

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Health Department to hold end-of-year opioid overdose prevention workshop

**Eau Claire, WI, December 9, 2022** – On Thursday, December 15 from 5:30 to 7 p.m., the Eau Claire City-County Health Department and At The Roots LLC will hold an opioid overdose prevention workshop at Banbury Place in Eau Claire. At this free workshop, the public will learn how to use the overdose reversal medication Narcan and how to identify an opioid overdose. Attendees will also get a box of free Narcan nasal spray and a medication lockbox to take home.

Register for this free 90-minute workshop at [www.GetInvolvedASAP.org](http://www.GetInvolvedASAP.org). The event is the Health Department's final overdose prevention workshop of 2022, though more workshop dates will be announced in 2023.

At these workshops – What Do You Know About Opioids – Health Department staff walk the audience through what opioids are, how opioids are impacting Eau Claire County, and how to recognize and respond to a potential opioid overdose.

“Community members who come to the workshop on December 15 will be able to take home one box of Narcan (naloxone) nasal spray, a medication lockbox or bag, a medication deactivation bag, and other resources,” says Sarah Dillivan-Pospisil, public health specialist with the Health Department. “Getting familiar with local overdose resources is a meaningful way to honor the many people in our community who are deeply impacted by overdoses.”

In 2020 in Eau Claire County, there were 15 opioid overdose deaths and 280 opioid-related hospital visits. Opioid overdose deaths have doubled in the county between 2014 and 2020. Nationwide, drug overdose deaths in the U.S. topped 100,000 for the first time in 2021; Wisconsin alone saw a 13% increase in drug overdose deaths that year.

County residents say drug use is a top priority for our community, according to the Eau Claire County 2021 Community Health Assessment.



"Everyone in our community should care about opioids. If you have kids, grandkids, or even pets, this could impact you. You could save a life just by being informed," says Renee Sommer, founder of At the Roots, LLC. "If we all do our part, we can make our community a healthier and safer place. Workshops like this are part of that."

**In addition to registering for the What Do You Know About Opioids workshop, you can also help prevent an overdose by:**

- **Using a lockbox, lockbag, or locked drawer** (and hiding the key!) to keep opioid medications safe and out of sight. 70% of people misusing prescription pain relievers get them through friends or relatives.
- **Disposing of your unused or expired medications** at one of several permanent medication drop-off locations in Eau Claire County. Leaving unused opioids in the home can increase the chance of other people finding and using them. Younger children or pets may find them and accidentally swallow the medication. Find a disposal location by visiting [www.GetInvolvedASAP.org](http://www.GetInvolvedASAP.org).
- **Finding local support groups and treatment resources** in the Chippewa Valley. Find the booklet at [bit.ly/OverdoseBooklet](http://bit.ly/OverdoseBooklet).

To register for the December 15 workshop and to learn more about opioids, visit:

[www.GetInvolvedASAP.org](http://www.GetInvolvedASAP.org)

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