



Naloxone on Campus

July 2025

About Me



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she/her

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University Health Services

Learning outcomes

1

Identify a sustainable, culturally competent system to make Narcan available on a college campus.

2

Describe key components of a comprehensive opioid overdose strategy.

3

Outline key components of a proactive, evidenced-based and audience -relevant communication strategy as part of a public health strategy.

Naloxone on Campus

Introduction and Our Why

Data

Program

Pushback

Communications Plan/Stakeholder Engagement

Assessment Data

The Larger Strategy

Challenges and Lessons Learned

An aerial photograph of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, showing various university buildings, green spaces, and the surrounding city and Lake Monona. The image is partially obscured by a white rounded rectangle containing text.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison

Public

Big 10

Research 1

35,665 / 10,445

undergraduate/graduate students

Student health at UW–Madison



UHS | University
Health Services
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Medical – Mental Health – Prevention

Alcohol and Drug Prevention

Suicide Prevention

Violence Prevention

Our Why

MARKETPLACE
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EDUCATION

Two UWM students died in their dorm rooms because of fentanyl. Now, their mothers are turning agony into action.

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Our campus data



37% of students drink at high-risk



29% use nicotine or tobacco



38% use cannabis

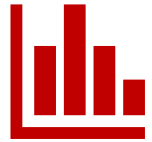


Disparities in alcohol use among student population

Our campus data



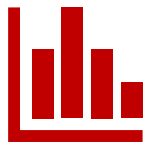
4% of students use Hallucinogens



2% use prescription stimulants non-medically



2% use cocaine



2% use inhalants



.3% use prescription opioids non-medically

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Purpose of Naloxone on Campus

- Naloxone is a life-saving medication that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose by blocking the effects of opioids.
- Publicly accessible Naloxone can save lives, much like Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).
- If administered in a timely manner, Naloxone can prevent a death for someone who is experiencing an Opioid overdose.
- Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that can be taken on its own or added to pills, powders, and crystals. It has been found in “counterfeit pills or pills that look identical to prescription drugs.

Narcan Boxes

About the Project

Over 3.5 years, UW–Madison made Narcan available and easily accessible to the entire campus community, including faculty, staff, and students.

- **Fall 2022:** 12 Narcan boxes
Campus housing
- **Fall 2023:** 13 additional Narcan boxes
Widely accessible campus locations including libraries, gyms, and Unions
- **Spring 2025:** 10 additional Narcan boxes
Additional and peripheral campus locations



Narcan Boxes

- The contents of the box are free and available to anyone who might need the live saving medication for themselves or someone they know.
- Each Narcan box contains:
 - Two doses of NARCAN® Nasal Spray (4mg each)
 - May take multiple doses for reversal
 - A breathing barrier (if rescue breaths are needed)
 - Instructions on how to administer NARCAN® Nasal Spray



Narcan Boxes

- Wireless monitoring
- Supplies replenishment
- Narcan administration instructions
- Recovery Resources



Roles

Box Site:

- Designate contact.
- Work with UHS, EHS and WI Voices on installation plan and during install.
- One site contact trained in Narcan administration.
- Check tear pads once a week.

Environmental Health & Safety (EHS):

- Receive notification when a box has been accessed. EHS staff will go to the location and determine if the box has indeed been accessed. If needed, will replace NARCAN® Nasal Spray.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed between EHS and Wisconsin Voices for all boxes placed on the campus.

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Think/Pair/Share



What is some of the pushback you've heard or you're expecting?

