

2022 ACTION PLAN

Philadelphia Opioid Response

The plan to save lives, rejuvenate impacted communities, and recover from the Opioid Crisis

August 2022

Acknowledgment

TO OUR PARTNERS: The Opioid Response Unit is deeply grateful to the countless community organizations, residents, and caring neighbors that serve as the eyes, ears, and backbone of the Kensington community. Your guidance and support are both crucial and irreplaceable, and we thank you for your continued patience and partnership as we work to respond to the national opioid overdose epidemic.



STATEMENT FROM MAYOR JIM KENNEY

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges for those impacted by the opioid overdose crisis. In 2020, Philadelphia witnessed the highest number of fatal overdoses in one year since 2017 and a significant increase in overdoses among Black and Hispanic/Latino/a/x Philadelphians. While there are no quick fixes to these issues, the City of Philadelphia remains committed to fighting the overdose crisis.

The City established the Opioid Response Unit (ORU) in February 2020 to respond to Philadelphia's opioid epidemic. The ORU's 2022 Action Plan describes its progress and goals addressing the health and safety impacts of this crisis in four key areas: Community Support, Prevention, Public Safety, and Treatment.

The City has used an equity lens in implementing all opioid response Strategic Initiatives, focusing on underserved communities, targeted interventions in overdose hotspots, and alignment of City resources across departments.

We have seen significant progress despite the continued and evolving challenges. Our commitment remains strong and we firmly believe that our communities can be healthy, safe, and thriving.

STATEMENT FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR TUMAR ALEXANDER

The City of Philadelphia has promised to be transparent, empathetic, and unrelenting in the fight against the opioid epidemic. The 2022 Opioid Response Unit Action Plan is proof of that promise. It provides a breakdown of the interagency effort underway to rid our city of the harms associated with the opioid epidemic and the violence of the narcotics trade.




This year's report is a reminder that we are in the midst of this fight. Data shows overdose rates have sharply risen, continuing to disproportionately impact our most vulnerable communities. Trends show that drug markets are fueling violence in our streets, taking far too many lives from us before their time.

It is sobering how much we have to contend with, but this report also shows that there is hope. Our efforts in many areas are working, specifically, our strong community-focused collaboration and investment in life saving harm reduction tools. Philadelphia has seen many hard days and come a long way in understanding what is needed to make a difference and turn the tide.

We will continue to work every day, with every resource at our disposal, to chart a path out of these troubled times. We stand with you, grieve with you, and will continue to fight with you to make Philadelphia the best place it can be.



The information in the chart below outlines the Opioid Response Unit's Key Accomplishments of 2021 and Key Goals for 2022. These initiatives continue to pave the way for an equitable response to the opioid epidemic.

STRATEGY GROUP	KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2021	KEY GOALS FOR 2022
<p>PREVENTION</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched the “Fentanyl Is in Everything” campaign. • Distributed six mini-grants (three grants of \$50,000 each and an additional three of \$10,000 each from Vital Strategies) to organizations serving Black and Hispanic populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase harm reduction-based engagement for Black and Brown Philadelphians. • Expand education and prevention services to Philadelphia School District and/or charter schools (naloxone training, “how to spot an overdose,” etc.). • Pilot alternative response models to provide continuity of care. • Implement juvenile justice and child welfare training series.
<p>TREATMENT</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched Mobile Outreach and Recovery Services (MORS) team that targets individuals seeking treatment for behavioral health care in communities deemed high risk for substance misuse and overdose. The MORS team works closely with Prevention Point Philadelphia, its overdose surge vehicle, and Penn Medicine in various communities on weekdays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Medication Assisted Treatment access in the Philadelphia Department of Prisons by increasing daily doses of buprenorphine. • Develop and implement a Mobile Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program.
<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established Kensington Community Resilience Fund (KCRF) which provided \$10,000 grants to 20 community-based organizations. • Opened Beacon House on Temple Episcopal campus and relocated emergency housing from the Kensington Avenue commercial corridor. • Launched Encampment Resolution Team (ERT). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Division of Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction’s Bereavement Care Program to assist the grieving process of children impacted by substance use-related deaths. • Disseminate a second round of Kensington Community Resilience Fund grants. • Complete a 100 Day Challenge to connect unsheltered people in Kensington with substance use disorder to shelter and treatment. • Increase Same Day Work and Pay participants by providing additional opportunities through expanded CLIP and Project Reach programming. • Identify service providers to support residents with tangled titles, deed fraud, and housing improvement programs, and provide these City services through alternative times and locations, including additional resource fairs.
<p>PUBLIC SAFETY</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched Kensington Police District with dedicated foot and bike patrols. • Implemented Coordinated Diversion to target open air drug use. • Successfully piloted the Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) program to ensure behavioral health support for 911 responses. • Maintained a consistent six-days-per-week behavioral health presence at SEPTA’s Huntingdon and Allegheny stations. • Expanded Police Assisted Diversion to all three East Division police districts and coordinated closely with Philadelphia Police Department Vice Unit and the Narcotics Strike Force. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Police Assisted Diversion (PAD) facilities to include a secure location in East Police Division with additional space for Emergency Medical Services, Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS), and touchdown space for outreach and engagement workers in the field. • Expand PAD Co-Responder capacity for evening shifts. • Expand CIRT team capacity to 2nd shift with citywide presence. • Pilot diversion court in East Division Expand Group Violence Intervention (GVI) to Police East Division.



