

Federal Funding Benefits Springfield Addiction Treatment

By **Sean Woodard** - September 25, 2018



Federal grant funding will go toward expanding [addiction treatment measures in Springfield, Oregon](#) and other areas of the state affected by drug overdoses.

The Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area experienced a number of drug overdoses this past weekend, which raised concerns from local law enforcement, government and healthcare officials. According to local law enforcement representatives, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel responded to 10 drug overdoses between Saturday and Monday morning. The administration of naloxone in nine of the cases is believed to have reversed the effects of the illicit substances.

Police are investigating whether the nonfatal overdoses involved heroin laced with fentanyl or a synthetic opioid called furanyl fentanyl — colloquially known as ‘China White.’ In 2016, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration [declared the substance illegal](#) by classifying it as a Schedule I drug, a drug deemed to have no medical use that has a high potential for misuse.

According to preliminary data from the [Oregon Health Authority’s Opioid Data Dashboard](#), there were 10 naloxone administrations in a total of 2,609 EMS runs during the second quarter of 2018 in Lane County, where Springfield is located.

The Eugene HIV Alliance is one local organization that offers naloxone training and distributes the opioid overdose reversal drug, in addition to encouraging its clients to seek addiction treatment. However, a lack of [addiction recovery resources](#) in the state makes it difficult for individuals to get the help they need.

According to the Addiction Policy Forum’s Addiction Resource Center, there are 21 addiction treatment providers in Lane County. The majority of treatment providers are located centrally in Eugene or Springfield.

In 2017, 272 out of 391 overdose deaths in the state were believed to be opioid-related. Lane County experienced the third highest drug-related overdose death rate in the state. An estimated 40 out of the county’s 72 overdoses deaths involved opioids, as reported by the county medical examiner.

Earlier this year, Gov. Kate Brown issued an executive order, declaring the state’s [opioid epidemic a public health crisis](#) and subsequently signed into law House Bill 4137, which charged the Oregon Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission (ADPC) with developing a framework for a strategic plan by September 15.

A coalition based out of Portland called Oregon Recovers submitted a tentative framework to the ADPC in July, which was taken into consideration and revised before the [resulting draft](#) was submitted this month for approval.

Proposed intervention, treatment and extended recovery aftercare measures in the plan include helping the [inmate population access medication-assisted treatment](#), improving the coordination of mental health services and substance abuse treatment and offering peer support and affordable housing to persons in recovery.

The finalized plan is expected to be finished by 2020. The plan’s long-term goals include to increase the state’s addiction recovery rate by 25 percent within five years, reduce the rate of residents diagnosed with substance use disorders and improve drug prevention, treatment and recovery programs.

Last week, Oregon representatives announced that approximately \$7 million in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be directed to 25 health clinics across the state. Two grants totaling \$632,000 will help expand addiction treatment and mental health services in Lane County.



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Publisher Name Addiction Now