We Prepared for Pushback

- “We don’t want to encourage drug use.”
 - Fentanyl, fatal in small amounts, can be laced into anything - it’s about safety
- “We don’t want people to think we have a problem in our community.”
 - Our numbers of self-reported opioid use are low however, Fentanyl, fatal in small amounts, can be laced into anything - it’s about safety
- “We don’t want *those* people coming into our community.”
 - Your organization could be seen as a leader of positive influence on the community by increasing safety of all community members (including those that are struggling with addiction)
- “Epi-pens are expensive, why should *drug users* get something for free?”
 - Our goal is to increase access to naloxone across campus for safety and harm reduction purposes. We are fortunate to participate in a program providing this for free. There are others out there advocating for lower costs of Epi-pens; our focus is naloxone access. It’s unfair to withhold forward progress in one area because another area isn’t progressing as quickly. All lives are important and valuable, and those that are struggling deserve to get support and be safe as well.

Addressing stigma around increasing Narcan accessibility

- Include talk of **safety** *in addition to* harm reduction
- *Encourage box placement near AEDs – they are all safety tools*
- Educate
- Promote positive messaging and make it normal
- Engage your community: Do you want to be a part of this effort to care for your community members and make a safer community?
- Harm reduction is important

Frequently Asked Questions: Naloxone and Naloxone Boxes

[Expand all](#) | [Collapse all](#)

+ What is naloxone?

+ When should naloxone be administered?

+ How is naloxone administered?

+ Is naloxone safe to use? What if naloxone is administered to someone who is not experiencing an opioid overdose?

+ How long does Narcan nasal spray take to work?

+ Does Narcan nasal spray expire?

+ How many doses are needed?

[Expand all](#) | [Collapse all](#)

+ What is inside a naloxone box?

+ Where are naloxone boxes located on campus?

+ Who can access naloxone boxes on campus?

+ If someone wants to carry naloxone on them, can they take it from the box?

+ Will an alarm sound if the naloxone box is opened?

+ Will the police be called if the naloxone box is opened?

+ Where else can I get naloxone?

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Change management (n.) – the process of supporting people during a change to make sure the change is successful long-term

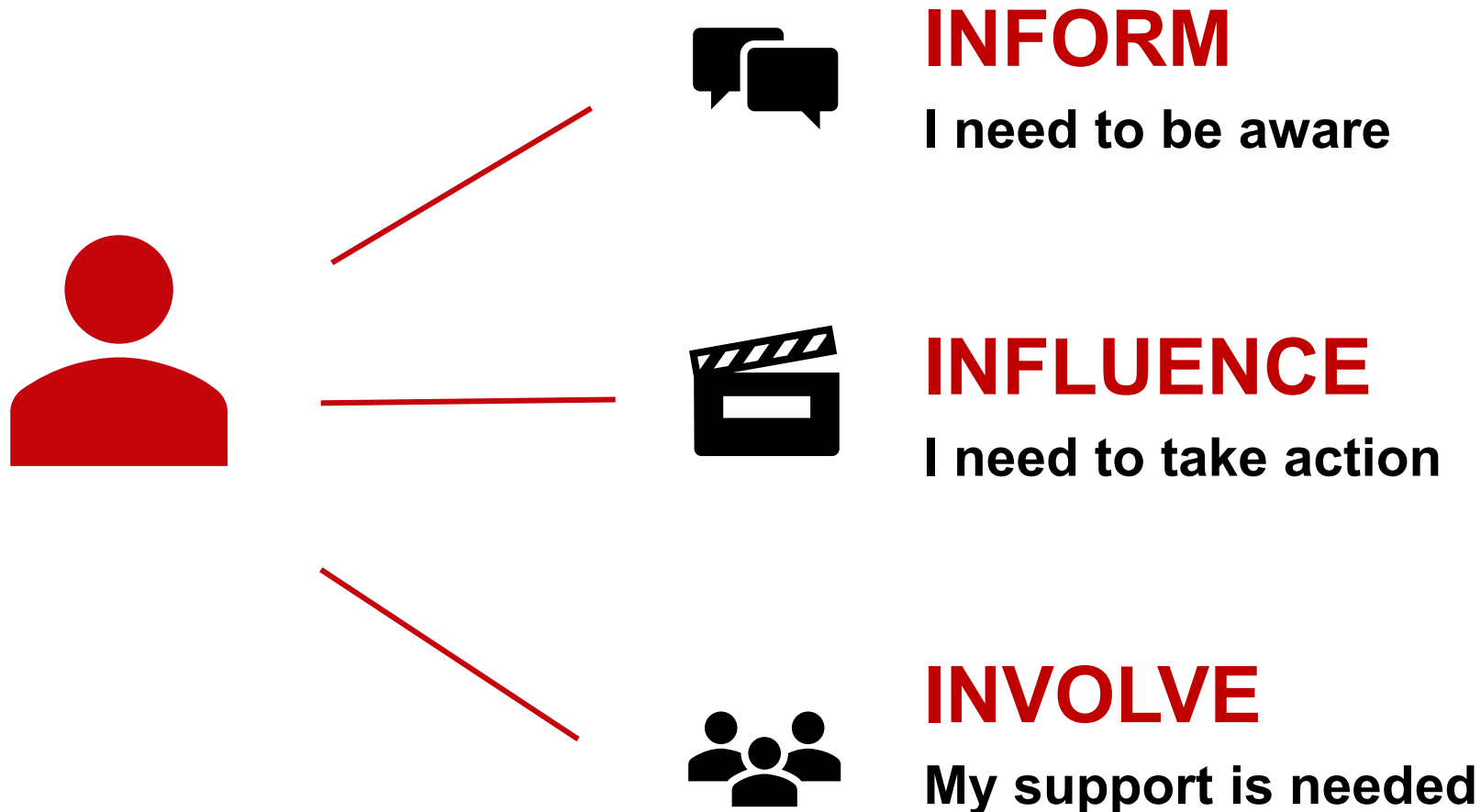
- **INFORMATIONAL:** Communicate about the behavior change
- **CONNECTED:** Involve the people you're trying to reach
- **RELEVANT:** Tie in culture, mission, and vision
- **MOTIVATING:** Provide encouragement and incentives to change

