

Opioid Perceptions Survey Overview

This report presents a brief summary of results of Waves One and Two of the *Opioid Perceptions Survey*, with invitations to participate sent to individuals in Franklin County who work with people (clients/patients) who use opioids in a nontherapeutic way. This refers to clients/patients or individuals encountered through professional capacity, and does not include colleagues. Wave One of the survey was administered in Spring 2021 with 29 participants and Wave Two in Fall 2021 with 30 participants. We plan to administer two more waves over 2022-2023 to capture perceptions among this group over time.

These surveys are part of a larger initiative being conducted by the Franklin County RCORP (Rural Communities Opioid Response Program) Consortium as part of a HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration) Implementation grant received by PreventEd (formerly NCADA) in Franklin County. The grant aims to address the high number of opioid overdose deaths in Franklin County, Missouri.

Experience and Role in the Community

Majority of respondents in Wave One (38%) worked as service providers (e.g., Children's Division, Community Health Worker, social worker). Majority in Wave Two (30%) worked as Behavioral Health Providers. Most respondents in Wave One (79%) have been working with people who misuse opioids for at least five years, with most having worked in this area for five to ten years (34%). In Wave Two, more than half of respondents (57%) have been working with people who misuse opioids for at least five years, while 40% have worked in this area for less than five years; one person (3%) did not disclose their experience. Due to varying numbers of people representing roles or experience, we report the sample size in each figure for consideration and comparison.

Key Takeaways

Strengths

Overall, respondents positively perceived working with people who use opioids in a non-therapeutic way across the two waves. Wave One respondents scored an average of 2.5 and Wave Two respondents averaged 2.8 on the 7-point scale. Although an increase in this measure to quantify stigma, this was not a statistically significant increase ($p>0.05$). The findings of these Opioid Perceptions Surveys highlight the importance of this grant and its work to support the needs of those working to help people struggling with an opioid use disorder. There is much work to be continued and we are grateful to the participants of these surveys for their time and their honest responses to guide the work.

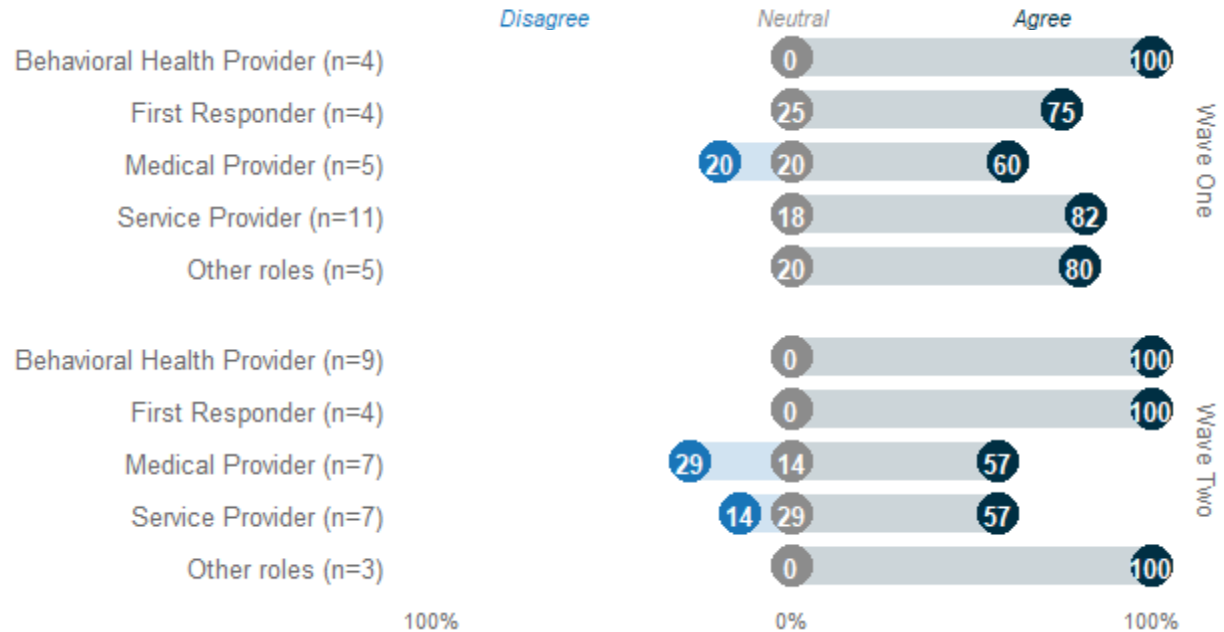
Most respondents (79% in Wave One, 80% in Wave Two) reported having a working knowledge of opioid use and related issues. This identified a strong foundation among most working in this field.



