

## **MHRB Receives State Opioid Response Funding**

The Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County was awarded \$803,559 in federal State Opioid Response (SOR) 2.0 funding to develop and expand programs to prevent, treat, and help people recover from opioid use disorders and stimulant use disorders. Ohio received \$96 million during 2020 as part of the 21st Century CURES Act initiative.

“As opioid overdose deaths have been occurring at alarming rates these past several years, there has also been a significant increase in the use and deaths from cocaine and methamphetamines as well,” stated Mental Health & Recovery Board Executive Director Dr. John Garrity. “This crisis is further complicated by the presence of the COVID19 pandemic and the additional challenges it presents.”

“The new funding will allow us to strengthen our continuum of care with new evidence-based-practices for us to offer a full range of recovery-oriented services that will assist individuals in moving towards achieving recovery,” Garrity explained.

Some of the projects the Mental Health & Recovery Board plans to fund include early diversion for at risk adolescents, a new intensive home-based treatment team, expansion of medication-assisted treatment and peer recovery support services, family-centered group treatment for substance abuse, training on trauma, and tobacco cessation therapy for individuals with co-occurring opioid and stimulant use disorders.

The Mental Health & Recovery Board is the local authority responsible to plan, develop, fund, and monitor the community-based mental health and addiction services in Portage County.

## **Meth, Cocaine, & Opioids Causing Overdoses**

A disturbing trend developed in 2020 alongside the pandemic. People dying from accidental drug overdoses increased after a few years of decline. In Portage County there were 42 confirmed fatal overdoses (plus two cases of suspected overdoses pending the toxicology test results) making it the 3rd highest year of overdose deaths on record.

Another cause for concern is the ever-changing "drug of choice." Opioids, including prescription drugs, heroin, fentanyl, were dominant substances during the height of the opioid epidemic. This past year, many people also had cocaine and methamphetamine (meth) also found in their systems.

Meth and cocaine are highly addictive stimulant drugs that increase alertness, attention, and energy, as well as elevate blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration. Heart attacks, seizures, strokes, and organ failure are some of the consequences of a meth or cocaine overdose. These conditions can result in death, especially when mixing stimulants with opioids.

“While fentanyl is the primary driver of the increase in overdose deaths, a combination of illicit drugs seems to be becoming more prevalent in the overdoses,” stated Dr. Dean DePerro, who is the Portage County Coroner and the Medical Director of the Townhall II Opiate Recovery Clinic.

People need to be aware that fentanyl may be mixed into other drugs without a person's knowledge.

"It is important that people have naloxone and know how to use it," said Mental Health & Recovery Board Executive Director John Garrity. "Friends and family members need to check in on people who use drug regularly and call 911 immediately after recognizing an overdose or resuscitating a person with naloxone."

Naloxone and overdose education is available to any Portage County resident through Project DAWN. Appointments are necessary. Call Townhall II's business line at 330-678-3006 or the Portage County Health District at 330-296-9919.

Medication-assisted treatment is available at Townhall II and other clinics in Portage County. It is a proven, evidence-based treatment which uses medications along with counseling to help people recover from opioid use disorder. The most effective treatment for stimulant use disorders are psychosocial therapies such as motivational interviewing, contingency management, and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Treatment is available here in Portage County with detoxification, residential treatment, counseling, medication-assisted treatment, and recovery housing services from our Board-funded providers – Townhall II, Family & Community Services, and Coleman Professional Services – as well as other local organizations.

If you need help, contact the Addiction Helpline at Townhall II at 330-678-3006.

## Crisis Intervention Team Officers of the Year



The Mental Health & Recovery Board is proud to announce the 2020 Crisis Intervention Team Officers of the Year awarded by the Portage County Police Chief's Association: Officer Josh Bartholomew, Streetsboro PD; Officer Matthew Butcher, Kent City PD; Officer Scott Krieger, Ravenna PD.