Overview

VISION To save lives and heal communities, Philadelphia will lead in preventing and treating opioid use disorder and breaking the cycle of trauma. We will achieve this through a data-driven focus on root causes of addiction, collaboration with communities, and strategically mobilizing resources.

Combatting the opioid epidemic and the pain it has caused Philadelphians is a significant test. However, the City of Philadelphia is committed to reducing the trauma the opioid crisis has caused. The Opioid Response Unit (ORU) recognizes that responding to the crisis requires a long-term commitment. Solutions that are implemented must consider the diversity of people affected.

The ORU focuses on preventing and treating opioid use disorder and helping communities recover by ensuring City departments operate with a unified strategy




and shared resources. The Opioid Response Unit manages four Strategy Groups (Treatment, Prevention, Community Support, and Public Safety), each of which manages multiple Strategic Initiatives to address both short and long-term goals. The Strategic Initiatives outlined below were designed to be implemented by each Strategy Group over a period of five years, with yearly evolving goals to reflect current drug-related trends. The below chart represents the Opioid Response Unit's Strategy Groups, Strategic Initiatives, and participating agencies:

ORU STRATEGY GROUPS			
STRATEGY GROUP	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT STRATEGY</p>  <p>GOAL Increase community engagement & opportunities for residents</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scale Housing First/Permanent Supportive Housing in opioid hotspot neighborhoods. 2. Expand employment programs for at-risk youth in hotspot neighborhoods. 3. Develop holistic and trauma-informed healing centered engagement program for communities, individuals, and families (parents, children, siblings, etc.) impacted by OUD (coordinate with Public Safety Strategy). <p><i>Coordinate with Public Safety Strategy #7: Pursue permanent closure of drugs corners and activation of community spaces in hotspot neighborhoods.</i></p>	<p>Managing Director's Office – Health & Human Services</p>	<p>Commerce, Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS), Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO), Homeless Services, Housing & Community Development, Law, L&I, MDO – Community Services Cluster (311 and CLIP), Mayor's Commission on Aging, Parks & Recreation, Planning, Public Health.</p>

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ORU STRATEGY GROUPS (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY GROUP	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<p>PREVENTION STRATEGY</p>  <p>GOAL Reduce overdoses & save lives</p>	<p>4. Reduce overdoses and increase harm reduction.</p> <p>5. Scale Emergency Medical Services Alternative Response Units.</p>	Public Health	DBHIDS, Fire, MDO-HHS, Police, Prisons
<p>PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGY</p>  <p>GOAL Reduce drug market related criminal activity & increase social service delivery</p>	<p>6. Improve coordinated narcotics strategy between local, state and federal agencies (coordinate with Roadmap to Safer Communities).</p> <p>7. Pursue permanent closure of drug corners and activation of community spaces in hotspot neighborhoods (coordinate with Community Support Strategy Group and Roadmap to Safer Communities).</p> <p>8. Scale Police-Assisted Diversion with co-responders.</p>	Police and MDO Criminal Justice	DBHIDS, SEPTA, School District, Town Watch, OHS, MDO, Parks and Recreation
<p>TREATMENT STRATEGY</p>  <p>GOAL Increase access to treatment</p>	<p>9. Expand warm hand-off program*, including following incarceration.</p> <p>10. Expand mobile medication assisted treatment (MAT).</p> <p>11. Execute Medication First policies, provider incentives, and expanded access to treatment.</p> <p><i>*The term "warm hand-off" refers to a personalized connection between service levels of care, in hopes that a personalized connection will increase utilization.</i></p>	DBHIDS	Public Health, Law, MDO-HHS, Prisons, Community Behavioral Health

