



OPIOID RESEARCH INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2024

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

Since its launch in April of 2023, the University of Michigan Opioid Research Institute has made great strides in centralizing the efforts of faculty, students and staff to reduce the harm of the ongoing opioid epidemic. This transdisciplinary institute works with teams across all three U-M campuses to bolster collaborations and strengthen community engagement, expanding the work of the Opioid Solutions network that was created in 2018.

In an effort to engage with researchers across multiple disciplines, the institute launched both its Visiting Faculty Lecture Series and its Coffee Connections Series in summer 2023. Both of these series of events encourage those conducting opioid-related research to step outside of their traditional areas of work and learn about other work happening in this critical field.

Serving as this central hub for opioid-related research being conducted at the university, the institute has also brought together internal and external partners to catalyze and expand high-impact research. Following the launch of the institute, the Technical Assistance Collaborative was announced - a joint venture between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (who also funded the project), the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University to offer local governments assistance in developing abatement strategies to address the ongoing opioid epidemic.

Together, teams across the three universities are working to provide resources such as community needs assessments, analysis with evidence-based recommendations, program implementation support, and evaluation strategies. The TAC is also actively identifying priority communities to immediately address the most critical populations across Michigan. The TAC released its 6-month report in October of 2023.

Being able to share the efforts of the institute has also been a key goal over the past year, with the team working to develop a strategic communications plan. This has so far included launching a quarterly newsletter, producing press releases on faculty publications and announcements, collaborating with other U-M programs and departments on events and revamping the Opioid Solutions website to reflect the branding and priorities of the institute. As we continue to develop our infrastructure, these plans will continue to evolve as well, with the priority being to increase both internal and external awareness and engagement.

At the end of 2023, four faculty members were added to the institute team to lead two domains: Research and Data and Community Engagement. Both domains are crucial to the success of the institute, as they each are charged with furthering the progress not only of the Institute but of the state of science in the field of opioid-related research.

As we enter into our second year, we are inspired not only by the communities we serve and engage with, but also by the students and faculty with whom we work. There is a critical need for opioid-related research in determining best practices and effective solutions to the ongoing opioid crisis. We look forward to continuing these efforts by bringing together the brightest minds and dedicated public and private partners.



Amy Bohnert, Co-Director



Chad Brummett, Co-Director



Kim Gaedeke, Managing Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Office of the Vice President for Research and the Medical School Office of Research launched the Opioid Research Institute in 2023 through a \$3 million commitment. The Institute serves as an expansion of the Opioid Solutions network that was created in 2018 to build partnerships among U-M researchers in this space.

The institute serves as a central hub for opioid-related research, bringing together U-M experts and external partners to catalyze and expand high-impact research, programs and collaborations that revolve around opioid misuse treatment and prevention research, community engagement, education and clinical innovation.

INSTITUTE MISSION & VISION

The mission of the Opioid Research Institute is to reduce overdose deaths and other morbidities through collaborative, innovative and interdisciplinary research that spans the translational spectrum. The Institute strives to make a statewide and national impact with a health equity lens by catalyzing and expanding high-impact research, evidence-based programs and varied partnerships to reduce opioid use, increase treatment access and options, and prevent opioid-related harms.

INSTITUTE VISION

What is at the core of ORI's vision and identity? ORI is a research institute seeking to address the societal and individual challenges presented by opioid misuse across the country. ORI is a hub for collaboration around opioid-focused research, community engagement, education and clinical innovation.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

Amy Bohnert, *Co-Director*

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FACULTY DOMAIN LEADS



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INSTITUTE STAFF



Beth Sprang
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Kate Barnes
Communications Manager



John Syrjamaki
Sr. Manager, Data Strategy & Analysis

Scan to learn more about our team



EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

We extend a special thank you to our Executive Advisory Board, which is comprised of leaders representing U-M's three campuses who serve to advise and guide the Institute's work and objectives

Anda Botoseneanu, Professor of Health Policy Studies & Associate Research Scientist, U-M Dearborn

Vicki Ellingrod, Dean, U-M School of Pharmacy

Steve Kunkel, Executive Vice Dean for Research, U-M Medical School

Lynda Lisbeth, Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, U-M School of Public Health

Jeffrey Morenoff, Associate Dean for Research and Policy Engagement, U-M School of Social Work

Romesh Nalliah, Associate Dean for Patient Services, U-M School of Dentistry

Joseph Ryan, Associate Professor of Social Work & Co-Director of the U-M Child & Adolescent Data Lab

Ken Sylvester, Interim Executive Director, Office of Research and Economic Development, U-M Flint

A YEAR IN REVIEW

MAKING CONNECTIONS - CREATING OPPORTUNITIES - SERVING COMMUNITIES

VISITING PROFESSOR LECTURE SERIES



- Dr. Keith Humphreys, PhD, Stanford School of Medicine
 - The Opioid Research Institute welcomed Dr. Humphreys to the University of Michigan for a visiting faculty lecture on May 5, 2023 to discuss state and federal approaches to the opioid crisis.
 - The hybrid event hosted approximately 270 attendees, including officials from the State of Michigan