The officers were recognized for practicing the communication and de-escalation techniques they learned during their CIT training in dealing with individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis or are struggling with addiction.

Streetsboro Police Chief Patricia Wain stated that Ofc Bartholomew has taken steps to work closely with the mental health community in his role as the County's CIT Coordinator, acting as a trainer during the CIT

classes for officers, and working with the city's fire department personnel.

This past year, Ofc Bartholomew made the extra effort to reach out to a homeless woman who had consistently refused help from the police. "Ofc Bartholomew connected with a social worker from Coleman Professional Services and together they were able to engage the woman in conversation and shared community resources with her. Had Ofc Bartholomew not taken that step, I doubt we would have been able to have any dialogue with her at all."

Ofc Butcher spent most of 2020 as the Kent City School Resource Officer. "In this role he built relationships with students in such a manner they grew to trust and respect him," said Kent City Police Chief Nicholas Shearer. "On one occasion, Ofc Butcher responded to a report of suicidal student during the evening hours when he wasn't on duty. He was able to successfully help de-escalate the situation."

Officer Butcher always goes out of his way to help fellow officers if they are struggling to de-escalate a person in crisis as well as assisting community members. "He has been known to purchase coffee and food for those in need while helping out.," Shearer commented.

Sgt Craig Wilmington of the Ravenna City Police Department nominated Ptl Kreiger for the award. "Ptl Kreiger always maintains a good relationship with the people of our community and continues to make Ravenna a safe place to live, work, and visit," he said.

A particular time in 2020, a mental health patient who was released from jail sought help from Kreiger as he had nowhere to sleep and didn't know where to turn. "Ptl Kreiger took the time needed to resolve the situation by calling multiple landlords and eventually found housing for him," explained Sgt Wilmington.

John Garrity, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County noted that this is the second CIT Officer of the Year award for all three officers.

"We are so pleased to learn how these officers have gone above and beyond, time and time again, to help residents who are experiencing a mental health crisis. They are great assets to our community," he stated.

The officers were recognized at the January 11th Mental Health & Recovery Board meeting. Congratulations and thank you for serving our community!

## Marijuana Presentation for February Coalition Meeting

---

Join us:

**February 11, 1pm  
Virtual Meeting**

**MARIJUANA  
TODAY**

**Darryl Brake, Executive Director  
Summit County Community Partnership**



**Portage Substance Abuse Community Coalition**  
get the meeting link at  
[www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)



# Naloxone kits & education

Available for Portage County residents

Project DAWN is a community-based drug overdose education and Naloxone distribution program through the Portage County Health District with funding from the Mental Health & Recovery Board.

Participants attend a 30 minute class to learn to:

- See the signs and symptoms of an overdose
- Know the different types of overdoses
- Do Rescue Breathing
- Call emergency medical services
- Give the intranasal Naloxone

Participants who complete the class will be given a Project DAWN Kit containing the Naloxone, instructions, and referral information.



Naloxone (Narcan) is a medication that can reverse an overdose from an opioid drug. It reverses the effects of opioids on the brain and restores breathing in order to prevent death.



To schedule an appointment for Project DAWN  
Portage County Health District (Ravenna) 330.296.9919  
Townhall II (Kent) 330.678.3006



## NETWORK OF CARE



Take a free, confidential mental health screening:

[www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)

# COCAINE & METH

## Stimulants

Stimulants increase alertness, attention, and energy, as well as elevate blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration. Stimulants come in a variety of forms, including cocaine and methamphetamines.

## Cocaine and “Crack”

(“C”, coke, flake, snow, stardust, blow, nose candy)

Cocaine is a stimulant drug made from the leaves of the coca plant native to South America. As a street drug, cocaine looks like a fine, white, crystal powder. Street dealers often mix it with things like cornstarch, talcum powder, or flour to increase profits. They may also mix it with other drugs such as opioids, including fentanyl. This is especially risky when people using cocaine don't realize it contains this dangerous additive. Increasing numbers of overdose deaths among cocaine users might be related to this tampered cocaine.

