



FIRST-RESPONDERS
COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION
AND RECOVERY ACT
Evaluation Report

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS BY



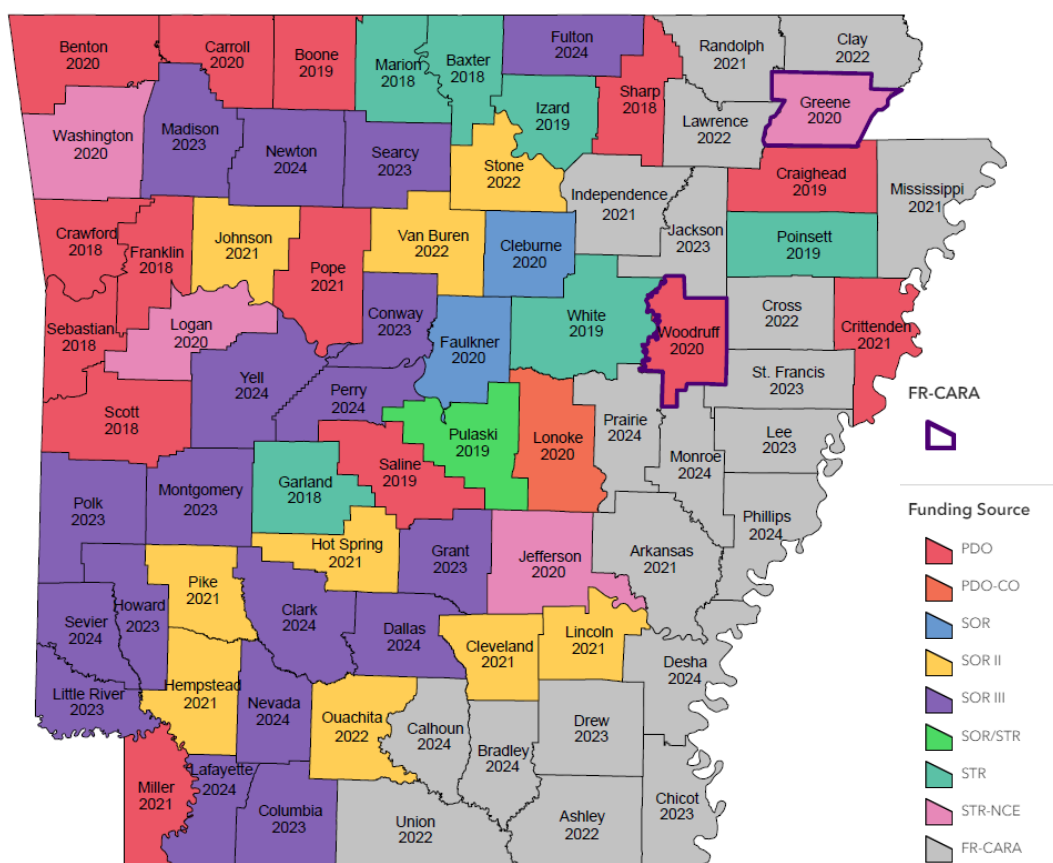
THIS REPORT IS SUPPORTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES GRANT #4600047897 TO ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF AGING, ADULT, & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES, UNDER CONTRACT WITH AFMC.

FR-CARA Evaluation Report

Introduction

The Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services (DAABHS) was awarded funding by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 for the First Responders-Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act Grant (FR-CARA). FR-CARA funds are being utilized for funding 20 counties (Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Clay, Cross, Desha, Drew, Independence, Jackson, Lawrence, Lee, Mississippi, Monroe, Phillips, Prairie, Randolph, St. Francis, and Union) (**Figure 1**) and adding additional funding to two counties (Greene and Woodruff) to supplement other grants. In FFY2021 the first four counties began receiving funding, followed by five new counties during each of 2022 and 2023, with the final six being added during FFY2024. The FR-CARA grant is managed by DAABHS which acts as program coordinator, The University of Arkansas at Little Rock MIDSOUTH provides planning and administrative oversight, the Criminal Justice Institute conducts program implementation activities, and the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care (AFMC) performs program evaluation.

Figure 1. Funding source by county



Results

Community Kickoff Roundtable Meetings

CJI facilitated an in-person Community Kickoff Roundtable Meeting in each selected county in which information about the FR-CARA grant activities and local data were presented. Attendees also had the opportunity to discuss their unique perspectives regarding the opioid epidemic in their counties with other community members and the State. CJI also broadcasted each meeting on Facebook Live.

