORPS COMMUNITY TRAINING FOR OVERDOSE RESCUE +

Summer 2025 INFORMATION PACKET

Updated October 15, 2024 by Ushna Khan

Thank you for your interest in the AmeriCorps Community Training for Overdose Rescue (ACT) program!

We look forward to learning more about you during the recruitment process, and we'd like to share some more information about us. This packet provides detailed information about the ACT program, the applicant screening and on-boarding process, and the role of an Overdose Rescue Trainer.

Despite being preventable and treatable, overdoses from heroin, fentanyl and other opioids continue to cause an alarming number of deaths in our region, devastating many in our communities. ACT aims to stop overdose deaths, reduce harm caused by opioids, and strengthen community engagement in addressing public health challenges. Our ACT AmeriCorps members serve a critical role in meeting these goals, and ACT is committed to providing our AmeriCorps members with an enriching and impactful service experience. Each year our team trains about 1,000 people from all walks of life in Metro Detroit to respond in an opioid related overdose emergency.

We are looking forward to forming our newest ACT Team!

In community partnership,

Lauren Meloche, Program Director

Chelsea Mudalagi, Member Success Coordinator

Ushna Khan, Recruitment Coordinator

Julia Hodgson, Pre-Service Coordinator

Dania Jadallah, Training Operations Coordinator



AmeriCorps service members from Summer 2023

What's in this packet?

- I. About ACT
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As you're considering a service term with ACT, we want you to be fully prepared with information about our program and what to expect, so you can decide if this service position is the right fit for you. If you have any additional questions after reviewing this packet, we'd be happy to discuss those with you!

Check for Understanding

When you're done reading the packet, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What does ACT stand for?
- What is ACT's goal?
- Why am I interested in being a part of ACT's goal?
- What does an Overdose Rescue Trainer do?
- What service activities am I most interested in?
- What could I gain from a term of service with ACT?
- What might be challenging for me about serving with ACT?
- Am I eligible to be an AmeriCorps member? What documents do I need?
- How long is a term of service with ACT?
- How many hours each week do ACT AmeriCorps Members serve in-person? When do most of these in-person hours take place?
- Do I have enough room in my schedule to serve for an average of 20 hours each week? With most of that time taking place in-person?
- How much money do ACT AmeriCorps members make during their term of service? How often do they receive this payment?
- When is the approx. \$1,956 Education Award available to ACT AmeriCorps members?
- What is a "successful" term of service?
- When should I submit my application?
- How can I get in touch with ACT program staff?
- Where can I apply?
- What WSU Department is ACT a part of?

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

What is the AmeriCorps Community Training for Overdose Rescue (ACT) program?

Our Mission

To provide community members in southeast Michigan with information, training, and tools to stop overdose deaths and reduce harm related to opioids.

Key Objectives

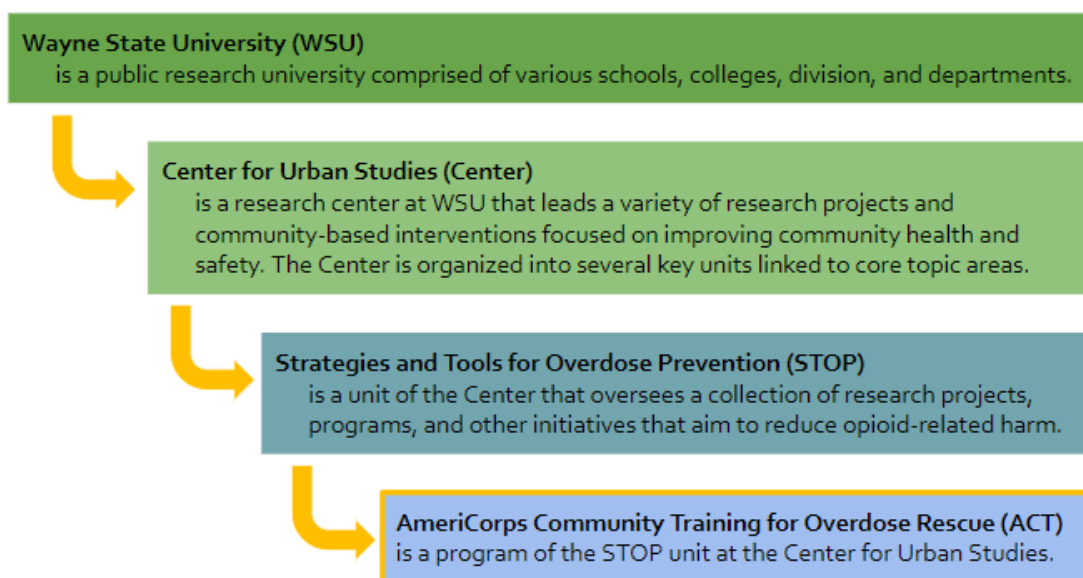
Each year, ACT will:

- Deliver 17,000 hours of service to the community by recruiting leaders across the region to commit to and successfully complete an AmeriCorps service term as an Overdose Rescue Trainer
- Train at least 800 community members in Overdose Rescue preparedness strategies
- Distribute at least 800 Overdose Rescue Kits containing life-saving Narcan nasal spray (an overdose-reversing medicine)

Organizational Framework

The AmeriCorps Community Training for Overdose Rescue (ACT) program is administered by the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University (see the organizational diagram below).

The ACT program is funded by AmeriCorps – a federal agency that supports community service and volunteerism by awarding grant funding to community-level organizations across the country to implement service-based programs. As an AmeriCorps sponsored program, ACT is part of a national network of independent programs that all incorporate community service as a key strategy for addressing critical community challenges.



Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

An AmeriCorps Term of Service with ACT

As an ACT Member you will be an *Overdose Rescue Trainer*- teaching others in the community how to provide first aid during an opioid overdose emergency to help save lives. You'll also help install Narcan distribution boxes in community settings across our service area.

This AmeriCorps service position is **different from a traditional employment or academic opportunity** - it is a paid opportunity to develop real-world skills and experience while making a positive difference in your community. See the following section for more information about our AmeriCorps Member benefits.

ACT welcomes candidates of all backgrounds, and we provide extensive training and professional development for incoming service members. This AmeriCorps service position is a rewarding opportunity for students, professionals, and anyone who wants to make a difference in our community.

As an ACT service member, you will sign up for a six-month term of service (see term dates below). This is considered a quarter-time service position, which requires the member to **serve a minimum of 450 hours** during the term (average 20 hours per week through the six-month term). Members who do not meet the 450-hour minimum by the end of their term may not be eligible for the education award and other member benefits.

After successfully completing a quarter-time term, members may extend their service by enrolling in another term (selection for an additional term of service is dependent on program needs and member performance during previous terms).

<i>Term</i>	<i>Start Date of Service Term</i>	<i>End Date of Service Term</i>	<i>PRIORITY Application Deadline</i>	<i>FINAL Application Deadline</i>
<i>SUMMER 2025</i>	<i>April 28, 2025</i>	<i>November 9, 2025</i>	<i>1/22/2025</i>	<i>2/19/2025</i>

Applicants are highly encouraged to apply by the *priority application deadline* to receive early admissions decisions, reserve your spot for the term, and participate in pre-orientation activities with our team. However, we will consider application submissions for remaining spots until the final application deadline for the term. Any applications received after the final application deadline will be considered for the following term.

About ACT's Service Schedule

Applicants are expected to be available to **commit 20 hours of service consistently** each week during their term, and **at least 8 hours each week need to take place in-person**. You will choose your specific schedule during orientation. In-person service activities will take place at the CUS Offices on WSU's campus, or in the community. **NOTE:** Most in-person service needs take place between **10am and 3:30pm Monday-Thursday**, with some community-based activities taking place outside of this time. Most virtual service should take place between **9am and 7pm Monday-Friday**. Evening and weekend hours are occasional and limited. Applicants should also plan to attend mandatory orientation **10am-4pm, Monday-Friday**, during the first week of the service term.