You likely have more audiences than you think!

Audiences and Stakeholders

Students	Faculty and staff	UHS	Other groups (outside the university)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All undergraduate students• First-year students• Transfer students• International students• Student organizations and groups• Fraternities and sororities• Peer educators• Resident assistants• Students in recovery• Students at risk of overdose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undergraduate instructors• Graduate TAs• New instructors• Student academic advisors• Departmental advisors• Library staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical staff• Mental health staff• Prevention Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media• Parents of students• Madison community members
	University leadership	Other campus orgs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chancellor Mnookin• UHS leadership• Dean of Students• Departmental deans• Associated Students of Madison (ASM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Affairs• Facilities Planning & Management• Recreation and Wellbeing• University Housing• Wisconsin Voices for Recovery• University Communications• Wisconsin Union	

Different audiences have different needs

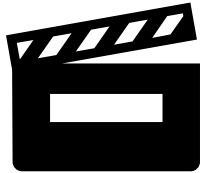


Narcan on campus



INFORM

- All students, faculty, and staff
- Parents/families



INFLUENCE

- People at risk of overdose
- People who know someone at risk of overdose



INVOLVE

- Box site staff
- Student organizations
- Campus leadership
- Student organizations



INFORM

I need to be aware

Audiences

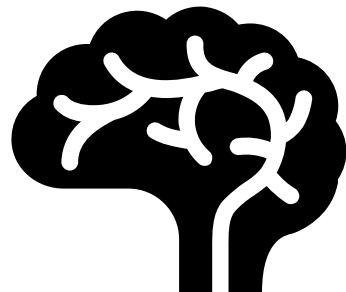
- All students, faculty, and staff
- Parents/families

- "Informing" an audience is not just a passive sharing of information.
- **There is always an action associated with what you are trying to communicate!**

Let's break it down...

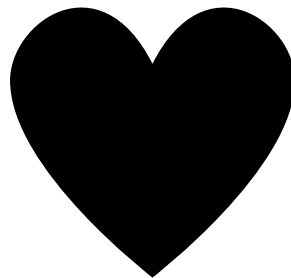
What does your
audience need to

KNOW?



