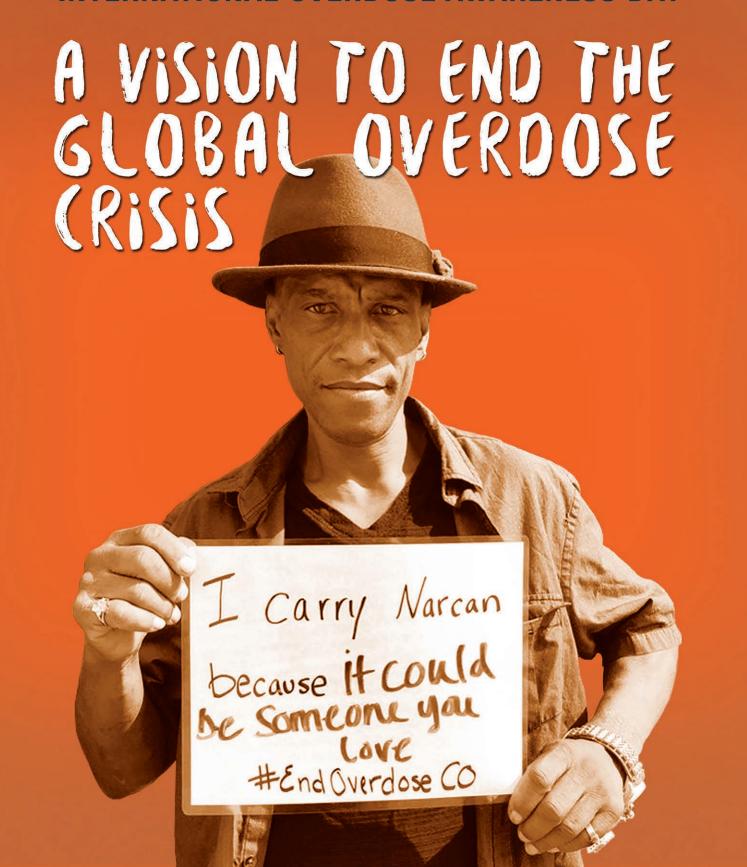
INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY



PARTNERS REPORT 2018





International Overdose Awareness Day

A Penington Institute initiative
95 Drummond Street Carlton VIC 3053 Australia

www.overdoseday.com

facebook.com/InternationalOverdoseAwarenessDay
twitter.com/OverdoseDay
instagram/OverdoseAwarenessDay

January 2019



Cover photograph

The Colorado Harm Reduction Action Center's Overdose Prevention Coordinator Vernon Lewis spreads the message about the importance of carrying naloxone.

Location: Denver, Colorado, USA.

Photo Credit: @YPR_Denver /Young People in Recovery Denver

CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Our approach	5
Our goals	6
Survey of IOAD partners and participants	6
The impact of IOAD in 2018	7
Events and activities	9
Campaign resources	18
Tributes	19
Social media	20
Media	23
Merchandise	25
Next steps	27



IOAD march in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Photo credit: @peachiekeenartistry



Niagra Falls, Ontario, Canada lit up purple to commemorate IOAD. Photo credit: @rob_antus

"Many of us have lost sons, daughters, mothers, fathers and so many more loved ones. We have to try and help others to lose the stigma. Let our voices be heard."

- Event/activity organiser, Canada

introduction

International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) is making a difference.

Each year on 31 August, we come together to bring attention to the ongoing tragedy of overdose and provide a space to acknowledge and remember those affected by overdose without shame or stigma. All of us are a part of an important campaign – every event organiser, fundraiser and supporter makes a valuable contribution to our cause. As convenor of the campaign, Penington Institute is proud of what has been collectively achieved, and look forward to your participation in IOAD in 2019 and beyond.

This report illustrates the power of collaboration and partnership. Taken together, the results are testimony to all those who contributed last year. By listening to event and activity organisers, we have a better understanding of what is working well, and where we can improve.

IOAD continues to grow and encompasses more communities each year. Together we have come a long way, but there is so much further to go before we reach our destination of a world without overdose.