Opportunities for engagement

Increase awareness of the causes of and risk factors for developing opioid use disorders and substance misuse. Opportunities to learn would be helpful and could include education sessions or sharing resources on where questions can be answered. Based on the results of Wave One, these efforts may be most helpful if focused toward First Responders and medical providers, and based on Wave Two, service providers could be added to these groups.

Survey Statement: I feel I know enough about the cause of opioid use problems to carry out my role when working with people who use opioids.



Survey Statement: I feel I know enough about the factors which put people at risk of developing opioid use problems to carry out my role when working with people who use opioids.

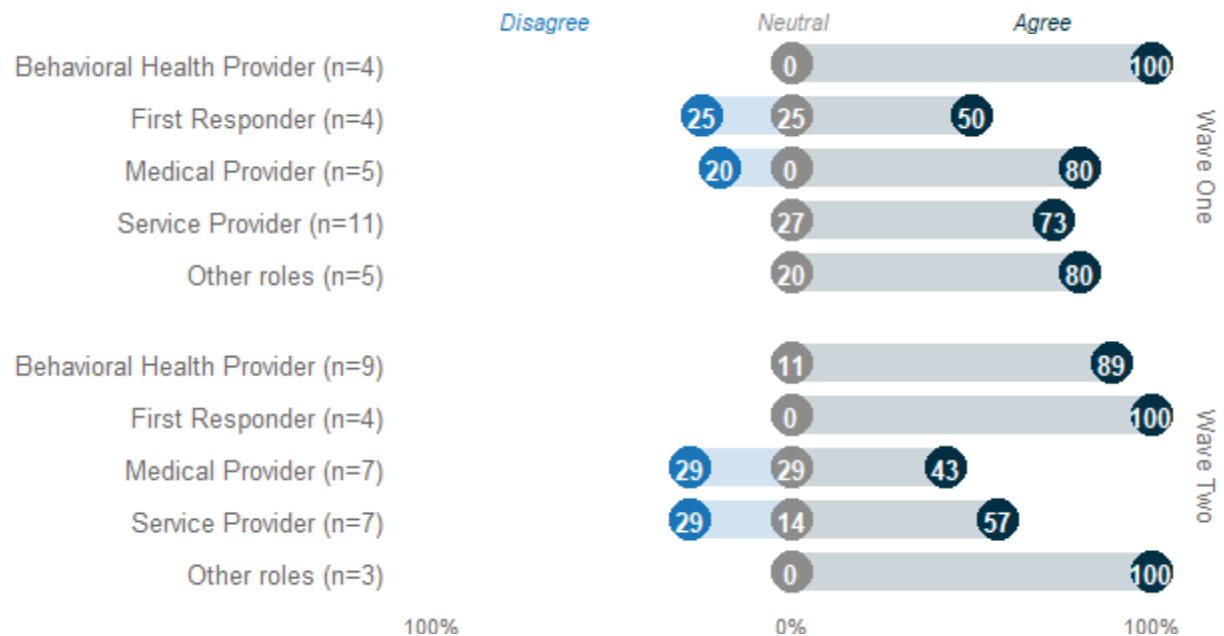
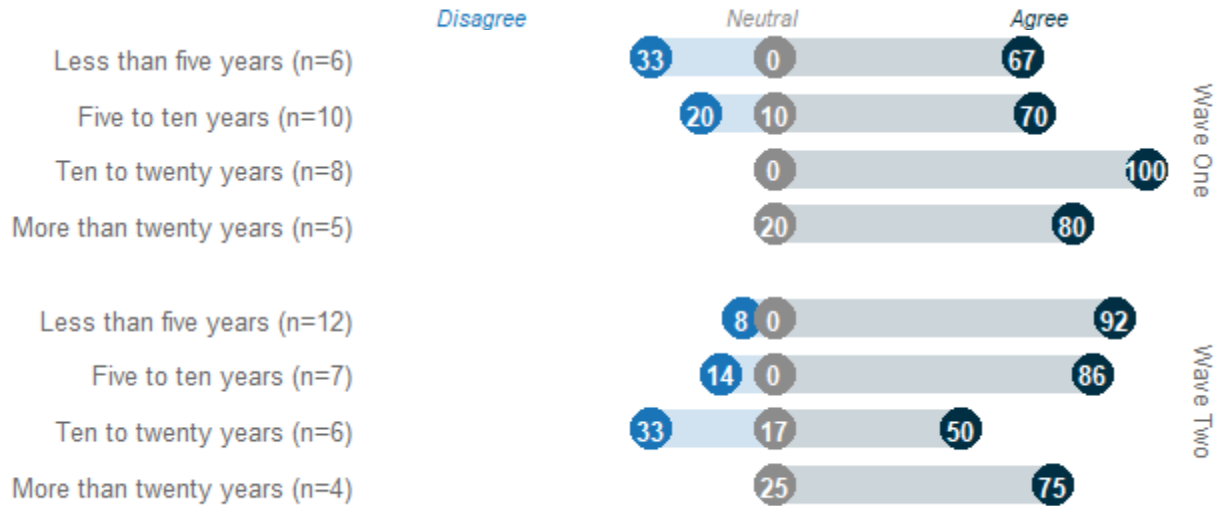