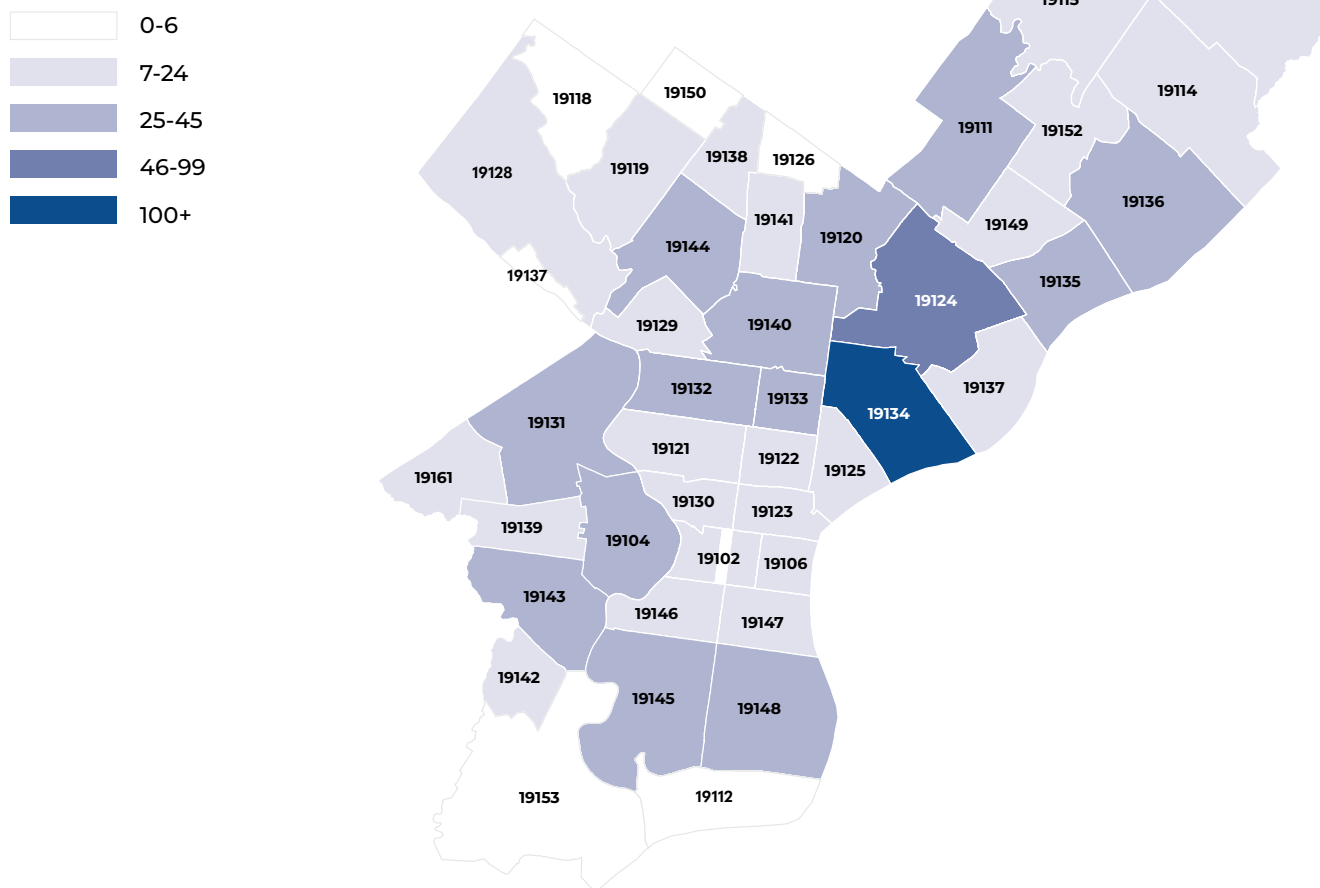


Overdose Numbers Continue to Rise

There has been a sharp increase in opioid overdose deaths over the last decade in Philadelphia, a trend that is reflected nationwide. In 2020, drug overdose deaths topped 100,000 for the first time in American history and in Philadelphia, opioids were involved in 86% of all drug deaths. At the time of publishing, calendar year 2021 data is not yet available. However, during the first six months of 2021, Philadelphia recorded 639 drug overdose deaths, a nearly 10 percent increase over the same period the previous year. This puts Philadelphia on a trajectory to mirror national trends and once again record the highest number of drug overdoses in the city's history.