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

If you serve with us, you'll set up your schedule during orientation week following the guidelines above. Below is what a typical week looks like for our team:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekends
Before 10am	Some members like to get started virtually and on their own before 10am. Sometimes <i>but not often</i> , there are trainings taking place virtually and in-person during this time.				The office is closed for in-person service today. ACT members usually work virtually on their own or with teammates over Zoom to prepare for trainings. Sometimes ACT members do outreach activities in-person today. Some trainings might take place Fridays, usually between 9am and 5pm.	The office is closed for in-person service today. Some ACT members choose to serve virtually on their own, usually taking care of administrative tasks, wrapping up loose ends from the previous week, or preparing for the next week. There are occasionally weekend events or activities the team does together. You should not rely on weekend availability to meet service hour requirements.
10am- 3:30pm	The majority of in-person service hours will take place during this time					
	<p>CUS Office Open</p> <p>There is a staff support hour today you can attend if you have questions</p> <p>ACT member leads a media discussion today about a current event related to our work</p> <p>ACT Members can serve in-person during this time, leading and preparing for trainings, doing outreach, and participating in learning activities with their teammates.</p> <p>Most trainings take place during this time.</p>	<p>CUS Office Open</p> <p>Mandatory All-Team Meeting, Tuesdays from 10:30am-12pm, this is virtual but can be attended in-person</p> <p>ACT Members can serve in-person during this time, leading and preparing for trainings, doing outreach, and participating in learning activities with their teammates.</p> <p>Most trainings take place during this time.</p>	<p>CUS Office Open</p> <p>There are staff and peer-led support hours today you can attend if you have questions</p> <p>ACT Members can serve in-person during this time, leading and preparing for trainings, doing outreach, and participating in learning activities with their teammates.</p> <p>Most trainings take place during this time.</p>	<p>CUS Office Open</p> <p>ACT Members can serve in-person during this time, leading and preparing for trainings, doing outreach, and participating in learning activities with their teammates.</p> <p>Every other week Book Club is today, where the whole team reads and discusses a book related to our work</p> <p>Most trainings take place during this time.</p>		
After 3:30pm	Some members like to serve virtually and on their own in the evenings. Sometimes there are trainings taking place virtually and in the community in the evenings.					

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

ACT Member Benefits

Although members do not receive a traditional “hourly wage”, AmeriCorps offers members many benefits throughout their term of service, as well as other alumni benefits after the service term is complete. Benefits include:

A living allowance in the amount of \$5,850 (biweekly payments + term completion bonus)

- o The living allowance will be distributed throughout the term in equal bi-weekly payments.
- o Members should expect to receive **\$4,950** before taxes, distributed evenly throughout their term in biweekly payments of around **\$380** each (actual pay amount depends on the number of pay periods within the term).
- o Members who serve until the term end date and successfully complete program requirements will receive a **\$900** term completion bonus.
- o **The living allowance is subject to federal, state, and city taxes.** The actual amount of your paycheck will depend on the number of allowances you claim when you complete a federal, state, and city W-4 form as part of your hiring paperwork. You can use this website to better estimate your biweekly pay:
<https://www.paycheckcity.com/calculator/salary/>

A Segal Education Award in the amount of approximately \$1,956

- o The award can be applied towards pursuing further education or training or to pay off existing qualified student loans. The award can typically be used at any institution that accepts federal aid.
- o **This is not a cash award.** Rather, it is disbursed directly by the National Service Trust to the school/program or to your lender.
- o Some institutions match this award with additional funding support (listed here):
<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/matching-institutions>.
- o **Members must successfully complete their service requirements and serve a minimum of 450 hours during their term to qualify for the Segal Education Award.**
- o This award is also **subject to taxes** and it will be taxed in the year you use it.
- o You have **7 years** after completing your term to use the award.

Loan forbearance on qualified student loans

- o If you have student loans, **you can request** that qualified federal student loans be put into forbearance during your term of service, meaning **you will not need to make payments** on your student loan during your service term.

