

Legislators Allow for Overdose Prevention and Medical Fellows Programs

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CANTON — St. Lawrence County legislators unanimously passed a resolution during Monday's Services Committee meeting modifying the 2022 budget for the Public Health Department for the Overdose Data to Action grant.

"The Public Health Department is responsible for the Overdose Data to Action Grant, and Public Health has been approved to receive \$72,000 in funding from the New York State Department of Health to address the opioid epidemic in the community," the resolution says.

"This is our final year of our Overdose Data to Action Grant," said Jolene F. Munger, director of the county Public Health Department, during the meeting.

She said the grant has been funded for three years now, and that the funding is similar to that of past years.

She said the Public Health Department is using the funding to work on different trainings, including harm-reduction training at the St. Lawrence County Correctional Facility, which will help train officers on trauma-informed care within the facility, according to the resolution.

The funding will also go toward overdose-reversal kits, fentanyl testing strips, and continued work on the county overdose map, Ms. Munger said.

"We are also going to be doing public service announcements with local groups this year," she said.

The resolution says the funding will also be used for increased access to Naloxone, which can treat narcotic overdoses in emergency situations.

Of the \$72,000, \$21,200 will go toward services, \$15,000 for workers, \$17,000 for advertising fees, and \$1,300 for educational workshops.

During the meeting, legislators also unanimously passed a resolution modifying the 2022 budget for the New York State Public Health Corps Fellowship Program.

“The NYSDOH will work with local health departments and community partners to recruit and deploy NYSPHC fellows across the state (excluding New York City) who will commit to a full time, paid position and at least a one year term,” the resolution states.

Ms. Munger said St. Lawrence County is looking to have five fellows.

She said some of the fellows will not be paid out of the county budget, but will instead be hired directly out of PCG Public Consulting Group.

The cost to the county will be \$47,220. Ms. Munger said the expense is mostly for staffing and technology requirements associated with having the fellows.

The resolutions will move to the next full board meeting on Aug. 1.