In 2020 the largest number of overdose fatalities (139 deaths) occurred in the 19134 zip code followed by 19124 (83 deaths), 19140 (69 deaths), 19133 (59 deaths), and 19132 (55 deaths), as depicted in the map below. Citywide data show that 88% of fatal overdose deaths occur outside of Kensington, and that 60% of overdose deaths occur inside homes and residences.

Number of Unintentional Overdoses by Incident Zip Code, 2020

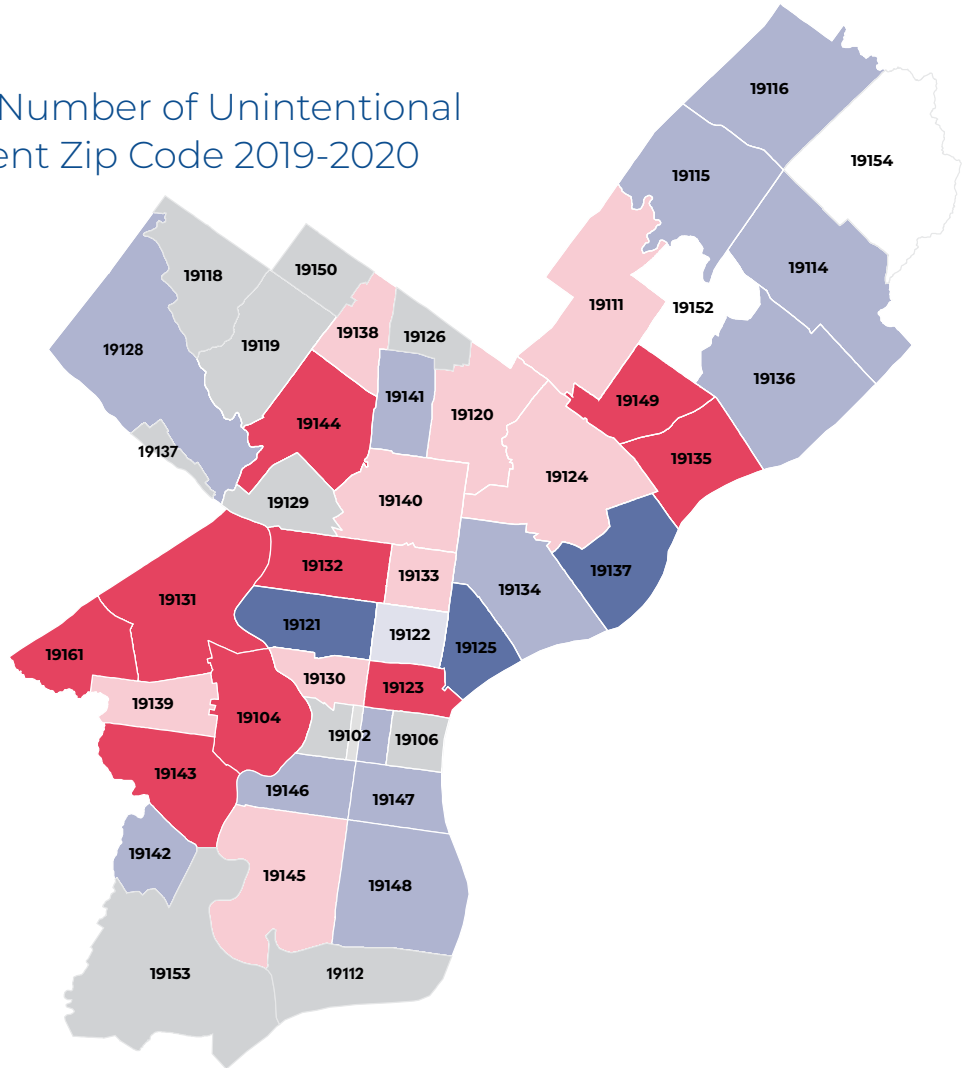
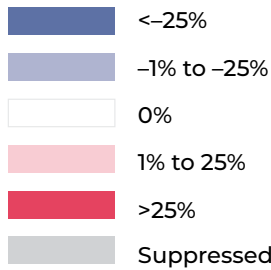


OVERDOSE NUMBERS CONTINUE TO RISE

Although the total number of overdose deaths increased across Philadelphia from 2019 to 2020, increases were not uniform across the city. The largest percent increase occurred in West Philadelphia and Northeast Philadelphia zip codes, as shown below.

