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Health Department Awards Five Mini-Grants for Overdose Prevention and Response

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) recently awarded five mini-grants totaling \$47,500 to community organizations working to prevent fatal opioid overdoses in communities disproportionately impacted by overdoses.

Each of the organizations: Bridge to the Mountains, Prevention Point Pittsburgh, Gamma Lambda Sigma Alumni Chapter of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Ross/West View Emergency Medical Services, and Families Turning, will be awarded \$9,500. Activities will be carried out by the end of 2019.

Funding for these mini-grants is provided by the Hillman Foundation through a grant (<http://bit.ly/2BaEVNg>) awarded to the Health Department in May of 2018.

“In an effort to address the opioid overdose epidemic, we are excited to provide funding to organizations that are working to address this issue,” said Dr. Karen Hacker, ACHD Director. “Their efforts in disproportionately impacted communities will help to target at-risk populations, employ evidence-based practices, and develop partnerships with multiple organizations. We look forward to collaborating with these organizations as they help extend efforts to address the complex issues of opioid overdose, use and addiction.”

The selected organizations represent a diverse approach to the epidemic and include education, outreach, connection to clinical services and harm reduction strategies. Following is more information about these organizations and their efforts:

- [Bridge to the Mountains](#) serves the street populations of Pittsburgh, and surrounding communities. Its primary operation involves daily street outreach and developing relationships with those living in the streets and assisting them with meeting the most basic needs to survive on the streets, and whenever possible to transition out of street living. The organization will utilize funds to continue to expand its Narcan distribution and training to the street population and will focus on harm reduction to those at greatest risk of overdose.
- Since 2005 [Prevention Point Pittsburgh](#) (PPP) has been the largest provider of community-based overdose prevention training and free naloxone distribution services in the region. Additional services include a syringe services program, and PPP currently operates three syringe access service locations in the City of Pittsburgh: East Liberty, Perry Hilltop and the Hill District. The organization will utilize funds to support the distribution of sterile injection equipment at all of PPP’s sites, but will mainly serve to increase the demand that will result from the addition of a syringe service site in Carrick in the future.
- Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., is an international organization built primarily on the ideology of promoting Brotherhood, Scholarship, and Service. The [Gamma Lambda Sigma Alumni Chapter](#) (GLS) is the alumni affiliate of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity in Western Pa. GLS will utilize funds to conduct Narcan training sessions, to build pop-up opioid overdose prevention outreach tents and do presentations on opioid overdoses and its effects the black community. The target neighborhoods are McKeesport, Penn Hills, Wilksburg, and Braddock.
- [Ross/West View Emergency Medical Services](#) will utilize funds to best serve the people who are affected by opioid overdoses in the communities that it responds to through education, awareness and prevention. This includes the distribution of brochures and pamphlets that provide resources for those who are

addicted and their families, conducting CPR trainings, and holding community events designed to inform at-risk persons, their loved ones, family members, friends and co-workers of the dangers of opioid overdoses.

- [Families Turning](#) provides families and friends, along with Certified Recovery Specialists, the support to empower effective and appropriate relationships with people who are using drugs. The organization will use funds to conduct public workshops for the families of people facing addiction and train Certified Recovery Specialists to run weekly support meetings for recoverees and family members. Activities will target high-risk groups in Allentown and East Liberty.

Overdoses can be prevented. It is vitally important that county residents have access to the best and most effective treatment to support their recovery. For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/2RTlrAZ>

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