

# EXPANDING OVERDOSE RESPONSE EDUCATION AND NALOXONE ACCESS IN RHODE ISLAND



Through partnerships with community organizations, municipalities, schools, and healthcare providers, the Community First Responder Program (CFRP) at the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy is helping expand overdose response education and naloxone access across Rhode Island. Since 2019, the program has worked with partners statewide to provide free overdose response training and distribute naloxone through community-based channels designed to reduce barriers such as cost, transportation, and stigma.

## About the Program

Across Rhode Island, community organizations continue to play an important role in strengthening overdose prevention efforts. The Community First Responder Program serves as a statewide hub for overdose education and naloxone distribution, supporting local partners with training, outreach, and harm reduction resources.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that can be administered by bystanders and community members. By increasing access to both training and naloxone supplies, CFRP equips individuals and organizations with the tools needed to respond quickly and effectively during an overdose emergency.

The program collaborates with partners across multiple sectors including harm reduction organizations, treatment and recovery programs, municipal agencies, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to ensure resources reach individuals where they live and work.

## Across trainings and outreach efforts, several themes shape the program's approach:

- **Community-based overdose response education:** CFRP provides live and virtual training sessions that teach participants to recognize an opioid overdose and administer intranasal naloxone. Trainings are free and available upon request to Rhode Island groups, schools, municipal agencies, and other organizations.
- **Removing barriers to naloxone access:** Naloxone kits are distributed free of charge through local partners, outreach events, and mail-order requests to help ensure access across Rhode Island communities.
- **Partnership-driven harm reduction outreach:** Through collaboration with community organizations and public health partners, the program helps expand overdose prevention resources in settings that may be outside traditional healthcare environments.
- **Continuing Professional Development:** CFRP provides live and virtual continuing education programs for nurses, social workers, pharmacists and licensed mental health counselors on a variety of substance-related topics. All are free and accessible from our website.

## Program Reach Across Rhode Island

**210,000+**  
naloxone kits distributed through community partners and outreach

**18,000+**  
individuals trained in naloxone administration

**1,600+**  
health care providers and first responders trained in overdose response

**480+**  
outreach and education events held across Rhode Island

**10,000+**  
fentanyl test strips distributed to address changes in the drug supply

**99%+**  
of training participants would recommend the program to others

### Learn More About the Community First Responder Program

- Visit the URI Community First Responder Program **website** at [URL.edu/CFRP](https://www.uri.edu/cfrp)
- Request community overdose response training
- Learn more about naloxone access and resources in Rhode Island