Percent Change of Number of Unintentional Overdoses by Incident Zip Code 2019-2020

PERCENT CHANGE RANGE



SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

COVID-19

2022 marks the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nationally, data suggest that necessary, public health-oriented restrictions associated with the pandemic may have contributed to a rise in overdose rates.¹ Social isolation, which was necessary to reduce the spread of the virus and was encouraged by public health guidelines, may have had the unintended effect of causing more individuals to use drugs alone. Solo drug use is especially dangerous, and common drugs, like opioids, have increased in strength raising the risk of overdose. Fewer treatment beds were available due to social distancing and many outpatient treatment programs went virtual.

FENTANYL

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times more powerful than heroin and is currently dominating both the local and national drug supply. Over the past decade in Philadelphia, the percentage of opioid overdose deaths in which fentanyl was present skyrocketed from 11 percent in 2010 to 94 percent in 2020. Fentanyl is an opioid often found in heroin or made into counterfeit pills. It could also contaminate other drugs including cocaine and other

¹Baumgartner, Jesse C. and David C. Radley. "Overdose Deaths Surged in the First Half of 2021, Underscoring Urgent Need for Action." The Commonwealth Fund. 2022. <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/blog/2022/overdose-deaths-surged-first-half-2021-underscoring-urgent-need-action>



stimulants. As a result, people who use drugs may not be aware of the presence of fentanyl and may underestimate the dangers of what is in their drug supply. In response to the dangers associated with fentanyl and to encourage people to better understand the current drug supply, in August 2021, the Mayor of Philadelphia signed Executive Order 4-21, decriminalizing the possession and distribution of fentanyl test strips and encouraging their use.

RACIAL DISPARITY

Mirroring national data, racial disparities are acutely prevalent in fatal overdose data in Philadelphia. Overall, opioid overdose deaths increased between 2019 and 2020, however the demographic profile of unintentional overdose deaths shifted – the age-adjusted mortality rate increased 33.5% among non-Hispanic Black individuals while the age-adjusted mortality rate decreased 9.2% among non-Hispanic White individuals.

In 2019, the Philadelphia Board of Health authorized OD Stat, Philadelphia’s overdose fatality review board.

OD Stat aims to humanize the overdose crisis, better understand the circumstances of decedents’ drug use and deaths and create recommendations to provide culturally competent support and resources to those most in need. OD Stat convenes stakeholders, including those with lived experience, to meet on a quarterly basis. This supports the City’s efforts to reduce death due to unintentional overdose. OD Stat and the Opioid Response Unit will partner in 2022 to coordinate and streamline the implementation of the recommendations.



Spotlight on Kensington

Kensington has been singled out as a hotspot in the opioid epidemic, a reputation that should not overshadow the vibrant, dedicated, and passionate community that calls Kensington home. The City of Philadelphia is deeply grateful for the Kensington, Harrowgate, and Fairhill residents that continue to serve as stewards guiding their communities. The below information provides an update of 2021's Kensington-area focused goals as well as a partial overview of 2021 Kensington-area capital investments.

