

2022-2023

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# Michigan Overdose Fatality Review (MiOFR)

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Annual Activities Report

[www.michiganofr.org](http://www.michiganofr.org)



*This project is supported by Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program, 2018-AR-BX-K037, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and administered by the Michigan State Police (MSP). Points of view or opinions contained within this document do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the DOJ or MSP.*

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# Introduction & Acknowledgements



**Michigan OFR**

In 2020, when conversations were just starting around Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) in Michigan, the Center for Child and Family Health at the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) was equally thrilled and overwhelmed at the prospect of starting a new county-level fatality review program. We understood the goal of fatality reviews, as our Center has supported the Child Death Review Program since its inception in 1995. With a deep understanding of the fatality review process and the benefits it can bring to Michigan, we began connecting with existing partners across the state. Although the fatality review processes are similar, reviewing substance-related cases that involve adults over 18, without any existing legislation to protect information sharing, was a new endeavor. Although challenging, in the last three years the program has expanded to 11 counties in lower Michigan, with five of those launching in 2023. This expansion has led to robust recommendation development in all 11 counties. These recommendations are formatted into infographics for our OFR members to distribute to Community Action Teams (CATs) to inform their strategic planning and to implement them to make changes in their communities. These compiled recommendations are also shared with the Michigan Overdose Fatality Review (MiOFR) State Advisory Group (SAG). This group, tasked with informing OFR practices and providing support when needed, continues to grow in membership. While this program is flourishing, changing, and growing across Michigan, the mission remains the same: the MiOFR Program will prevent drug overdose deaths by examining case-specific underlying circumstances involved, actively seeking feedback from those with lived experience, increasing connections between professionals serving individuals and families affected by substance use, and providing data-driven recommendations to stakeholders at the community, state, and national levels.

Due to the support of impactful funding opportunities such as Michigan Overdose Data to Action (MODA), Michigan State Police (MSP) sub-award for Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP), and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), this program has been able to rapidly grow into a great success. Without the support of these funders, our local champions, OFR team coordinators and case abstractors, as well as our expansive county team membership, this program wouldn't have had the impact that it has already had. Due to the collaborative nature of OFR, hearts and minds are constantly changing among new and existing OFR team members. Through the funding provided by NACCHO, we have begun to evaluate the OFR process. You can find more information about OFR evaluation on page 23. Of the small cohort of OFR county-level teams that were surveyed, 100% of respondents agreed that OFR is useful in improving collaboration among local overdose prevention professionals and they are hopeful that this process will lead to change in their communities.

One respondent stated:

— “ —

**[OFR] has been the most eye-opening collaboration I have been involved with to date. Much of the conversations are based in a forward-thinking manner with change intended. We have complete investment from those that work in the trenches of substance misuse.**

— ” —

We hope that MiOFR continues to expand across Michigan, leading to impactful community-led changes and a reduction in overdoses.

# OFR Meetings

## MODA



*Michigan Overdose Data to Action (MODA) program- photo from Wayne State's MODA Community Platform's LinkedIn-*

*<https://www.linkedin.com/in/moda-community-platform-4825a224b>*

In Fiscal Year 2023, due to funding from MODA, the MiOFR team at MPHI's Center for Child and Family Health (CCFH) established one new OFR in Eaton County, as well as began launching a team in St. Clair County. Accordingly, the MiOFR team continued to support existing OFR teams in Bay, Calhoun, Ingham, Midland, and Muskegon Counties. The following summaries are representative of Fiscal Year 2023: October 2022 – September 2023.

# MODA: Bay County

(established 2022)

## 2022

Three OFR meetings in 2022, which resulted in the creation of their first findings and recommendations infographic.

## 2023

Four OFR meetings in 2023, which resulted in the creation of their second findings and recommendations infographic.

## Team

Team members include: Recovery, Prevention, Mental and Behavioral Health, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Jail, Persons with Lived Experience, Treatment, Public Health, Children's Protective Services (CPS), Harm Reduction, Medical Examiner's Office (MEO), Faith-Based Agency, Schools/Education, Health Care and Emergency Medicine, Pharmacist

## ★ Successes

- Bay County OFR is in the process of meeting with the Sheriff's office to talk about policies that impact jail release times and offering Medication for Opioid Use Disorder while incarcerated.