What does your
audience need to

FEEL?



What does your
audience need to

DO?





INFORM

I need to be aware

Audiences

- All students, faculty, and staff
- Parents/families

Messaging

What do staff need to **KNOW**?

- Narcan is free and easily accessible to them for emergency use or to take and carry in case of an emergency
- Where Narcan is located on campus
- How to use Narcan
- Signs of overdose
- Risks of fentanyl and opioid overdose (including drug lacing)



What do staff need to **FEEL**?

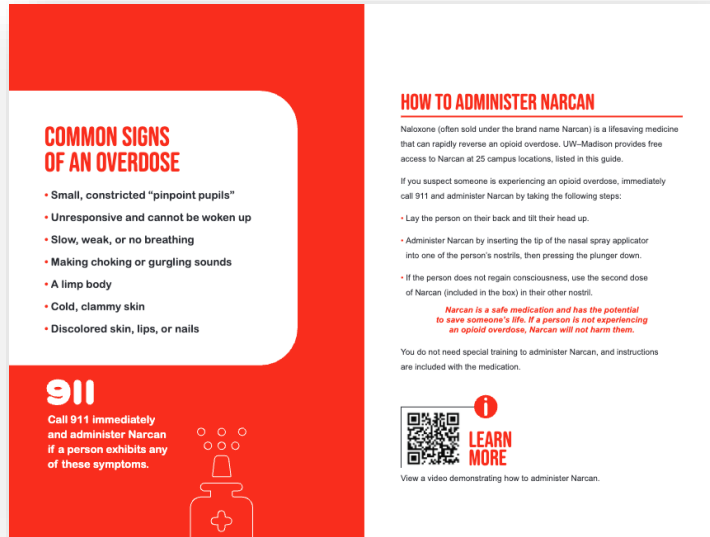
- They have the power, knowledge, and ability to save a life
- Overdose is an issue that could affect them or someone they know—it is not a far-away or unrealistic issue
- Narcan is safe and highly effective at reversing an opioid overdose
- It is important to be prepared and act quickly in the case of overdose



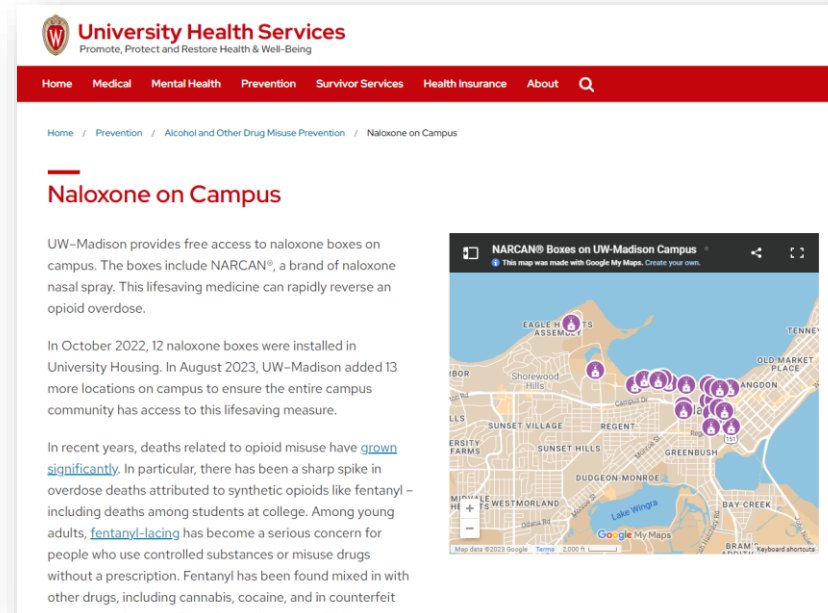
What do staff need to **DO**?

