



For Immediate Release
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MENOMINEE, MI – The M&M Area Community Foundation (MMACF) is leading a “Safeguarding Our Communities” partnership with Bellin Health and Public Health of Delta and Menominee Counties. The MMACF applied for and received a grant from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan in collaboration with Vital Strategies, a global public health organization. The purpose of the grant is to reduce overdose deaths by expanding harm reduction services. Harm reduction is a way of preventing disease, death, and promoting health that meets people where they are rather than making judgments about where they should be.

The MMACF will invest the grant funding in community-rooted harm reduction programs that are committed to engaging with and caring for the health and well-being of community members across Marinette and Menominee Counties. The Foundation will develop and expand community education efforts related to opioid overdose risk and prevention, Narcan training and distribution and expansion of the Public Health of Delta and Menominee Counties Syringe Service Program.

2018 data shows that Marinette county has an average of 14.8 deaths per 100,000 residents, which is lower than the Wisconsin average of 22.4 per 100,000. However, Menominee County averages 36.8 overdose deaths per 100,000, which is well above the Michigan average of 26.9. Menominee County has the highest overdose death rate in all the counties reported in the UP.

“We are honored to be one of only ten Communities Foundations across Michigan to receive this support,” stated Paula Gruszynski, MMACF Executive Director. “The misuse of, or an addiction to opioids – including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl – is an ongoing serious crisis, here and across the country.”

All community members are encouraged to join with this partnership in recognizing that not all overdoses have to end in death. Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding our communities, this year and every year!

To learn more about how to participate in a free, virtual “Safeguarding Our Communities” educational program, contact Paula Gruszynski at 906-864-3599. If your business or organization would like to plan a training specific to your employees, please reach out to the MMACF.

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