

1. Opioid Preparedness Exercise in a Box Overview and Instructions

Overview

The Opioid Preparedness Exercise in a Box is a modifiable resource for state response teams to adapt and reference when preparing for and facilitating an opioid preparedness exercise. All resources in the toolkit can be re-designed and altered to fit a state's unique needs and characteristics.

This resource contains a scenario-based opioid preparedness exercise and is intended to convene state health agency staff and key response partners at the state and local levels to support planning for and responding to prescription access disruptions involving opioids, medications for opioid use disorder, and other controlled substances such as benzodiazepines. While disruptions may occur for a variety of reasons (e.g., a healthcare provider's death or retirement), these exercises focus on disruptions involving law enforcement actions taken against healthcare providers, which impact access to care for the patients the healthcare provider was treating. Once the patients lose access to their healthcare provider, they may experience difficulty finding a new clinician which impacts their care continuity. The purpose of the opioid preparedness exercise in a box is to guide a state in planning for a disruption before it transpires so that the state, local, and community partners know what to do should a disruption occur.

Specific circumstances surrounding prescription disruptions are variable, as are state and local response capabilities. Therefore, each response will depend somewhat on the specifics of a given disruption, its location, and myriad other factors. The goal of a scenario-based exercise is to help drive discussion-based response planning for a given scenario. Exercises can and should be repeated with different scenarios to help formulate and test readiness for a variety of circumstances. Before using these resources, please review ASTHO's guidebook, *Responding to Disruptions in Access to Opioid Prescriptions: A Guide for State Health Departments and Their Partners* (2022). The Opioid Preparedness Exercise in a Box contains the following:

- [Exercise Invitee Checklist and Sample Invitation Emails](#)
- [Exercise Agenda Template](#)
- [PowerPoint Slides](#)
- [Facilitator Script](#)
- [Notetaking Guide](#)
- [Inject Inventory](#)
- [Action Planning Activity](#)
- [Resource Samples](#)

Instructions

1. Review ASTHO's [Responding to Disruptions in Access to Opioid Prescriptions](#) guidebook and the Opioid Preparedness Exercise in a Box materials.
2. Create an invitee checklist using agenda template.

3. Contact key partners using the sample invitation email to see who can attend and when they are available to attend the exercise.
4. Develop agenda(s) for the exercise and send calendar invites.
5. Select a facilitator and notetaker(s) among the state response team and use the facilitator script and notetaking guide during the exercise.
6. Create PowerPoint slides for the exercise and align the facilitator script and notetaking guide with the slide deck. The inject inventory and action planning activity will be completed within the PowerPoint slides.
7. During or following the exercise, reference the resource samples as needed to help inform the development or refinement of the state's response protocol and efforts.

Exercise Invitee Checklist and Sample Invitation Emails

The invitee checklist includes a suggested list of key response partners who might participate in the opioid preparedness exercise. The state response team may use the suggested table to brainstorm key response partners and track contact information and invitation statuses for the exercise. The sample invitation email includes suggested outreach language when connecting with exercise participants.

Exercise Agenda Template

The exercise agenda functions as a template for state response teams to adapt when planning an exercise. The document includes a suggested outline for Sessions One and Two if state response teams decide to conduct the exercise in two sessions.

PowerPoint Slides

The PowerPoint slide deck serves as a template for states to adapt when preparing an opioid preparedness exercise. The slides match the exercise agenda template and can be divided into two sessions based on how the state decides to develop its exercise. In the slide deck, light blue textboxes provide additional context and directions. Text that is bracketed and in bold indicates spaces where state response teams should fill in state-specific information and response details unique to their jurisdiction.

Facilitator Script

Aligning with the PowerPoint slides, the facilitator script includes suggested language that presenters may use to walk through content and guide conversation during the preparedness exercise.

Notetaking Guide

Also aligning with the PowerPoint slides, the discussion guide offers space for state response teams to summarize conversations, key takeaways, and/or questions that arise during the exercise in this template.

Inject Inventory

Injects are prompts that encourage participants to consider common complications that arise during disruptions. During the exercise, state response teams may select two injects and incorporate them into the PowerPoint slide deck. The inject inventory includes the scenario language, discussion questions, and probes. All information listed is modifiable and may be adapted based on jurisdictional needs and time restrictions.

Action Planning Activity

The action planning activity is intended to build consensus and identify immediate next steps following the opioid preparedness exercise session. State response teams and their response partners are encouraged to use the last 15 minutes of the session to discuss and brainstorm three to five priority action items and identify people to carry out those activities (i.e., the “lead”). Prior to using this document, please review the job action sheets in Appendix A of ASTHO’s guidebook, [Responding to Disruptions in Access to Opioid Prescriptions](#), for additional context around roles and responsibilities from response partners.

Resource Samples

The Resource Samples offer a set of patient notification fliers, provider notification letters, and other key communication documents that other states have used when responding to disruptions. State response teams may use these resources as examples and templates to adapt when drafting their own communication and outreach documents for a response.