After the initial kickoff meetings in each selected county, CJI staff worked with local community members to establish an advisory council. CJI attends and helps facilitate subsequent advisory council meetings and trainings in each county. Dates for each kickoff and total attendance are shown in [Figure 2](#). On a monthly basis, CJI reports information regarding the events of each county kickoff and subsequent activities in a REDCap data collection tool designed and maintained by AFMC. Summaries for each county are shown below.

Figure 2. Kickoffs by county and fiscal year, 2021-2024

Fiscal Year	County	Kickoff Date	Attendance	Kits Distributed^
2021	Arkansas	July 23, 2021	22 (167 views)	N/A
	Independence	June 17, 2021	20 (166 views)	N/A
	Mississippi	July 27, 2021	14 (112 views)	N/A
	Randolph	June 24, 2021	20 (106 views)	N/A
2022	Ashley	March 29, 2022	31 (73 views)	N/A
	Clay	April 28, 2022	22 (50 views)	N/A
	Cross	February 15, 2022	51 (218 views)	N/A
	Lawrence	March 2, 2022	31 (91 views)	N/A
	Union	July 14, 2022	28	N/A
	Chicot	May 4, 2023	20	13
2023	Drew	April 4, 2023	35	33
	Jackson	March 21, 2023	29	29
	Lee	June 20, 2023	31	26
	St. Francis	June 7, 2023	41	39
	Bradley	February 29, 2024	46	32
2024	Calhoun	August 14, 2024	5	5
	Desha	May 30, 2024	28	21
	Monroe	May 1, 2024	61	18
	Phillips	December 15, 2023	49	49
	Prairie	May 1, 2024	197	23

*Greene and Woodruff counties were selected to receive additional FR-CARA funding in FFY2021. These counties already had kickoffs during FFY2020 when they were initially selected to receive previous grant funding.

^Prior to 2022, the number of distributed kits were not reported for kickoff meetings.

Activities

Naloxone

Purchases

Throughout the funding period, CJI made 12 naloxone purchases totaling 5,040 doses and 2,520 kits that were purchased (**Figure 3**). Since FFY2018, CJI has managed naloxone purchases and distribution for multiple federal grants. Therefore, distribution numbers may be higher than the number of purchases due to overflow from previous grants.

Figure 3. FR-CARA naloxone purchases by year, 2021-2024

Year	Total Purchases	Doses Purchased	Kits Purchased
2021	3	840	420
2022	4	1,560	780
2023	2	600	300
2024	3	2,040	1,020
Total	12	5,040	2,520

Distribution

In total, CJI reported 206 naloxone distribution activities during the FR-CARA grant period. Across all activities, 3,065 naloxone kits were distributed, resulting in 6,130 doses of naloxone. Each kit contains two doses of naloxone (**Figure 4**). The number of distribution activities per month is shown in **Appendix A**.

Figure 4. CJI naloxone distribution activities by year, 2021-2024

Year	Distribution Activities	Naloxone Doses Distributed	Naloxone Kits Distributed
2021	12	692	346
2022	32	2,074	1,037
2023	69	1,920	960
2024	93	1,444	722
Total	206	6,130	3,065

Administration

From 2019 to 2024, there have been 85 naloxone administrations in FR-CARA counties (**Figure 5**). Of the 20 FR-CARA counties, just over half (n=11, 55.0%) reported naloxone administrations (**Figure 6**). Independence County had the highest number of reported naloxone administrations (n=23, 27.1%). However, Cross County had the highest rate of grant-funded naloxone administrations per 100,000 people (96.4). 2023 was the year with the highest number of administrations (n=30, 35.3%) (**Figure 7**). Of the 85 doses of Naloxone administered and reported in the region, 7 doses were

administered between 2019 and 2020, these were not obtained through FR-CARA and were instead obtained through the Blue & You grant.

