

# OPIOID & HEROIN USE DISORDERS AFFECT US ALL

## DRUG OVERDOSE PREVENTION COALITION WAKE COUNTY, NC

Wake County, like many communities in North Carolina and the U.S., has seen a steep increase in opioid-related death rates. Synthetic opioids are contributing to the increased death rates.

### AN EPIDEMIC

Drug overdoses in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's were largely from use of street drugs like crack cocaine and heroin. Since the late 1990's overdoses from prescribed drugs as well as heroin have been on the rise and become a deadly public health problem.

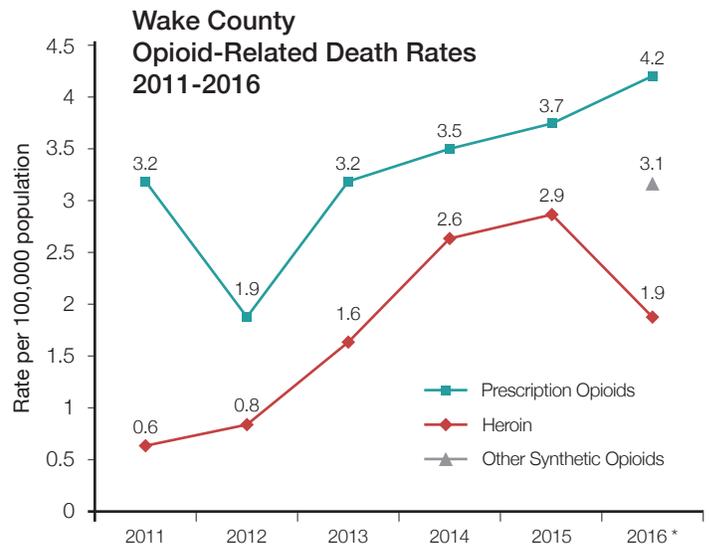
### OPIOIDS

Opioids include prescription pain medications, like Percocet, and illegal drugs, like heroin. In North Carolina, most overdose deaths are caused by prescription opioids like methadone, oxycodone and hydrocodone, but heroin death rates are rapidly increasing. Many communities are seeing a switch from the use of prescription pain pills to the use of heroin because it can be easier to get and cheaper to use.

### OPIOID USE DISORDERS

People can become dependent on opioids—both from prescribed use and misuse. People misuse opioids when they:

- ◆ Take more than is prescribed
- ◆ Take them to get high
- ◆ Take opioids that are prescribed for others
- ◆ Combine them with alcohol or other drugs



\* 2016 data is provisional and subject to change. Categories are not mutually exclusive, as some persons may have had more than one substance contributing to the cause of death. Source: NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch.

### EFFECTS ON FAMILIES AND HEALTH

Consequences of opioid and heroin use disorders can include:

- ◆ Being unable to find or keep a job and turning to crime to feed a habit
- ◆ Having relationships and families torn apart by loss of trust, abuse and violence
- ◆ Being at risk for serious health issues like hepatitis C, HIV and STDs. Babies can suffer withdrawal at birth and have long term health problems.
- ◆ Having family members and friends die from overdose.

### EFFECTS ON EVERYONE

Communities also feel the effects in

- ◆ Loss of productive community members
- ◆ Costs of crime
- ◆ Increased use of child welfare services
- ◆ Having access to adequate emergency and treatment resources and services

**THE WORST EFFECT OF OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE  
IS THE LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE.**

# DRUG OVERDOSE PREVENTION COALITION WAKE COUNTY, NC

In November 2015, groups and organizations in Wake County working to prevent and respond to heroin and opioid overdoses formed a coalition. Working together helps combine resources to be more effective in preventing drug overdoses in Wake County.

## COALITION REPRESENTATIVES

Alliance Behavioral Healthcare

Atlanta–Carolinas High Intensity  
Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)

Community Care of Wake and  
Johnston Counties

Fellowship Health Resources, Inc.

Healing Transitions

NC DHHS-Division of Public Health,  
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch

North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition

The Alice Aycock Poe Center  
for Health Education

The Patient Centered Primary Care Collaborative

Recovery Communities of North Carolina

Wake County District Attorney's Office

Wake County Emergency Medical Services

Wake County Human Services

Wake County Sheriff's Office

Wake Technical Community College

The Coalition has identified the current ways drug overdoses are being prevented and treated, gaps in service and other needs. Coalition work focuses on:



Conducting drug use and overdose prevention education and outreach with a focus on vulnerable populations.



Establishing mechanisms to connect those in need to specialized care and recovery resources.



Improving access to naloxone kits to prevent deaths.



Supporting syringe exchange programs that reduce the spread of disease and connect individuals to treatment.



Collecting and applying data to better utilize interventions and measure prevention efforts.



Identifying and supporting community-based treatments that meet the needs of drug offenders.



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The Drug Overdose Prevention Coalition is sponsored by Wake County Human Services and Wake County Sheriff's Office

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