



# News

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## **DMHAS ANNOUNCES \$1.92 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT TO REDUCE NON-MEDICAL USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS & PREVENT OPIOID OVERDOSES**

*Strategic Prevention Framework for Prescription Drugs (SPF-Rx) Grant Will Build  
Partnerships among Stakeholders*

**Hartford, CT** – Acting Commissioner Nancy Navarretta announced today that the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is the recipient of a grant award to reduce non-medical use of prescription drugs and prevent opioid overdoses by raising community awareness about the dangers of sharing medications. The \$1.92 million dollar five-year grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will build partnerships among stakeholders to educate prescribers, pharmacists and patients statewide. In collaboration with the University of Connecticut, graduate students from health profession programs will work with local health districts and departments statewide to implement strategies shown to be effective at reducing overprescribing and opioid overdoses. This grant will also increase the capacity to understand and use Prescription Drug Monitoring Program data, managed by the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP).

“The best ways to address the non-medical use of prescription drugs are to increase awareness and reduce access,” DMHAS Acting Commissioner Nancy Navarretta said. “These funds will give our state a chance to enhance our data-driven public health approach to prevent opioid overdoses and save lives.”

“The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program is one of the best data tools we have to analyze prescribing behaviors,” said DCP Commissioner Michelle H. Seagull. “The data is critical to understanding the opioid epidemic, and educating local health departments, prescribers, pharmacists and patients to increase awareness about opioids and prevent addiction and overdoses. These funds allow us to build on the important work we’re already doing in partnership with other state agencies to put an end to the opioid epidemic.”

DMHAS, DCP, and the Department of Public Health (DPH), with guidance from the Prevention Subcommittee of the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council, will co-direct the grant implementation and activities. Additional partners in the grant include the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy and local health departments and districts. The University of Connecticut Health Center will evaluate the effectiveness of the project.

“We have spent the past 18 months focused on COVID-19 and the importance of getting the vaccine to keep our loved ones safe,” said DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD. “But we cannot lose sight of other critical issues in our communities—substance misuse is one of the most identified community health needs in our cities and towns, and this grant will go a long way in supporting local health departments and their implementation of these life-saving strategies.”

The Strategic Prevention Framework for Prescription Drugs (SPF-Rx) grant is one of many statewide initiatives to address the opioid epidemic. For more information on prevention, treatment and recovery visit [www.drugfreect.org](http://www.drugfreect.org).

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