



International Overdose
Awareness Day

A VISION TO END THE GLOBAL OVERDOSE CRISIS

STAKEHOLDER REPORT 2017

31 AUGUST

—
INTERNATIONAL
OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY

WHY A STAKEHOLDER REPORT?

Since 2012, Penington Institute has been working to raise awareness about overdose at an international level, most notably through our work leading the International Overdose Awareness Day campaign. The day, acknowledged throughout the world, with hundreds of community events, would not happen nor have such an impact if not for people like you finding ways to raise awareness about this growing crisis. We acknowledge and thank you for your commitment.

This, our first Stakeholder Report, is an important means to engage with our entire stakeholder community to feed back to everyone what we are achieving together. We believe it is important that everyone involved has an opportunity to have a say and learn what others are doing.

Our aim is to continue to document and evaluate our collective work, to improve the campaign and ultimately create a greater impact, which we can measure in more awareness, greater commitment and most importantly fewer deaths from overdose.

You are part of this important campaign, as an event holder, funder or supporter. It's a campaign that's becoming a movement and we are proud that you have joined us.

PENINGTON INSTITUTE HAS A VISION OF A WORLD WHERE NOBODY DIES FROM AN ACCIDENTAL DRUG OVERDOSE AND WHERE PEOPLE CAN TALK OPENLY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE WITHOUT STIGMA.

THE SITUATION

Over the last twenty years drug overdose deaths have increased significantly in many parts of the world and continue to worsen. Each year a record number of deaths are reported, which is predominantly driven by the misuse of opioids in combination with other drugs. This growing overdose epidemic extends to all parts of the world. There is now an international crisis of drug overdoses and the emotional and economic costs are enormous.

Overdoses, both fatal and non-fatal, continue to deeply affect individuals, families and communities. Without question, this epidemic is reshaping life in North America and beyond. Prescription painkillers, heroin and other drugs including synthetic cannabinoids and opioids like fentanyl are being misused unlike any previous time in history. While pharmaceutical drugs contribute to most fatal overdoses, it is important not to dismiss the presence of overlapping mental illness and drug dependence.

Many of us are working hard to help raise awareness of overdose. Finding a viable and sustainable way to slow, let alone stop, the rising number of deaths and near death is an enormous challenge to be addressed at many levels of society.

The painful irony behind our current situation is the fact that drug overdoses are preventable and practical strategies to reverse and prevent an overdose do exist. Harms associated with problematic drug use can be lessened; however, the necessary technologies, knowledge, supportive environments compassion and the required funding are not yet readily available. Achieving an effective response to the current epidemic will be a hard fought battle requiring the activation of communities, the generation of insights and action.

SOMEONE'S SISTER

31 AUGUST

—
INTERNATIONAL
OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY

TIME TO
REMEMBER.
TIME TO **ACT.**

“LOST: A BEAUTIFUL, FUNNY, OUTGOING FATHER OF TWO LITTLE GIRLS, A BROTHER, UNCLE, SON, AND FRIEND TO MANY, MANY PEOPLE. BEFORE HE BECAME A SHELL OF HIMSELF, EVERYONE REFERRED TO HIM AS THE MAYOR BECAUSE HE TALKED TO EVERYONE, AND EVERYONE LOVED HIM. HE HAD A PASSION FOR PLANTS, LANDSCAPING, TREES AND MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH. BECAUSE HE WORKED IN LANDSCAPING, HE ULTIMATELY ENDED UP WITH BACK PAIN AND WAS PRESCRIBED PAIN KILLERS, WHICH INEVITABLY TURNED INTO HEROIN. WE LOST OUR SHAYNE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2017.”

— Just one example of the hundreds of emotional tributes posted on the International Overdose Awareness Day website

01 OUR APPROACH

OVERDOSE IS A GLOBAL CRISIS, SO WE ASPIRE TO A WORLD WHERE:

- Nobody dies from accidental drug overdose;
- Overdose is destigmatised and better understood;
- Policy-makers make decisions about overdose that are well informed and evidence-based.

02 OUR CAMPAIGN

As you know, International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) is an annual event held on 31 August to raise awareness about overdose, to remember without stigma those who have lost their lives to overdose and to provide better support for overdose prevention.

International Overdose Awareness Day started in Melbourne, Australia in 2001 with a small backyard event. The number of world-wide events registered on the IOAD website has grown to 483 events held in nineteen countries in 2017. Many more events are held but not registered.

