

Overdose Prevention Priorities and Actions



GHAI's overdose prevention program advocates for evidence-based policy actions that will prevent drug overdose deaths in the United States. Amid a changing political landscape, GHAI has targeted and timely advocacy actions that map to long-standing program priorities

Priority 1: Expand access to addiction treatment.

All Americans should be able to receive treatment when and where they need it and at a cost they can afford. To eliminate the burden of overdose deaths, we must develop capacity to provide treatment on demand. We must build systems that provide lifesaving treatment at key intervention points, including through peer supports in emergency departments and during incarceration.



GHAI Advocacy Action

- Medicaid represents the largest commitment by the federal government to the treatment of people with substance use disorder (SUD). Nearly two million Americans receive SUD treatment through Medicaid. GHAI is advocating against cuts to Medicaid-supported services — these budget actions threaten access to treatment.

Priority 2: Support local overdose prevention efforts.

Community-based organizations are preventing overdoses across the United States every day. Many of them receive federal funding from the SUPPORT Act, which passed Congress in 2018 and created grant programs that provide organizations with resources to address their unique needs. The programs are proving to be effective — just five years after passage, the U.S. has seen an almost twenty four percent decrease in yearly overdose deaths.



GHAI Advocacy Action

- GHAI advocates for Congress to reauthorize and expand the SUPPORT Act to fully fund the programs included in that legislation. This includes fully funding efforts to distribute naloxone, the medication that reverses an opioid overdose, to first responders and community-level overdose prevention groups.

Priority 3: Advance data-driven solutions to the overdose crisis.

With the drug supply changing rapidly, public health surveillance of the illicit drug supply, drug use patterns, and non-fatal overdoses provide states with the necessary intelligence to address overdose hot spots and deploy effective services. In particular, HHS's programs and services help detect and respond to emerging threats and contaminants in the drug supply. They also identify and address gaps in a rapidly declining health care and behavioral health care workforce at a time when more than one-third of Americans live in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area.



GHAI Advocacy Action

- GHAI is calling on the Trump Administration to restore funding to the HHS programs that monitor and analyze national and local data to inform timely responses to overdose threats.