- Recognize the signs of overdose
- Locate their nearest Narcan box location
- Carry Narcan with them (as a preventive measure) if they or a friend/peer are at risk of overdose
- Be prepared to administer Narcan in an emergency and call 911

Example "Inform" Communications



Booklet

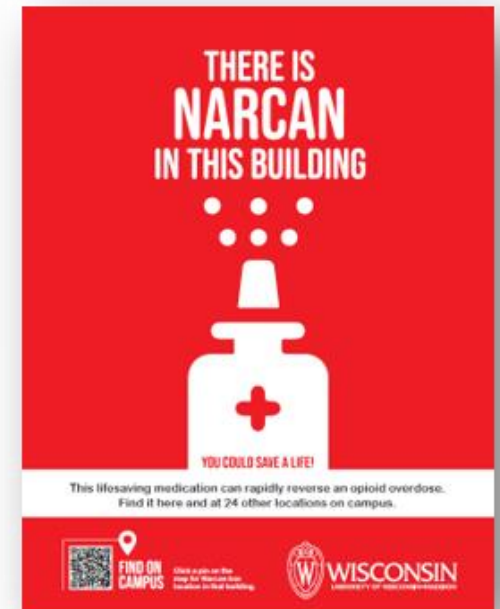


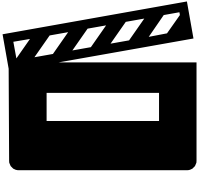
Webpage with Map



Wallet Card

Poster





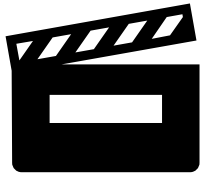
INFLUENCE

I need to take action

Audiences

- People at risk of overdose
- People who know someone at risk of overdose

- Tie to specific events or times of year to communicate in a way that is **relevant** and **motivating** for your audience.
- Not just the "what" but also the "**why.**"



INFLUENCE

I need to take action

Audiences

- People at risk of overdose
- People who know someone at risk of overdose

Messaging

What do students who know someone at risk of overdose need to **KNOW?**

Same as "inform" audience, plus:

- Where to get fentanyl test strips on campus
- How to use fentanyl test strips
- Recovery support, drug misuse counseling, and safer use resources are available on campus
- How the Amnesty Policy works

→ **What do students who know someone at risk of overdose need to **FEEL**?**

Same as "inform" audience, plus:

- They have the ability to significantly reduce their risk of overdose
- They are supported (not stigmatized), and their health and wellbeing matter

→ **What do students who know someone at risk of overdose need to **DO**?**

Same as "inform" audience, plus:

- Carry Narcan with them or keep it in their apartment, dorm room, or office (as a preventive measure)
- Educate friends and roommates on Narcan
- Use fentanyl test strips before using any substances
- Never use alone/practice safer use



**MOST OVERDOSES
ARE WITNESSED.**

**DO YOU KNOW
WHAT TO DO?**

Overdose Awareness Day IG Post





INVOLVE

My support is needed

Audiences

- Box site staff
- Student organizations
- Campus leadership
- Student organizations

Why does involvement matter?

- Extend your team!
- Reaches groups on campus with barriers to access (trusted messenger, targeted reach and messaging, etc.)
- Embedding health promotion ambassadors across campus; creating culture change, not just campaigns



INVOLVE

My support is needed

Audiences

- Box site staff
- Student organizations
- Campus leadership
- Student organizations