IOAD's purpose is to focus on overdose awareness and prevention and fight stigma including acknowledging the grief felt by families and friends. The day spreads the message that the tragedy of overdose death is preventable and empowers people to come together to tackle overdose as a community.

“IT WAS THE VERY FIRST OF ITS KIND IN OUR COMMUNITY, AND IT BROUGHT HEALING, RESPECT, DIGNITY, NO STIGMA, NETWORKING AND BEAUTY FROM ASHES.”

— 2017 IOAD event organiser

03 OUR GOALS

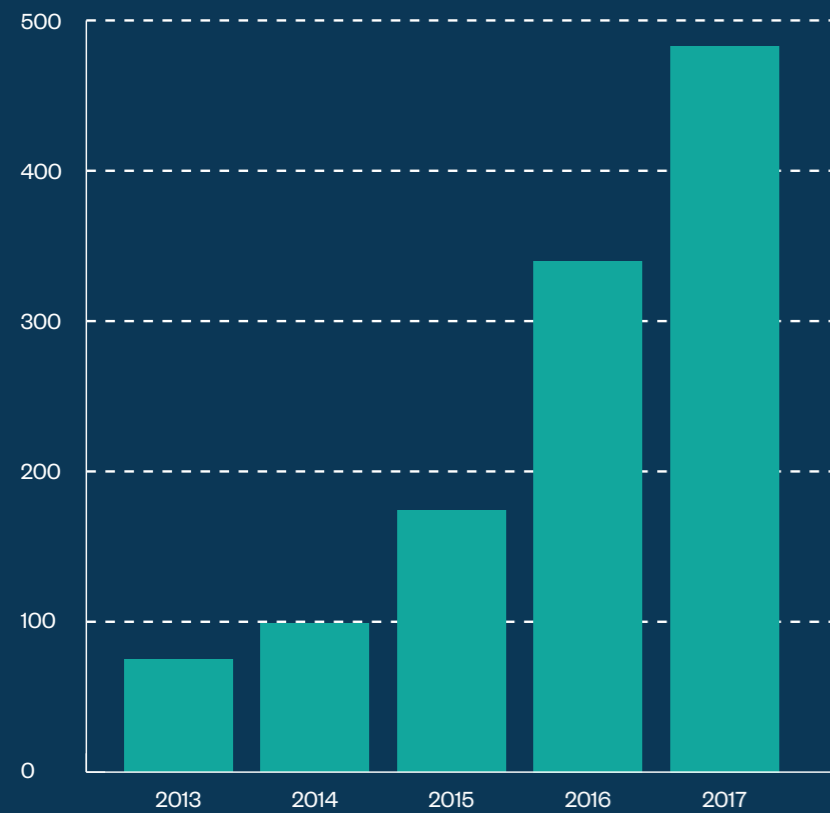
- To provide an opportunity for people to publicly mourn for loved ones, some for the first time, without feeling guilt or shame;
- To include the greatest number of people in International Overdose Awareness Day events, and encourage non-denominational involvement;
- To give community members information about the issue of fatal and non-fatal overdose;
- To send a strong message to people who currently or have used drugs in the past that they are valued;
- To stimulate discussion about overdose prevention and drug policy;
- To provide basic information on the range of support services that exists in the local community;
- To prevent and reduce drug-related harm by supporting evidence-based policy and practice, and;
- To remind all of the risks of overdose.

TIME TO
REMEMBER.
TIME TO ACT.

WE'VE SEEN SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Through engagement activities in social and traditional media, the number of registered events world-wide has grown from 75 in 2013 to nearly 500 in 2017. We also believe that many additional grassroots events are held locally but not registered on our IOAD website. Media reporting via Google indicated about 50 events that were not registered in 2017, with presumably many more unregistered local events being held that did not receive any media coverage.

IOAD Registered Events



In 2013, events were registered in six countries while in 2017 there were 19 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Georgia, Ireland, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, Scotland, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, the UK and the United States. We have also heard feedback about events held in Russia.