# MODA: Calhoun County

(established 2022)

## 2022

Two OFR meetings in 2022, which resulted in the creation of their first findings and recommendations infographic and a “Year in Review meeting” to discuss recommendations, successes, and challenges in their first year.

## 2023

Three OFR meetings in 2023.

## Team

Team members include: Public Health, MEO, Mental and Behavioral Health, CPS and other Social Services, Probation and Parole, Prevention, Health Care, Harm Reduction, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP), Treatment, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Courts

## ★ Successes

- The team is using their Community Action Team and the OFR recommendations to guide strategic planning for this year.
- Problem solving: Due to this county having the largest number of xylazine-related deaths in this ME's jurisdiction, the team decided to have a review focused on decedents that died with xylazine as a contributing factor. Since there was not a single case with enough information for a complete review, our abstractor selected three cases for us to review at one meeting, leading to a robust prevention discussion.

# MODA: Eaton County

(established 2023)

## 2023

Introduction to OFR Meeting and two OFR meetings.

## Team

Team members include: MEO, Public Health, Schools/Education, Mental and Behavioral Health, Law Enforcement, Charities, Prevention, Health Care and Emergency Department, EMS and 911, Jail, Harm Reduction, Treatment, and Prevention.

Team members engaged in an initial OFR feedback survey after their first review.

## ★ Successes

- While this team is only two meetings into the OFR process, they are continuing to grow and build out any team membership gaps. The team has had robust representation from law enforcement and schools since the beginning and continues to increase representation from various entities within the county to ensure all voices are heard.

# MODA: Ingham County

(established 2022)

## 2022

Two OFR meetings, which resulted in the creation of their first findings and recommendations infographic.

## 2023

Three OFR meetings, which resulted in the creation of their second findings and recommendations infographic.

## Team

Team members include: Public Health, MEO, Probation and Parole, Law Enforcement, Harm Reduction, Mental and Behavioral Health, Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, Schools/Education, Jail, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, CPS, EMS, Health Care, Persons with Lived Experience, and Courts.

## ★ Successes

Ingham's team has used the OFR as an opportunity to learn about existing resources in the community and fill in knowledge gaps. For example:

- There were questions regarding the role of the MEO in investigating overdose deaths. The ME Investigator and pathology technician provided a brief case presentation on what the MEO considers when conducting overdose death investigations. This also resulted in a recommendation for a more formal overdose death scene investigation training, which is now in the beginning stages of development.
- The team invited a representative from a local Urgent Care to present on resources available to those that are uninsured and underinsured, as the team had numerous questions regarding local supports available for this population.

# MODA: Midland County

(established 2022)



**2022**

One OFR meeting in 2022.



**2023**

Two OFR meetings in 2023, which resulted in the creation of their first findings and recommendations infographic.



**Team**

Team members include: Public Health, MEO, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Probation and Parole, Prevention, Mental and Behavioral Health, EMS, Recovery, Law Enforcement, Health Care and Emergency Department, Pharmacist, Courts, and Persons with Lived Experience.

## ★ **Successes**

- The team is using OFR as an opportunity to fill in knowledge gaps among team members. For example, at their second OFR the team invited their local Sheriff to present on services that are provided in the jails (e.g., medication-assisted treatment, recovery/support groups, etc.)
- Several businesses and churches now have Narcan kits to place near their existing defibrillators and first aid kits.
- The county jail resupplied their resource backpacks containing Narcan, recovery resources, hygiene supplies, etc. These are given to individuals as they are being released.
- Enhanced the "Chances Are" anti-stigma campaign with new messaging. The coalition is waiting on feedback. Once approved it will be disseminated to the community.

# MODA: Midland County

(established 2022)

## ★ Successes continued

- A Narcan vending machine was ordered for the community. A community center is also interested and beginning conversations around obtaining a vending machine.
- The coalition is still working on getting fentanyl testing strips and xylazine testing strips to place in vending machines and to distribute them to community members.
- Midland Kids First is working on implementing the SEEK program, an evidence-based, practical model for improving primary healthcare for children and their families.
- The coalition updated their resource guides to ensure all information is accurate.