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

- o Once service has begun and you are enrolled as an AmeriCorps member, you will be able to request forbearance of qualified student loans in the MyAmeriCorps system.
- o Upon successful completion of your term, **you may also request the interest accrued on your qualifying loan while in forbearance during your term be paid by the National Service Trust.**

Extensive professional development

- A unique component of being an AmeriCorps member is **receiving guided support and career development training.**
- At the start of the term, **members will receive comprehensive training about overdose first aid, community outreach and engagement strategies, public speaking and meeting facilitation, and other topics** to ensure members are prepared to successfully carry out program activities.
- The ACT program will also provide members with **additional learning opportunities and skill-building** during the term that can be applied to future roles. The program intends to enhance social and civic competencies **including communication, leadership, and team collaboration.**
- ACT's professional development is designed to support members with foundational knowledge and skill-based training that allows them to successfully serve the community in a health education capacity, most of which **directly aligns with the [CDC's competencies for public health professionals.](#)**
- ACT offers CPR certification, guest speakers, exposure to a variety of community-based and professional public health spaces, and more!



"ACT connected me with like-minded individuals who are equally as passionate about public health and the community as me. Each person I met seasoned my life in different ways, exposing me to different perspectives and experiences that I would not have had otherwise. The memories I've made will stick with me forever"

Cohort 13 members participated in the statewide Russ Mawby Day of Service, Summer 2024

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Overdose Rescue Trainer - Role and Daily Activities

ACT Overdose Rescue Trainings

ACT's Overdose Rescue Trainers hold weekly Overdose Rescue training sessions that anyone from the community may attend, and they also arrange private training sessions for groups or organizations. *The photo below was taken at a Fall 2023 training with a local construction company who incorporated our efforts into their standard safety curriculum.*

Each training session lasts approximately one hour. During the training presentation, you will **present information** about...

- The magnitude of the overdose crisis and its impact on our community
- How to recognize the signs of an opioid related overdose
- How to provide first aid during an overdose emergency, including how and when to administer Narcan (a medicine that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose)
- How to perform hands-only CPR
- Aftercare considerations for overdose survivors

At the end of the training, you will **provide all participants...**

- An Overdose Preparedness Kit containing instructions for providing overdose first aid, information about local treatment and recovery services, and a dose of Narcan - a medicine that reverses opioid overdose and is administered with an easy-to-use nasal spray device.
- Fentanyl test strips on request
- Other supplemental handouts as needed



Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Outreach- Connecting the Community with ACT

A primary part of your role will include conducting outreach within the tri-county area to promote the training sessions and recruiting participants to attend the training. Training sessions may be **attended by anyone in Southeast Michigan**, and are particularly important for people who are likely to encounter an overdose emergency. These can include...

- Employees of local businesses
- Transit workers
- Librarians
- Street outreach teams
- Safety patrol groups
- Social service providers

...and more! Do you have ideas? ACT members also drive our outreach strategy, using their knowledge and lived experiences to suggest target populations in our service area.

ACT Service Tasks- Spreading Harm Reduction and Narcan

ACT members engage in the following **tasks to successfully train people** in the community:

- **Recruit community members and groups to participate in Overdose Rescue training sessions** by conducting outreach throughout metro-Detroit to promote the ACT program. Outreach methods may include distributing flyers, social media promotion, phone calls, emails to organizations,, short presentations at community meetings, etc
- Develop **tailored messaging** to help appeal to specific audiences when promoting the trainings
- Collaborate with teammates to **plan, prepare for, and promote** the training session
- **Coordinate the logistics** for training sessions and facilitating the training events
- **Deliver** Overdose Rescue training presentation to participants and **answer questions**
- Distribute **Overdose Preparedness Kits** to training participants
- Help install Narcan distribution boxes "Nalox-Boxes" in community settings for easy access



Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

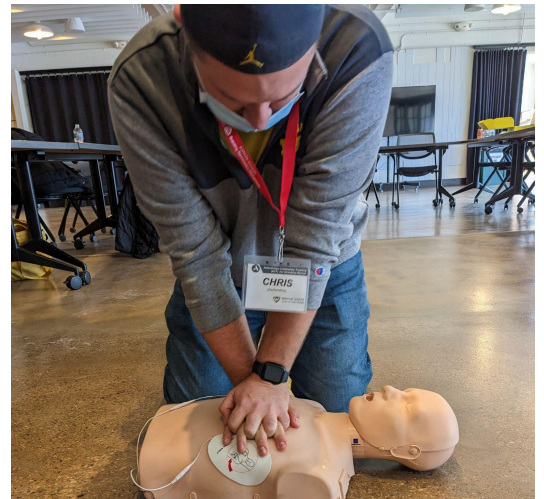
ACT Service Tasks- Expanding your Knowledge and Skills

Like we mentioned in the *Member Benefits* section, in addition to carrying out training sessions, members build their own knowledge and experience in a variety of areas in a team environment.

- During orientation and throughout the service term, members build **foundational knowledge** about the overdose crisis, harm reduction, and public health.
- Members also **learn about intersectional issues** related to the overdose crisis (ex: mental health, incarceration, homelessness, maternal health, veteran populations, etc.).
- As a team, members **discuss articles and other media** related to these topics.
- **Guest speakers** provide different perspectives on the overdose crisis and the efforts to address this issue.

These aspects of the service member experience provide **many opportunities for peer leadership and professional development.**

Maddi, Cohort 13, helps plan an outreach strategy for an upcoming training. Chris, Cohort 11, brushes up on his CPR skills. Sara, Cohort 15, and Julia, Cohort 14, practice applying a tourniquet as part of our Stop the Bleed professional development session with a guest presenter, Tijuana, Cohort 14 was a strong teambuilder. during her time with ACT.



Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

ACT is a Hybrid Service Program

This position requires regular and predictable attendance with the flexibility to work both in-office and remotely. Incoming members should **expect to serve the majority of hours in-person**, though there is flexibility for some service tasks to be completed virtually/remote. During the Covid-19 pandemic, our program adapted some service activities so they can be conducted in a virtual/remote format, and through this process we recognized the benefits of this added flexibility for our AmeriCorps members and program as a whole. In order to continue to offer this hybrid format, all ACT members and staff need to adhere to strict requirements from Wayne State University and AmeriCorps. **Team members should be capable and comfortable serving together and completing tasks in a hybrid format (serving both in-person and remote).** *NOTE: If you know someone who served with us before January 2023, their service schedule requirements would have been very different from what you can expect serving with us in 2025. Please refer to About ACT's Schedule or contact us if you have questions about this.*

What is Teleservice?

Teleservice is a term used to describe serving hours remotely from an appropriate alternative site, where a supervisor is unable to physically be present to verify hours, sometimes we call this 'virtual service'. Per AmeriCorps requirements, teleservice is allowed under certain circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic, inclement weather, etc. AmeriCorps has decided to continue to allow this flexibility through some hybrid programs. **Members are only permitted to complete certain pre-approved service activities remotely.** You will receive a list of these activities every day via program email if you serve with us.

Generally, virtual aspects of hybrid service involve collaborating with team members and program staff via Zoom, email, and other remote communication tools. Some community outreach activities and some overdose rescue training sessions are conducted online.

It is important that team members are comfortable communicating in a virtual manner with other team members and people in the community. Team members should be comfortable completing about 8-10 hours of virtual service each week, most of which will be self-directed. Members are expected to have reliable internet access, check their program email daily, and complete all required tasks by their due date.

We are a Public Health program, committed to...Public Health!

While the COVID-19 pandemic has thankfully lessened, we continue our commitment to public health and safety in service in the following ways:

- Our program adheres to WSU vaccine policies and members are expected to comply with them. At the time this document was written, WSU only requires a flu vaccine, with limited exceptions. You can read more about their policies here: wayne.edu/coronavirus
- ACT members will not be permitted to come into the office if they are experiencing symptoms of illness.
- ACT members are welcome to wear a mask, and our team will respect anyone's decision to wear a mask at any time, no questions asked.
- Everyone is encouraged to keep workspace surfaces clean, and run our air purifiers if multiple people are sharing a workspace.
- ACT Staff will implement further restrictions, rules, or recommendations should a future health-related situation arise during your term of service.