Learn more about IOAD here: www.overdoseday.com

OUR APPROACH

Overdose does not discriminate, and the number of people affected by it are increasing around the world. Part of what makes overdose so deadly is the silence that surrounds it. At Penington Institute, we envisage a world where overdose is destigmatised and better understood; where policy makers make well-informed and evidence-based decisions that help those who are at risk of overdose. Only by addressing this silence, and by prioritising responses that are based in evidence instead of fear or anger, will we reduce the number of lives lost to overdose each year.

OUR GOALS

- Provide an opportunity for people to remember and commemorate loved ones;
- Involve more people in IOAD and expand its reach, with more events and activities in more countries;
- Provide information to the public about overdose, including how to recognise an overdose and what support services are available;
- Fight the stigma surrounding overdose;
- Stimulate discussion about overdose prevention and drug policy;
- Encourage communities to respond to overdose as a local issue;
- Support evidence-based responses that save lives; and
- Remind people around the world about the risks of overdose.

SURVEY OF IOAO PARTNERS AND PARTICIPANTS

We invited those who organised an event or activity for IOAD 2018 to share their experiences, highlights and event outcomes. The survey was also an opportunity for us to learn how we can make improvements going forward, ensuring IOAD is open and accessible, and that event holders are supported. Our survey received 221 responses from people in the United States, Australia, Canada, Tanzania, Italy, the Republic of Macedonia, India, Hong Kong, Afghanistan, Ireland, Mexico, Togo, Romania, Russia, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Spain, Myanmar and Indonesia among others.



IOAD march in New York City, New York, US. Photo credit: Drug Policy Alliance photo by Averie Cole

THE IMPACT OF IOAD IN 2018

- 747 events and activities wers registered on www.overdoseday.com, compared to 483 in 2017; and
- 38 countries hosted an event or activity, compared to 19 in 2017.

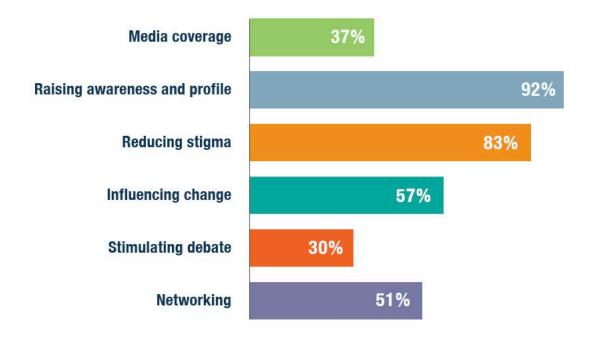
Stakeholders were asked to share outcomes or actions that resulted from their IOAD event or activity. More than 90 per cent of respondents selected 'raising awareness and profile' and more than 80 per cent indicated 'reducing stigma'.

Asked what the best thing about their event or activity was, most responded that IOAD brought communities together:

"A sense of community was established for a brief period and discussion related to the need for treatment was increased. Stigma was also addressed as many people recognized friends and family on the video that showed people who have passed from overdose." - Event/activity organiser, West Virginia, USA.

"The best thing was the active involvement of the people who took part in the event."-Event/activity organiser, Italy.

Outcomes of the event or activity



This year saw real benefits delivered from IOAD events and activities. These included:

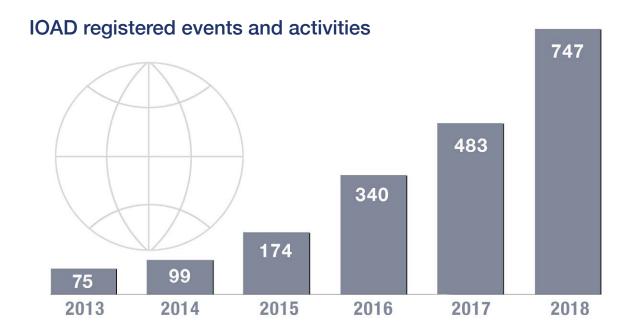
- In **Afghanistan**, the head of the national AIDS and hepatitis control program announced that "drug use is not a crime" and asked all the hospitals and service providers to carry naloxone:
- Flags of Hope from Toronto, Canada arranged for major landmarks, including the CN
 Tower, to be lit purple in commemoration of those lost to drug overdose. In addition, to
 distributing IOAD pins they organised for the city's mayor to issue a proclamation about
 IOAD;
- Sandra McGivern from Sydney, Australia distributed information packs and posters which were put up in schools, Narcotics Anonymous meetings and advertised on a local government website;
- In **Montenegro**, Marija Milic from the harm reduction organisation *Juventas* organised naloxone training for professionals and peer workers. They also developed a questionnaire for participants and distributed health care resources to other stakeholders;
- The *International Model Diplomats for Integrated Development* in **Togo, Africa** created a working group to "reflect on the solutions to overdose" and committed to organising a meeting with the Ministry of Health;
- The *Italian Network for Harm Reduction* reported that a local treatment service began a take-home naloxone program for the first time;
- The Glueckert Funeral Home in Illinois, USA conducted overdose prevention and naloxone training. After receiving many requests for further training, they have committed to hold additional training sessions; and
- First responders in **Connecticut, USA** now carry a customised resource guide about opioid overdose with referals to local services.



Part of an IOAD event in Maroochydoore, QLD, Australia. Photo credit: Jon's Story photos by Jasmin Raggam

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES: SIGNIFICANT GROWTH ACROSS THE WORLD

The number of IOAD events and activities held world-wide and registered on www.overdoseday.com has grown from 75 in 2013 to 747 in 2018. We know that many additional grassroots events are held locally but are not registered on our IOAD website.

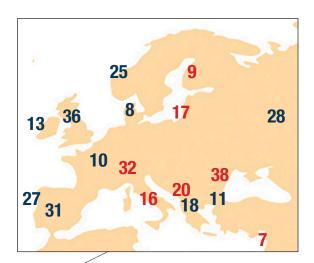


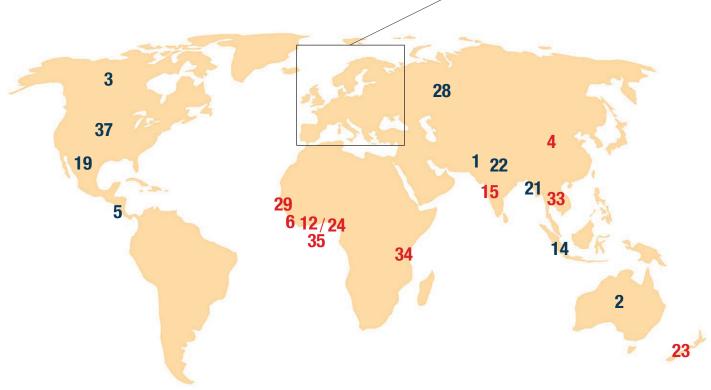


Brett Bramble in Times Square, New York City, NY, USA. In 2018, Brett walked along the East coast of the US (from Key West in Florida to Fort Kent in Maine) in honour of his sister Brittany. Photo credit @brettbramblewalks

Map of event and activity countries

In 2013, events and activities were registered in six countries while in 2017 there were 19 countries participating. The 2018 year events and activities were held in 38 countries with many holding events or activities for the first time. First time event/activities holders are marked in red.





1. Afghanistan	2. Australia	3. Canada	4. China	5. Costa Rica
6. Cote d'Ivoire	7. Cyprus	8. Denmark	9. Finland	10. France
11. Georgia	12. Ghana	13. Ireland	14. Indonesia	15. India
16. Italy	17. Lithuania	18. Macedonia	19. Mexico	20. Montenegro
21. Myanmar	22. Nepal	23. New Zealand	24. Nigeria	25. Norway
26. Pakistan	27. Portugal	28. Russia	29. Sierra Leone	30. Serbia
31. Spain	32. Switzerland	33. Thailand	34. Tanzania	35. Togo
36. UK	37. USA	38. Romania		

Events and activities

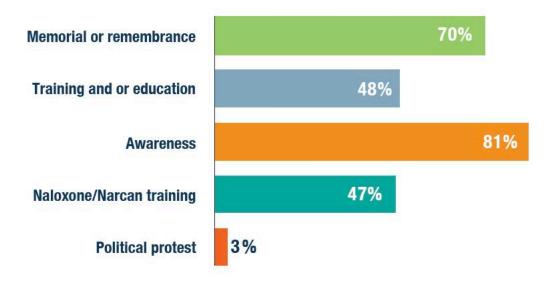
There was a wide range of event types in 2018, and organisers were motivated to host events for many reasons.

