

Study Shows Community Coalition-Prioritized Strategies Increased Naloxone Education and Distribution in Jails



This study shows that the HEALing Communities Study (HCS) significantly helped jails expand access to naloxone and overdose education to individuals leaving incarceration.

The results underscore the value of a community-engaged intervention that leveraged local coalitions to plan and implement Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) strategies to expand access to life-saving overdose prevention services within correctional settings.

The Problem




Overdose is one of the leading causes of death for individuals following incarceration.^[1]



Individuals are **129 times** more likely to die from an overdose within the first two weeks after release.^[2]



 **25%** of U.S. jails provide naloxone to individuals upon release.^[3,4]

The Study

Researchers assessed the impact of the HCS’s Communities That HEAL intervention, which supported local coalitions in planning and implementing OEND strategies to address overdose risk among individuals impacted by incarceration.

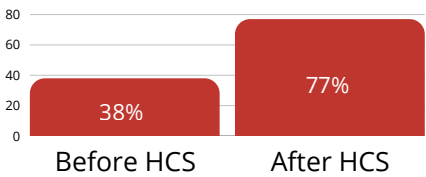
Jail-based OEND outcomes were measured through surveys administered to HCS Intervention communities (n = 34) that received the intervention first and implemented strategies between January 1, 2020, and June 30, 2022. These results were compared to HCS Waitlist control communities (n = 33), which did not implement strategies until after Intervention communities concluded.

Data were collected from all 67 participating communities between 2019 and 2022 at three points: baseline and two annual follow-ups.

Key Findings

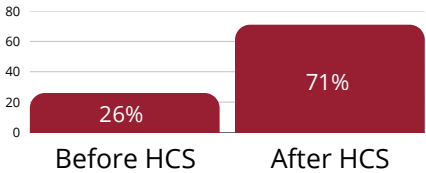
Increased Overdose Education:

Intervention jails that provided overdose education increased from 38% at baseline to 77% after receiving HCS support.



Increased Naloxone Distribution:

Intervention jails that distributed naloxone at release increased from 26% at baseline to 71% after receiving HCS support.



Education Strategies Varied:

Education was provided through various methods (e.g., tablets, kiosks, or facility communications devices), which allowed streamlined completion tracking and easy identification of who should receive naloxone.

Naloxone was Distributed at Various Points:

Some jails provided naloxone upon release, while others offered naloxone at intake and placed it in personal belongings. Access methods included discharge kits, from vending machines in release areas, or through vouchers redeemable at community-based organizations or pharmacies.

The Article

Hunt, T., Oser, C. B., Friedmann, P. D., Mack, N., Balvanz, P., Freisthler, B., Chandler, R. K., Hochstatter, K., Harris, D. R., Glasgow, L., D’Costa, L., Russo, M. R., Eggleston, B., Aldridge, A., Bellair, P., Cogan, A. G., David, J. L., El-Bassel, N., Goddard-Eckrich, D., Gomori, S., ... Sprunger, J. G. (2025). Overdose education and naloxone distribution in jails: Examining the impact of the Communities That HEAL intervention in 4 states. *Health & justice*, 13(1), 47. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-025-00353-5>

Learn More
<https://bit.ly/4mJOKWx>

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