

Operation BRIDGE

Bridging Recovery and Interdiction Data Gathering Enforcement



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This initiative was inspired by a study done by Dr. Brad Ray, a Senior Justice and Behavioral Health Researcher, which focused on law enforcement efforts to disrupt drug markets and overdoses.

After hearing Dr. Ray speak and reviewing his study, Operation BRIDGE was created at the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) and the Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center (ONIC). BRIDGE stands for Bridging Recovery & Interdiction Data Gathering Enforcement.

The study shows that when illegal narcotics are diverted from communities or a narcotics dealer is arrested, it has the potential to actually increase overdoses in the community. People suffering from substance disorders have a tendency to get their narcotics from one or two dealers. When the dealer cannot supply the narcotics, they go to an unknown source or a different drug they are not familiar with - which creates a greater chance of an overdose.

Ray, B. (2021, June 2). A modified two-process Knox test for investigating the relationship between law enforcement opioid seizures and overdoses. *Proceedings Of The Royal Society A*, Volume 477 (Issue 2250) <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspa.2021.0195>

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Operation BRIDGE combines the resources of law enforcement and substance use treatment in a coordinated effort, focusing on the reduction of supply and demand simultaneously, prioritizing treatment for those who qualify.

There are two parts to Operation BRIDGE:

Interdiction and Significant Arrest
Notification

- **Interdiction and arrest notification:** First, the law enforcement agency notifies local outreach programs that a drug dealer has been arrested, or a large quantity of drugs has been diverted from the community. During this part, we would ask our outreach partners to be proactive in their hot spots, as well as supplying these areas with more NARCAN and prevention and education information.

Narcotic Enforcement Saturation
with Outreach Programming

- **Narcotic enforcement saturation with outreach:** Next, federal, state, and local law enforcement combine resources for 2-3 days to aggressively enforce narcotic laws with a special focus on individuals supplying drugs to the communities. State and local recovery resources also combine to create outreach teams to assist people who suffer from substance disorders. These quick response teams (QRT) set up in communities to provide a proactive approach with NARCAN, distribution of prevention and education information, facilitating getting individuals into treatment, and a prescription pill take-back event.



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Where it started: First use of BRIDGE was in Lawrence County in the Tri-State area

- **June 2021 first notification**
- **April 2022 first operation**

Lawrence County Drug and Major Crime Task Force (LDTF)

- Formed in 1997
- Implementing agency: Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office
- Comprised of personnel from the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office, Ironton Police Department, and Prosecutor's Office
- Located in the most southeastern part of the state serving 58,000 residents
- Borders Kentucky and West Virginia





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Lawrence County Quick Response Team

- In 2017, Lawrence County was awarded a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office to form the Quick Response Team
- During this time, most law enforcement agencies in Lawrence County would respond to overdoses and clear the call as a medical event without a report or investigation
- After the Good Samaritan Statute went into effect, the Lawrence County Prosecutor agreed that if the elements of possession existed charges would be filed on individuals who did not receive an assessment
- It took approximately 2 years for LDTF/QRT to change the perception of overdoses within the law enforcement community in Lawrence County



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Approach:

Lawrence County Drug and Major Crime Task Force uses a 3-pronged approach:

- Education
- Enforcement
- Treatment





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Education:

The Student Ambassador Program:

- Comprised of roughly 300 students from 6th to 12th grade from 10 school districts in Lawrence County
- Ambassadors meet with LDTF, QRT, and guest speakers monthly to discuss issues in the schools and provide guidance/strategies to help lead fellow students to a drug-free life





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Enforcement:

- LDTF averages **70 felony convictions** a year with 65% of those for high-degree felony drug offenses
- One investigator focuses on drug overdose investigation
- Since October 2021, there have been five individuals indicted for Involuntary Manslaughter and two cases are currently pending Grand Jury for consideration of charges



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Treatment:

- LDTF through the Lawrence County Quick Response Team follows up on all non-fatal overdoses, court and law enforcement referrals, family referrals, and outreach efforts that have connected numerous individuals with treatment centers in and around the tri-state area
- Since 2017, we have connected **over 270 individuals** to treatment