Figure 5. Locations of naloxone administrations in FR-CARA counties, 2021-2024

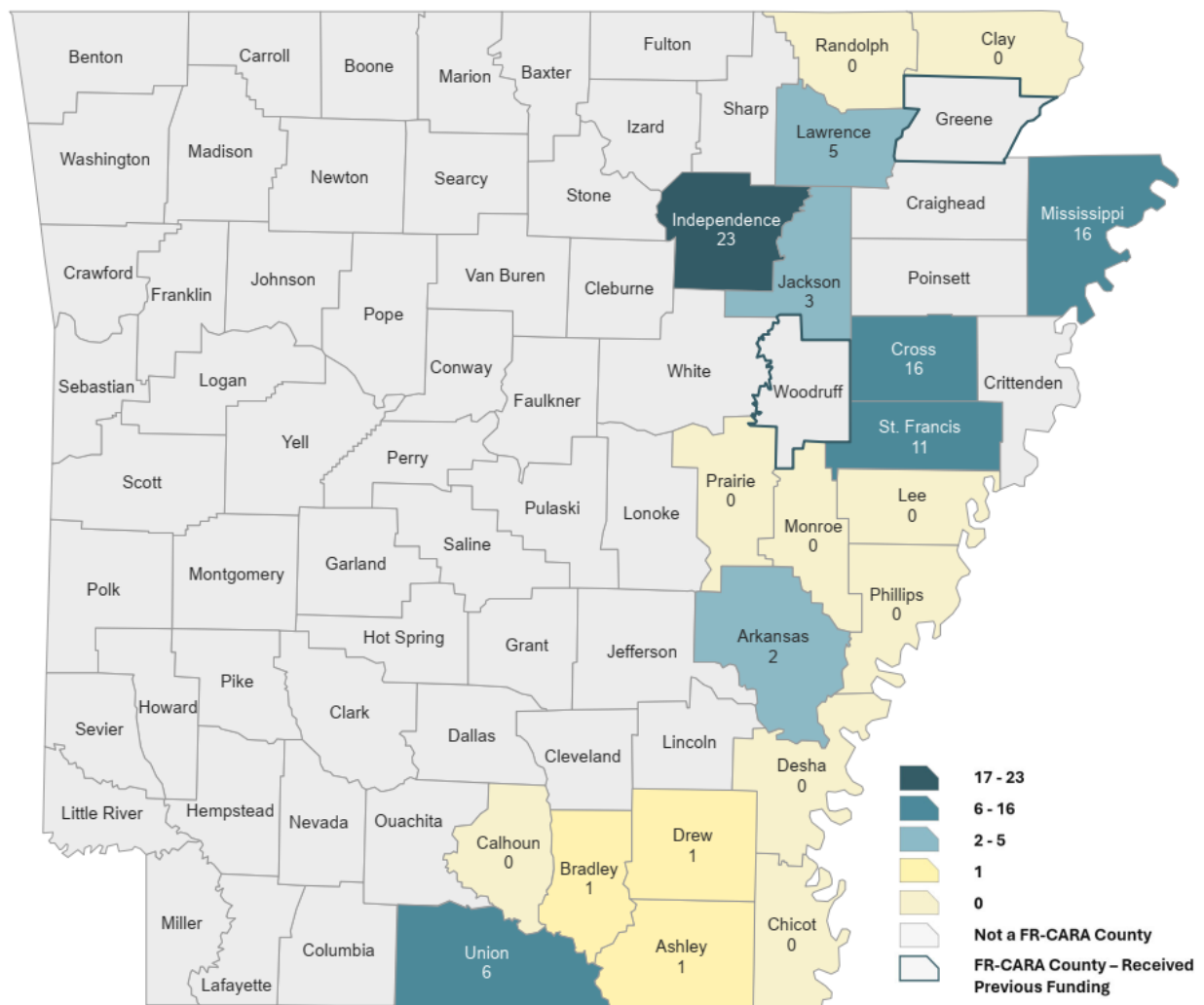


Figure 6. Total naloxone administrations in FR-CARA counties, 2021-2024

County	Administrations	Rate of Administrations per 100,000
Arkansas	2 (2.4%)	12.1
Ashley	1 (1.2%)	5.4
Bradley	1 (1.2%)	9.9
Cross	16 (18.8%)	96.4
Drew	1 (1.2%)	5.9
Independence	23 (27.1%)	60.6
Jackson	3 (3.5%)	18.0
Lawrence	5 (5.9%)	30.9
Mississippi	16 (18.8%)	41.1
St. Francis	11 (12.9%)	49.0
Union	6 (7.1%)	15.9
Total	85 (100.0%)	34.2

Figure 7. Naloxone administrations by year in FR-CARA counties, 2019-2024

Year	Administrations
2019*	1 (1.2%)
2020*	6 (7.1%)
2021	14 (16.5%)
2022	16 (18.8%)
2023	30 (35.3%)
2024	18 (21.2%)
Total	85 (100.0%)
*Administrations prior to 2021 come from the Blue & You grant.	

