
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Fentanyl Community Engagement and Test Strip Distribution Initiative in New York City

ISSUE DATE: November 17, 2021

RESPONSE DUE DATE: December 15, 2021

REPLY TO: Ariana Holland at aholland@fphnyc.org

RELEASED BY

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Background and Program Overview

The Fund for Public Health in New York (FPHNY), on behalf of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is currently accepting proposals from organizations in New York City (NYC) that wish to expand their existing capacity to provide fentanyl awareness education and fentanyl test strip distribution in the community. FPHNY serves as the fiscal agent for DOHMH.

Fentanyl continues to drive overdose deaths in NYC and was involved in 68% of all overdose deaths in 2019. Cocaine was also found to be involved in 51% of all overdose deaths.

In 2019, East Harlem and four neighborhoods in the South Bronx were among those with the highest rate of overdose death in New York City. From 2018 to 2019, rates of overdose death increased among Latino/a New Yorkers (25.5 to 26.1 per 100,000 residents) and Black New Yorkers (22.5 to 23.0 per 100,000 residents). Among Black New Yorkers, the rate of overdose death was the highest among those aged 55 to 84.* In a review of national drug overdose mortality data, researchers found that between 2009 and 2018, stateside Puerto Ricans were two to three times more likely to die of a drug overdose than non-Hispanic White Americans. And in 2018, stateside Puerto Rican men had the highest overdose mortality rate (104.1 per 100,000) across age, sex, and heritage.†

* Nolan ML, Tuazon E, Paone D. Unintentional Drug Poisoning (Overdose) Deaths in New York City in 2019. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Epi Data Brief (122); December 2020.

† Cano, Manuel, and Camila Gelpí-Acosta. "Drug Overdose Mortality among Stateside Puerto Ricans: Evidence of a Health Disparity." International Journal of Drug Policy, vol. 90, Apr. 2021, p. 103079. Science Direct.

In response to increasing overdose deaths in the South Bronx and Northern Manhattan, in 2018 DOHMH's Rapid Assessment and Response Team (RAR) launched its Enhanced Community Engagement initiative (ECE). The aim of ECE is to engage community members to increase fentanyl awareness and provide overdose prevention training outside traditionally targeted settings, such as harm reduction programs, substance use treatment programs and pharmacies. ECE accomplishes this by engaging staff and customers at bodegas and delis, barbershop and hair salons, laundromats, check-cashing facilities, liquor stores, and selected fast-food restaurants in areas with high rates of overdose death. This initiative includes provision of information, health promotion materials, and naloxone kits, as needed.

Currently, DOHMH supports drug checking by funding syringe service programs (SSPs) to purchase BTNX fentanyl test strips. Additionally, DOHMH's Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Care, and Treatment (BADUPCT) directly distributes fentanyl test strips to community members through the Relay initiative and RAR team. These strips are used off-label by recipients to check drug products for fentanyl and give a binary (yes or no) indication if fentanyl is present. SSPs provide these test strips to participants and train them on how to use them to check their own substances. Participants are receptive to drug checking and have been utilizing the strips.

This RFP builds on the ECE model and current fentanyl test strip distribution efforts by funding community-based programs to conduct outreach and education with local residents who use a range of non-opioid drugs, including cocaine or crack, methamphetamine, ketamine, and pressed pills from non-medical sources. The goal of this RFP is to increase awareness of fentanyl in the illicit drug supply and provide fentanyl test strips and overdose prevention training to community members who use drugs. This RFP also aims to engage people who use drugs who are not connected to syringe service programs. The activities resulting from this RFP will provide an additional harm reduction tool to address the presence of fentanyl in the drug supply and to mitigate the burden of overdose deaths in communities that have been most impacted by overdose in New York City – namely communities of color.