# MODA: Muskegon County

(established 2021)

## 2022

One OFR meeting in 2022, which resulted in the development of their third findings and recommendations infographic. The team had a “Year in Review” meeting at the end of 2022 to discuss recommendations, successes, and challenges in their first year.

## 2023

Four OFR meetings in 2023, which resulted in the development of their fourth findings and recommendations infographic.

## Team

Team members include: MEO, Public Health, Mental and Behavioral Health, EMS, Treatment, Health Care, Veteran’s Affairs, Law Enforcement, Jail, CPS and other Social Services, Recovery, Harm Reduction, and Courts.

## ★ Successes

- The CAT is using their OFR recommendations to guide the spending of their allocation of Opioid Settlement dollars.
- The OFR team has continued to find positive aspects of the cases reviewed, such as an increase in Narcan administration by bystanders prior to EMS arrival. Accordingly, another law enforcement agency in the county starting to carry Narcan.

# MODA: St. Clair County

(developing since 2022)

- The team showed passion and excitement at their Introduction Meeting, as well as their Mock Review. They had membership from: Public Health, Law Enforcement, Jails, Treatment, Mental and Behavioral Health, Recovery, Pharmacist, and CPS. Despite this, there are lingering challenges with engaging a case abstractor. The local champions continue to work on circumventing those barriers; however, the team is currently at a standstill. Without the protection of legislation, this is currently a necessity for establishing an OFR team in Michigan. The St Clair team is working on planning a meeting for this September to ensure that momentum is not lost.

# OFR Meetings

## NACCHO

# NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

*National Association of County & City Health Officials- photo from [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org)*

In Fiscal Year 2023, due to funding from NACCHO, the MiOFR team at MPHI's CCFH established three new OFR teams in Tuscola, Washtenaw, and Genesee Counties. The following summaries are representative of Fiscal Year 2023: October 2022 – September 2023.

# NACCHO: Genesee County

(established 2023)

## 2023

The team had an Introduction to OFR and a Mock OFR meeting, followed by two official OFR meetings in 2023.

## Team

Team members include: Recovery, Prevention, Law Enforcement, Health Care, EMS, Mental and Behavioral Health, MEO, Public Health, Harm Reduction, and Courts.

Team members engaged in an initial OFR feedback survey after their first review.

## ★ Successes

- Team members have identified the need to provide more services and resources to a specific area in the county. Team members are working together to identify key stakeholders who can provide education, resources, and reduce stigma.

# NACCHO: Tuscola County

(established 2023)

## 2023

In 2023, the team had an Introduction to OFR meeting, followed by six OFR meetings. The first three meetings resulted in the creation of their first findings and recommendations infographic and the next three meetings resulted in the creation of their second findings and recommendations infographic.

## Team

Team members include: Public Health, MEO, Prevention, Recovery, Mental and Behavioral Health, Jails, Faith-Based Agency, Schools/Education, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Courts, Law Enforcement, CPS, Probation and Parole, Health Care, Funeral Home, and Treatment.

Team members engaged in an Ongoing OFR Process Survey after their third review.

## ★ Successes

- The CAT applied for grant funding to support the development of a Quick Response Team in their community.
- They influenced hospital and clinic policies to allow the distribution of Narcan, resulting in 10 clinics offering it in their waiting rooms.

# NACCHO: Washtenaw County

(established 2023)

## 2023

The team included their introduction to OFR within their first OFR meeting and had a total of two OFR meetings in 2023.

## Team

Team members include: Public Health, Mental and Behavioral Health, MEO, Schools/Education, Prevention, Pharmacist, Health Care, Treatment, CPS and other Social Work, Recovery, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Courts, Unhoused Shelters, Harm Reduction, EMS, Probation and Parole, and Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Team members engaged in an initial OFR feedback survey after their first review.

## ★ Successes

- Law enforcement connected with the case abstractor, who explained the process of signing an interagency agreement. This will provide an opportunity to include criminal history and law enforcement contact in the case presentations.