Trainings

In total, CJI facilitated 116 trainings on the proper administration of naloxone during the FR-CARA funding period. In total, 1,284 people were trained. Of the 116 trainings, CJI issued naloxone to training participants at 114 trainings (**Figure 8**). The number of trainings per month is shown in **Appendix B**.

Figure 8. CJI naloxone trainings by year, 2021-2024

Year	Trainings	People Trained	Trainings with Naloxone Issued
2021	19	420	17
2022	33	352	33
2023	22	195	22
2024	42	317	42
Total	116	1,284	114

Of the 1,284 people trained, demographic data was provided for 1,213 participants. Of the 1,213 participants, the majority (68%, n=821) were White (**Figure 9**). Most of the participants reported that they were not Hispanic (**Figure 10**). Additionally, there were more male participants (45%, n=548) than female participants (43%, n=521) (**Figure 11**). It should be noted that the total number of participants whose gender was reported totals 1,223. This is most likely due to a data entry error that occurred during 2021. Since then, AFMC modified the REDCap data collection tool to contain automatic data checks that alert users to inconsistencies in the data. This has prevented similar data entry errors from occurring in subsequent years.

Figure 9. Training participants by race, 2021-2024

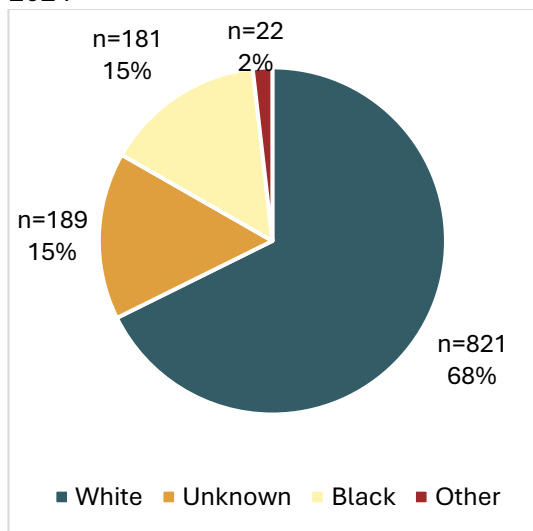


Figure 10. Training participants by ethnicity, 2021-2024

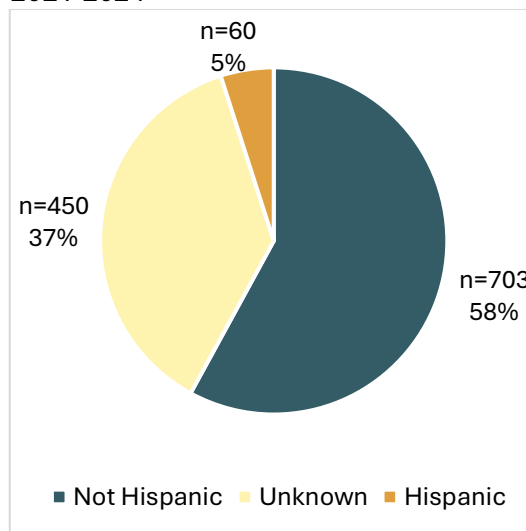
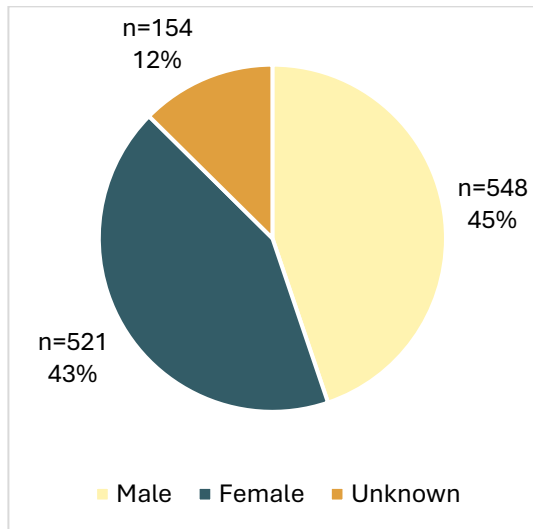
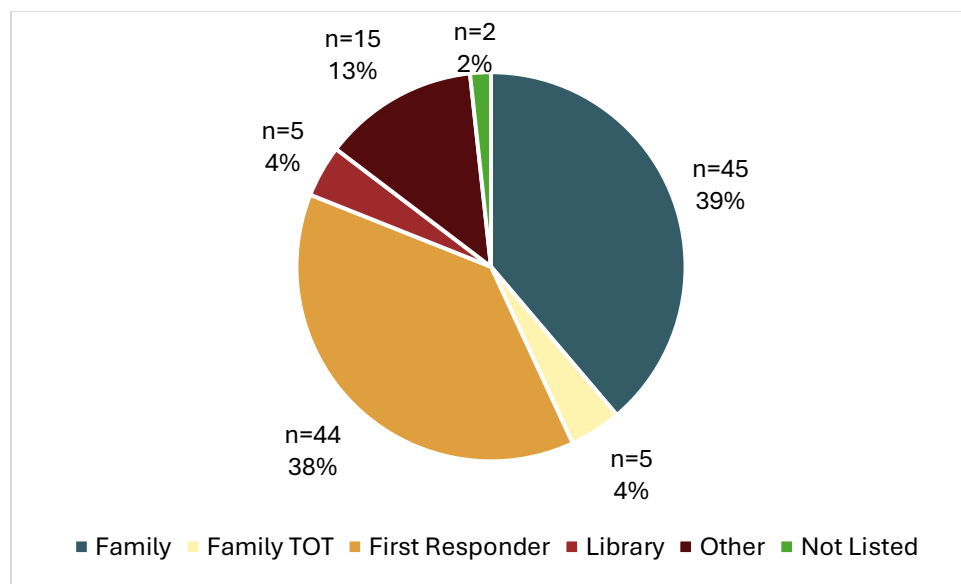


