

Los Angeles Centers
for Alcohol and Drug Abuse

OVERDOSE

Prevention and Response
2023/2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Naloxone Distribution Project	1
Naloxone Units Distributed to L.A. CADA Programs February 2023 to September 2024	2
Overdose Prevention and Response Training	3
Access to Naloxone	4
International Overdose Awareness Day 2024	5
Community Outreach and Mobile Engagement	6
Strategic Plan for Naloxone Distribution Project 2025	7
Success Stories	8
References	9

The Naloxone Distribution Project

DRUG OVERDOSE is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States and a significant issue for public health. Provisional data from the CDC estimates that there were 107,503 drug overdose deaths in the United States during 2023, a 3% decrease from the 111,029 deaths estimated in 2022 (CDC, 2024).

While more public health interventions are needed, L.A. CADA is committed to making naloxone and other opioid overdose reversal medications (OORM) accessible to the community by lowering barriers to care and addressing health inequities.

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) created the Naloxone Distribution Project (NDP) to combat opioid overdose-related deaths throughout California. The NDP aims to address the opioid crisis by reducing opioid overdose deaths through the provision of free naloxone. Opioid overdose is life-threatening and requires immediate emergency attention. **Recognizing the signs of opioid overdose is essential to saving lives.**

L.A. CADA recognizes the complexity of substance use disorders (SUD) and the growing crisis of opioid-involved overdose deaths. As a result, we prioritize the use of evidence-based interventions to prevent overdoses and protect our communities. We are dedicated to expanding low-barrier, non-judgmental services such as harm reduction to better engage individuals, and we are committed to increasing access to Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT), an evidence-based treatment approach.



(Skid Row, LA; May 2023) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez

7,380
Naloxone units obtained through the DHCS Opioid Response Program between February 2023 and September 2024.

4,000
Fentanyl Test Strips obtained through the DHCS Opioid Response Program between February 2023 and September 2024.

4,992 Naloxone units distributed to L.A. CADA Programs FEBRUARY 2023 to SEPTEMBER 2024

QUANTITY	L.A. CADA PROGRAM
840	Community Outreach
636	Community Training Overdose Prevention and Response
384	Youth and Family Services
288	Allen House Residential Treatment
252	International Overdose Awareness Day
204	San Pedro Outpatient
204	Nuestra Casa Residential Treatment Center
180	Wellness Center
168	Downtown Central Outpatient
144	Casa Consuelo RBH
144	Art House RBH
120	LA Mission RBH
108	Start House RBH
96	Pride Event Long Beach
96	Naloxone Training to Staff
96	Safe Haven
84	Casa de Corazon
84	Alhambra Cottages RBH
72	Heart House RBH
60	ACR-Azusa
60	Community Partner
60	Carson RBH
60	Grace's House RBH
48	CENS Department
48	Bloomfield Outpatient
48	4th Street Field Based Outpatient
48	Santa Fe Springs Outpatient 9300
48	Alice's House Residential Treatment
36	Elm Street
36	Compton RBH
36	Long Beach Outpatient
36	Community Prison Mother Program CPMP
36	Custody to Community Transitional Reentry Program CCTR
24	East LA Probation Office
24	ACR Hermosa Beach
24	Mental Health Fair
24	LA Mission Female Side RBH
24	Serenity House Residential Treatment
12	FBS Site

Overdose Prevention and Response Training

THROUGH EDUCATION and community awareness, L.A. CADA is dedicated to reducing the risk of opioid overdose. As part of this initiative, we offer Opioid Overdose Prevention and Response Training, and provide Naloxone (nasal spray) — a life-saving medication — free of charge to individuals and organizations.

Our trainings equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively respond to an overdose, including administering Naloxone, commonly known as Narcan.

Additionally, we offer guidance on accessing Harm Reduction services and support systems for those affected. Harm Reduction training is also available, as fentanyl test strips.



(Long Beach, CA; January 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez

Trainings are free and open to the public with the support of Grant funding received under SAMHSA MAT Program, Grant Number T1084304. L.A. CADA has provided training to schools, colleges, universities, city personnel, and behavioral health specialists.

For more information about training opportunities or to request Naloxone, please visit our website for resources and scheduling options.



(Long Beach, CA; March 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/Nolan Ross Samé-Weil

352 Participants were trained through L.A. CADA's Overdose Prevention and Response Workshop. All received FREE Naloxone Nasal Spray.