Figure: Percentage agreement with statements about causes of and risk factors for opioid use problems among respondents working in a given role.

Increase personal and professional support and clarification on responsibilities. Many respondents across all experience levels in the Waves indicated that finding such support would be difficult. This is an area of potential growth for the community and the various organizations in Franklin County, MO.

Survey Statement: If I felt the need when working with people who use opioids I could easily find someone who would help me clarify my professional responsibilities.



Survey Statement: If I felt the need I could easily find someone who would be able to help me formulate the best approach to a person who use opioids.

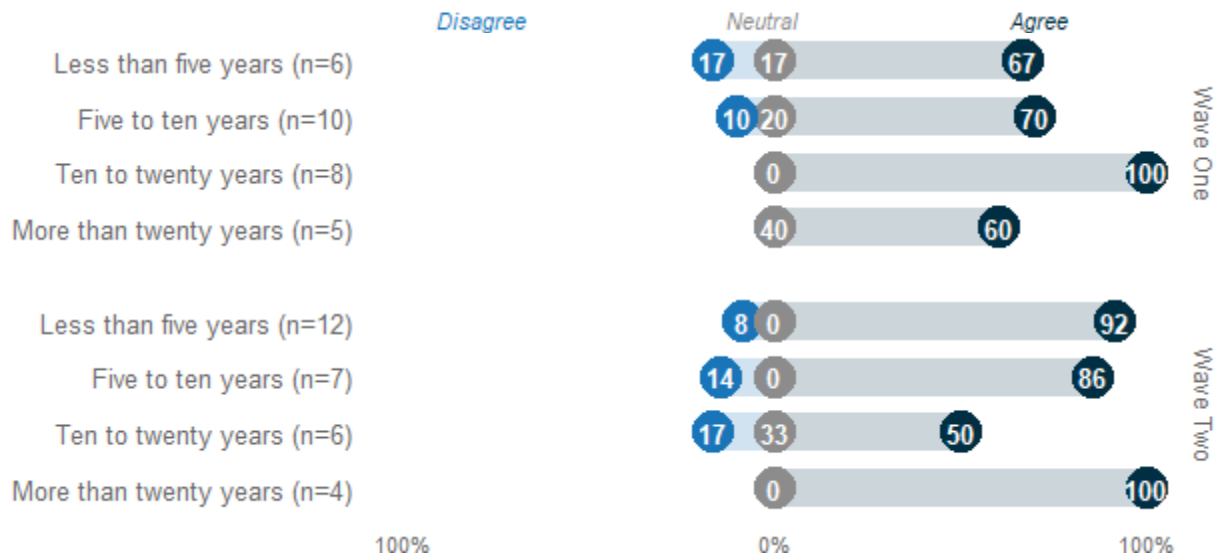
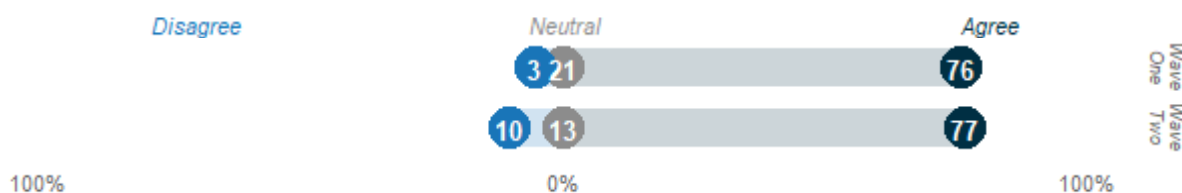


Figure: Percentage agreement with statements about finding help among respondents working for a given period of time with people who misuse opioids.

Increasing awareness of the physical and psychological effects of opioid use. More Wave Two respondents reported a lack of confidence in their knowledge of these effects to support their work. Promoting access to this knowledge and training opportunities can help to increase the comfort level when having conversations surrounding opioid and other substance use.

Survey Statement: I feel I know enough about the physical effects of opioid use to carry out my role when working with people who use opioids.