Consideration will be given to programs with an existing peer infrastructure that can be leveraged to deliver health information, fentanyl test strips, and overdose response training including naloxone, to NYC residents. The emphasis on having peers or people with lived experience to do this work is key given their unique insight and ability to connect with people who use drugs. Peer interactions with community members will also explore receptivity to the adoption of DOHMH health messaging around fentanyl awareness and overdose prevention strategies.

DOHMH has a strong preference to partner with an organization that is able to fulfill the delineated basic services (detailed below in the proposed outreach methods section) to participants in a culturally and linguistically competent manner (e.g., providing all services in both English and Spanish including to persons fluent only in Spanish).

This RFP is not intended for syringe service programs (SSPs). New York City SSPs can use their Harm Reduction Services funding to purchase fentanyl test strips. This RFP is intended to solicit responses from organizations not currently receiving funding for fentanyl test strip distribution.

Application Deadline

EVENT	DATE
Release of Request for Proposals	November 17, 2021
Inquiry Period	November 17 – November 30, 2021
Q & A Posted at	December 6, 2021
Deadline for receipt of proposals	December 15, 2021
Notice of Award	January 10, 2021
Contract Start Date	January 24, 2021
Due date for last activity/deliverable of contract	June 30, 2022

Basic Information

Funding Term	Funds awarded will be a five-month contract with the option to renew, beginning January 24, 2021 – June 30, 2022. All deliverables to be completed by June 30 th , 2022.
Anticipated Funding and Payment Structure	The total anticipated funding amount is \$257,700. Funding per program will range from \$20,000 to \$40,000 with 6 to 8 awards expected to be made. The lower range of this funding is suggested for smaller organizations, and the higher range of this funding for larger organizations. However, DOHMH and the FPHNY reserve the right to make additional awards and/or change the value of awards should additional funding become available. Payments will consist of milestone payments tied to the achievement of deliverables.
Applicant Eligibility	Organizations that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are located in New York City ○ Are not Syringe Service Programs (SSPs) ○ Have peer services or conduct outreach to people who use drugs ○ Are affiliated with an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP), registered as or plan to register themselves as an OOPP with the New York State Department of Health within one month of receiving the award. ○ Priority will be given to organizations that

	<p>serve neighborhoods that have been disproportionately impacted by overdose. These neighborhoods include Hunts Point-Mott Haven, Highbridge-Morrisania, Crotona-Tremont, Fordham-Bronx Park and East Harlem.</p>
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Submission Information

Submission Date, Time, and Format

Responses must be submitted electronically. Please format all documents submitted in response to this RFP in .pdf (Portable Document Format).

Proposals must be e-mailed to the following address, no later than **Wednesday, December 15, 2021 - 11:59 PM EST**.

Attn:
 Subject: **FENTANYL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TEST STRIP DISTRIBUTION INITIATIVE IN NEW YORK CITY**
 E-mail: aholland@fphnyc.org
 Responses received after **December 15, 2021 - 11:59 PM EST** will not be reviewed.

RFP Communications and Q&A

Potential respondents may send any questions or comments no later than **Tuesday, November 30, 2021 – 11:59 EST**:

Attn:
 Subject: **FENTANYL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TEST STRIP DISTRIBUTION INITIATIVE IN NEW YORK CITY**
 E-mail: aholland@fphnyc.org

The answers will be made available by **Monday, December 6, 2021** on our website at <https://fphnyc.org/get-involved/requests-proposals/>.

Applications received after the deadline will be disqualified from funding consideration.

It is the responsibility of the submitting organization to ensure delivery of the application to DOHMH at the above email address by the submission deadline. A confirmation of receipt of the required electronic submission (via email) of the application will be sent by email.

Application Format Guidelines

- Application narrative should be 1.5-spaced;
- Applications should be submitted in PDF or Word format
- Applications should have 1” margins all around (headers and footers may appear outside of this margin);
- Suggested minimum font size is Times New Roman 12-point with the exception of any included supportive charts, which may use a font no smaller than 10 point;
- Each page of the application narrative should be consecutively numbered and total number of pages should adhere to page limit;
- Application narrative should remain in the same sequence and format as provided; questions should not be renumbered or reordered, however the text of the question can be omitted;
- Each page of the application should include as a header or footer the name of the organization submitting the application.

