

NATIONAL SERVICE

Taking Action to Combat the **Opioid Crisis**

“Together, we will face this challenge as a national family with conviction, with unity, and with a commitment to love and support our neighbors in times of dire need.”

- President Donald J. Trump

Our nation is in the midst of an unprecedented opioid epidemic.

More than 2.4 million Americans currently struggle with opioid addiction. More than 64,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2016, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids--nearly double in a decade. This growing crisis is causing devastating effects, placing burdens on workplaces, the health care system, families, states, and communities. Recognizing the severity of the opioid epidemic and the important role national service can play in addressing this challenge, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has significantly increased its support of opioid abuse prevention, education, reduction, and recovery programming as part of the Trump Administration's efforts to combat the substance abuse and opioid crisis.

CNCS: Taking Action to Prevent and Reduce Opioid Abuse

CNCS, the federal agency for service and volunteering, engages 300,000 Senior Corps volunteers and AmeriCorps members in results-driven service annually at 50,000 locations across the country, including nonprofits, schools, faith-based groups, and local agencies. For decades, CNCS has supported positive youth development through mentoring, tutoring, after-school, and summer programs that help youth stay in school, graduate ready for college or career, and refrain from risky behaviors including substance abuse.

Building on this track record, CNCS has prioritized substance abuse prevention and reduction in its AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Senior Corps programming. Working with Governor-appointed State Service Commissions and national and local organizations, CNCS substantially increased its investments in opioid and substance abuse prevention programs in FY 2017 and FY 2018.

BY THE NUMBERS

 **134**

projects serving in all 50 states & D.C.

 **1,830**

AmeriCorps members & Senior Corps volunteers focused on substance abuse prevention, reduction, and recovery

 **\$14.9**

million in opioid-related AmeriCorps & Senior Corps grants and project funding

 **\$5.8**

million in education awards for AmeriCorps members serving in these programs to help pay for college

Using National Service to Prevent and Reduce Substance Abuse

National service is a flexible, cost-effective strategy to address community needs. Nonprofit groups, faith-based and community organizations, hospitals and health clinics, and state and local agencies across the country are using AmeriCorps and Senior Corps resources through a variety of program models to expand their reach and impact. National service members provide drug abuse education, serve as recovery coaches, build capacity of anti-drug organizations, provide screening and assessments, establish state and local anti-drug coalitions, prevent relapse and recidivism, and more.

Serving with Police Departments to Prevent Overdoses and Relapse

In Massachusetts, 25 AmeriCorps members will serve as Recovery Coaches in police departments across the state through the Police Assisted Addiction & Recovery Initiative, helping opioid users access treatment and recovery services. In Avondale, Arizona, an AmeriCorps VISTA worked with the Chief of Police to research local opioid overdoses to develop procedures and training for overdose response for law enforcement officers and volunteers.

Providing Drug Abuse Prevention and Education

In Kentucky, Operation UNITE engages 54 AmeriCorps members to provide drug abuse education and math tutoring to more than 3,300 students, recruit 8,240 adult volunteers for school activities, and sponsor anti-drug clubs involving 4,353 students. In Tennessee, Senior Corps RSVP volunteers serving with the Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition deliver drug education to military veterans and organize an annual training for more than 50 medical professionals on proper prescribing. In April 2018, they supported the collection of nearly 190 pounds of medication for safe disposal.

Building the Capacity of Drug Treatment and Recovery Organizations

In Pennsylvania, two AmeriCorps VISTA members serving at the Wright Center's Opioid Use Disorder Center of Excellence helped secure a \$1.1 million grant to support ten primary care practices in implementing an evidence-based Medication-Assisted Treatment program, which combines medication with counseling and behavioral therapies to treat substance use disorders.

Supporting Safe Disposal of Prescription Drugs

Seventeen Senior Corps projects in Montana assisted a project which distributed 100,000 medication disposal bags to all 56 counties in Montana through a SAMHSA Opioid State Targeted Response grant. The Senior Corps projects partnered with State Prevention Specialists to prepare and distribute the bags over a period of several months.

Serving as Recovery Coaches to Help Individuals Overcome Addiction

In Wisconsin, the Marshfield Clinic Health System will engage 20 AmeriCorps members to serve as trained Recovery Coaches to provide services and support individuals overcoming addiction to remain drug-free. The Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in New Hampshire will engage 16 AmeriCorps members to help individuals in recovery resolve non-clinical barriers to care such as housing, literacy, and transportation.

Providing Substance Abuse Screening and Assessments

University of Nebraska AmeriCorps members use the evidence-based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) method to identify, reduce, and prevent dependence on drugs. Mercy Health in Ohio places AmeriCorps members in emergency departments across the state to provide education, treatment placement, and emotional support to patients with substance abuse disorders.