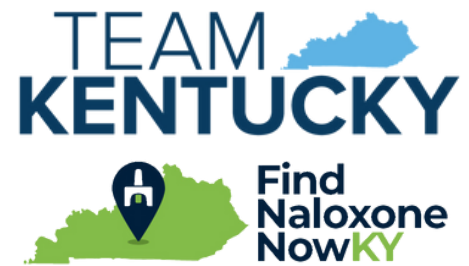


Kentucky Naloxone Saturation Strategic Plan: 2025-2026



To reduce overdose mortality in an equitable manner across the commonwealth, government agencies and community-based organizations must collaborate to distribute naloxone, the drug used to reverse opioid overdose. Implementing this naloxone saturation strategic plan will maximize the impact of resources, support coordination across agencies and enable Kentucky to significantly reduce overdose mortality in disproportionately affected communities.

Saturation means that naloxone is available for at least 80% of witnessed overdoses (Irvine et al., 2022). Saturation in Kentucky will require delivery of Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) to people most likely to witness overdose. Strategic planning will focus resources proactively by promoting naloxone saturation across key agencies on a statewide level (top-down), while simultaneously prioritizing local saturation at the county level based on need and readiness (bottom-up). This approach will address changing patterns of substance use in a rapidly evolving risk environment.

As the landscape of risk continues to change, rates of opioid overdose remain elevated in Kentucky, particularly among Black, Hispanic, and Appalachian Kentuckians.

Opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2019–2023

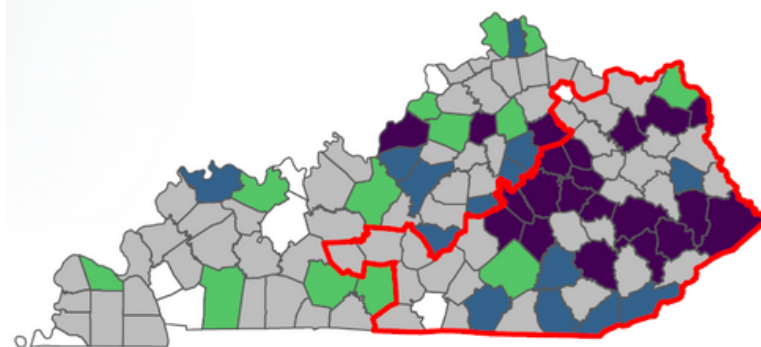
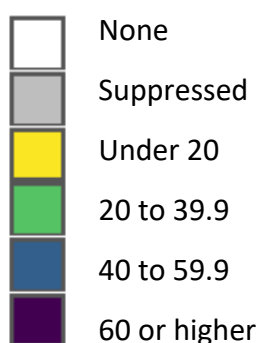
Race	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022-2023 % change	2019-2023 % change
Hispanic	7.8	12.2	13.7	22.1	17.8	-19%	+128%
Non-Hispanic Black	22.2	38.6	53.4	59.3	58.6	-1%	+164%
Non-Hispanic White	25.2	40.5	44.4	40.8	36.4	-11%	+44%

Opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2019–2023

Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022-2023 % change	2019-2023 % change
Appalachian counties	21.7	39.4	51.6	47.2	47.4	0%	+118%
Non-Appalachian counties	24.1	36.9	39.3	38.1	32.8	-14%	+36%

Rates have been age-adjusted using the US Standard 2000 population and are presented as the number of deaths per 100,000 population.

