OVER-THE-COUNTER LAYER OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

Opioid-related injuries and deaths, especially those involving potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl, continue to occur at a high rate in the United States. Opioid overdose reversal medications (OORMs) including naloxone are life-saving drugs approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) and designed to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.[1] In March 2023, the FDA approved naloxone for over-the-counter, non-prescription use, while, in order to make OORMs more widely available, naloxone access laws currently exist in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.[2,3] However, in addition to tracking near real-time naloxone available at the county level via the ODMAP Naloxone Saturation Layer, it is also important to track OORM sales to further understand public access to these medications.

CONCEPT

The Over-the-Counter (OTC) Layer will provide ODMAP users with OORM sales data including a range of the most recent number of units sold monthly and average cost per unit. Using this layer in conjunction with the Naloxone Saturation Layer and suspected overdose events will further support agencies in developing comprehensive prevention and response strategies such as targeted naloxone distribution to high-risk areas and individuals.

CURRENT OVERVIEW

The OTC Layer was developed in April 2024 and includes OORM sales data across the majority of the United States.
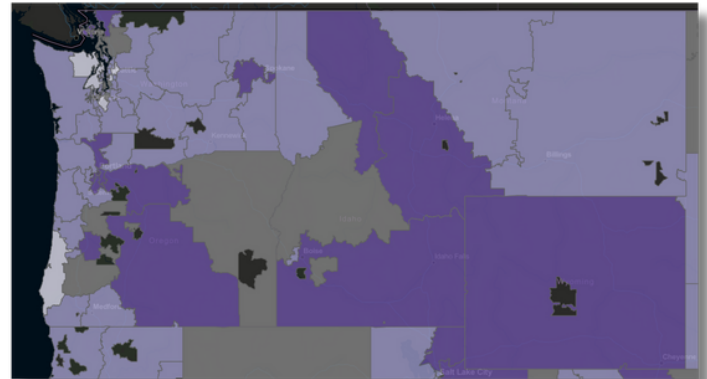
HOW THE LAYER WORKS

The layer is intended to support ODMAP agencies with their overdose response, reduction, and prevention activities including naloxone availability in a specific region. ODMAP users will be able to access the layer through the National Map where it will be visualized as a choropleth, color-coded map layer. Information such as a range of the number of OORM units sold in a particular **Precision Area (PA)** along with the average cost per unit during the most recent month will be available. The range of OORM units sold includes: no available data, 0-4 units, 5-20 units, 21-50 units, and greater than 50 units. Users will also be able to compare the average price per OORM unit sold in their nearest PA to the national average during the same period.

In PAs where sales information is unavailable, the national average price per unit sold will be provided in the pop-up window. The layer will be updated monthly and include OORM sales data from the previous month. The OTC Layer follows established ODMAP data sharing guidelines and is not meant for public dissemination.

WHAT ARE PRECISION AREAS?

Precision areas (PA) represent over 2,200 geographic areas and track any product sold by retailers including grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, big box retailers, and liquor stores across the U.S. They are built around ZIP Codes and expanded to meet data standards established by retailers. For the OTC Layer, opioid overdose reversal agents including naloxone are visualized at the PA level and depict the most recent month of retail sales.

Regional over-the-counter opioid overdose reversal medication sales data, Northwest U.S. – February 2024

References:

(1) Opioid overdose reversal medications (OORM). Published March 26, 2024. Accessed May 28, 2024. https://www.samhsa.gov/medications-substance-use-disorders/medications-counseling-related-conditions/opioid-overdose-reversal-medications

(2) U.S. Food & Drug Administration. FDA approves first over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray. FDA. Published March 29, 2023. Accessed March 26, 2024. https://www.fda.gov/news-events/pressannouncements/fda-approves-first-over-counternaloxone-nasal-spray

(3) Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (2023). Naloxone Access: Summary of State Laws. https://legislativeanalysis.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/02/Naloxone-Access-Summaryof-State-Laws.pdf