



# Foundation *for* Opioid Response Efforts

## **FORE Awards \$2 Million in New Grants to Improve Access to Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in Pharmacies and Emergency Departments**

### **Funds to Provide Training, Address Stigma, and Develop Guidelines**

**NEW YORK (March 8, 2023)** – As part of its ongoing work to support evidence-based solutions to the national opioid and overdose crisis, the [Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts \(FORE\)](#) today announced \$2 million in new grants to improve access to medications for opioid use disorder in pharmacies and emergency departments nationwide. The four organizations receiving funding are the University of Houston College of Pharmacy, Howard University, the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy, and the Emergency Medicine Foundation. Since its founding in 2018, FORE has awarded grants totaling \$33.9 million to address the national crisis.

“Medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder have proven to be highly effective in saving lives, however access to these medications is often limited,” said Karen A. Scott, MD, MPH, president of the Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts. “Pharmacies and emergency departments have a vital role in ensuring that patients receive the medications they need in a timely manner. We are providing funding to address stigma, lack of training and other barriers to treatment at these two critical access points.”

### **Addressing Pharmacy-Level Access to Medications for Opioid Use Disorder**

Pharmacists carry clinical and regulatory responsibilities to provide safe and effective care for patients with opioid use disorder, however community pharmacists and their staff lack clear cut guidelines on how to appropriately assess prescriptions and dispense medications for opioid use disorder. Stigma, fear of investigations, and other barriers are prevalent. [The University of Houston College of Pharmacy](#) is receiving \$572,278 over two years to launch a collaboration among three schools of pharmacy and two national pharmacy organizations, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and the National Community Pharmacists Association, that will create evidence-based guidelines and continuing pharmacy education to provide pharmacists with the training required to overcome administrative, attitudinal, and knowledge-based barriers that interfere with properly dispensing medications for opioid use disorder.

Black residents of lower-income areas of Washington, DC, are disproportionately affected by opioid use disorder and overdose deaths yet have limited access to medications for opioid use disorder in their communities. To increase access, [The Howard University](#) is receiving \$241,043 over two years to train at least 80 pharmacy

personnel and implement a new and innovative treatment model, the Pharmacy-Physician-Peer Recovery Coach Collaborative, in at least three community pharmacies.

Rural Appalachian communities in Kentucky have been highly impacted by opioid use disorder and overdose, yet a study found that most pharmacies in 12 Appalachian counties were limiting their dispensing of buprenorphine, a life-saving medication for opioid use disorder, or were not dispensing it at all. [The University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy](#) is receiving \$496,130 over two years to develop and test a peer-to-peer, visiting education program for pharmacists to reduce stigma, mitigate barriers to dispensing, and increase pharmacists' confidence in dispensing buprenorphine.

### **Accelerating Improvement of Emergency Department Treatment**

**The Emergency Medicine Foundation**, a nonprofit founded by the [American College of Emergency Physicians](#), is receiving \$739,003 over two years to provide intensive, tailored coaching and support to 70 emergency departments over two years to enhance their capacity to provide buprenorphine and naloxone to patients with opioid use disorder. The project builds on a [previous](#) FORE grant that offered technical assistance and other supports to emergency department clinicians interested in increasing access to treatment. The Emergency Medicine Foundation will also partner with the Naloxone Project to conduct an environmental scan of naloxone dispensing practices in 10 states, engage with emergency departments and support states' capacity to increase naloxone distribution across a variety of clinical settings.

This latest grant continues FORE's work to accelerate the ability of the nation's emergency departments to fight the opioid crisis. In 2020, FORE launched the [National Emergency Medicine Consortium](#), consisting of three grantees, the American College of Emergency Physicians/Emergency Medicine Foundation, California Bridge at the Public Health Institute, and Get Waivered at Massachusetts General Hospital that have integrated their work into a single national initiative to significantly improve emergency department care of patients with opioid use disorder.

To learn more about how FORE-funded grantees are expanding access to treatment for opioid use disorder, tune in to "[Beyond X-ing the X-Waiver](#)," a free webinar from FORE, on March 9, at 3pm ET. Register [HERE](#).

### **Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE)**

[FORE](#) was founded in 2018 as a private 501(c)(3) national, grant-making foundation focused on addressing the nation's opioid crisis. FORE is committed to funding a diversity of projects contributing solutions to the crisis at national, state, and community levels. FORE's mission is to support partners advancing patient-centered, innovative, evidence-based solutions impacting people experiencing opioid use disorder, their families, and their communities. Through convening, grantmaking and developing informational resources, FORE seeks to bring about long-term change. To date, FORE has awarded 74 grants totaling \$33.9 million.

Source: Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE)

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