

**Community Opioid Abuse Response Effort (COARE): Local Leadership Prescription for Action**

**COARE Overview**

Ending the opioid epidemic requires a coordinated community response. Hospitals, health systems, and healthcare providers need to actively partner with people and organizations in their communities to address the epidemic together. It is important to connect communities with opioid abuse treatment resources and encourage a communitywide conversation. Community Opioid Abuse Response Effort (COARE): Local Leadership Prescription for Action is a community-based performance improvement program (PIP) in which an Improvement Advisor supports community leaders to partner with health systems, hospitals, healthcare providers, state and local health departments, local behavioral health, law enforcement, interested community organizations interested in opioid use disorders including community mental health centers, federally qualified health centers, EMS/ambulance service, faith-based groups, pharmacies, local political leaders, schools, and district attorneys.

The COARE project is a result of SDAHO's response to the Request for Information issued by the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health to support the state's additional opioid response efforts in which funding was available to all states from the SAMHSA State Opioid Response (SOR) federal grant.

*Purpose: SDAHO will plan and execute community-specific conversations and training events across approximately 10 targeted communities in South Dakota to:*

- *Support COARE to build community engagement*
- *Establish performance improvement programs specific to opioid abuse presentation and response strategies at the local level in collaboration with community-based stakeholders*

- ❖ Dedicated Improvement Advisor (IA)
- ❖ Initial phase gathering information on statewide resources such as Dept of Social Services, Dept of Health, Helpline, Face It Together, etc.
- ❖ Developed a repository of known services in designated communities to include medical providers, addiction services, prevention services, pharmacies, law enforcement, state's attorneys, med disposal sites, and several others
- ❖ Improvement Advisor began identifying interest and leaders in targeted communities. Targeted discussions with hospital, health system, and healthcare provider leaders, assessing engagement in the community and a variety of stakeholders
- ❖ To date, initial stakeholder meeting in the communities of Watertown and Aberdeen
  - Currently evaluating effectiveness, potential gaps in the community, and discussion of next steps
- ❖ Additional Stakeholder meetings include Mitchell in July, tentative meetings in Spearfish, Sisseton, and possibly Brookings in September
- ❖ Exploring SDAHOs role in continuing to support these communities
- ❖ Continue to connect with further possible future communities to include Huron, Sioux Falls, Pierre, Yankton, others
- ❖ Also considering integration/partnering with other opioid abuse funding sources