



IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

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On September 19, 2018, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded a \$200,000 grant to Western NC AIDS Project (WNCAP) to combat the opioid crisis in the 7 far western counties of North Carolina: Clay, Cherokee, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain and the Qualla Boundary.

A total of \$19 million is being awarded to 95 organizations under the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's (FORHP) Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Planning (RCORP-Planning). These one-year planning grants are a part of a multi-year initiative being implemented by HRSA to increase access to treatment and recovery services for opioid use disorder within rural areas.

WNCAP will use this funding to expand the WNC Harm Reduction Alliance (WNC HRA), a regional, multi-sector consortium that includes people who use drugs and people in recovery as well as any business, agency or organization in the service area that wants to be part of the solution. The original coalition was formed in 2015 as the Macon Overdose Prevention Coalition to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses and other prevention and treatment services. In 2018, the name was changed to WNC HRA to reflect the expanded focus on the region.

The WNC HRA will develop plans to implement evidence-based opioid use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery interventions designed to reduce opioid overdoses, as well as new HIV and Hepatitis C infections among rural populations at the highest risk for substance use disorders.

If you or your organization is interested in being a member of the WNC HRA, please contact Stephanie Almeida at stephanie@wncap.org. Help us save lives and heal families!