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Selection Process for ACT AmeriCorps Members

We recognize and celebrate that ACT Members come from many different backgrounds and walks of life, this includes education level, levels and types of work experience, race, ethnicity, age, income level, ability status, size and more! We are looking for candidates who are thoughtful, responsible, flexible, open to growth, self-directed and passionate about making a difference in Metro Detroit. We want to get to know you. Our process is as follows:

1. Application
2. Phone screening
3. Group Interview Invitation, Reference Check, and Eligibility Check
4. Attending a Group Interview
5. Selection
6. Pre-Service Enrollment Process
7. Orientation

You can see more about each step and the dates for the Summer 2025 Cohort on the next page. If you would like to request reasonable accommodations for participating in this process or have other questions, please contact Ushna Khan, our recruitment lead, as soon as possible at ushna.actwayne@gmail.com.

AmeriCorps Eligibility and Required Documents

ACT is a service program within the AmeriCorps network. **To be eligible for AmeriCorps service, you must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and pass a criminal history check.** To verify eligibility, ALL candidates must provide ACT staff with each of the following documents. These will be requested **prior to the group interview**:

1. Documentation to confirm you are a US Citizen , National, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien
 - o If you are a US citizen, one of the following:
 - US passport
 - Birth certificate showing US birth
 - US Naturalization certificate, or other official proof of US citizenship
 - o If you are a US National or Lawful Permanent Resident, one of the following:
 - State Department Certification (N-550; N-560; N-561; or N-570)
 - Alien Registration Card/Permanent Resident Card (I-551)

AND

2. a valid (unexpired) government-issued photo ID
 - o One of the following:
 - driver's license
 - state-issued photo ID

AND

3. your social security card (signed).

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

ACT Summer 2025 Application Timeline	Priority Group	Final Group
Application Interested candidates can complete an application at any time through our website at stopoverdosedeaths.org . Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis, and candidates are encouraged to apply before the priority application deadline for the term . Applications submitted after a final deadline for the term will be considered for the next term.	1/22/2025	2/19/2025
Phone Screening Program staff will review your application for eligibility and inform you if you've been selected for a phone screening. During this 25-minute interview, we will discuss your application, your availability, your prior experience and your expectations of the role. We schedule these in 1-hour appointments to ensure you have enough time to fully share your thoughts and to ensure enough time between candidates.	Will take place 1/13/2025- 1/30/2025	Will take place 2/10/2025- 2/27/2025
Group Interview Invitation, Reference Checks, and Eligibility Check You will then be notified if you are selected to participate in a group interview. You will choose an interview time and upload your ID. Then we will contact your references, and check your identifying documents to make sure you are eligible to serve with AmeriCorps.	You will have RSVP'd and references will be checked by: 2/3/2025	You will have RSVP'd and references will be checked by: 3/3/2025
Group Interview In a group of 5-8 other candidates, you will learn more about ACT and answer interview questions.	Two options: 2/6/2025 2/11/2025	Two options: 3/6/2025 3/25/2025
Selection Selections will be announced after the group interviews via email.	2/12/2025	3/26/2025
Enrollment New members will complete pre-service training online and attend an in-person enrollment session to review and complete onboarding paperwork before starting service. Candidates will undergo a criminal history check, as required by the AmeriCorps agency. Selected candidates will also be required to schedule a fingerprinting appointment to complete the AmeriCorps-mandated criminal history check.	All selected candidates will receive more detailed information and complete these steps between : 3/26/2025- 4/2/2025	
Orientation Orientation for new members takes place over several days during the first week of service. Orientation activities are mandatory for all new members.	April 28, 2025 First day of service!	

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Thank you for reading our Information Packet!