Messaging

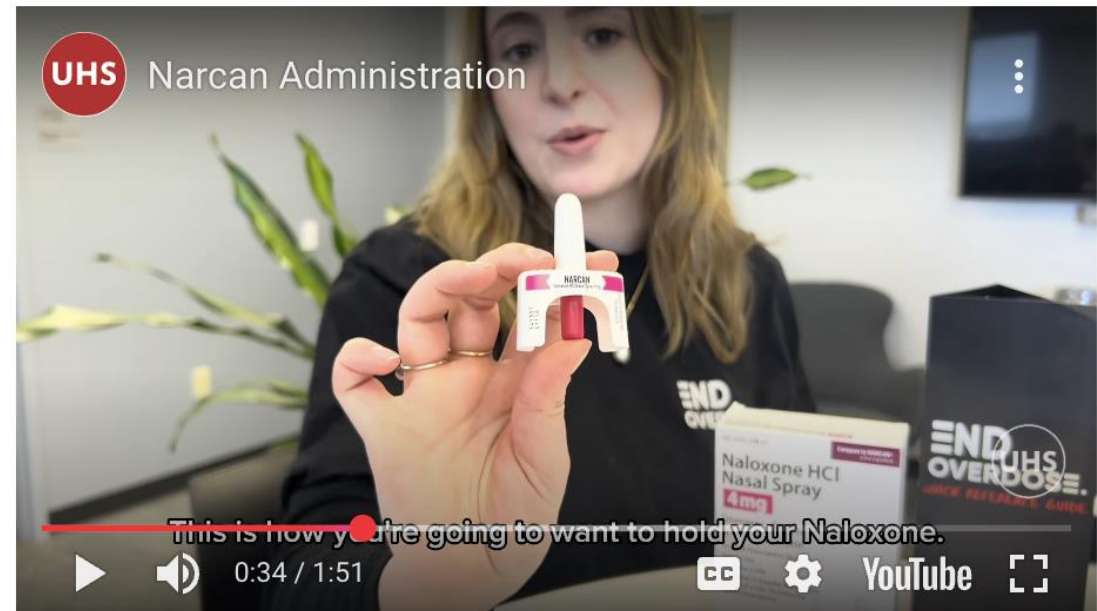
What do student orgs need to KNOW?	→	What do student orgs need to FEEL?	→	What do student orgs need to DO?
<i>Same as "inform" audience, plus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where to go for consultation and support; how to get help from UHS		<i>Same as "inform" audience, plus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They can help keep their members and the campus community safe• Their work is supported by campus services and resources		<i>Same as "inform" audience, plus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote campus Narcan availability in their trainings and outreach• Keep Narcan in their org office or meeting locations

Example "Involve" Communications



Box Site Toolkit

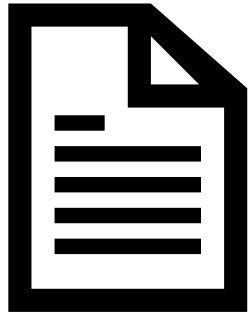
- Talking points and FAQs
- Sample materials
- Narcan administration instructions



Narcan Administration Video

(in collaboration with UW's End Overdose student organization)

Communication planning at-a-glance



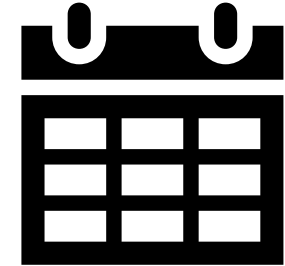
CHANNEL

How do they already get health information?



MESSENGER

Who do they trust and listen to?



TIMING

How can this message be most relevant?



Side note

Understanding your audiences

Feedback channels like focus groups or surveys can help you find out what resonates:

- Prior knowledge
- Beliefs and biases
- Language and terminology
- Access to information/channels

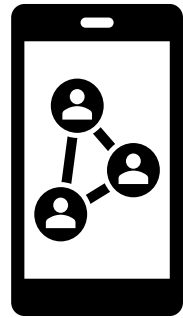
Low capacity options:

- Use existing groups/channels
- Consider informal feedback
- Lean on campus partners

What channels can you look for?

