

# N.C. OPIOID USE CRISIS

## Making a difference in WNC

With the help of community partners, Smoky Mountain MCO has implemented multiple initiatives to help individuals using heroin and other opioid drugs find healing and hope. Programs include preventing overdose deaths, building professional knowledge, strengthening community response and expanding treatments proven to work. Additionally, Smoky is launching new efforts to build programs that promote recovery from any type of addictive substance.

### ► NARCAN® distribution

- In a partnership with the N.C. Harm Reduction Coalition (NCHRC), Smoky funded the distribution of more than 2,600 free NARCAN® nasal spray overdose reversal kits in spring 2016 in WNC
- Smoky's \$100,000 contribution is only one of several reinvestment strategies being implemented.
- To date, at least 67 lives have been saved using Smoky's contribution. It's very likely that more reversals occurred but were not documented.
- The reversals include an incident in which a person required nine doses of NARCAN® after ingesting a condom full of heroin – with the intent to transport the drug – which later burst inside the person.
- The donation also equipped seven law enforcement agencies with NARCAN® kits.

Haywood and nearby counties in particular are seeing results from the NARCAN® initiative thanks to robust NARCAN® distribution efforts in that area:

**“There is a significant jump in overdose reversals from prior to the Smoky donation.”**

— NARCAN® distributor Conner Adams

### ► Heroin Summit co-sponsorship

- Smoky was co-sponsor of the 2016 Heroin Summit, hosted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina.
- Approximately 200 professionals attended to discuss the rise in addiction, trafficking trends, law enforcement efforts, prevention, treatment, roles for community organizations and recovery.

### ► Medication-assisted treatment

- Plans are underway to recruit, train and fund providers to provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to Medicaid and uninsured members.
- Planned funding of \$500,000 over two years as part of community reinvestment efforts.

### ► General substance use recovery

- Support of Western Regional Recovery Rally (Haywood County) in 2015 and 2016, plans for spring 2017 rally (McDowell County)
- Plans underway to develop and/or expand substance use recovery housing, support peer-run recovery centers and encourage new or expanded provider peer support services
- Ongoing Wellness Recovery Action Plan education and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trainings.