Turning the Tide: Building Bridges to Navigate the Waves of the Opioid Crisis

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Site Information

- **County:** Hardin County
- **State:** Kentucky (KY)
- **Year OFR started:** 2021 with case reviews starting in 2022
- **Overdose deaths per year:** First year of case review in 2022 (50), 2023 (38), 2024 (35)
- **Size of jurisdiction:** 112,000 residents
- **Funding sources:** Currently, Hardin County OFR does not have a funding source

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Stakeholders Involved in Hardin County's Overdose Fatality Review

- Local Law Enforcement
- Emergency Department Directors
- Coroner's Office
- Public Health Department
- County Attorney's Office
- Emergency Medical Services Personnel
- Department for Community Based Services
- Probation & Parole
- Local Recovery Centers & Houses
- Schools
- Overdose Response Strategy

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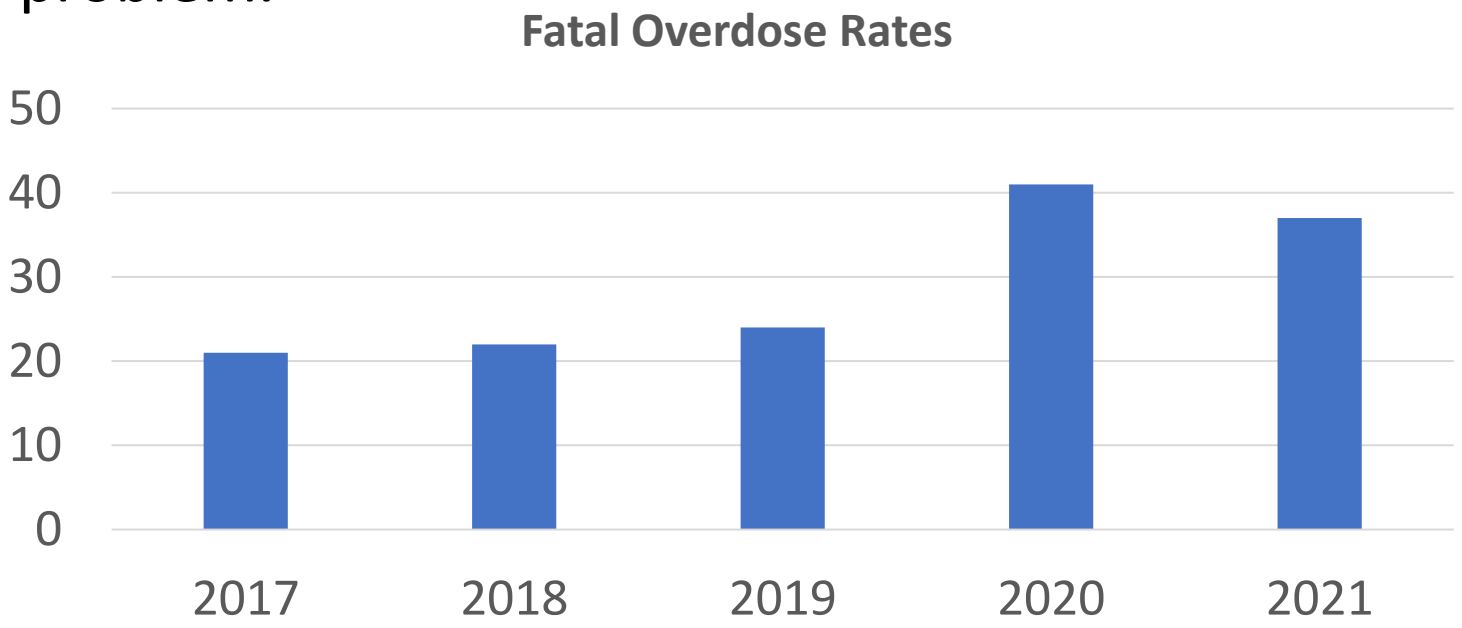
Our Story

- 2017–2021: Hardin County experienced a consistent rise in fatal overdoses
- 2021: Tragic overdose of a local teen
- This event prompted the local hospital's Chief of Medicine to engage with local officials and community partners, sparking collaborative efforts to tackle the problem.