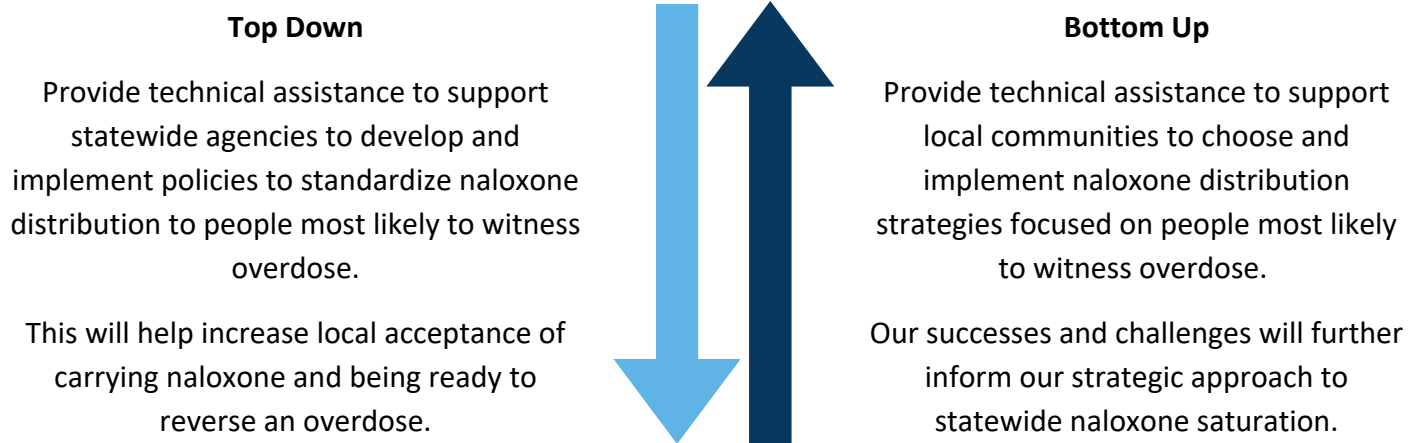
Drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2023



Red line denotes Appalachian counties.

(Steel et al., 2024)

Strategic planning will focus resources proactively by promoting naloxone saturation across key agencies on a statewide level (top-down), while simultaneously prioritizing local saturation at the county level based on need and readiness (bottom-up).



Top-down

This plan will support critically positioned agencies across Kentucky by providing technical assistance with policy creation to implement standardized distribution of naloxone to individuals likely to witness overdose. These policies will emphasize opt-out, hand-to-hand distribution over written prescriptions. The following distribution settings will be offered technical assistance to implement agency-wide naloxone distribution policies.

- Administrative Office of the Courts
 - Pretrial Services
 - Alternative Sentencing Program
 - Specialty Courts
- Community Mental Health Centers
- Regional Prevention Centers
- Department of Corrections
 - State Prisons
 - Regional Jails
- Probation and Parole
- Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers
- Rural Health Clinics
- Hospitals
 - Emergency Departments
 - Labor and Delivery, Perinatal Units
- Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services
- Local Health Departments
- Narcotic Treatment Programs
- Recovery Community Centers

Bottom-up

Local saturation will require tailored technical assistance to implement naloxone distribution strategies that focus on people most likely to witness overdose. The Kentucky Department for Public Health Overdose Prevention Liaison will work with Local Health Departments, Kentucky Income Reinvestment Program’s Target 4 Project Health Education Coordinators, and local Collaboration Specialists embedded in Community Mental Health Centers to provide capacity-building technical assistance to communities in response to trends in overdose mortality.

This team will evaluate local factors contributing to overdose trends and help partners select and tailor strategies that promote naloxone saturation within each community’s unique social-ecological landscape. Working from materials published on the Find Naloxone Now KY website, this technical assistance will support Local Health Departments and community-based organizations to collaborate with people with lived experience and provide OEND to people most likely to witness overdose.