2021 ACTION PLAN - KENSINGTON	
AREA GOALS	PROGRESS
<p>Launch the Kensington Community Resilience Fund</p>	<p>The Kensington Community Resilience Fund awarded \$200,000 in July 2021 to 20 organizations that work in Kensington, Harrowgate, and Fairhill. The grants were awarded by a Community Grant Committee to support work in six areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety • Youth development • Workforce development • Beautification and blight removal • Responding to community trauma • Connecting residents to resources <p>Another round of funding at \$200,000 was awarded in March 2022, bringing the total invested to \$400,000 in new resources to support residents and community-based organizations in Kensington, Harrowgate, and Fairhill.</p>
<p>Open Beacon House emergency shelter</p>	<p>The Office of Homeless Services (OHS) supported Prevention Point in opening Beacon House on the Temple Episcopal campus, moving the 60-bed emergency housing facility from Kensington Avenue.</p>
<p>Target city services at McPherson Square and the intersection of Kensington Avenue and Allegheny Avenue</p>	<p>During the summer of 2021, the City convened the Treatment and Wellness Resource Fair in McPherson Square to streamline the provision of city services. At the Resource Fair, residents were able to access COVID-19 testing and vaccination and access supports including those provided by the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity and BenePhilly. At the Resource Fair, City agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged with 1,231 unsheltered people and 372 residents • Engaged 85 people with substance use treatment services • Engaged 40 people with emergency housing services, 19 people were referred to rental assistance programs and seven people accepted Stranded Travelers Assistance • Provided medical assistance to 196 people • Administered Hepatitis-A vaccines to 60 people • Administered 71 COVID-19 vaccines <p>The ORU convened multiple City agencies to create safe spaces at McPherson Square, as defined by community leaders, by enforcing curfew, addressing outdoor drug use, and coordinating closely between Park Rangers and Police to enforce no-camping rules.</p> <p>The City resolved encampments near Kensington and Allegheny and on Lehigh Avenue in August 2021 and has dedicated social services, sanitation resources, and Police to maintain that area.</p>

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2021 ACTION PLAN – KENSINGTON (CONTINUED)

AREA GOALS	PROGRESS
<p>Increase behavioral health crisis response by piloting the Crisis Intervention Response Team (“CIRT”)</p>	<p>The Office of Criminal Justice, in coordination with DBHIDS, established the East Division CIRT Team. Since inception, there have been over 200 engagements that originated with a call to 911. Of those engagements, fewer than five have led to an arrest.</p>
<p>Coordinate a \$500,000 contract between the Managing Director’s Office and HACE CDC to deliver home repairs</p>	<p>The Community Support Strategy looked to maximize City services and access to resources to maintain properties in Kensington.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through a program funded by the Managing Director’s Office, HACE repaired the exteriors of 100 homes in the summer of 2021. • The Basic Systems Repair Program (BSRP) provides free electrical, plumbing, and other repairs for eligible residents of owner-occupied homes. In 2021, 117 homes received basic systems repair. • The Adaptive Modification Program provides free services to low-income people with permanent physical disabilities to make their homes more accessible. In 2021, five homes received adaptive modifications. • In 2021, 12 households in the 19134 zip code received help with tangled titles.
<p>Continue Kensington Coordination Strategy</p>	<p>Multiple outreach and social service providers huddle weekly outside of the PAD East Service Hub at F & Allegheny. The huddles provide an opportunity for teams to share information on resources (shelter bed availability, treatment assessment capacity), hotspots for outreach engagement, overdose surge locations, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PAD East Service Hub houses Prevention Point, Merakey, Salvation Army and DBHIDS Community Wellness Engagement Unit (CWEU). • In 2021 the Hub had 1,208 unique walk-ins (about 100/month). • In fiscal year 2021, the Salvation Army enrolled 139 people involved in sex work into case management services.
<p>Launch Office of Homeless Services’ Encampment Resolution Team (ERT)</p>	<p>The Encampment Resolution Program (ERP) brings together health providers, social services providers, and other partners to do outreach to encampments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS launched the Encampment Resolution Team (ERT) in June. The ERT focuses on encampment hot spots in Kensington and is staffed by One Day At A Time (“ODAAT”), an addiction recovery organization. The ERT is focused on connecting homeless individuals with shelter and social services.



In addition to the specific 2021 Action Plan goals updated above, the below table provides milestones and updates related to ongoing Kensington-area initiatives.