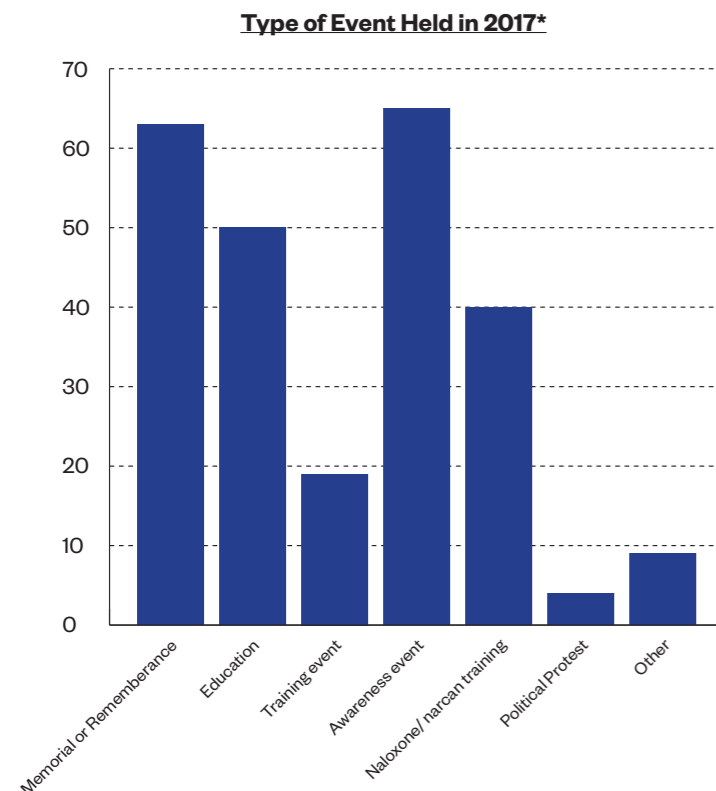


IN LATE 2017, WE CONDUCTED A SURVEY OF EVENT HOLDERS AND HAD 85 RESPONSES. OF ALL THESE EVENTS, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING RANGED FROM TWO TO 1000, WITH AN AVERAGE OF 167 ATTENDEES.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE SURVEY:

- Half of the event holders were a friend or family member of someone affected by overdose;
- 75 per cent of event holders listed their event as a memorial or awareness raising;
- For more than 40 per cent of event holders, this was their first time holding an IOAD event;
- 95 per cent of event holders thought their event was a success and;
- 100 per cent of event holders intend to hold an event in 2018.

WE ALSO LEARNED THAT THE EVENTS HAD A NUMBER OF PURPOSES - NOT SIMPLY REMEMBRANCE (SEE GRAPH BELOW).



- Most survey participants ticked multiple answers, meaning most events had several purposes (i.e. memorial and awareness raising);
- Most participants that ticked memorial or remembrance, also ticked awareness, demonstrating that when it comes to overdose, remembrance and awareness raising are intertwined;
- Training and naloxone training were also popular, demonstrating the appetite for action and change.

*N=84. Event holders could select more than one response.

“THE VIBE AT OUR EVENT IS TOGETHER WE CAN. IT FEELS LIKE A HUGE AND GROWING FAMILY REUNION. WE SHARE SADNESS AND GRIEF, AND SUPPORT THOSE WHO ARE HURTING. BUT WE ALSO SHARE HOPE AND JOY AND A SENSE OF STARTING OVER. IT’S A BEAUTIFUL EVENT THAT IS AN ANNUAL HIGHLIGHT FOR OUR COMMUNITY.”

— Event Organiser

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS ARE MADE AVAILABLE ON WWW.OVERDOSEDAY.COM AND HAVE TRADITIONALLY USED STRONG MESSAGING.



Poster from 2013 (theme: prevention and remembrance)



Poster from 2014 (theme: rethink remember – overdose does not discriminate)



Postcard from 2015 (theme: Right dose? Wrong dose? Overdose?)

TIME TO REMEMBER. TIME TO ACT.

For 2016 and 2017 we used the theme: 'Time to remember. Time to act.' This was used across a range of resources available for download by event organisers and others. It was also used on the www.overdose.com website and our social media channels.

In 2016 for the first time our campaign posters were translated into languages other than English. We commenced in 2016 with Arabic, Spanish, French and Vietnamese.



In 2017 we further extended our range of languages to include Bahasa (Indonesian), simplified Chinese, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Norwegian and Portuguese.