Go to <https://www.stopoverdosedeadths.org/join-our-team>, to apply!

Contact us if you have any questions or would like to know more:

Chelsea Mudalagi

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chelsea.mudalagi@wayne.edu

She/Her/Hers

ACT Member Success Coordinator

Strategies and Tools for Overdose Prevention (STOP) Unit

Center for Urban Studies

Wayne State University

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She/Her/Hers

ACT Program Director

Strategies and Tools for Overdose Prevention (STOP) Unit

Center for Urban Studies

Wayne State University

Email is the fastest way to reach us, but you can also give us a call at: (313) 681-5207

If you've left a voicemail, please allow at least 4 hours for your call to be returned before calling again. Do you have an urgent need? Please follow up via email.

You can also find us on Wayne.edu: <https://cus.wayne.edu/whatwedo>

Additional Information and Resources

Hear about us on WWJ's Warriors in the Community segment:

<https://today.wayne.edu/news/2023/10/16/warriors-in-the-community-episode-27-ameri-corps-community-training-for-overdose-rescue-act-program-60140>

Visit our website and social media pages to become more familiar with our program:

<http://www.stopoverdosedeads.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/stopoverdosedeads/>

<https://www.instagram.com/stopoverdosedeads/>

Below are some resources that provide more information about the overdose crisis and harm reduction:

Read the article announcing the launch of our ACT program in Fall 2019

<https://today.wayne.edu/news/2019/06/14/ameri-corps-grants-to-help-combat-opioid-crisis-further-urban-safety-initiatives-32584?>

The science of addiction: How opioids – and environment – change the brain

<https://www.knoxnews.com/story/news/health/2018/01/26/opioid-epidemic-addiction-science-environment-brain/1021225001/>

Fentanyl-Linked Deaths: The U.S. Opioid Epidemic's Third Wave Begins

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/03/21/704557684/fentanyl-linked-deaths-the-u-s-opioid-epidemics-third-wave-begins>

The Opioid Crisis Is Getting Worse, Particularly for Black Americans

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/22/upshot/opioid-deaths-are-spreading-rapidly-into-black-america.html>

Without Medical Support, DIY Detox Often Fails

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/07/03/533793801/without-medical-support-diy-detox-often-fails?>

Visit <https://www.hri.global/what-is-harm-reduction> and <https://harmreduction.org> for more information about Harm Reduction (see definition in glossary below).

Harm Reduction 101 (2:34)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXlIj_jgFmE

The harm reduction model of drug addiction treatment | Mark Tyndall (16:31)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfzkBGxXGE>

Finding the Hook: Changing Perceptions of Harm Reduction Strategies (3:40)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMF9Cfn_SRk

How Naloxone Saves Lives in Opioid Overdose (5:39)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWe_lPniEq4

Motorcycle Crash Shows Bioethicist The Dark Side Of Quitting Opioids Alone (43:14)

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/07/08/738952129>

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Glossary

AmeriCorps – AmeriCorps is a national network of independent programs that incorporate community service as a key strategy for addressing critical community challenges. AmeriCorps programs respond to pressing issues facing our nation including providing education and mentoring to children, increasing access to nutrition and healthcare, improving housing and public safety, and addressing the opioid overdose epidemic. The ACT Program is an AmeriCorps State sponsored program. Corps is pronounced “CORE” (as in “apple core”), not “corpse”. For example, ACT is an “Ameri-Core” program, not an “Ameri-Corpse” program.

AmeriCorps Member – an individual serving in an AmeriCorps program. An AmeriCorps service member is not an employee, apprentice, or volunteer. Members receive a living allowance during their term and are eligible to receive an education award or alternative post-service benefit upon successful completion of their term.

Education Award – a benefit AmeriCorps members may receive after successful completion of a term of service. The award is directly paid to an educational institution and may be used for federal student loans, or to finance college, graduate school, or approved vocational training.

Living Allowance – a stipend, *not* a wage or salary. The living allowance is provided to AmeriCorps members who are actively enrolled and serving in a program and is distributed over the length of the term of service.

