



BUNCOMBE COUNTY STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

OPIOID ADDICTION



PRIORITY: Stem the disease of opioid addiction, a crisis that threatens the health and safety of growing numbers of people in our community.

BACKGROUND: The United States has 4.6 percent of the world's population, yet we use 80 percent of the world's opioids. In Buncombe County, there were over 17 million painkillers prescribed in 2016 – this equals almost 68 pills for every man, woman and child in Buncombe County. From January to August 2017, there were 230 opioid overdose emergency department visits in Buncombe County. Today in North Carolina, you are more likely to die of an overdose than a car crash. Some opioids are prescription painkillers, such as oxycodone, codeine cough syrup, Percocet or Vicodin. Some opioids, like heroin and fentanyl, are illegal drugs. Addiction to opioids is a public health crisis with costs to families, neighborhoods and the community.

GOALS:

- Increase public awareness about the disease of opioid addiction and ways that the community can be a part of the solution.
- Equip professionals and the public with the information and tools for prevention and response, with a focus on youth prevention.
- Limit the supply of prescription painkillers and illegal opioids in the community and hold the industry accountable that made the epidemic possible.
- Increase access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services.
- Respond and follow-up when overdoses occur to reduce harm and increase wellness.