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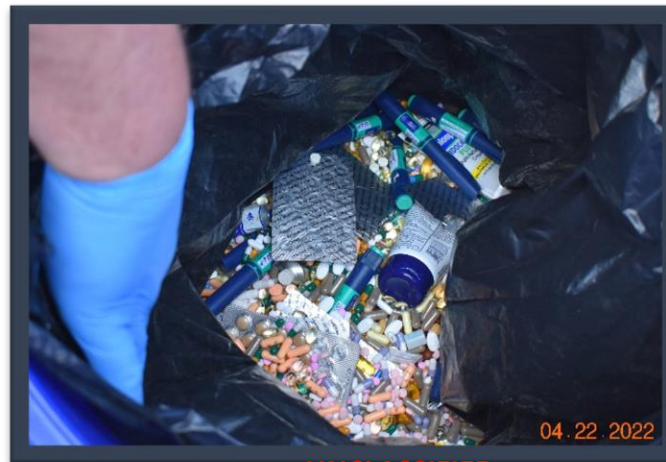


Prevention, Treatment & Recovery Partners

- Recovery and Treatment Centers
- Pill Take Back Programs
- Narcan Distribution Networks
- QRTs
- Public Health
- RecoveryOhio

Law Enforcement Partners

- Police Departments
- Sheriff's Offices
- Drug Task Forces
- Ohio State Highway Patrol
- Prosecutors
- Judges
- Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center- Intel and Forensics
- QRTs



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Chesapeake, Ohio, April 21-22, 2022



INTERDICTION

SEIZURES

Marijuana	2 grams	Heroin	1 gram
Fentanyl	421 grams	Rx Pills	1 unit dose
Methamphetamine	38 grams	Counterfeit Pills	9 unit doses



Traffic Stops Initiated	268
Felony Arrests (Non-Drug Related)	7
Felony Arrests (Drug Related)	18
Misdemeanor Arrest (Non-Drug Related)	13
Misdemeanor Arrest (Drug Related)	9
Criminal Cases Initiated (Non-Drug Related)	5
Criminal Cases Initiated (Drug Related)	19
Citations Issued	53



Gun Seized 1

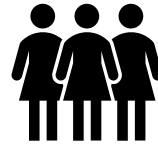


Warrants Served 25



Devices Submitted for Digital Forensic Examination 16

OUTREACH



QRT Contacts (Walk-Ups)	109
Outreach Referrals (Targeted)	32
Narcan Distributions	115
People Connected to Treatment	30
Still in Treatment 1 Month Later	27
Still in Treatment 2 Months Later	19



Pill Takeback Total Weight: 68 lbs.

PARTNERS

Lawrence County Drug & Major Crime Task Force and QRT	Hamilton County Heroin Coalition Drug Task Force/QRT
Lawrence County Sheriff's Office	Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center
Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office	Ohio Department of Public Safety
Local police departments	RecoveryOhio
Ohio State Highway Patrol	Huntington, WV QRT
South Central Major Crimes Unit Drug Task Force/Project F.O.R.T.	Boyd County, KY QRT
	Lawrence County Public Health
	Local recovery and treatment centers

HIGHLIGHTS *Mother/son requested treatment during the first hour of day 1 that resulted in a knock and talk where an additional two individuals requested treatment. *FORT Peer Supporter broke barriers with an individual they have been trying to help. *A lady walked up to the triage tents and on her own requested to go to treatment. *OSHP made a traffic stop that resulted in a drug seizure of nearly a half kilo of fentanyl. *Of the 30 individuals that were connected to treatment: 8 were in Kentucky, 6 in West Virginia and 16 were in Ohio. *Arrest warrants ranged from a variety of offenses including drug related offenses, domestic violence, driving under suspension, child endangerment, burglary, etc.

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Positive Effects of Community Collaboration During the Operation:

- Open discussion between treatment providers from different jurisdictions
- Create new connections between law enforcement and treatment
- Sense of community and togetherness
- Breaking down barriers to allow true change in our communities
- Reduce stigma
- Educate one another





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After the Operation:

1. Did the detail have any adverse effects on your QRT?
 2. Did you have any trouble getting bed space after the detail?
 3. After getting so many people into treatment, what was the first couple of weeks like after the detail?
- 2022 Operations: Richland & Fairfield counties
 - 2023 Future Operations





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QUESTIONS?



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Contact Information:

Department of Public Safety: Dick Meadows

- rmeadows@dps.ohio.gov

Lawrence County Drug & Major Crime Task Force: Commander David Marcum

- D.marcum@lawrencecountyprosecutor.com

Lawrence County Drug & Major Crime Task Force: Brad Layman

- B.layman@lawrencecountyprosecutor.com