# OFR Meetings

## MSP



*Michigan State Police- photo from [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov)*

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In Fiscal Year 2023, due to funding from MSP, the MiOFR team at MPHI's CCFH established one new OFR in Allegan County, as well as began supporting Kent County's new OFR team. The following summaries are representative of Fiscal Year 2023: October 2022 – September 2023.

# MSP: Allegan County

(established 2023)

## 2023

After finding ways to address barriers in resources and time constraints, the team held an Introduction to OFR Meeting, a Mock Review, and four OFR meetings in 2023.

## Team

Team members include: Public Health, Law Enforcement, Harm Reduction, Prevention, Recovery, EMS, Tribes, Treatment, Evaluator, MEO, Health Care, Mental and Behavioral Health, Veterans Affairs, and Jail.

## ★ Successes

- While Allegan's OFR team is newer, they are trying to identify a stable funding source to support the team long-term, as they believe this process is beneficial to the community.
- Since their establishment in May of 2023, they have taken team recommendations to their CAT to find innovative ways to implement them. They developed Narcan kits that include four doses of Narcan, English and Spanish administration instructions, a sanitizer wipe, gloves, resources around accessing syringes and mental health services, and a CPR shield. They've been distributing these to the community and are addressing barriers for service providers to be able to distribute them as well. For example, EMS couldn't leave these kits behind on their calls because of policy barriers around providing Narcan that didn't originate from them. They've used this as an opportunity to provide community service hours to those on probation that may have disabilities and can't do service hours with any strenuous physical activity. They are providing hours for those that stuff their kits with EMS-provided Narcan, as well as the rest of the materials in the typical kit. This allows EMS providers

# MSP: Allegan County

(established 2023)

## ★Successes continued

to leave kits behind after any encounter. They are also reaching out to the board of pharmacists to try to provide their Narcan in the community kits in lieu of the expensive prescription Narcan that community members are currently using. This would alleviate any cost barriers for those wanting to access Narcan from a pharmacy.

- At their OFR meetings, the team noted stigma as a significant barrier. To help share resources around harm reduction and reduce stigma, they plan to have people with lived experience share their stories, including those that have been revived using Narcan. They plan to distribute Narcan kits at this event, have their mobile unit present, and use it as an opportunity for the community to ask questions.

# MSP: Kent County

(established 2021)

## 2022

The team had three OFR meetings in 2022.

## 2023

The team has six OFR meetings in 2023, as well as two additional meetings to plan for opioid settlement dollar allocation around OFR recommendations. Their [findings and recommendations infographic](#) is compiled from review meetings that took place October 2022 – April 2023, with the recommendations categorized by theme.

## Team

Team members include: Health Care, Public Health, Law Enforcement, Mental and Behavioral Health, Harm Reduction, MEO, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, CPS and other Social Services, Program Evaluator.

## ★ Successes

- Kent County is using their OFR recommendations to guide the use of their allocation of Opioid Settlement dollars. Recommendations from their first seven reviews were categorized in the following themes: Stigma Reduction, Care Coordination, Harm Reduction, Treatment Recommendations, Education for Community and Providers, and Education and Support for the OFR Team.
- The Kent County OFR team continues to work toward filling in knowledge gaps. For example, there was a review of a decedent of Native American descent in which there were several questions from the team regarding resources that may be available within tribal communities. This resulted in an opportunity to invite behavioral health providers from a local tribal community to educate the team on their resources and unique challenges.

# State Advisory Group

This group of champions from across the state meet quarterly with the aim of standardizing the processes and procedures around OFR, providing a clearinghouse of findings and actions, and ensuring that the recommendations produced at OFRs are actively moving forward, as well as supporting policy and practice changes and other initiatives at the state level. Team members include: PIHP, Michigan Association of Counties (MAC), persons with lived experience, Prevention, EMS, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, Local Public Health from county-level OFR teams, Pharmacist, Drug Data Analyst, Law Enforcement, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Certified Addictionist, Medication-Assisted Treatment Provider, Veterans Affairs, Naloxone Educator, Nurse at an Unhoused Shelter, Policy, Maternal Mortality, Epidemiologist, Statewide 211 Public Health Provider, Harm Reduction, Recovery, and the Jail.