Figure 11. Training participants by gender, 2021-2024



Of the 116 training sessions, the most common groups of people trained were family members of individuals with SUDs (39%, n=45) and first responders (38%, n=44) (**Figure 12**). It should be noted that the types of trainings were not listed for two (2%) of the training sessions. These were the training sessions in which naloxone was not issued to participants.

Figure 12. Types of training, 2021-2024



Media

During the FR-CARA grant funding period, CJJ produced nearly 300 media campaigns across the state. Of all the media campaigns, billboards were the most common (n=111) (**Figure 13**). In total, there were nearly 100,000,000 total impressions.

Figure 13. FR-CARA media campaigns by type

Media Campaign Type	Total Campaigns	Total Materials	Total Impressions
Billboards	111	169	79,046,452
Newspaper Ads	3	1	10,633
Facebook Posts/Ads	61	271	2,393,700
Other Social Media Posts/Ads	5	7	5,384,568
Other Advertisements	3	14,051	2,690,654
Television	6	6	634,298
Website	27	15,243	134,630
Mobile App	21	733	3,134
Audio/Display Ads	9	9	551,021
Video Display Ads	10	10	1,528,135
YouTube	29	144	447,369
Total	285	30,644	92,824,594

Discussion

The FR-CARA grant provided significant resources to combat the opioid crisis in Arkansas, particularly in the Delta region. Through the grant, CJI procured 2,520 naloxone kits, each containing two doses, for distribution across 20 counties. Additionally, 3,065 naloxone kits were distributed to first responders, libraries, and other community members, utilizing surplus kits from previous grants. To support effective naloxone use, 1,284 individuals participated in 116 training sessions, with naloxone provided to attendees in 98% of these sessions (n=114). Thanks to the FR-CARA grant and other SAMHSA opioid initiatives, Arkansas achieved full naloxone saturation in 2024, meaning that naloxone distribution has successfully reached every county in the state.

During the four years of the FR-CARA grant, 78 naloxone administrations were reported to AFMC's Naloxone Reporting Tool, with over half of the funded counties (n=11, 55.0%) documenting cases of naloxone use. Furthermore, seven naloxone administrations had already been reported in the years leading up to the grant.

The grant also funded 300 media campaigns, including digital ads on social media and billboards, which achieved an impressive 100 million impressions, further raising awareness and contributing to the ongoing fight against opioid misuse in Arkansas.

Despite being selected using results from the opioid needs assessment, some first responders in selected counties felt like the opioid epidemic had not reached their community yet. In FFY2023 and 2024, many of the selected counties ranked very low on the needs assessment. FR-CARA counties lie in the State's Delta region, which is one of the most rural areas of the State. Due to the rurality of the counties, some had not reported any overdose-related deaths in several years, contributing to the low needs assessment ranking. It could be beneficial to reframe future programs to explain to community members that although they might not think many people are currently overdosing from opioids, many of these overdoses go unreported and it is crucial to participate in order to monitor trends and prevent future overdoses. CJI should also identify and educate new stakeholders to increase buy in and acceptance of the naloxone program in selected counties.