Access to Naloxone

OUR MISSION is to educate and protect our communities from the deadly impact of the fentanyl crisis, and we are dedicated to preventing it. We recognize the stigma surrounding drug use and aim to bridge the gap between awareness and action.

By spreading education and advocacy together, we aspire to cultivate a healthy and informed community where access to naloxone and evidence-based treatment options are easily accessible.

We have implemented an **Opioid Overdose Emergency Box** in nearly every L.A. CADA facility, and each is equipped with an alarm to facilitate a rapid response. These boxes contain Naloxone Nasal Spray and CPR face masks to assist with rescue breathing if necessary.

All our staff members are equipped with Naloxone Nasal Spray and receive training when hired, with annual refresher training provided to ensure readiness in overdose situations.

In almost **40%** of overdose deaths in California, a bystander was present. These deaths might have been prevented if that bystander knew when and how to help. Let's change that! (CDPH, 2024)

"Creating a safer and healthier future starts by ensuring access to life-saving resources like naloxone and committing to comprehensive overdose prevention. Together, we can stand strong against the impact of the opioid crisis, protecting lives and supporting communities."

– Nolan Ross Samé-Weil, Director of Development



(Santa Fe Springs, CA; May 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez



(San Pedro, CA; August 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez

International Overdose Awareness Day 2024

HELD EACH YEAR ON AUGUST 31, International Overdose Awareness Day is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose by remembering, without stigma, those who have died, and acknowledging the grief of families and friends left behind.

With the slogan, **'Together We Can,'** L.A. CADA hosted the event to educate and raise awareness while addressing the stigma surrounding addiction. Participants included SAPC representatives and local police officers, plus L.A. CADA clients, family, staff members, and the executive team.

This year, the activity took place at our DTLA Outpatient and Services Center - San Pedro facility, just steps away from Skid Row, a symbol of the ongoing struggles for people experiencing homelessness and substance use disorders in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles.



(San Pedro, LA; August 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/John Gray

"As an overdose survivor, this day is important to me. It's important to let people know there is life after an overdose, and there is an opportunity to change."

– Lawrence Dotson, Health Navigator/Peer Mentor



(San Pedro, LA; August 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/John Gray

"Families should know that these are treatable illnesses and that treatment works. All addictions are treatable. People do recover, and I don't want families to lose hope."

– Dr. Randolph Holmes, Chief Medical Officer



(San Pedro, LA; August 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/John Gray

"Fentanyl has changed everything. Fentanyl is in everything. It's cheap and easy to make. We've seen it mixed with meth. We have tools to prevent people from dying, like fentanyl test strips and Naloxone."

– Cynthia Holmes, Registered Nurse

Community Outreach and Mobile Engagement

L.A. CADA and our community partners aim to provide people experiencing homelessness with the necessary services and housing while working towards revitalizing our neighborhoods.

This comprehensive approach recognizes that homelessness is not just an issue of housing, but also encompasses various other factors, such as mental health, substance abuse disorders, and access to essential resources.

The L.A. CADA Community Outreach Department serves the San Gabriel Valley, Hawthorne, and Hermosa areas five days a week, and sometimes even seven. Our primary goal is to actively listen and provide expert problem-solving, striving to uplift those living on the streets by connecting them with services they are ready to receive. This includes support for shelter, SUD care, harm reduction, mental health services, medical care, and addressing food insecurity.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for those who are open to assistance, as well as for those who may not yet be ready.



(Skid Row, LA; May 2023) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez

840 Naloxone units were distributed throughout the Community Outreach and Mobile Engagement program.



(Skid Row, LA; May 2023) © L.A. CADA Photo

Serving more than **25** cities in the San Gabriel Valley, plus Hermosa Beach and Hawthorne.



(San Gabriel Valley, CA; 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo

STRATEGIC PLAN for Naloxone Distribution Project 2025

1. Increase Reporting of Overdose Reversals

ACTION:

- Mark all naloxone supplies distributed with a QR code in order to provide immediate and straight forward reporting of overdose reversals by recipients, while opening ways of communication for harm reduction services.

GOALS:

- Increase overdose reversal reporting by 25% through QR code tracking.
- Strengthen community feedback loops for continuous improvement.

2. Promote Policy Advocacy

ACTIONS:

- Collaborate with local and state lawmakers to push for legislation supporting harm reduction services, including expanding access to naloxone and fentanyl test strips.
- Increase community members' involvement in policy discussions to ensure the representation of diverse voices affected by the opioid crisis.

GOAL:

- Influence at least two pieces of legislation.