When asked for the **main reason** for participating in IOAD, many respondents said they were motivated to hold an event or activity after losing a loved one or living in a community heavily affected by overdose.

The top three reasons for holding an event/activity were:

- 1. Raising awareness of overdose;
- 2. Remembering and honouring a loved one who died of an overdose; and
- 3. Providing education about overdose and naloxone the opioid overdose reversal medication also known as Narcan.

Type of event or activity



The people who make IOAD happen

IOAD is a diverse commemoration, and a wide range of people and organisations participated in the 2018 campaign. Nearly half (48 per cent) of respondents identified as a friend or family member of someone affected by overdose. A substantial proportion (46 per cent) worked in harm reduction or in a drug treatment service. Other respondents identified as health professionals, drug reform advocates, people who use drugs and people who previously used drugs. No matter what a person's background, everyone can contribute to IOAD.

Commemoration

"One of the most amazing moments I witnessed at our event that was entitled JustInTimeAwareness (we named our campaign in memory of my fiancé Justin Thomas Wilson) was individuals who have been stigmatized by their community, their family and their employers because of how their loved one passed away get a chance to celebrate their loved one's life and feel supported for the first time since the death of an individual they adored. So many of them spoke and expressed thanks and it was inspiring."- Event/activity organiser, Ohio, USA.

"Our clients were able to write the name of people they had lost to overdose on paper candles during the month of August... Our clients and staff were all deeply touched by the event." - Event/activity organiser, California, USA.

Education and training

"We made a Jean-Michel Basquiat dummy and drove it all over Moscow talking about overdoses. It was heard from people and they willingly took pictures with him and listened about overdose prevention." - Event/activity organiser, Moscow, Russia.

"Education is key, gave folks an opportunity to come together in the community. People just loved the naloxone kits and educational information provided by Addiction Policy Forum." - Event/activity organiser, USA.

"Local community treatment providers also conducted a Narcan training and gave out a total of 60 kits." - Event or activity organiser, Colorado, USA.

Advocacy and awareness

"It has started discussion among the drug using community and health care providers about the importance of overdose management." - Event/activity organiser, India.

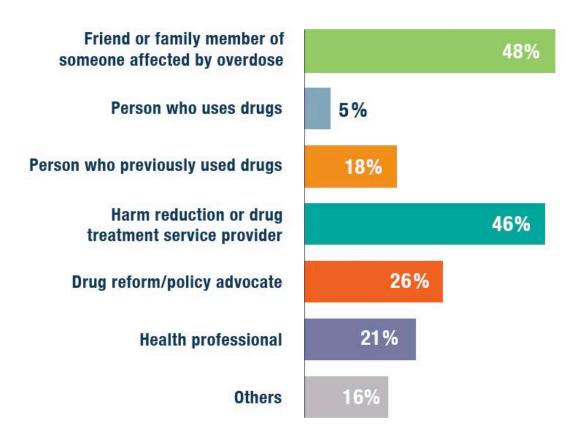
"[We held our event] to promote awareness about overdose management and services among target population and general community including family members." Event/activity organiser, Myanmar.

"[A]s it is still considered taboo topic, people hesitate to come forward and talk freely."

- Event/activity organiser, Hong Kong, SAR, China.

"The best thing was awareness about overdose management." - Event/activity organiser, India.

Types of people holding an activity or event



Indicators of success

Of those identifying as a new participant in IOAD 2018, 95 per cent described their event or activity as a success. Many new IOAD event and activity holders reported that their event or activity exceeded expectations.

"People showed up on a rainy Friday night and stayed when the rain got heavy. Responses from those who attended were very positive. One person stated that she felt she had walked into a big warm hug." - Event/activity organiser, Pennsylvania, USA.

