



## Impact Statement

**Project Title:** Partnerships for Promoting Health and Wellness

**Issue:** For the past several years, Ohio has ranked among the states with the highest number of deaths resulting from opiate and opioid overdoses. Currently, someone in Ohio dies every 90 minutes from an overdose from which they are unable to recover. In the fall of 2016, the State Extension Advisory Committee ranked opioid addiction as the top issue that they would like to see Extension address. OSU Extension, however, had little expertise in the area of addiction. Consequently, we have partnered with colleges across the OSU campus to develop a response to the opioid crisis.

**What has been done:** In the fall of 2016, OSU Extension engaged in a partnership with the College of Public Health to sponsor a campus-wide summit on the opioid crisis. More than 200 faculty and staff participated in the event. Following the summit, a university steering committee was established to coordinate university efforts focused on the crisis. Additionally, the provost allocated \$1.35 million to fund competitive proposals for research and programs focused on prevention, treatment, or recovery. Funds provided by the provost, OSU Extension, and the College of Public Health support two program managers that oversee the university's response to the opioid crisis.

**Impacts/New Partnerships:** OSU Extension has partnered with the College of Pharmacy to expand the statewide footprint of Generation Rx, a community-based initiative to promote the safe use of prescription drugs. OSU Extension is also working to certify as many Ohioans as possible in Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, a multi-college team led by OSU Extension received a Rural Health and Safety Grant from USDA-NIFA to replicate the PROSPER program in three Ohio Counties. Finally, Ohio 4-H members are working in their communities to encourage individuals and families to discard unused prescription drugs.

**Outcome of Project:** For now, overdose deaths remain high in Ohio, primarily because the drugs and drug combinations are becoming more potent and deadly. But multi-faceted, community-based approaches are showing signs that the number of users of these substances may begin to decline. In states where the supply of more dangerous drugs arrived earlier than Ohio, overdose rates are now beginning to fall. In Dayton, OH the number of overdose deaths, emergency room visits, and ambulance calls have dropped as much as 60% since January 2017.

**How has your project been aided by your FSLI experience?** FSLI helps fellows understand the relationship between individual leadership behaviors, the organization in which they work, and the systems within which both operate. As a leader, I've been able to communicate a sense of urgency within the organization to take steps to address the opioid crisis. As a result, local offices are introducing communities to tools and resources for leading sustainable community change.

**Contact information:** Roger A. Rennekamp, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210, [rennekamp.3@osu.edu](mailto:rennekamp.3@osu.edu), 614-292-7614