“Crack” or “rock” is cocaine which is chemically changed so it can be smoked and inhaled into the lungs. Crack cocaine is particularly addictive and very dangerous. People are attracted to it because smoking provides a much quicker and more intense “high” than sniffing or “snorting” cocaine into the nostrils. The immediate, intense euphoria of smoking crack cocaine wears off more quickly than when the drug is sniffed. Then the user becomes anxious, irritable and deeply depressed and craves another dose to relieve the depression.

## How is cocaine used?

- snorting
- rub onto gums
- injecting the powder that has been dissolved
- smoked in the form of crack or rock

## Effects:

- the person's appetite will decrease
- the person will be more alert and have more energy and will not get tired easily
- the person's heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing will speed up and there is a risk of burst blood vessels or heart failure
- the person's pupils will be enlarged
- the person may be violent; they may experience delusions like feeling a sensation of having something crawling under their skin or believing someone is trying to hurt them

## Overdose:

Heart attacks, seizures, and strokes are some of the consequences of a cocaine overdose. Death can occur from these conditions and from mixing cocaine with opioids.

Sources: National Institute on Drug Abuse and Parent Action on Drugs



## “Crystal Meth”/ Methamphetamine

(speed, meth, chalk, ice, crystal, glass, tina, jib, crank)

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive stimulant drug usually used as a white, bitter-tasting powder or a pill. Crystal methamphetamine is a form of the drug that looks like glass fragments or shiny, bluish-white rocks. Smoking or injecting “meth” causes a stronger reaction than inhaling or taking it in pill form.

Another cause for concern is the way crystal meth is produced. It is made by combining household items, such as ammonia and lithium from batteries, with pseudoephedrine which is found in several common cold medicines. The illegal home laboratories which produce the drug are extremely dangerous because of the chemicals involved.

## How are methamphetamines used?

- inhaling/smoking
- swallowing (pill)
- snorting
- injecting the powder that has been dissolved

## Effects:

- it causes feelings of an intense sensation of pleasure; when smoked or injected there is a brief “rush” or “flash” although the drug stays in the body for up to 12 hours
- it causes increased heart rate, blood pressure and can cause damage to blood vessels in the brain and convulsions
- the person may experience loss of appetite, anxiety, and become aggressive or confused
- long-term effects include: possible irreversible damage to brain cell-endings associated with thinking, memory and movement, severe dental problems, insomnia, anorexia, paranoia, violent behavior, and skin sores.

## Overdose:

Methamphetamine overdose can lead to stroke, heart attack, or organ problems – such as kidney failure – caused by overheating. These conditions can result in death.

**Addiction Helpline  
for Portage County**  
**330.678.3006**

**Mental Health &  
Recovery Board**  
OF PORTAGE COUNTY

# Opioids & Heroin



## What are Opioids? Opiates? Heroin? Fentanyl?

**Opiates** are derived from the seed pod of the Asian opium poppy plant. Patients with severe or chronic pain may be prescribed opioid-based medications such as morphine, oxycodone, or hydrocodone.

At one time “opioids” referred to synthetic opiates only (drugs created to emulate opium, however different chemically). Now the term **opioid** is used for the entire family of opiates including natural, synthetic and semi-synthetic.

**Fentanyl** is used to treat patients with severe pain or to manage pain after surgery in hospitals or prescribed as a patch. As a street drug, it is an illegally produced compound and may be mixed with heroin or pressed into a pill to make it a more potent product. Many of the overdose deaths are being caused by fentanyl.

**Heroin** is also derived from poppy plants. It is usually found as a white or brown powder or black sticky substance (“black tar heroin”).

## How are opioids & heroin used?

Heroin & opioids can be injected, inhaled or smoked. Any method of heroin use can cause immediate harm and lead to addiction.