Service – helping others to meet critical community needs. AmeriCorps members participate in service programs across the U.S. to help improve the lives of individuals and communities. Service is not a job or employment.

Service Term – a committed period of service with an AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps programs offer five types of terms (full time, half time, reduced half time, quarter time, and minimum time). All terms of service for the 2022-2023 year with the ACT program will be quarter-time slots consisting of 450 minimum required hours, completed over a 6-month period. Members may choose to complete more than one term during a year.

Opioid – a substance that binds to opioid receptors, which are located throughout the brain and body. Opioids are commonly used to relax the body and relieve pain. Opioid is a term that is inclusive of:

- opiates: naturally occurring substances derived from opium plants (e.g., morphine)
- semi-synthetic opioids: heroin, oxycodone
- fully synthetic opioids: fentanyl, tramadol

Overdose – occurs when a toxic amount of a drug, or combination of drugs, overwhelm the body. In an opioid overdose, the individual may become unresponsive to stimulation and their breathing slows or stops, which deprives the body of oxygen. An overdose can result in death, or if not fatal, may have other negative health consequences (e.g., brain damage). An opioid overdose can typically be stopped if an opioid antidote (naloxone) is administered quickly.

Overdose Epidemic – also called the opioid overdose crisis, is the continued sharp rise in opioid-related deaths since the 90s. However, opioid use disorder and overdose deaths caused by opioids have occurred before the recent opioid epidemic and occurred at particularly high rates beginning in the late 1960s.

Note: Please refer to the Glossary at the end of this packet for more information about key terms.

Naloxone / Narcan – is a lifesaving medication that should be administered during an opioid overdose emergency to reverse the effects of opioids. It is an FDA-approved medication and works as an opioid antagonist: The naloxone molecules block opioid receptor sites, essentially ‘kicking out’ any opioids that were bound to the receptors. This reverses the toxic effects of an overdose. The medication can be used safely by anyone in the community to provide first aid. An individual cannot become addicted to naloxone, and naloxone cannot cause harm if the person has no opioids in their system. Narcan is a brand name of naloxone that comes in an easy-to-use nasal spray device.

Community First Responder – a volunteer member of the public who provides care during a medical emergency while waiting for professional help to arrive.

Harm Reduction – Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with substance use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use substances. Harm reduction incorporates a spectrum of strategies from safer use, to managed use to abstinence to meet drug users “where they’re at,” addressing conditions of use along with the use itself.

Source: <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

Substance Use – use of psychoactive substances - which may be legal, illegal, or controlled for use. Intensive substance use may lead to significant impairment or distress, or other problematic results such as recurrent failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home; recurrent use in situations in which it is physically hazardous; recurrent substance-related legal problems; or continued substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance.

Substance Dependency – (“Addiction” is often used synonymously, but is more stigmatizing term) A physiological dependence on a substance, characterized by increased tolerance for the substance (need for increased amounts of the substance to achieve the desired effect, or diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance) and withdrawal (the experience of mental or physical disturbance or reduced functioning upon reduction in substance use). Prolonged use of opioids may or may not result in tolerance or dependence. There are several risk/protective factors that influence a person’s likelihood of dependence.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) – a clinical term describing a syndrome (diagnostic criteria established by American Psychiatric Association) characterized by recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs that cause clinically significant impairment, including health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home. An individual may be diagnosed with a mild, moderate to severe substance use disorder, or a person may meet the criteria, but never be diagnosed with SUD. SUD involving opioid use is termed an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD).

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disorders>

Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) / Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) – Medications used to treat opioid use disorder relieve symptoms of withdrawal and address psychological cravings that cause chemical imbalances in the body. Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) include methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone (also prescribed under various brand names). Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) combines MOUD with behavioral therapy to treat substance use disorders.

Recovery – the process of change, including changes to the brain, through which people improve their health and wellness. Recovery may be accomplished through treatment, therapy, and replacing substance use behaviors with healthy alternative behaviors to live self-directed lives. Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery>

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