ONGOING KENSINGTON INITIATIVES	UPDATES
<p>Increase behavioral health crisis response by piloting the Crisis Intervention Response Team (“CIRT”)</p>	<p>Police Assisted Diversion (“PAD”) offers programs and initiatives committed to diverting low-level, non-violent offenders away from the criminal justice system. PAD focuses on reducing the harm that low-level criminal activity might pose to individuals and the community. In 2021, PAD increased operations in East Division for a total of four dedicated officers available Monday-Friday for both day and night shifts. PAD Officers will be integrated into the forthcoming Behavioral Health Unit.</p> <p>In 2021, PAD service providers completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 410 assessments for inpatient treatment · 194 Crisis Response Center transports · 139 admissions to outpatient treatment · 236 shelter placements
<p>Kensington Police District</p>	<p>The Kensington Police District launched in January 2021. The district has a dedicated foot beat and bike patrol officers. The area has experienced an overall decrease of 17 percent in violent crime. Most notably, the number of shooting victims fell by 32 percent. There also was a 43 percent reduction in aggravated assault with a firearm. Additionally, a 23 percent reduction in property crime occurred, with a reduction in residential of 50 percent compared with the same period last year.</p> <p>The new mini district supported the revised narcotics enforcement strategy that leveraged officers in East Division to target mid-level operations. 2021 statistics for Kensington Police District (KPD):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 570 arrests — 270 for possession with intent to deliver · 54 Firearms confiscated — 35 Violation of Uniform Firearms Act arrests (VUFA)
<p>SEPTA Co-Responder Coordination</p>	<p>SEPTA developed a pilot entitled Serving a Vulnerable Entity (SAVE). The SAVE model created teams consisting of behavioral health professionals and SEPTA police to offer treatment options and other resources to people in and around SEPTA stations. The pilot was in coordination with Merakey. During the summer of 2021, the SAVE unit expanded to include an additional provider, One Day At A Time (ODAAT) to maintain a consistent behavioral health presence at additional SEPTA stops with increased frequency.</p>
<p>Playstreets</p>	<p>Playstreets is a City of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation program that closes streets to traffic to allow children to play and included cooling stations, sports, and arts kits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 59 Playstreets were opened during summer 2021 in Kensington, Fairhill, and Harrowgate · Lunches were distributed to approximately 1,380 kids
<p>School Safe Corridors</p>	<p>Town Watch Integrated Services (TWIS) provided technical assistance to the elementary and middle schools in the School District of Philadelphia’s (SDP) Opioid Task Force so that safe corridors could be established for the children. Additionally, TWIS monitored corridors to support the SDP for the following schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Elkins Elementary School · Sheppard Elementary School · Willard Elementary School · Conwell Elementary School · Sheridan Elementary School

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ONGOING KENSINGTON INITIATIVES	UPDATES
<p>Project Reach</p>	<p>Project Reach is a harm reduction-based sanitation program housed under the Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Division (SUPHR) of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. Project Reach focuses on providing environmental services in communities that have been impacted by today's substance use crisis and provides hazmat services focused on human waste and drug-related clean-up. In 2021, Project Reach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Hosted over 150 volunteers· Distributed 1355 doses of Narcan Nasal Spray· Distributed 115 doses of Intramuscular naloxone· Distributed 745 Fentanyl Test Strips· Collected 29,655 syringes· Collected 7,489 trash bags



2022 Strategic Initiatives and Goals

In 2022, the ORU's strategic initiative goals focus on equity, culturally competent community support, and harm reduction as key components of the overall opioid response.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Strategic Initiative One: Develop holistic and trauma-informed engagement program for communities, families, and individuals impacted by OUD.

Strategic Initiative Two: Scale Housing First/Permanent Supportive Housing in opioid hotspot neighborhoods.

Goal One: Complete a 100 Day Challenge to achieve targeted, specific goals related to homelessness in the Kensington area. The 100 Day Challenge will include, but will not be limited to, evidenced-based reentry programming, dedicated shelter space for couples, housing vouchers, supportive housing for recovery, transportation, nursing support, wound care and coordination and alignment of resources for both sheltered and unsheltered people in the Kensington areas.

Goal Two: Increase housing availability and related shelter services, by both type and location.

Strategic Initiative Three: Expand employment (including youth opportunities) and other programs in hotspot neighborhoods.

Goal One: Increase Same Day Work and Pay participants by providing additional opportunities through expanded CLIP and Project Reach programming.

Strategic Initiative Four: In coordination with the Public Safety Strategy Group, pursue permanent closure of drug corners and activation of community spaces in hotspot neighborhoods.

Goal One: Support residents in improving quality of life.

Goal Two: Improve the physical condition of opioid-affected communities.



PREVENTION

Strategic Initiative One: Reduce overdoses and increase harm reduction.

Goal One: Provide city-wide, targeted harm reduction, community education and connections to support and resources. This work will stem from intersectional considerations, emerging trends, risk profiles and currently under-met needs, as described in the City-Wide Engagement section below.

Goal Two: Ensure communication around harm reduction is culturally competent and meets the needs of unique individuals.

Goal Three: Offer supportive services to families impacted by substance use.