"There was a larger than expected crowd, many groups from the community participated as speakers or resource tables, and attendees expressed their appreciation for such an event. Several local newspapers (print and online), the university and the Dallas TV station covered our event." - Event/activity organiser, Dallas, USA.

"We had about 200 people attend to listen to our lived experience and front-line workers share their stories. It was a heartfelt, beautiful afternoon, where we also met and engaged with many who either love someone who uses drugs or lost someone. We feel every conversation counts." - Event/activity organiser, location withheld.

Events and activities, big and small, making a difference

The IOAD 2018 stakeholder survey showed that the number of participants in events and activities ranged from 10 to several thousand. More than half of all respondents (63 per cent) said that their event or activity had 100 people or fewer attendees and 34 per cent said there were between 100 and 500 people in attendance.

- Two event/activity holders reported 501-1000 attendees;
- Two event/activity holders reported 1001-2000 attendees;
- One event had 2001-3000 people attend; and
- One event had an estimated 3001-5000 participants.

Events and activities were attended by community members, health and workers and advocates, family and friends of people affected by overdose and people who use drugs.

Some organisers were pleasantly surprised by the high attendance at their event or activity.

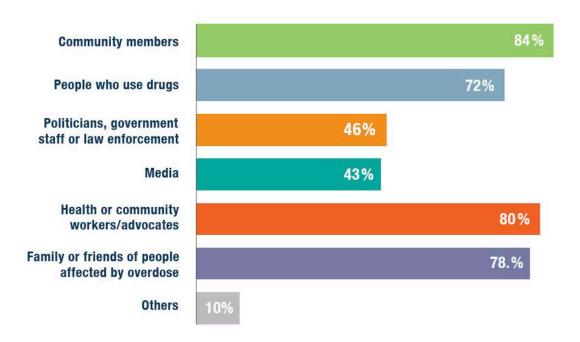
"I expected 30-50 people when first planning. We had close to 250. The response back from everyone there was extremely positive." - Event or activity organiser, New Jersey, US

While most respondents reported more traditional gatherings, with speeches, stories and powerful symbolic gestures to honour those lost, some organisers were very creative. Some organised other types of events such as walks, producing a podcast and conducting a 'flash-mob' in a public square. One group even held a rugby game.



Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada turned purple for IOAD 2018. Photo credit: @monicasousaa

Who participated in events and activities?



In the United Kingdom, an IOAD campaign was run by the *Opioid Dependence Portfolio* at Ethypharm (formerly Martindale Pharma) in conjunction with Boots Pharmacies and Public Health England. Posters featuring IOAD messaging, website and logo were printed and distributed to 2,500 Boots Pharmacy shops across the United Kingdom.



Boots Pharmacy, England, UK.

IOAD event Glasgow, Scotland, UK.

IOAO AROUNO THE WORLD



Event participants commemorate people lost to overdose in Putney, Vermont, USA. Photo credit: Mike Kelly Art.

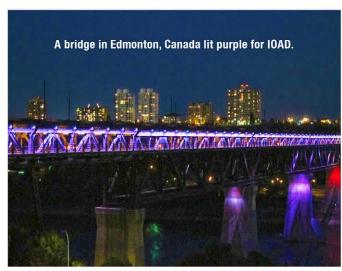






The Colorado Department of Human Services created a giant wall of prescription bottles, each featuring the name of a person who had died of overdose.

Community Health nurse training in Grampians region, Victoria, Australia. Community event in
Côte d'Ivoire which was
organised to educate people
who use drugs within their
community about overdose
prevention. Photo credit:
Adeolu Ogunrombi.





IOAO AROUND THE WORLD





The Social Awareness Service Organisation in Manipur, India held an International Overdose Awareness Day event featuring more than 200 participants. Photo credit: SASO.

Overdose Awareness Utah filled a to-scale 737 airplane on the lawn of the Utah Capitol Building in Salt Lake City,USA to create a visual representation of the number of lives lost to overdose each day.

Photo credit: OverdoseAwarenessUtah and Aimee Hadfield.

A participant at EACH's event in Ferntree Gully.

Melbourne, Australia, lights a candle to remember those who have died of overdose.

The Social Awareness Service
Organisation in Manipur,
India held an
International Overdose
Awareness Day event featuring
more than 200 participants
Photo credit: SASO.





CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

The IOAD website is a hub for people around the world to engage with the campaign. Anyone can download resources (including posters and social media graphics), post a tribute, register their event or activity, buy merchandise make a donation and learn more about substance use and overdose including first aid tips.

IOAD 2018 survey respondents indicated that they appreciated the variety of resources available to them from the IOAD website. These include promotional materials, planning guides with suggested events and activities, and an event organiser toolkit. More than 78 per cent of respondents made use of the online resources.

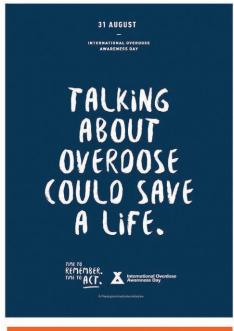
In the lead up to IOAD 2018, Penington Institute developed 40 new social media graphics and posters, making a total of 231 colour downloadable resources available. Responding to feedback, we have also made all downloadable resources available in grayscale for people wanting to print posters and other materials more economically.

The resources were well used by many event and activity holders.

- A total of 35,459 individual PDF resources were downloaded:
- The event organiser tool kit had more than 1600 downloads;
- The most popular poster featured the text "Talking about overdose could save a life" and
- The most popular translated poster was in Arabic.

Campaign materials are available on the International Overdose Awareness Day website:

www.overdoseday.com







TRIBUTES

The IOAD website allows people affected by overdose to post a tribute to those they have lost. Posting a tribute not only allows people to express their grief but this also forms the basis for ongoing conversations about overdose. Having these conversations free from shame and stigma is critical if we are to address growing rates of overdose mortality. A total of 441 tributes were posted in 2018.

"My precious daughter Marci, I am so sorry I wasn't with you when you were dying. I have so many questions about your death that I'll never get answered. Your death was devastating. One of the sorrows that hurt me most is that you were around people that didn't love you. I wish I could have been there to hold you and tell you how beautiful you are and how much I love you."

- Tribute, 2018

"It has been just four and a half months since my first-born child, my only daughter, Jade, lost her battle with addiction, leaving two children without a mother, three brothers without a sister, and more broken hearts than can ever be counted.

She was beautiful. Intelligent. Creative. Hilarious. Outspoken. Genuine. Caring. She loved to read, to learn, and she was a gifted writer/poet. She was (and is) loved. And she will be forever missed. Her death has left a void that can never be filled, and no one who knew her will ever be the same.

Every moment of every day, I miss my daughter. The struggle to carry on is IMMENSE and indescribable.

She wanted to be better. She wanted to beat her addiction. She wanted to have a normal life, be successful, contribute something meaningful to the world, and most importantly, she wanted to be a good mother to her children.

As she wrote in her journal just a few short weeks before she died, Jade was determined to turn her life around, to focus on her kids and her future, ignore the people who expected or even wanted her to fail, and "PROVE THEM WRONG".

These things are no longer possible for Jade, with the one exception of contributing something meaningful to the world. She achieved that simply by being who she was, and in every way that I possibly can, I intend to make sure that she continues to achieve it, even in death.

She will never be forgotten. She will always be missed."

* Tributes posted on the International Overdose Awareness Day website.

SOCIAL MEDIA

IOAD's social media presence grew over the 2018 campaign. This year we promoted the use of the hashtags #EndOverdose and #OverdoseAware across all social media channels.

Facebook

IOAD is receiving more likes on Facebook due to our targeted promotion and focus on creating content that is interesting and informative. At the end of December 2018, the page had close to 37,000 likes.

A strong effort was made in 2018 to feature a variety of photos from previous IOAD events and activities.

We received many positive comments about the Facebook page and how it assisted people.

I just want to say that your page has helped me a lot with getting through the grief of losing the love of my life from accidental prescription fentanyl overdose in 2016. It's great having a day that raises awareness of overdoses. Since I lost him I've been obsessed with learning about drugs and symptoms of overdose so that I would know how to identify and act in the circumstance that I am ever around someone overdosing...I am a non-drug user and when my man passed away I didn't have the knowledge to identify that he was abusing his fentanyl. I wish I knew then what I know now then I could've had a chance at saving him... thank you so much for raising awareness on this issue. - Lisa, 18 April 2018.