OUR CAMPAIGN MATERIALS ARE INCREASING IN NUMBER EACH YEAR AND IN 2017 INCLUDED:

- 30 campaign posters in English available in various sizes from A4 to A1;
- three translated campaign posters in each of 13 languages;
- an event poster template;
- six factsheets on alcohol and different drug types;
- six factsheet posters on responding to different types of overdose;
- 22 social media memes, and;
- an event organiser's support kit.



“KEEP DOING WHAT YOU'RE DOING! THE SOCIAL MEDIA AND EVENT PLANNING GUIDE WERE FANTASTIC RESOURCES AS WELL AS THE LITERATURE AND POSTERS.”

— Event Organiser



INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY WEBSITE WWW.OVERDOSEDAY.COM



Our website www.overdoseday.com is the hub for people to engage with the campaign. From here, and through our social media engagement, we encourage people to take specific actions including writing a tribute, registering an event or buying merchandise.

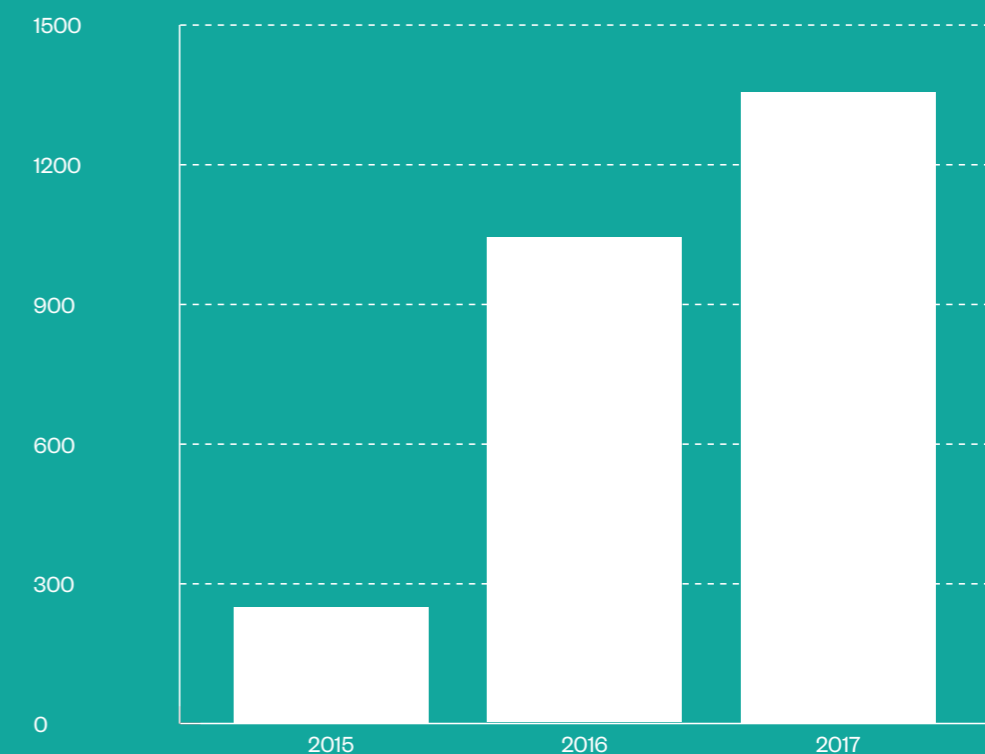
The IOAD website continues to attract returning and new visitors – 283,855 active user sessions were recorded (up from 271,818) with 84.6 per cent of these being sessions by new visitors (1 September 2016 – 1 September 2017).

TRIBUTES

The tributes function on www.overdoseday.com encourages people touched by overdose to post a tribute to their lost loved one. This provides an outlet to express grief not otherwise possible due to the stigma surrounding an overdose death.

The number of heartfelt tributes on www.overdoseday.com written by people who have lost a loved one to overdose has also increased substantially, with significant growth occurring between 2015 and 2017.

Tributes



TIME TO
REMEMBER.
TIME TO
ACT.

Stock photos. Posed by model.



31 AUGUST
—
INTERNATIONAL
OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY

SOMEONE'S
BROTHER

TIME TO
REMEMBER.
TIME TO ACT.