Strategic Initiative Two: Scale Emergency Medical Service Alternative Response Units.

Goal One: Expand AR-2 Operational Hours.

Goal Two: Expand AR-2 Geographic Footprint.





PUBLIC SAFETY

Strategic Initiative One: In coordination with the Community Support Strategy Group, pursue permanent closure of drug corners and activation of community spaces in hotspot neighborhoods.

Goal One: Create safe spaces with enforcement of curfew, no camping, and no outdoor drug use at all community parks in Kensington, Harrowgate, and Fairhill.

Goal Two: Support Parks and Recreation Summer Programming at Play Parks, Swim Philly, and Play Streets.

Strategic Initiative Two: Scale Police-Assisted Diversion (PAD) with co-responders.

Goal One: Expand PAD to Northeast Police Division with mobile behavioral health supports concentrated in the 15th police district.

Strategic Initiative Three: Improve coordinated narcotics strategy between local, state, and federal agencies.

Goal One: Expand Group Violence Intervention (GVI) to East Division.

Goal Two: Pilot diversion courts in East Division.



TREATMENT

Strategic Initiative One: Execute Medication First policies, expand Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) provision and provider incentives and expand access to treatment.

Goal One: Enhance access to existing treatment systems.

Goal Two: support Recovery Houses to become licensed through the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP).

Strategic Initiative Two: Expand mobile medication assisted treatment initiatives.

Goal One: Develop and implement a Mobile Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program, with the goal of transitioning individuals to a clinic to preserve capacity to serve new patients seeking care.

Strategic Initiative Three: Expand Warm Handoff Program, including following incarceration.

Goal One: Develop warm handoff culture across systems.

The Opioid Response Unit relies on public health data to guide its goals. As such, the Strategic Initiative related to prescriber oversight will be maintained and sustained, however no further action steps were deemed necessary at the time of publishing.

Recent data reflects a drastic reduction of both the number of prescriptions generated and the quantity of opioids. Specifically, "[t]he number of opioid prescriptions less than or equal to 89 morphine milligram equivalents (MME) prescribed to Philadelphia residents decreased from 219,480 prescriptions in the first quarter of 2017 to 133,071 total prescriptions in the last quarter of 2020. During the same time period, high dose opioid prescriptions, which consist of prescriptions that are 90 MME or higher, decreased from 53,848 prescriptions in the first quarter of 2017 to 27,672 in the last quarter of 2020.



City-Wide Engagement

In addition to the Kensington-area initiatives described above and in response to data indicating the increase in city-wide fatal and non-fatal overdose, the Opioid Response Unit leads and supports targeted trainings, workshops, and community conversations throughout Philadelphia. The initiatives below represent some of this ever evolving work.

ENGAGING MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

In response to trends pointing to rise in overdose deaths among Muslim Philadelphians, the Opioid Response Unit has developed a three-session workshop for Muslim leaders. The workshop is focused on the Science of Addiction, Culturally Competent Response, and Community Engagement.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Risk factors related to gun violence and the narcotics trade are highly intersectional. As such, the Opioid Response Unit is working to implement a workshop series focused on issues related to juvenile justice involvement. Workshops will be developed for multiple, distinct audiences, including but not limited to: juvenile-justice involved young people, support staff and families. Workshops will focus on history related to the War on Drugs and its current implications, toxicity of the current drug supply, treatment options and harm reduction best practices.

CITY COUNCIL

The Opioid Response Unit looks forward to providing each City Councilperson with local data and substance use-related trends in their district to better implement and support neighborhood-level, targeted interventions.

CHILD WELFARE

In response to nationwide data indicating an increase in child welfare-involvement due in part to the opioid overdose epidemic, the Opioid Response Unit is providing each incoming CUA Cohort with SUD-related training and information around the Science of Addiction, Systems Involvement, Addiction as a Chronic Relapsing Disease and Medication Assisted Treatment.

GROCERY AND CONVENIENCE STORES

Nationwide data indicate overdoses routinely take place in public restrooms. In response, the Opioid Response Unit is working with Philadelphia-area grocery and convenience stores to train staff in harm reduction techniques and provide resources to help empower staff in supporting the health of their customers.

Conclusion

The Opioid Response Unit will continue to work steadfastly to implement community-led programs and initiatives to quell the toll of the opioid epidemic. We humbly and profoundly thank the people of Philadelphia for your continued support and patience.





City of

Philadelphia