Photos from previous IOAD campaigns were posted in 2018 as #FlashbackFriday. This post from 2016 shows Ryan Cahner paying tribute to his late sister Erin Conner in downtown Chicago, Illinois, USA.



Instagram

In 2018 we introduced a new IOAD social media channel on Instagram using the name @overdoseawarenessday. At the end of December 2018, we had 1137 followers on the IOAD Instagram account.

Like the IOAD Facebook page, the focus has been on vibrant content to engage new people with IOAD. The IOAD Instagram account will continue to play an important role in 2019 and beyond.



The DOPE Project in San Francisco, California, USA commemorated IOAD 2018 by remembering those whose lives have been lost and celebrating all those who have been saved. Hundreds of paper cut-out figures were displayed - each representing five overdose reversals - to provide a physical reminder of the lives saved.

Photo credit: @hanleelee.



IOAD march in New York City, New York, US. Photo credit: Drug Policy Alliance photo by Averie Cole

Twitter

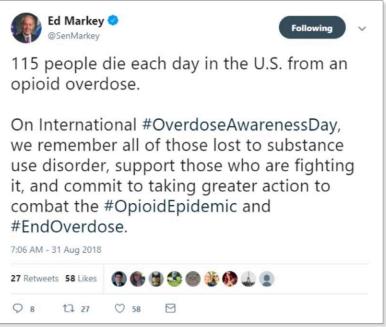
The number of people following the IOAD Twitter account increased by 14 per cent: from 3301 in 2017 to 3,761 on IOAD 2018. In the period 1 January to 2 September, there were 3,577 engagements (likes, retweets or comments) with our tweets. There were also 1,078 mentions of our Twitter name @overdoseday and 162,654 unique interactions with our tweets.

Twitter highlights included the US Surgeon General (who has 570,000 Twitter followers) tweeting four times using our hashtags (#EndOverdose and #OverdoseAware) including photos and a detailed video on how to administer naloxone.

The US Surgeon General Vice Admiral Jerome M Adams MD MPH tweeted several times about IOAD to his 570,000 followers.

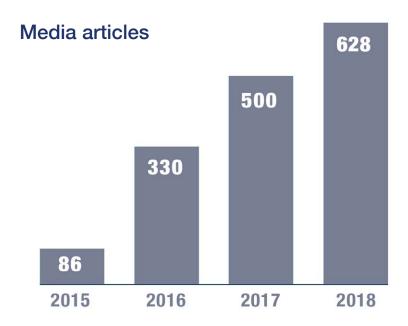


US Federal Senator Edward J Markey tweetedon IOAD to his 141,000 Twitter followers.



MEDIA

There was strong media interest in IOAD events and activities around the world in 2018.



With limited resources, it is hard to obtain precise figures for the amount of media generated by the campaign. Only a small amount of print and online media can be monitored and it is especially difficult to obtain broadcast coverage. It is likely we are aware of only a fraction of the the number of the stories written each year. Nonetheless, it is obvious that there has been a significant increase in the coverage by IOAD.

Approximately three quarters (76 per cent) of survey respondents reported media engagement with their event, and approximately 40 per cent reported engagement from more than two media platforms (web, print, television, radio). Several events attracted coverage from state or national media channels.

"TV news on three of five major Chicago television stations. Articles in two of three Chicago newspapers and repeated coverage on major news radio station." - Event organiser, Illinois, USA.

"CBC news covered our event "Flags of Hope". We made flags to commemorate the 303 opioid related deaths in Toronto in 2017. We had a procession and remembrance at our City Hall square." - Event organiser, Toronto, Canada.

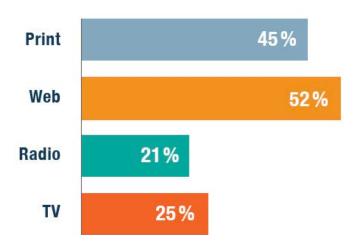
"Great article in the local paper." - Event organiser, USA.

