



Local leaders believe that the [HEALing Communities Study](#) helped spread naloxone and expand medications for opioid use disorder

The Problem ▶

[Naloxone](#)—the medication that reverses an opioid overdose—and medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) need to be more widely used.

There are many obstacles to making sure people who need these life-saving medications can access them in their communities. Researchers from the [HEALing Communities Study](#) (HCS) looked at whether a program called the [Communities That HEAL](#) (CTH) helped reduce obstacles that kept naloxone and MOUD from becoming available in places like hospitals, jails, and other public locations.

The Goal ▶

Researchers wanted to understand whether the CTH program changed community members' minds about obstacles standing in the way of expanding naloxone and MOUD programs to new locations. They also wanted to see if these opinions differed based on which state the local leaders lived in and whether they lived in rural or urban communities.

What We Did ▶

Researchers surveyed local leaders about their thoughts on the obstacles to expanding naloxone and MOUD programs in their communities. The first survey occurred before the CTH program started in their community while follow-up surveys occurred throughout the program.

What We Learned ▶

The CTH program helped [decrease perceived obstacles](#) to:

- Increasing access to naloxone in hospitals, primary care, and behavioral health clinics by **10%**.
- Increasing access to naloxone by street outreach, mobile vans, and telemedicine by **18%**.
- Expanding MOUD programs by street outreach, mobile vans, and telemedicine by nearly **12%**.

Why It Matters ▶

Local leaders in CTH communities perceived fewer obstacles to adding naloxone and MOUD programs in their communities through nontraditional services, such as mobile delivery vans and partnerships with faith-based organizations. Leaders in both rural and urban communities may perceive fewer hurdles to strengthening their MOUD and OEND programming through CTH practices.

This is a summary of scientific research published in *Preventive Medicine* by Knudsen et al. (2024): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2024.108034>. To find out more how you can bring the CTH program to your community, visit the HEALing Communities Study website: hcs.rti.org.