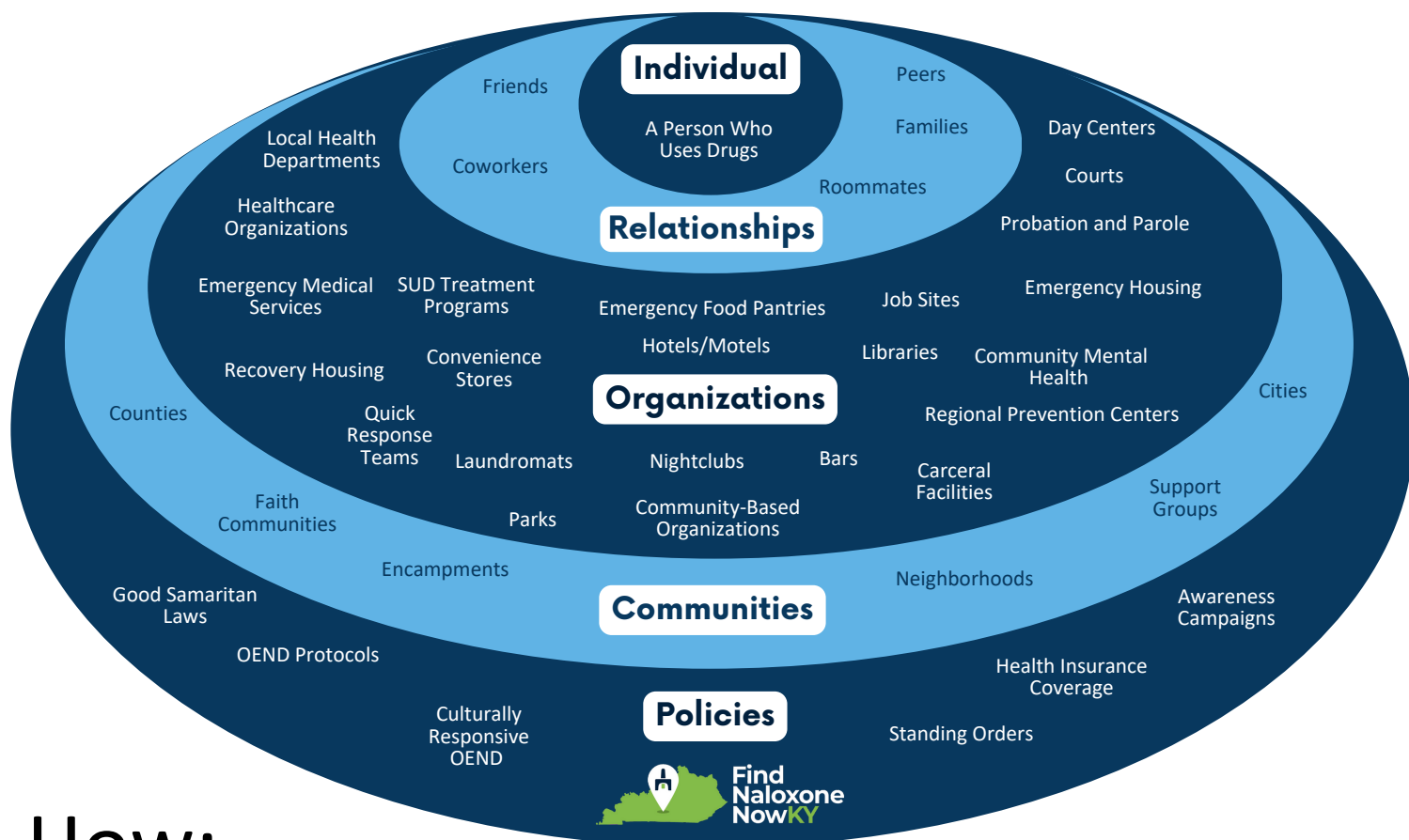
Saturation Plan



What: Distribute naloxone, the drug used to reverse opioid overdose.

Who and Where:

Distribute naloxone to the people most likely to witness overdose in the places where it is needed most.



How:

Active distribution strategies bring naloxone to people, meeting them where they are and offering support.

Passive distribution strategies make naloxone available to communities, conveniently and anonymously.

- Community OEND Events
- Culturally Responsive OEND Materials
- First Responder Leave-Behind
- Mail Order
- Opt-Out Hand-to-Hand Distribution
- Secondary or Peer-to-Peer Distribution
- Quick Response Teams (Post-Overdose Response Teams)

- Harm Reduction Vending Machines
- Emergency Naloxone Storage Boxes
- Naloxone Kiosks

Looking Forward

Through implementation of this plan, top-down and bottom-up strategies merge to inform a dynamic and evolving approach to statewide naloxone saturation. Standardized naloxone distribution policies across identified agencies will further normalize carrying naloxone across the commonwealth. This increased acceptance will, in turn, expand local opportunities for capacity building and technical assistance. Through publication and dissemination, this plan will also serve as a resource for independent and local implementation of the outlined strategies. The collaborative partnerships that result from all of these efforts will help us continue to identify new agency partners, distribution locations, and innovative strategies as we work to ensure that naloxone is available when and where it is needed most.

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