“NIKKI. WHAT CAN I SAY? MY LOVE, MY HEART, MY FUTURE WIFE. THIS DISEASE HAS DAMAGED US BOTH. I GOT HELP, INSTEAD YOU KEPT ON USING. WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE TOGETHER FOREVER. NOW I'M HERE ALONE. STILL BATTLING RECOVERY. IT'S SO HARD WITHOUT YOU. IF I WOULD'VE BEEN THERE THAT DAY THIS WOULD'VE NEVER HAPPENED. REST IN PEACE BABE. I'LL NEVER FORGET OR LOVE ANOTHER LIKE YOU. I FOREVER LOVE YOU. P.S. LOVE YOU MORE.”

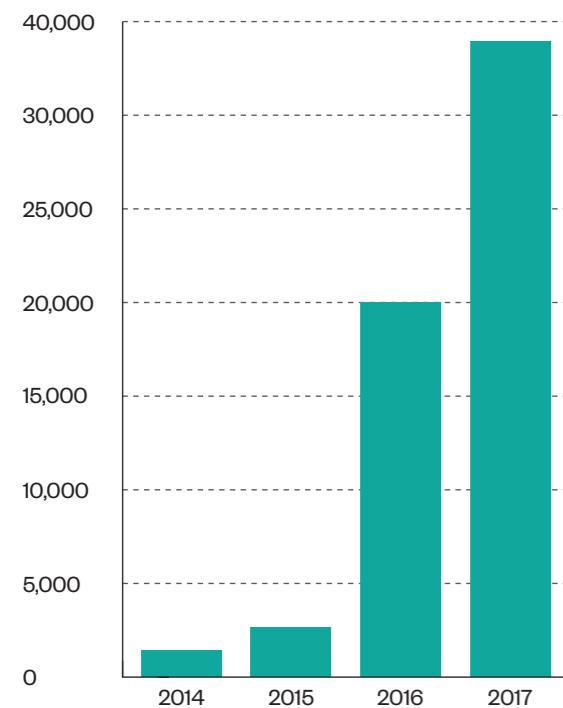
— Tribute

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our online engagement through Facebook includes news items from around the world, as well as event posts and social media infographics (see example memes below). Facebook 'likes' have grown dramatically due to our investment in content curation, plus some targeted Facebook promotion.



IOAD Facebook Likes



Social media is an central and growing part of the IOAD campaign. In addition to Facebook we also engage with IOAD audiences through Twitter, with 3326 followers as of the end of 2017, up from 1060 followers on IOAD 2014.

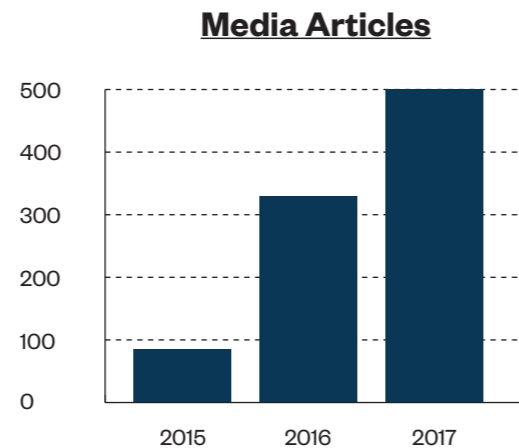
In 2017, our Twitter activities encouraged followers and other stakeholders to use the hashtags #OverdoseAware2017 and #EndOverdose, while in 2016 we simply used the hashtag #OverdoseAware2016. Join us at @OverdoseDay on Twitter and Facebook at International Overdose Awareness Day and share the hashtags #OverdoseAware and #EndOverdose.

Stock photos. Posed by model



MEDIA COVERAGE

In 2017, more than 500 IOAD related media articles were identified internationally during the campaign, the vast majority of these in the United States. In 2016, there were 330 media articles (including 155 in Australia), an improvement on the 86 media mentions in 2015.



IN AUSTRALIA, MEDIA RELATIONS ACTIVITIES HAVE GROWN IN SCALE AND SCOPE OVER RECENT YEARS. IN 2013 FOR EXAMPLE, THE MEDIA RELEASE FOCUSED ON THE RISE IN OVERDOSE NUMBERS AND HOW THIS FIGURE HAD OVERTAKEN THE NUMBER OF DEATHS IN CAR ACCIDENTS.



Each year, Penington Institute has distributed an international media release and local releases in Australia. However, it's clear that the majority of international coverage is generated by local events and event organisers.