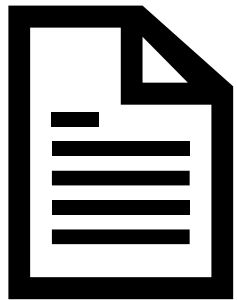
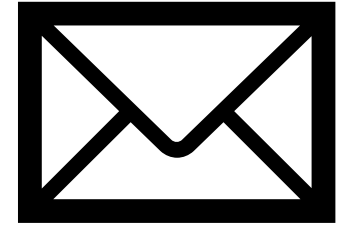
Social Media

- Instagram
- Twitter
- Facebook



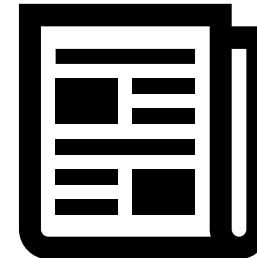
Newsletters and Email Lists

- Advisors
- Departments
- University



Print

- Posters
- Postcards
- Flyers
- Stickers



Digital

- Websites
- Digital TVs



Campus News

- Press releases
- Student newspapers



Keep in mind:
You can ask your campus partners what channels exist in their area!

Building a collaborative plan



It's not one-and-done. Reinforce key messages throughout the year.



Look for tie-ins with other campus and national events, relevant times of year, and related messages.



Combine forces with campus partners with similar goals.

Case study: Narcan on campus

EVENTS

Orientation	Orientation Housing move-in Required programs	Fall classes begin	Homecoming Halloween	Thanksgiving Break	Winter Break
	New box sites Overdose Awareness Day	Recovery Month	Alcohol Awareness Week		
JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Summer Break		Fall Semester			

COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINTS

Emails		Communicators Advisors				
Newsletters		Weekly, InsideUW	Housing, Grad, RecWell, Union			
News Articles		Press release				
Print Materials			Housing posters	Wallet card	Box site posters	
Other	Web updates	Resource pkg.			Digital screens	
Outreach Events			Harm Reduction Fest			
Social Media		Announcement Awareness Day		Halloween drug safety		