Proposed Outreach Methods

Organizations can choose from two different models: 1) a peer-led community engagement model; and 2) a community event model. Organizations will invoice for their activities based on the deliverable schedule developed as part of the contract. The contract will start on January 24, 2021 and will be completed by the end of the Fiscal Year 2022 (June 30, 2022). The two models are described below:

Peer-led community engagement model

Contracted organizations with existing peer-outreach infrastructure will be funded to distribute fentanyl test strips and other materials during outreach. Peers and/or outreach workers will be required to attend DOHMH-led trainings on fentanyl test strip distribution protocols. In addition to engaging individuals on the street and in community gathering spaces (parks, areas with public restrooms, public events), outreach workers will be encouraged to visit venues that people who use drugs or their peers, friends, and family members patronize, including (but not limited to): social clubs, community centers, bodegas/delis, salons/barbershops, restaurants/bars, religious centers/places of worship, laundromats, check-cashing facilities, and liquor stores.

We envisage this model will fund existing peers and/or outreach workers for additional hours and will include community engagement in venues where people who use drugs frequent (listed above). Interactions with community members will include provision of fentanyl education and information on fentanyl test strips, including training in their use and distribution of strips if desired.

Community events model

Contracted organizations will be funded to provide fentanyl awareness education and distribute fentanyl test strips and other materials through community events, such as block parties, health fairs, and other programming. Organizations with a social media presence may use their platforms to share harm reduction and fentanyl awareness education with community members.

We envisage this model will fund organizations to host or attend at least one community event per month during which they will engage with community members through tablings and/or hosting presentations and trainings. The attendees must include people who use drugs. Organizations with a social media presence may use their platforms to share the occurrence of these events, as well as to share harm reduction and fentanyl awareness education with community members that follow their accounts.

Deliverables

Contracted organizations will be funded for completion of the following deliverables.

a. Completion of policies and procedures:

- Development of policies and procedures/work plan document detailing how this work will be implemented in the organization, including: staffing and roles, non-personnel resources required, locations of outreach, and outreach and recruitment methods. DOHMH can provide sample policies and procedures.

b. Completion of trainings:

- All participating staff including coordinators, peer and/or outreach workers will be required to attend the following trainings:
 - 2-hour fentanyl test strip training offered by NYC DOHMH. Staff will learn how to train others in fentanyl awareness education, the use of fentanyl test strips, and how to engage individuals around the practice of harm reduction.

- The contractor shall ensure that all personnel dispensing naloxone kits have completed the Training of Dispensers (TOD) course offered by DOHMH within the past 2 years. Personnel names and dates of TOD completion are to be submitted to DOHMH.
 - Additional training may be added as needed.
- c. *Monitoring calls and meetings:*
 - Attend a monthly call hosted by DOHMH to provide updates on the population(s) that the organization has outreached, outreach barriers and facilitators, and the impact of outreach activities.
 - Submit a biweekly (every other week) electronic survey that details populations engaged, number of people engaged, number of people trained in fentanyl test strips, and number of fentanyl test strips distributed.
- d. *Completion of outreach activities:*
 - Distribute a minimum of 300 fentanyl test strips each quarter until the end of fiscal year 2022 through either the peer-led community engagement model or community events model:
 - Breakdown of quarters:
 - 1st quarter: January through March
 - 2nd quarter: April through June
 - Individuals who are newly in receipt of fentanyl test strips should be appropriately trained in their use. When possible, provide overdose prevention training or general harm reduction education, including naloxone distribution and distribution of fentanyl awareness materials as part of engagements.
- e. *Completion of reporting progress with fentanyl test strips*
 - Maintain records of the number of strips dispensed per quarter; submit this data to DOHMH on a monthly basis. Commit to sharing summaries of the successes and challenges encountered while distributing fentanyl test strips during bi-weekly (every two weeks) check-ins with DOHMH. Commit to collecting demographic data (race, gender, age) during one outreach session every two weeks in order to report back a snapshot of what communities are receiving fentanyl test strips. DOHMH will furnish organizations with the forms that will be used for data collection. To accomplish the aforementioned tasks, organizations must have a computer and access to software that would allow for tracking of fentanyl test strips, such as Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel. These data reports will enable DOHMH to assess if these methods of distributing fentanyl test strips are a desired and useful intervention for the community. This data also will be used to make future adjustments in order to maximize the impact and effectiveness of fentanyl test strip distribution programming.