In Fiscal Year 2023, the advisory group held four quarterly meetings:

- In **December 2022**, Veterans Affairs presented resources for veterans struggling with substance use, MDHHS provided a legislative update, and MiOFR staff shared 44 recommendations from the 2022 OFR meetings.
- In **March 2023**, MDHHS shared updates on legislation and data specific to xylazine, the MAC presented on how to track opioid settlement dollars and who had received their allocations and held breakout room discussions about the 2022 OFR recommendations that fell under the Prevention and Treatment pillars of the MI Opioids Strategy.
- In **June 2023**, MDHHS shared a legislative update, provided a xylazine data update and an overview of wound care pertaining to this emerging drug. EMS provided an overview of their emergency response protocols for overdoses in Michigan.

- In **September 2023**, MDHHS shared updates about OFR legislation and the progress on the drafted Letter of Authority that would give OFR teams the ability to request records. The MAC presented an overview of opioid settlement dollars at the county level, successes or challenges within these allocations, and frequently asked questions about the process. An Evaluation Specialist at MPHI shared an overview of results from our first round of surveys to a few pilot OFR teams. Finally, we discussed funding for the upcoming fiscal year and plans for OFR expansion.



# Evaluation

Through the MODA team, MiOFR has worked on quarterly evaluation profiles detailing various milestones, outcomes, fidelity, reach, barriers, and facilitators of the program. Through the NACCHO grant, MiOFR was funded to build out a review process and short-term outcome survey. While only three counties received the initial process survey, and only one received the ongoing short-term outcome survey, it is valuable to see how OFR is progressing in different counties.

- Eaton County received the initial OFR feedback survey after their first review. Seven team members from different disciplines responded, including a person with lived experience. Two of the seven respondents also sit on their local substance use coalition. Of those that responded, four team members have attended an OFR meeting, and all indicated that they felt ready to participate in future OFR meetings, as well as plan to use something shared at the first OFR meeting in their professional role. All respondents indicated that they found the introduction meeting helpful, they learned something new, and it prepared them for their first OFR meeting.
- Washtenaw County received the initial OFR feedback survey after their first review: Eighteen team members responded to the survey, representing 14 different disciplines, including family members of people with lived experience. Four of the 18 respondents also sit on the local substance use coalition. All respondents have attended an OFR meeting. Of those that responded to the survey, there was a statistically significantly lower level of agreement compared to Genesee's team members, in their level of comfort with sharing at the meeting, as well as how ready they felt to participate in future OFRs. One reason for this may be that Genesee held an Introduction to OFR Meeting and a Mock Review prior to conducting official review meetings, as opposed to Washtenaw, who had their introduction to OFR at the beginning of their first review meeting. Washtenaw also has a more extensive roster of team members, which may have played a role in the time or comfort level of sharing at their first meeting.

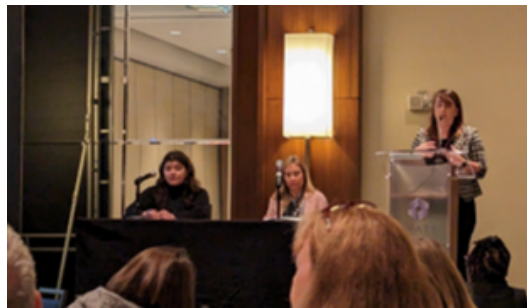
- Genesee County received the initial OFR feedback survey after their first review. Among the 10 respondents, it was found that those who attended the Introduction to OFR Meeting, and the Mock Review identified them as useful supports in their team membership.
- Tuscola County received an ongoing OFR feedback survey after three reviews and receiving an infographic. Twelve team members representing 10 different disciplines responded to the survey. Of those 12, seven indicated they were also members of their local coalition. The majority of respondents agreed that the OFR process helps them in understanding overdose behaviors, highlighting areas of overdose fatality prevention, understanding gaps in overdose fatality prevention support, and improving collaboration among professionals important to the overdose fatality prevention discussion. Every team member who responded indicated that they are hopeful that the OFR process will lead to change in their community. Several respondents also noted that the data provided in the case presentation has been useful in identifying gaps in prevention that need to be filled. When asked how the OFR process might be improved, several respondents indicated the ability for team members to openly share identifiable information about decedents would “bring full background” to the circumstances of the overdose and better inform the prevention discussion. The findings and recommendations infographic is provided to each team member following the review of three overdose deaths. Feedback was sought about team members’ intentions for using and distributing this infographic. Ninety-two percent of respondents found the infographic helpful, and two-thirds (67%) reported planning to use it in their professional role. Team members are encouraged to share the infographic with a substance use prevention coalition, task force, or other action team in their community, as well as anyone else involved in overdose fatality prevention. Over 50 percent reported that they had either shared the infographic with someone else or intended to do so. Of those who had already shared the infographic (n=6), two (33%) shared it with their local substance use prevention coalition, taskforce, or action team and two (33%) shared it with their local health department. Half (50%) shared the infographic with local law enforcement and two-thirds (67%) shared the infographic with someone from their city/county government. One respondent added that they shared the infographic with someone from EMS and another reported sharing it with the probation and drug team.