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Key Challenges We Faced

Limited ability to hold in-person meetings due to COVID-19 restrictions

Uncertainty about how and where to begin addressing the issues

Disconnected communication between essential agencies, including law enforcement, hospital staff, and detention centers

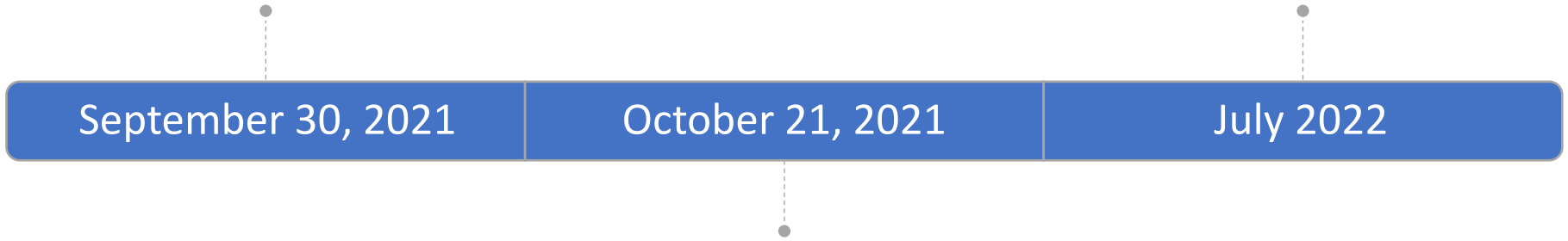
Insufficient coordination of medical care for justice-involved individuals

Lack of trust between agencies to share critical information

Bringing It All Together

First Meeting (September 30, 2021)
The initial meeting was held virtually via Zoom and served as an informational session.

Case Reviews Began (July 2022)
After months of planning and coordination, the team began conducting case reviews in July 2022.



Second Meeting (October 21, 2021)
This meeting focused on identifying key stakeholders who needed to be involved in the conversation.

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Case Example: Key Issues in Justice-involved Patient Care

Scenario: Multiple individuals ingested baggies of assumed controlled substances before arrest

Communication Breakdown: Police officers transporting patients without medical training

Unclear Expectations: Ambiguity around the term "medical clearance"

Why It Mattered: Life-threatening gaps in care for justice-involved patients

Outcome: Resulted in overdoses, emphasizing critical safety concerns

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Response: Implementing a New Protocol