Support for Selected Institutions

To help with project implementation and expansion, certain supports will be available to all contracted organizations, in addition to direct funding. This support is described below. New forms of support may be developed in response to needs identified by contracted organizations.

DOHMH will provide fentanyl test strips and other fentanyl-related materials to the organizations that are selected to receive the awards. All initial materials (fentanyl test strips, the instruction insert, and educational materials) will be mailed to organizations. DOHMH will also provide trainings on harm reduction messaging, fentanyl, community engagement, and how to use fentanyl test strips.

1. Fentanyl test strip and instructional insert
 - a) DOHMH will provide fentanyl test strips and their instruction insert free of charge. DOHMH will send the initial order of fentanyl test strips and their inserts by mail based on the number of fentanyl test strips organizations anticipate needing in their RFP application. Organizations will place orders for additional fentanyl test strips just before their initial orders run out. The fentanyl test strips will be shipped to program sites, where organizations will be responsible for distributing fentanyl test strips with the accompanying test strip instruction insert when appropriate.
2. Technical assistance
 - a) DOHMH will provide technical assistance to contracted organizations through biweekly meetings and other correspondence (meetings, emails, phone calls) to ensure timely implementation of developed policies and procedures. DOHMH will also provide technical assistance related to the use of fentanyl test strips.
3. Overdose prevention training materials
 - a) DOHMH will provide all the necessary trainings for organization staff to distribute fentanyl test strips and if needed, naloxone. DOHMH will also provide electronic forms for data collection and information regarding naloxone liability.
4. Outreach materials
 - a) DOHMH will provide materials including “Naloxone available here” stickers, fentanyl awareness posters and flyers, fentanyl bathroom poster and staff breakroom flyer, and other educational materials. DOHMH will send the initial order of materials by mail. Organizations can place orders for additional supplies as needed.
5. NYC Overdose Mortality Data
 - a) DOHMH will provide NYC DOHMH overdose mortality data on which neighborhoods in NYC have the highest overdose mortality rates in order to help organizations target outreach efforts.
6. Data collection system
 - a) NYC DOHMH will provide electronic reporting surveys for monthly reporting of outreach activities with fentanyl test strips and other overdose prevention activities. This form will include number of test strips distributed, number of individuals receiving strips, the primary method by which strips were distributed, and the benefits and challenges encountered during fentanyl test strip distribution. An order form will be provided to organizations to be used to request additional materials.

Eligibility and Requirements

1. Only non-SSPs are eligible for this funding. Eligible organizations may be:
 - a. Health care facilities, such as hospitals, primary care clinics, and substance use disorder treatment clinics, that are regulated by NYS DOH.
 - b. Individual medical practitioners - which include physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants - so long as they are legally authorized in NYS to prescribe medication.
 - c. Substance use disorder treatment programs that are licensed by NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS).
 - d. Not-for-profit community-based organizations incorporated under the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law.
 - e. Institutions of higher education which provide a course of study leading to a post-secondary degree or diploma.
 - f. Business, trade, technical and occupational schools approved by the Regents of the University of the State of New York or by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association accepted by the Regents.

- g. Organizations incorporated in New York State, such as an LLC.