3. Expand Social Media Outreach

ACTION:

- Intensify presence on social media platforms to promote naloxone distribution, overdose prevention training, and harm reduction awareness.

GOALS:

- Grow social media engagement by 30%, particularly among at-risk populations.
- Launch quarterly digital campaigns with key partners, focusing on overdose awareness and naloxone training.

4. Expand Training

ACTIONS:

- Expand the Overdose Prevention and Response Training workshops across the community and offer both in-person and virtual options.
- Prioritize underserved communities and partner with schools, local businesses, and healthcare facilities to increase the reach of the program.

GOALS:

- Train 1,000 additional participants in overdose prevention, with 90% of attendees equipped with naloxone kits.
- Collaborate with five new organizational partners to co-host training sessions, ensuring a broader geographic coverage.

“I haven’t felt this good since middle school... and it’s a really great feeling!”

I’m 39 years old, and started drinking when I was 15 or so. I began using harder drugs like meth and fentanyl about three years ago. During the pandemic, I wasn’t able to find a job, and some people I was hanging out with started selling these fake Percocet pills called M30s. I didn’t know they were fentanyl pills at the time, but one day I just tried a little bit, and that led to a little bit more, a little bit more, and a little bit more, and after a week or so I was smoking five pills a day which turned into ten pills a day and that’s when I knew it was getting pretty bad.

I didn’t know much about MAT (Medication for Addiction Treatment). All I knew was that people who used it were like using heroin, and it was not really a solution. However, the doctors at L.A. CADA educated me about the benefit and that I could live comfortably without the pain of withdrawal, so I gave it a try. One year later, I’m still on it. Looking back to when I was younger, my depression was really bad from when I was 18. I haven’t felt this good since I was in middle school...and it’s a really great feeling!

For people who are thinking about taking MAT or getting help in general, I think about my life if I hadn’t taken the medication. I could have said that I was just going quit on my own, that I didn’t need any help. But I would have relapsed for sure, and I would have ended up on the streets.

Warm regards, and thank you for reading my story.

NOTE: Having successfully completed the program at Allen House Residential Treatment Center, this individual continued his journey at L.A. CADA Outpatient supported by a MAT SAMHSA Grant. After living in L.A. CADA Recovery Bridge Housing, and then continuing treatment at Outpatient for over a year, he is now working for L.A. CADA’s Community Outreach and Mobile Engagement Department helping people who are experiencing homelessness.

“Not today, I got you!”

NOTE: This is a story about saving a life by reversing an opioid overdose at a Recovery Bridge Housing (RBH) site.

Hi, my name is Joe Tarin. I am the Co-Manager of Casa Consuelo RBH. I am a former gang member, and am in recovery from substance use disorders. I was born in the San Fernando Valley in the city of Sun Valley.

The journey began in December 2020, when I arrived at the Allen House after six years of constant addiction that led me to lose my family, become homeless, and get incarcerated. The L.A. CADA team screened me and found me fit for their program. Needless to say, I felt they saw in me a chance for redemption.

I’d never witnessed an overdose before—not in the streets, not at work. That was the first time I encountered something like that. Thankfully, through training and fast thinking, I was able to help save a life that day: I was in the office getting ready to do my next walk-through when a guest came to me and stated, “Someone’s in the restroom and isn’t responding to my knocking!” I ran to the scene, opened the locked door, and saw a guest collapse to his knees in the shower with all his clothes on. I sprang into action and, with the help of another guest, pulled him out onto the floor. His face was completely blue and he was unresponsive.

I called the paramedics and proceeded to grab Naloxone (Narcan). While the guest lay there, I administered Naloxone (Narcan) and turned him on his shoulder. He didn’t respond, so I administered another dose. In fear, we picked him up bear hug style, and he suddenly took a breath of fresh air. As he came back to life, the paramedics arrived and took it from there. I was so grateful to hear him breathe again and for the guest who helped me. My only thought was, “Not today, I got you!”

During the episode, I felt there was no way this man was going to be taken from us. He was only 23 years old and meant for so much more. I was thankful for both the guest’s and my presence.

I wasn’t supposed to work that night. It was supposed to be another staff member, but I’m grateful that God put me there. I want others to know that you can save a life, even if you don’t think you can: with Naloxone (Narcan) and action.

On a personal note, I’m now a successful father of two kids, and I enjoy working for L.A. CADA.

Thank you for reading my story.



References

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(City of Norwalk, CA; April 2024) © L.A. CADA Photo/Eva Hernandez

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