Medical Report Form

Complete Visit Record

Direct Communication Line

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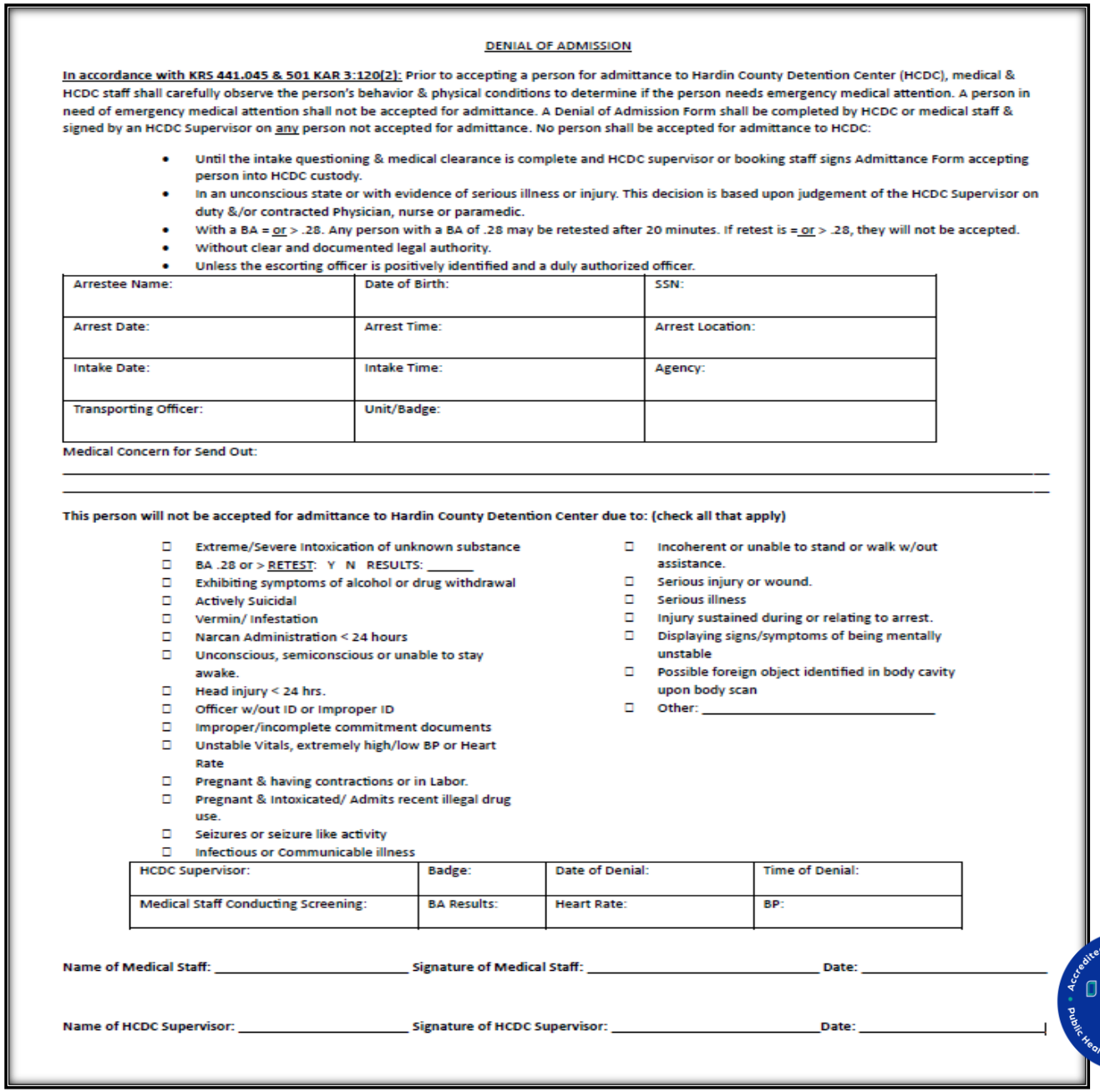
Denial of Admission



DENIAL OF ADMISSION

In accordance with KRS 441.045 & 501 KAR 3:120(2): Prior to accepting a person for admittance to Hardin County Detention Center (HCDC), medical & HCDC staff shall carefully observe the person's behavior & physical conditions to determine if the person needs emergency medical attention. A person in need of emergency medical attention shall not be accepted for admittance. A Denial of Admission Form shall be completed by HCDC or medical staff & signed by an HCDC Supervisor on any person not accepted for admittance. No person shall be accepted for admittance to HCDC:

- Until the intake questioning & medical clearance is complete and HCDC supervisor or booking staff signs Admittance Form accepting person into HCDC custody.
- In an unconscious state or with evidence of serious illness or injury. This decision is based upon judgement of the HCDC Supervisor on duty &/or contracted Physician, nurse or paramedic.
- With a BA = or > .28. Any person with a BA of .28 may be retested after 20 minutes. If retest is = or > .28, they will not be accepted.
- Without clear and documented legal authority.
- Unless the escorting officer is positively identified and a duly authorized officer.

