



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Healthy People in Healthy Communities

May 7, 2024

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tri-County Collaborative has been awarded a Fentanyl Overdose Prevention Grant to Tackle Rising Overdose Rates.

Today, May 7th, marks Fentanyl Awareness Day; a day dedicated to raising awareness about the dangers of fentanyl and its devastating impact on individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

Fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid, is approximately 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine and has contributed to a staggering rise in opioid-related deaths in recent years. Unbeknownst to people using drugs, fentanyl is frequently and cheaply mixed into other substances like counterfeit prescription pills and other drugs. Combined with its potency, this makes it a particularly lethal substance, often leading to accidental poisonings, overdoses, and fatalities, even in small doses.

Fentanyl-related deaths continue to rise across the Central Coast region in 2023 claiming over 200 lives last year alone (California Overdose Surveillance Data Dashboard; Coroner-Sheriff's Office).

On Fentanyl Awareness Day, we honor the memory of those who have lost their lives to fentanyl overdoses and poisonings while standing in solidarity with individuals and families battling addiction.

The Tri-County Collaborative (TCC), encompassing substance use safety and overdose prevention coalitions along our Central Coast region of Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey counties, renew our commitment to prevention, education, and harm reduction efforts aimed at impacting the devastating wave of opioid-related deaths in our communities. Today, the TCC is proud to announce it has been awarded a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Fentanyl Overdose Prevention Grant. This multi-year grant totaling \$1,280,985 over 3 years, provides critical funding to bolster efforts to combat the alarming increase in fentanyl-related overdoses gripping the region. United, we can leverage the strength of our individual coalitions to maximize our impact across our three neighboring counties in which our communities crossover for home, work, play, and to access needed health care services.

The TCC is composed of healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and government entities unified around the urgent need for comprehensive intervention strategies to address the fentanyl epidemic.

Amidst the growing fentanyl crisis, collaborative action is essential to protect the health and well-being of our communities. This grant represents a significant step forward in our collective

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efforts to prevent overdoses, save lives, and provide support to individuals struggling with substance use disorders.

Key initiatives funded by the CDPH grant include:

1. Providing education programs in schools
2. Supporting overdose prevention and increasing access to naloxone (NARCAN®)
3. Improving local overdose data surveillance
4. Increasing access to substance use disorder recovery services among those addicted to fentanyl or other opioids.

Our collaborative approach is rooted in compassion, equity, and a commitment to addressing the underlying factors driving substance use disorders. Together, we will work to stem the tide of fentanyl-related overdoses and provide support and resources to individuals and families impacted by addiction.

The Tri-County Collaborative extends its gratitude to the California Department of Public Health for its support and partnership in addressing this public health crisis.

For more information and media inquiries about the Tri-County Collaborative and its initiatives, please visit:

Santa Cruz:

- Webpage: hipscc.org/saferx
- Email: SafeRx@hipscc.org

San Benito:

- [Home | San Benito County Opioid Task Force \(sbcoioidtaskforce.org\)](https://sbcoioidtaskforce.org)
- Email: sbcotf@cosb.us

Monterey:

- Website: ccodp.org
- Email: contact@ccodp.org



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