Left: story on Canada's CBC British Columbia new website



Left: story on CBS Pittsburgh's website and TV news



In 2016, the media relations for IOAD were complemented by the release of Penington Institute's Australia's Annual Overdose Report 2016. For the first time, this report analysed data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics to highlight the state of overdose in Australia. The media relations activities around the inaugural report achieved significant coverage in Australian media, including a front-page story, feature and editorial in the Herald Sun (Australia's largest selling newspaper), broad radio news and program coverage and national TV news stories.

SOMEONE'S LOVE

31 AUGUST

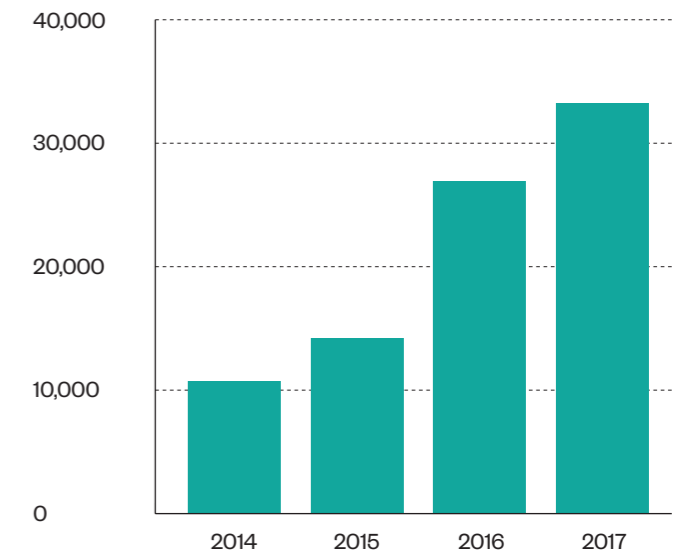
INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

TIME TO REMEMBER. TIME TO ACT.



MERCHANDISE SALES

For a number of years Penington Institute has sold IOAD badges to organisations and individuals through an online shop. Sales have grown consistently year to year.



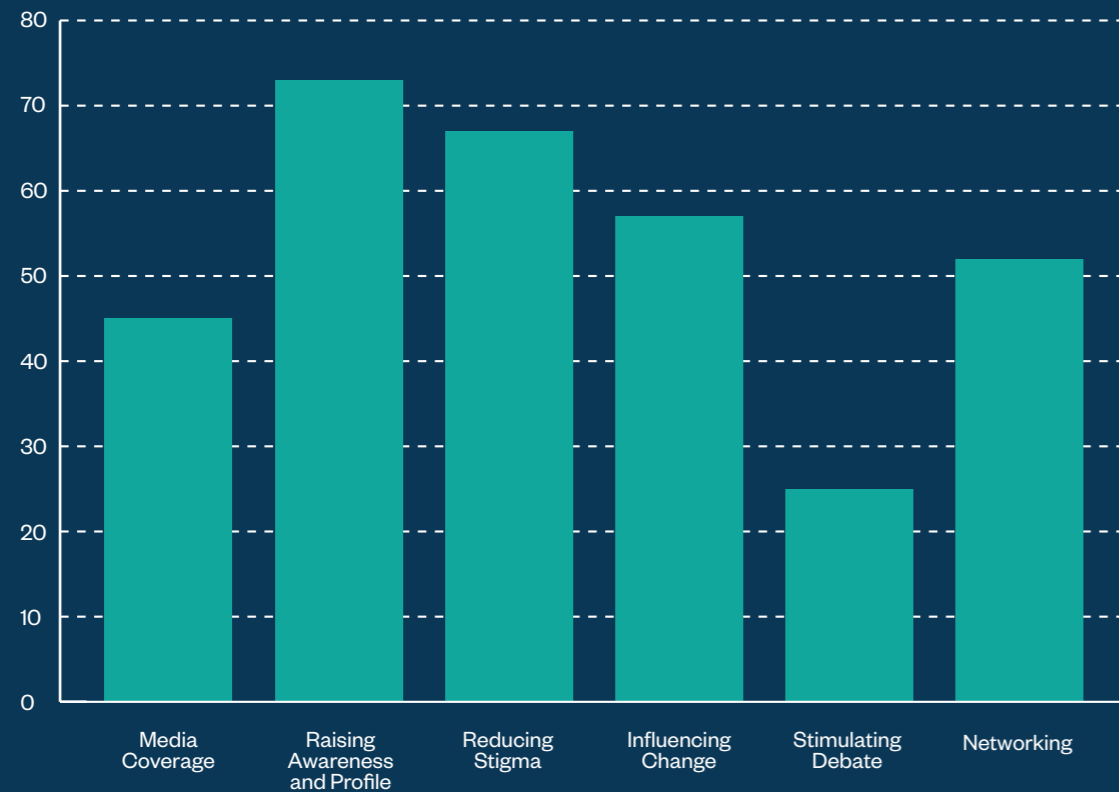
In 2017, we introduced a wristband to our merchandise options, selling 11,450 wristbands in the first year they were available.



