



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-3468, **Agenda Item #:** 56.

12/14/2023

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with the University of Texas at Austin for health communication strategy and media placement services to prevent opioid overdose deaths for the term of December 15, 2023, through September 29, 2024, in the amount of \$300,000, with one 12-month renewal option in the amount of \$300,000, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$600,000.

Lead Department

Austin Public Health.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$300,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Public Health Special Revenue Fund. Funding for the remaining term is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Prior Council Action:

June 16, 2022 - Council approved Resolution No. 20220616-053 declaring a public health crisis in the City related to drug overdoses and directing the City Manager to address the drug overdose crisis by investing in harm reduction strategies utilizing opioid settlement payments and coordinating with the Public Health Commission, Council, and Travis County Commissioners Court, on an 11-0 vote.

September 14, 2023- Council approved Ordinance No. 20230914-072 to accept and appropriate \$2,000,420 in grant funds from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, for the "Austin Travis County Substance Use and Misuse Expanded Programming for Increased Community Awareness and Capacity to Prevent Substance Use Disorder Morbidity and Mortality" grant, on an 8-0 vote with Council Members Alison Alter, Harper-Madison, and Pool absent.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

Austin Public Health has been awarded funding from a Congressional Directive Spending Project entitled "Austin Travis County Substance Use and Misuse Expanded Programming for Increased Community Awareness and Capacity to Prevent Substance Use Disorder Morbidity and Mortality." This project will support the implementation of a public health prevention and education strategy to reduce deaths from opioid overdose. The strategy uses data to educate the community on a multi-component system, including 1) substance use/misuse and the associated risk of drug use; 2) high-risk populations within the community; 3) substance use prevention programs at partner agencies that will support educational outreach, provide case coordination and the assessment for at-risk populations; 4) linkage of clients with appropriate prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery programs; 5) expansion of Narcan Risk Reduction education and training of first responders (EMS, Fire, Police, public health), health care professionals, Community Health Workers, people who use drugs, city and transit employees, and other community members; 6) public education campaign; and 7) and healthcare provider education.

This interlocal agreement will support health communication strategies, including media placement services that will be conducted by the University of Texas at Austin, Center for Health Communication in support of Austin Public Health's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (or SAMHSA) grant. Communication goals include:

- Increase awareness of the dangers of fentanyl in the Austin metro area and Travis County.
- Increase knowledge about and use of harm reduction strategies to prevent fentanyl overdoses.
- Increase knowledge about and use of naloxone to reverse fentanyl overdoses and save lives.

Deliverables are still being negotiated and will include the following:

- IRB approval by the University of Texas at Austin.
- Environmental scan of existing campaigns for prevention of overdose deaths.
- Creative testing of existing materials.
- Procurement of a media buyer for placement of paid media.
- Creation of a media plan and timeline.
- Literature review to inform the creation of new materials.
- Design, testing, and refinement of new creative materials.
- Implementation and placement of the campaign in the Austin metro area and Travis County.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with Austin Public Health through monthly project calls and reports on campaign progress and media metrics.
- End of project summative report that includes recommendations for sustainability.