# Outreach & Supports

In Fiscal Year 2023, the MiOFR team at MPHI had the honor of providing several presentations. Our team shared MiOFR successes and challenges to:

The 2023 OFR National Forum and Pre-Conference Meeting in Washington DC (1/18/2023-1/20/2023) –

- Presented on a panel entitled 'Equipping the Field'



- MiOFR provided presentations at the National Forum on an emerging strategy, where we discussed, 'Intended and Unintended Outcomes of Building Comprehensive Multidisciplinary OFR teams.' We also shared harm reduction strategies in a presentation titled, 'Leveraging Community Collaboration to Implement Harm Reduction Strategies.'



- MiCelerity User Workgroup (1/24/2023)
- East Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (3/8/2023)
- MPHI Breakfast Club (MPHI staff-wide presentation; 4/19/2023)
- Midland County's Health and Human Services Council (03/22/2023)
- NACCHO Overdose Response Team (5/1/2023)
- OD2A Conference in Atlanta, GA (6/7/2023)



- Michigan State Police COSSAP Grantee Meeting (7/12/2023)
- CPS Advisory Council (7/26/2023)
- MODA Stakeholder Retreat (7/31/2023)

MiOFR provided case abstractor training with Chloe Bielby from the MODA Surveillance Team to St. Clair, Allegan, Genesee, and Washtenaw counties. We also provided a new member training to St. Clair, Allegan, Genesee, Washtenaw, Tuscola, Midland, and Eaton counties. We provided an opportunity for Allegan, Genesee, and St. Clair counties to attend a mock OFR. We created resources such as a slide deck for case abstractors, and a [training infographic](#) detailing an overview of the training. MiOFR continues to meet with the MODA Surveillance team regarding how to better refine the case abstraction and selection process with equity in mind.

MiOFR firmly believes in the importance of building authentic relationships and we choose to begin our program by connecting with partners to better support our teams. In Fiscal Year 2023, our team had the opportunity to connect with several partners across the state:

- The SAG had Veterans Affairs present on resources in December as well as to some of our local OFRs. Some teams have subsequently added the VA as a team member.

- Through the MODA Stakeholder Meetings, MiOFR has built relationships with several organizations and disciplines, such as:
  - Medication Assisted Treatment Provider
  - Detroit Recovery and Reentry
  - Wayne State Center for Behavioral Health and Justice, Michigan Center for Rural Health
- MiOFR reached out to a representative of Drug Endangered Children to talk about possible collaboration with OFR once enabling legislation is in place.
- MiOFR connected with a member of the Michigan Maternal Mortality Workgroup who is interested in starting an OFR in the Upper Peninsula.
- MiOFR began building relationships with other potential future OFR team champions:
  - Individuals in Monroe County met with the team to discuss their interest in forming an OFR; we hope to establish one there this year. They invited MiOFR to present this September to their coalition, which will act as their CAT. Their community champion plans to shadow an upcoming OFR meeting in Muskegon.
  - The Northern Michigan Opioid Consortium discussed with the team the potential of developing an OFR in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Michigan. One potential barrier to this may be the identification of a case abstractor from the already understaffed MEOs in those areas.
- MiOFR continues to build relationships with the national OFR Technical Assistance (TA) providers at the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), Mallory O'Brien and Melissa Heinen. MiOFR is starting to meet monthly with IIR to keep them updated on Michigan's progress, as well as to help them develop resources and tools related to the work.
- MiOFR connected and assisted with other states interested in OFRs:
  - Oregon's OFR program reached out to the team in February, after connecting at the OFR National Forum. MiOFR addressed their questions, shared OFR resources and expertise, and invited them to shadow some of the MiOFR meetings.
  - In July, the team met with professionals in Kansas to help support their OFR efforts by answering any questions and providing resources. They said it was very helpful and were able to shadow a few of our county OFR meetings as well.