2. In addition, in order to be selected under this RFP, an organization must meet the following criteria:

- a. Proposers should either be registered as an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP) with the New York State Department of Health, affiliated with an OOPP, or plan to register or affiliate themselves with an OOPP within one month of receiving the award. For organizations that are not registered or affiliated with an OOPP, DOHMH will help identify the best mechanism to maintain consistent access to naloxone.
- b. Organizations commit to conducting overdose prevention trainings and distributing fentanyl test strips through outreach to people who use drugs, or their peers, friends, and family members. For applicants who do not currently conduct outreach, commitment to using funds to build outreach capacity.
- c. Organization commits to distributing 300 fentanyl test strips each quarter until the end of fiscal year 2022 through either peer led community engagement model or community events model:
 - o Breakdown of quarters:
 - 1st quarter: January through March
 - 2nd quarter: April through June
- d. Organization commits to maintaining records of the number of fentanyl test strips dispensed per quarter and submitting this data to DOHMH on a monthly basis; commit to sharing summaries of successes and challenges encountered while distributing fentanyl test strips during bi-weekly (every two weeks) check-ins with DOHMH; and commit to collecting demographic data (race, gender, age) during one outreach session every two weeks in order to report back a snapshot of what communities are receiving fentanyl test strips. DOHMH will furnish organizations with the forms that will be used for data collection.

Selection Criteria

A selection committee at DOHMH will select organizations for funding through this RFP based on the criteria listed below:

1. Is eligible for funding, as per requirements outlined in the Eligibility and Requirements section above.
2. Applications must be complete and responsive to all instructions provided in the Application Instructions section. Those applications submitted that do not supply the required information will be considered non-responsive. This will result in rejection of the application.

Application Instructions

- Your application must consist of narrative responses to the 4 sections below and must address all of the questions in each section in the order listed below. Label the beginning of each section as indicated (e.g., "Organization Experience," etc.) and include each question number; it is not necessary to repeat the text of the question.
- Maximum length of the narrative is 4 pages, excluding attachments.
- General instructions and additional requirements for the submission of the application are in the Submission Information section.

1) **Organization Experience.**

- a) What are the current neighborhoods and populations served by your organization? What languages are your services offered in?
- b) What services does your organization provide? If you are currently offering peer services, describe your peer service activities. If you are currently offering harm reduction services for people who use drugs, please describe your harm reduction service activities and what services are offered.
- c) Describe the unmet need for overdose prevention education and fentanyl test strip distribution among the populations you serve.

2) **Program Services**

- a) Describe your organization's approach to providing overdose education and naloxone dispensing (OEND) services. If the proposer is a new/non-dispensing OOPP, describe the unmet need for OEND in the community and the plans to integrate it into the organization's current services.
- b) Describe your plan to integrate overdose prevention education and fentanyl test strip distribution into your organization's services, including how you will identify clients/patients to train and supply with fentanyl test strips and through which service delivery method. Describe any outreach activities your organization currently conducts, and how overdose prevention and fentanyl test strip distribution work will be incorporated. If you are already conducting outreach and your organization's outreach efforts include overdose prevention and fentanyl test strip distribution, describe how additional funding will enhance outreach to include fentanyl test strip distribution.
- c) Clearly identify the borough/neighborhood (geographic service area) that would be served under your application, as well as indicating specific community settings and venues where your organization plans to conduct fentanyl test strip distribution. Additionally, indicate when fentanyl test strip distribution will occur including the intended days of the week and hours of windows of distribution.
- d) Describe how you will serve populations of people who use drugs who do not already know about fentanyl test strips. Include the populations of people who use drugs that your organization will aim to reach and the drugs that they use (cocaine or crack, methamphetamine, ketamine, opioids, pressed pills from nonmedical sources, polysubstance use, etc.). Describe your organization's commitment to racial equity when doing community engagement and outreach.
- e) Describe how your organization will operationalize this project. Outline how your organization will promote the availability of fentanyl test strips at your organization (print media, social media, etc.) as well as the number of fentanyl test strips that your organization will need on a monthly basis. Please describe if you anticipate having new encounters during fentanyl test strip distribution and/or returning participants. Please note that most harm reduction organizations provide 2 to 5 fentanyl test strips per individual per encounter.
- f) Describe any additional assistance you anticipate needing from DOHMH to implement fentanyl test strip distribution at your organization.