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Quantitative Metrics

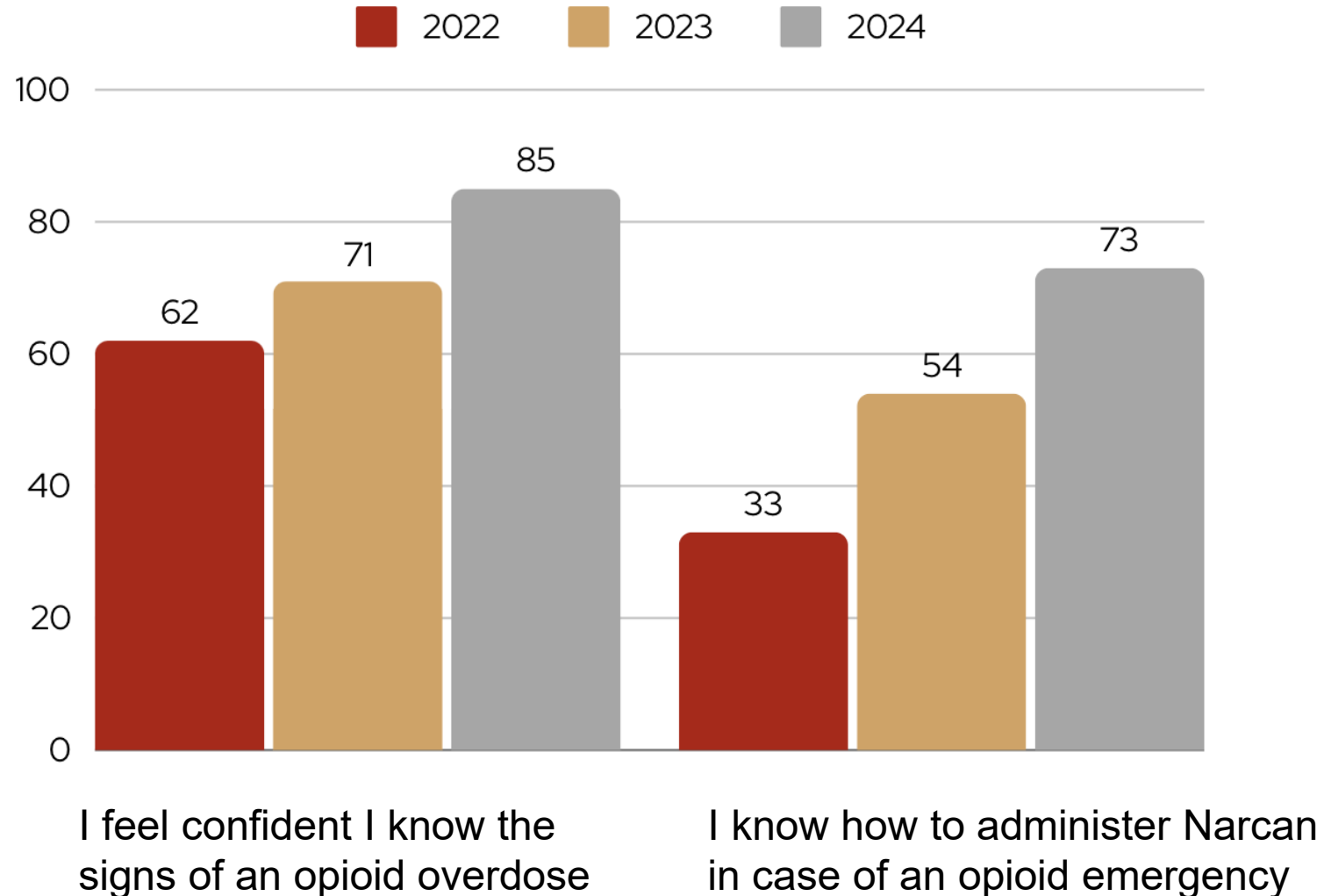
Goals	Measurement
Inform students, faculty, and staff of on-campus Narcan availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 50,000 views of campus map since start of 2023• 4 media inquiries• Broad campus newsletter reach, including promotion to all undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff
Increase access to Narcan on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Box utilization increased from first year:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 54 kits of Narcan removed in 2023-2024 school year (an increase from 16 kits removed in previous school year)• 38 kits of Narcan removed in 2024-2025• 2 reports of Narcan administered to an individual
Promote overdose awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 9,000 students received training on overdose awareness and Narcan in AlcoholEdu; data showed significant increases in pre/post-test knowledge over previous academic year

Student knowledge increased

INFORM



% "Agree" Responses to AlcoholEdu Post-Test



Qualitative Feedback

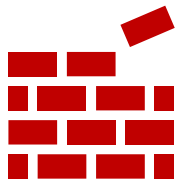
INVOLVE



Interest from campus partners



Positive media attention



Opportunities to build on the program



Success stories!

Success Stories

INVOLVE



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Overdose Harm Reduction on Campus

In Clinic

Indicated Prevention

Interventions:

- In-clinic HOPE kits
- Medication lockboxes

Communication:

- Posters and digital screens in waiting areas
- Provider talking points for conversations with patients

Campus-wide

Selected Prevention

Interventions:

- Provision of Narcan and fentanyl test strips
- Med takeback events

Communication:

- Alignment with high-risk times of year (e.g., Mifflin, Halloween, spring break)

Universal Prevention

Interventions:

- 35 campus Narcan boxes
- Free test strips in SAC
- Promotion of Med takeback sites on/near campus

Communication:

- Webpage, campus map
- Print education materials
- Posters and digital screens

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Challenges/Lessons Learned

Time: It was a big undertaking. Hard to keep prioritizing at the risk of letting other ATOD items go.

Demand: Everyone wanted a box. More strategy early would have helped

Parents: You'll never be doing enough.

Plan Ahead: Whatever your funding for the program is think through how you can sustain if everything goes away.

- **Consult:** Legal and Risk Management
- **Assessment:** Understand your audience
- **Communication Plan:** Spend time here, use tools, re-evaluate yearly or when needed
- **Policy:** Will reflect our program not general Narcan on campus



Questions?

Contact Info



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