Several enhancements to the OFR website, [MiOFR – Michigan Overdose Fatality Review \(michiganofr.org\)](https://michiganofr.org), increased supports available to our teams:

- A map was added to our website showing the distribution of OFR teams in Michigan.
- Three separate email campaigns were conducted, detailing resources and learning opportunities, grant opportunities, etc., to our OFR team members and SAG members. These emails had an open rate of over 40% and a click rate of 17-18%.
- Social Media Takeover for International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) on August 31st, 2023: The MiOFR team within our Center crafted posts for the MPHI Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram social media pages detailing the importance of IOAD, as well as information about the MiOFR Program.

# Challenges

As with any public health initiative, the successes experienced by the MiOFR Program were accompanied by a number of challenges. One of the most significant barriers is the lack of enabling legislation that would allow for fully identifiable case reviews. Such legislation was reintroduced this session as Senate Bill 133 and was referred to the Committee on Health Policy and Human Services, as well as heard by the Michigan Senate. The Senate has passed the bill and it is now being referred to the Committee on Health Policy in the House. In collaboration with the MODA Surveillance team, MiOFR is working to address this barrier by drafting a Letter of Authority. In Michigan, the Fetal Infant Mortality Review program has a Letter of Authority signed by the Director of MDHHS to conduct its reviews. This letter grants the case abstractor the authority to request records that are typically protected, such as medical and CPS records. The same authority would be granted to OFR case abstractors to gain access to more information. Although the review process would remain deidentified for team members, it would result in a more thorough review process. A draft Letter of Authority was submitted to MDHHS legal department for review. They are currently making edits and asking program staff questions about the OFR process. MiOFR is hopeful this letter will be signed soon and made available to existing OFR teams.

In collaboration with the MODA Surveillance team, MiOFR is working to address the lack of legislation by drafting a Letter of Authority.

# Looking Ahead

- All local OFR Case Abstractors and Coordinators will be convened for an opportunity to network, learn about data and facilitation resources, and ask questions related to the review process. This meeting is scheduled for October and will provide the opportunity for the group to connect with folks in their roles from across the state, as well as learn about data resources such as ODMaps, the Michigan Substance Use Vulnerability Index, MiCelerity, and more. This meeting will also include presentations from a coordinator and case abstractor from two different OFRs to share their experiences and answer any questions.
- In December, the MiOFR team is beginning an annual Year in Review meeting, focused on bringing all OFR team members together in one virtual meeting to discuss county spotlight successes, ask questions, and have an open discussion with other OFRs from across the state. The National TA providers at IIR were very supportive of this idea and will be attending.
- The National TA providers at IIR have expressed interest in having monthly meetings with internal MiOFR team to discuss the possibility of developing COSSUP videos and other resources related to MiOFR.
- The MiOFR team plans to engage with the State Advisory Group to integrate the Public Health and Safety Toolkit (PHAST) into OFR processes.
- One of the MiOFR team's goals is to build out a training to support a more equitable OFR case abstraction and selection process and facilitation guide. The team is continuing to look at ways to better support those volunteering their time to the OFR process. For example, the team is developing a more strategic method of providing evaluation feedback to OFR case abstractors and team coordinators to better support their roles and the needs of the teams.





## Michigan OFR

If you are interested in championing or joining an OFR in your community, please scan the following QR code to complete an interest survey, or reach out to MiOFR staff at [MichiganOFR@mphi.org](mailto:MichiganOFR@mphi.org)



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