



# County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

## Board Report

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**File #: 20-137, Version: 1**

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Receive and accept an oral report from the Prescribe Safe Initiative regarding efforts and outcomes for the county including Naloxone (Narcan) distribution efforts.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Receive and accept an oral report from the Prescribe Safe Initiative regarding efforts and outcomes for the county including Naloxone (Narcan) distribution efforts.

**SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:**

U.S. sales of prescription opioid drugs for medical use began to rise dramatically starting in 1999. While these drugs have therapeutic benefit, their use can lead to accidental overdose and long-term addiction if risks are not carefully managed through patient education and oversight. Patients, their families, and the surrounding community can be impacted. Prescriptions that are stronger than needed, in greater quantities than necessary, or duplicate prescriptions; a combination which can all lead to dangerous outcomes for patients. Nationally, opioid sales, prescription opioid related deaths, and admissions for opioid addiction treatment all increased dramatically over the last 20 years.

Counties have begun to respond to the epidemic by developing local response efforts through collaboratives. Prescribe Safe Monterey County was formed in 2014 by local Emergency Department physicians, the Monterey County Health Department, Behavioral Health Bureau, and local law enforcement. Prescribe Safe Monterey County brings together over 18 local agencies and organizations with goals and actions to support, educate, and provide resources for our residents, physicians and patients on the dangers of prescription drugs, the safe use of prescription medications, safe and effective pain management options, and increase access to treatment for opioid addiction in Monterey County. Safe prescribing and reduction in access to opioid prescription drugs has led to the manufacturing, sales and distribution of illicit drugs including fake Percocet or Oxycodone pills laced with fentanyl. Additionally, there has also been a rise in heroin use once prescriptions run out.

Although efforts in Monterey County have seen improved prescription opioid misuse related outcomes for county residents a “wave” of illicit opioid related overdoses has resulted due to an overwhelming increase in the illegal distribution of illicit drugs laced with fentanyl. As a result, Monterey County opioid related fatalities increased by 300% between 2018 (9) and 2019 (36). To combat this alarming and deadly epidemic, Prescribe Safe has implemented several strategies including outreach and education, Rx Drug Take Back Days, Press Conferences, Town Hall meetings and Narcan distribution events. Efforts to date have occurred largely through in-kind efforts by all agency and organization personnel.

Narcan, has been an effective harm-reduction tool in reversing an opioid overdose. Prescribe Safe Monterey County has held four distribution events in local communities and has collaborated with local law enforcement, local government agencies, local libraries and local schools to ensure that Narcan is readily available should the need arise. In Monterey County, the use of Narcan has saved approximately 180 lives and is expected to save more as distribution events take place in various regions of our County.

This work supports the following Monterey County Health Department 2018-2022 Strategic Plan initiative: 1) Empower the community to improve health; 2) Enhance community health and safety through prevention; and

3) Ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, customer-friendly, quality health services. It also supports nine of the ten essential public health services, specifically: 1) Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems; Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues; 4) Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems; 5) Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts; 6) Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety; 7) Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provisions of health care when otherwise unavailable; 9) Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services; and 10) Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Monterey County Health Department, Behavioral Health Bureau and Monterey County Prescribe Safe Partners have contributed to the efforts around the Prescribe Safe Initiative.

FINANCING:

There is no impact to the County General Fund for receiving this report.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

- Economic Development:
  - Through collaboration, strengthen economic development to ensure a diversified and healthy economy.
- Administration:
  - Promote an organization that practices efficient and effective resource management and is recognized for responsiveness, strong customer orientation, accountability and transparency.
- Health & Human Services:
  - Improve health and quality of life through County supported policies, programs, and services; promoting access to equitable opportunities for healthy choices and healthy environments in collaboration with communities.
- Infrastructure:
  - Plan and develop a sustainable, physical infrastructure that improves the quality of life for County residents and supports economic development results.
- Public Safety:
  - Create a safe environment for people to achieve their potential, leading businesses and communities to thrive and grow by reducing violent crimes as well as crimes in general.

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Approved by:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health, 755-4526

Attachment:

PowerPoint presentation is on file with the Clerk of the Board