- Dr. Scott Weiner, Harvard Medical School
 - The Opioid Research Institute welcomed Dr. Weiner to the University of Michigan for a visiting faculty lecture on September 22, 2023 for a discussion on The Past, Present and Future of Opioids and the Overdose Epidemic.
 - The hybrid event hosted approximately 155 attendees and included a faculty panel/Q&A session

COFFEE CONNECTIONS

In 2023, ORI launched its Coffee Connections event series. These events serve as an opportunity to bring trainees, basic scientists and clinical researchers together to learn from U-M experts on topics related to opioid research. To date, ORI has hosted 7 of these events, with each averaging 50 attendees. The series is led by Dr. Erica Levitt, Research & Data Domain Assoc. Director. More information about how to join the sessions or to participate/present can be found on ORI's website Events page.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Zingerman's Community of Businesses launched a train-the-trainer model at its Ann Arbor locations in early August 2023. The model allows certified naloxone administrators to train community-based organizations on best practices for providing the lifesaving drug to those experiencing an opioid overdose. This partnership is the first time OPEN has provided the training to a restaurant with the support of ORI, and is led by Dr. Gina Dahlem, Community Engagement Domain Co-Director.



To learn more about Institute news and events, scan to join our listserv



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COLLABORATIVE



About the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC)

States joining the national opioid lawsuits against manufacturers and distributors contributing to the opioid epidemic have secured billions of dollars in settlement funding. Based on the first round of settlements for Michigan, the state is expected to receive around \$776 million over the next 18 years. Of the initial round of settlements reached, around 50% will go directly to county, municipal, and local governments that sign the subdivision agreements. Of the funds received, 70% must be used for future opioid remediation (reversal or stoppage of opioid-related harms).

In the spring of 2022, in anticipation of this funding going to counties, cities, and townships, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), brought together the state's three largest research universities, Michigan State University (MSU), University of Michigan (U-M), and Wayne State University (WSU) to discuss ideas on how to best support and assist local governments.

This collaboration resulted in multiple strategy meetings amongst the three universities and MDHHS. In October of 2022, MSU, U-M, and WSU jointly submitted a proposal to MDHHS for consideration to establish the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC). The TAC was launched in April of 2023.

The funding for the TAC allowed the universities to build their capacity to provide technical assistance and expertise at no cost to counties, cities, and townships. This has been a collaborative effort in partnership with MDHHS; MDHHS has also served as a liaison between the TAC and relevant statewide associations and organizations.

Community Learning Series

U-M and WSU took the lead in coordinating and establishing 10+ online webinars as part of the TAC Learning Series for county, city and township officials and communities interested in hearing from experts related to core strategies and allowable uses of the Opioid Settlement funds. Each webinar included time for a question-and-answer session. Attendance ranged from 17 to over 70 participants, and each webinar was scheduled for an hour to 1.5 hours. These webinars and presentations are recorded, shared with registered attendees, and available to the public upon request.

View the TAC Annual Report



ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2024

This annual report serves as a snapshot of the efforts and activities carried out by the Institute between April 2023 and June 2024. Below are additional highlights of team accomplishments during this reporting period:

- 68+ media mentions
- 15+ press releases drafted or co-drafted amplifying faculty research and publications
- Quarterly newsletter launched and established
- Communications plan established
- Executive DEI plan established
- Faculty Affiliate Member page launched on the Institute's website with 43 members
- 7 Coffee Connection events organized and hosted
- 2 Visiting Professor Lecture events organized hosted
- Received funding from a private donor
- Secured a total of \$400,000 (\$200,000 in April 2023 and \$200,000 in January 2024) for U-M to provide expertise, communication and other levels of effort toward the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC)
- Secured funding from the U-M Department of Anesthesiology
- Partnered with U-M Poverty Solutions and the Overdose Prevention Network (OPEN) to help support a graduate level internship that will focus on opioid related policy research
- Met with student organizations to develop partnerships and support similar aligned efforts and projects
- Held a team retreat and visioning session at Zingerman's Team Training Facility



As we look to the future and objectives in this space continue to evolve and expand, the Opioid Research Institute seeks to further generate high-impact programs, research and partnerships to most effectively contribute to addressing societal needs. The institute is focused on improving collaboration with key stakeholders, supporting evidence-based strategies, having critical community conversations and taking informed action to save lives in Michigan and across the U.S.

A critical component of that collaborative effort is ensuring equity is at the forefront of all programs, projects, research and outreach. U-M's commitment to generating solutions for the public good directly coincides with our dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). As an educational and research institution, U-M is steadfast in its efforts to ensure that each member of our communities has full opportunity to thrive – for we believe that DEI is key to community and individual development, educational excellence and the advancement of knowledge. ORI will continue implementing its DEI plan and follow U-M's commitment to DEI efforts in every facet of the work that we do.

*Thank you to the following for making the Institute's first year a success:
U-M's Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), Michigan
Medicine's Office of Medical Research, our donors, supporters, executive
advisory board, faculty affiliate members, U-M guest presenters, national
presenters, patient advisors, community organizations, the State of
Michigan and all our internal and external partners.*

*We look forward to accomplishing even bigger goals and are grateful for
your continued partnership.*



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