"We received coverage in the newspaper Dainik Bhaskar Gurdaspur." - Event organiser, Punjab, India.

In Australia, IOAD media relations were complemented by the release of Penington Institute's *Australia's Annual Overdose Report 2018*. The report, which analysed data from

the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveals the current state of fatal overdose in Australia. The report received extensive media coverage across Australia. This coverage often referred to IOAD and the importance of finding solutions to combat overdose.

Media coverage of IOAD events and activities



Scottish Drugs Forum campaign to curb the rise in overdose deaths

1arc Horne

August 30 2018, 12:01am, The Times



David Liddell, of the Scotland Drugs Forum, wants greater availability of naloxone, which reverses the effects of opioid overdose

A campaign aimed at curbing Scotland's spiralling total of drugs fatalities will be officially launched today.

The Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF), an independent expert advisory group funded by the Scottish government, is behind #StopTheDeaths.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of the rising toll of drug overdose deaths in Scotland and to galvanise politicians and agencies to do more to prevent the tragedies.

Example of online media coverage in the UK.

MER (HANDISE

Penington Institute sells silver badges and purple wristbands to help people spread the messages of IOAD.

Badge sale numbers increased from 28,115 in 2017 to 39,250 in 2018 – an increase of almost 40 per cent. A new merchandise product in 2017, we sold 18,240 wristbands in 2018 up 83 per cent from the 9960 sold in 2017.

In 2018, we ensured that merchandise featured prominently in our digital content to boost awareness of IOAD.

To purchase IOAD merchandise visit: www.overdoseday.com/shop/







Photo credit: Paul Ogle - Twitter @Recovery_4all

NEXT STEPS

Many survey respondents thanked Penington Institute for our ongoing support, including the information and resources made available on the IOAD website and social media pages.

"You are doing a great job. The print posters and other resources are helpful." - Event/activity organiser, Canada.

Some respondents also gave practical feedback about how Penington Institute could provide even greater assistance in 2019 and beyond.

Resources

Several IOAD survey respondents also contributed some helpful feedback for how the downloadable materials on the IOAD website could be made even better.

Examples include:

- Including more resources that "focus on people who survived an overdose and continue to use drugs";
- More events pictures on the IOAD Facebook page;
- Resources with information about different types of interventions (e.g.psychological treatments);
- More graphics concerning naloxone training;
- Having downloadable resources that are "editable" and available in United States sizes as well as vector graphics;
- Tailored resources for prisons;
- IOAD t-shirts;
- Infographics using an IOAD silver ribbon;
- A sample proclamation for local, state and national governments to use on IOAD; and
- Financial support for NGOs in low-income countries.

Funding

Convening IOAD is undertaken by Penington Institute, an independent and not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting responses to drug use that promote safety and human dignity.

As convener of the campaign, Penington Institute receives no formal funding for IOAD. The work of coordinating the campaign is done voluntarily within our existing resources.

Going forward there is an urgent need for a well-resourced campaign. We hope to be better able meet the needs of event and activity holders around the world, and to do so requires external funding. Many IOAD event and activity organisers self-fund their events and efforts and they should be applauded for doing so. However, the continued growth of IOAD requires more partners; this is a global campaign that needs to attract interest from the private sector. If this was to change IOAD could reach many more people and have a far greater impact.

To create a more sustainable and ambitious campaign that enables strong growth in our global movement, Penington Institute is actively seeking financial support from major donors who share our vision of ending overdose.

A reminder that anyone can donate to IOAD on the website: www.overdoseday.com/donate/





IOAD event held at Sri Guru Ram Das University of Health Sciences in Punjab, India. Photo credit: Harjot Singh



IOAD event in Porto, Portugal. Photo credit: @leonorclemos



IOAD event in Hong Kong, SAR, China.



Volunteers at the IOAD event in Greensboro, North Carolina, USA. Photo credit: @healthyguildford

Thank you to our collaborators, partners, event and activity holders, event attendees and activity participants, sponsors of local events and activities, organisations and individuals.

Thank you, one and all.

31 AUGUST

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

TIME TO REMEMBER. TIME TO A (T.

A Penington Institute Initiative

Penington Institute: http://www.penington.org.au