Arrestee Name:	Date of Birth:	SSN:
Arrest Date:	Arrest Time:	Arrest Location:
Intake Date:	Intake Time:	Agency:
Transporting Officer:	Unit/Badge:	

Medical Concern for Send Out:

_____

_____

This person will not be accepted for admittance to Hardin County Detention Center due to: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Extreme/Severe Intoxication of unknown substance
- ☐ BA .28 or > RETEST: Y N RESULTS: _____
- ☐ Exhibiting symptoms of alcohol or drug withdrawal
- ☐ Actively Suicidal
- ☐ Vermin/ Infestation
- ☐ Narcan Administration < 24 hours
- ☐ Unconscious, semiconscious or unable to stay awake.
- ☐ Head injury < 24 hrs.
- ☐ Officer w/out ID or Improper ID
- ☐ Improper/incomplete commitment documents
- ☐ Unstable Vitals, extremely high/low BP or Heart Rate
- ☐ Pregnant & having contractions or in Labor.
- ☐ Pregnant & Intoxicated/ Admits recent illegal drug use.
- ☐ Seizures or seizure like activity
- ☐ Infectious or Communicable illness
- ☐ Incoherent or unable to stand or walk w/out assistance.
- ☐ Serious injury or wound.
- ☐ Serious illness
- ☐ Injury sustained during or relating to arrest.
- ☐ Displaying signs/symptoms of being mentally unstable
- ☐ Possible foreign object identified in body cavity upon body scan
- ☐ Other: _____

HCDC Supervisor:	Badge:	Date of Denial:	Time of Denial:
Medical Staff Conducting Screening:	BA Results:	Heart Rate:	BP:

Name of Medical Staff: _____ **Signature of Medical Staff:** _____ **Date:** _____

Name of HCDC Supervisor: _____ **Signature of HCDC Supervisor:** _____ **Date:** _____

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Denial of Admission

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Results

Significant improvements in patient safety and care coordination
Strengthened collaboration between law enforcement, hospitals, and detention centers
Reduction in critical information gaps, enabling better-informed decision making
Increased efficiency and fewer avoidable errors

Lessons Learned

- Collaboration Is Key
- Transparent Communication
- Flexibility and Trust
- Small Steps, Big Impact

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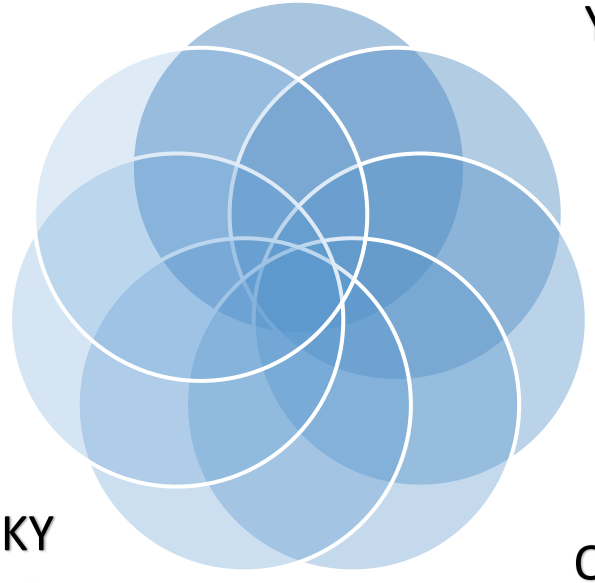
Other Activities to Come From Our OFR

Narcan storage boxes

Overdose Spike Alert Response Plan (in discussion)



Youth Task Force

Emergency department peer support (still in discussion)

Quick Response Team

Many other KY counties have observed to recreate and implement in their areas

Overdose prevention education in local schools

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The Future of Hardin County's OFR

- Expanding OFR efforts
- Embracing continued collaboration
- Sustainable framework
- IIR observed our OFR and made suggestions

*Institute for Intergovernmental Research
OFR Training and Technical Assistance Team

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