## Why Do People Use Opioids?

A number of people with severe or chronic pain are legitimately prescribed opioid-based medications and most are able to use them appropriately. However, for some individuals, they develop an addiction and, after their prescriptions are stopped, may resort to street medications and heroin to cope with their pain and addiction. Other people start using these substances for a variety of reasons: to cope with physical/emotional pain and traumas; peer pressure to experiment; self-medication for untreated mental health problems; and to obtain feelings of pleasure and well-being.

## Health Effects of Heroin Use

Risks of heroin use include death, dependency, deterioration of the brain’s white matter, spontaneous abortion, infectious diseases such as hepatitis and HIV. Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, infection of heart lining and valves, abscesses, constipation, liver or kidney disease.

## Why Do Some People Become Addicted?

There are a number of genetic, biological, social and psychological factors that contribute to people developing an addiction. People who have experienced trauma and who lack social supports are at an increased risk for developing an addiction. The earlier that drug use begins, the more likely it will progress to serious abuse. It is a complex disease that requires much more than a strong will or good intentions to stop. Although the initial decision to take drugs is voluntary, the brain changes that occur over time challenge a person’s ability to stop.

## Signs of a heroin overdose include:

Shallow breathing, pinpoint pupils, clammy skin, convulsions, coma. **Call 911.**

## Naloxone (Narcan) Available

Project Dawn is a community-based overdose education and naloxone distribution program through the Portage County Health Department. Naloxone is a medication that can reverse an overdose caused by an opioid drug.

Appointment are necessary:

Portage County Health District: 330-296-9919  
Townhall II: 330-678-3006



[www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org) • 330.673.1756

## Myths!

### **Once a person uses heroin they are hooked for life and there is no hope. NOT TRUE!**

Recovery is possible for those who develop an addiction. Treatment and recovery are an ongoing process that require time. The first step is getting help.

### **More than anything else, drug addiction is a character flaw. NOT TRUE!**

Drug addiction is a brain disease. Drugs can cause changes in the molecules and cells that make up the brain, that result in mood changes, changes in memory processes, and in such motor skills as walking and talking. These changes have a huge influence on all aspects of a person's behavior. The drug becomes the single most powerful motivator in a drug abuser's existence. Similar to other chronic diseases like diabetes, addiction can be managed although relapses are common and are part of the recovery process.

### **Abstinence is the only true recovery method. Medication Assisted Treatment is just replacing one drug for another. NOT TRUE!**

Medications such as Suboxone and Vivitrol are prescribed or administered under monitored, controlled conditions and are safe and effective for treating opioid addiction. They reduce drug cravings and prevent relapse without causing a "high." The medications are used in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies to provide a whole patient approach to treating addiction.

## Treatment & Recovery

Recovery is possible for those who are dependent on heroin and other opioids. Drug addiction is a complex illness, and there is not just one solution to fit everyone. Effective treatment plans incorporate many components and should be assessed continually and modified to meet changing needs.

Relapse is possible and it is important for families to understand that recovery from a substance use disorder can be a long-term process requiring multiple episodes of treatment. Many drug addicted individuals also have mental illnesses that need to be treated.



## Portage County Treatment & Services

Recovery work starts with a phone call or visit to the following local agencies.

### **Townhall II**

155 N. Water St, Kent  
330-678-3006

#### **Call for:**

Detox  
Medication-Assisted Treatment  
Comprehensive Assessment  
Individual & Group Counseling  
Residential Treatment for Women

### **Family & Community Services**

143 Gougler Ave, Kent  
330-677-4124

#### **Call for:**

Comprehensive Assessment  
Individual & Group Counseling  
Residential Treatment for Men  
Recovery Housing

### **Coleman Professional Services**

5982 Rhodes Rd, Kent  
330-673-1347

#### **Call for:**

Comprehensive Assessment  
Individual & Group Counseling  
Mental Health & Alcohol/Drug  
Medication-Assisted Treatment