3) **Staffing Plan**

- a) Describe your plan to manage staffing based on the expectations outlined in the *Proposed Outreach Methods* and *Deliverables* sections above. Outline the associated staff roles such as outreach worker, counselor, program manager, etc. who will carry out the engagement and training of community members, fentanyl test strip distribution, inventory and ordering, and monthly reporting. What new staff or hours will be added to perform this work?
- b) Submit an organization chart with the titles of all involved staff and existing and proposed job duties related to this funding.

4) **Program Monitoring, Data Management, and Reporting**

- a) Describe how you will collect data from individuals who have received fentanyl test strips and who will keep this data organized and how. Describe how you will use this information, other than to meet the reporting requirement. Data that will be collected includes number of fentanyl test strips distributed, number of people trained, and current inventory.
- b) Describe how you will ensure the submission of timely and complete bi-weekly (twice monthly) reports to DOHMH.

5) **Proposed Budget**

- a) Applicants must complete and attach a proposed budget using the template provided. Please keep in mind that items listed in the *Support for Selected Institutions* section of this RFP will be provided by DOHMH free of charge. Organizations only need budget for the resources they will be providing, such as staff time, and not the materials that DOHMH will be providing, such as fentanyl test strips and outreach materials.
- b) The proposed budget should be the estimated cost of providing the proposed services for a full 10-month period of operation at capacity.
- c) Include a narrative description for each line item (justification for each budgeted line item) based on the project

Funding Process

Institutions selected for funding will receive initial funding upon signing of the contract in January 2022; remaining funding will be awarded after completion of deliverables.

General Disclosures

A. Right to Reject Proposals

The Fund for Public Health in New York City may reject any or all proposals received and may ask for further clarification or documentation. Submitted information that does not respond to all items in this RFP may be excluded from further consideration and alternative information packages may not be considered.

B. The Fund for Public Health in New York City may decline to review an application in the event the respondent submits a response after the submission deadline and/or any disparity is found during the evaluation process.

C. Costs

The respondent will be solely responsible for any costs incurred in preparing, delivering, or presenting responses to this RFP. Respondents will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred in preparing proposals.

D. Fulfillment of Requirements

By submitting an information package, the respondent acknowledges that the respondent has read and understands this RFP and is capable of fulfilling all requirements.

E. Submitted Information

Once submitted, responses will be the property of FPHNYC and will not be returned.

F. Right to Amend, Cancel this RFP, or Solicit a New RFP

FPHNYC may amend or cancel this RFP at any time, without any liability to FPHNY, and/or DOHMH. FPHNYC or DOHMH may solicit new requests for information and/or proposals regarding the services addressed in this RFP at any time.

G. Amount of Business

FPHNY does not guarantee to any specific amount of business or revenue as a result of this RFP.

H. Security and Confidentiality

Respondents should give specific attention to the identification of those portions of their proposals that they deem to be confidential, proprietary information or trade secrets and provide appropriate justification for why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by FPHNYC. Such information must be easily separable from the non-confidential sections of the proposal. All information not so identified may be disclosed by FPHNYC.

I. Insurance Certificate and A-133 Audit Information

Selected institutions will need to provide proof of liability insurance (including Worker's Compensation) and their most recent certified financial audit report (reports prior to 2013 will not be accepted for review), including A-133 Audit, if applicable. For audit years beginning after 12/26/14, an A-133 Audit is required if your organization expends \$750,000 in federal funds in the year. For prior audit years, the requirement for A-133 was \$500,000 in federal funds during a given year.

Attachments

Attachment A- OOP Policies and Procedures Template

Attachment B- RFP Budget Template