ACHIEVEMENTS - WHAT THE IMPACT HAS BEEN

In our late 2017 survey, event holders selected the following impacts of their events:

How event holders described outcomes from their event



TIME TO REMEMBER.
TIME TO ACT.

- Reported outcomes had both tangible and intangible elements, with some reporting the number of people trained in naloxone administration and others the power of sharing grief;
- One important theme was how effective IOAD events are for connecting with authorities and legislators. Many reported policy changes at the local level resulting from their event;
- Visibility was key. The consequences of overdose often remain invisible so events were an effective way of bringing these to light.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT ACTIONS RESULTING FROM THEIR EVENT, 20 EVENT HOLDERS RESPONDED WITH COMMENTS. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:



- We announced the results of Illinois consumer survey that shared impact of opioid epidemic in Illinois. We fostered new relationships with the Lt. Governor's office who shared an update on the state opioid taskforce.
- City council later decided to make naloxone available at city-owned and operated buildings.
- The Centre County Board of Commissioners signed a Proclamation proclaiming August 31st Overdose Awareness Day.
- We have a week proclaimed as Overdose Awareness Week in LaSalle County, Illinois.
- A candidate for Sheriff is now a member of our group. The Sheriff's Department vehicles now carry naloxone.
- A proclamation and a harm reduction program were announced.
- Politicians were better informed about local drug issues.
- More people joined our local recovery advocacy team.
- There are many changes coming together in our small community. Our resources for treatment have been limited but we have had had numerous things start happening. We have a Sober Living Home being built. We are getting a medication assisted treatment facility, we have an amazing Drug Coalition and we've held training for Narcan (naloxone) use. We are part of a Community Pilot Program with Facing Addiction.
- Resolution in City Council recognizing the day's importance.
- Local Prosecutor and Law Enforcement have gotten more involved in assisting with directing people to treatment rather than incarceration, more awareness brought to bear and more local treatment becoming available.

WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CAMPAIGN?

Some governments and organisations use International Overdose Awareness Day to make announcements on policy changes. They are very hard to track but examples from 2017 include:

- Governor Rick Scott of Florida announced new policies and an additional USD\$50 million in funding to address the region's opioid crisis. The policies include boosting access to treatment and support services and the implementation of a state-wide prescription monitoring system.
- In Hartford, Connecticut, Governor Malloy signed legislation to address the opioid crisis at an IOAD community event. This policy will support efforts to address overdose by ensuring overdose kits and overdose response training are both made more widely available in the State.
- Health officials in Baltimore, Maryland announced training and free distribution of naloxone.
- In New York State, a policy was announced to ensure the State would reimburse all public schools for the costs of making naloxone available.
- In West Virginia the director of the State's new Office of Drug Control Policy, Jim Jonson affirmed the importance of access to treatment services.

IN 2017, THE VIRGIN UNITE WEBSITE MARKED IOAD:



THANK YOU TO OUR PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS

- Bell Charitable Fund – 2017 funding of resource translations into languages relevant for the Victorian community
- Timothy Daly (on behalf of the Silas F Kelly memorial soccer match) - 2017
- R E Ross Trust – 2014-2016 funding for overdose awareness activities in Victoria
- Dangerfield – 2013

**INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY**

Penington Institute
95 Drummond Street
Carlton VIC 3053 Australia

 www.overdoseday.com

 facebook.com/InternationalOverdoseAwarenessDay

 twitter.com/OverdoseDay

TIME TO
REMEMBER.
TIME TO ACT.

31 AUGUST

—

**INTERNATIONAL
OVERDOSE
AWARENESS DAY**

 **International Overdose
Awareness Day**