Survey Statement: I feel I know enough about the psychological effects of opioid use to carry out my role when working with people who use opioids.

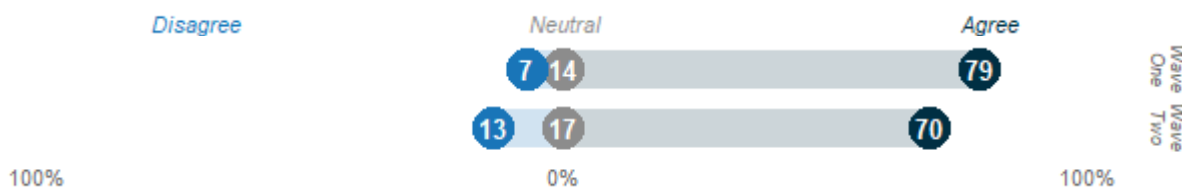


Figure: Overall percentage agreement with statements about effects of opioid use.

Continuously share resources around prevention, treatment, and recovery from opioid use. These continue to be helpful to individuals in this field regardless of role or experience.

Next steps

To further understand opioid perceptions in Franklin County, we plan to administer two more waves of the survey before August 2023. In addition to gathering more information, the Consortium along with our many partners and members are currently exploring opportunities to leverage the many strengths within Franklin County to act upon the lessons learned from the survey waves. Ongoing strategies include resource fairs and outreach initiatives.

The Consortium continues to partner and engage with behavioral health providers, medical providers, service providers, First Responders, the community, and others to strengthen treatment, prevention, and recovery services and resources. Please access the full reports of the Wave One Results and Wave Two Results for graphs, data, and additional information, and Briefs for highlights. Full and brief reports are available on the [Foundations for Franklin County website](#). You can also email Erica Wiley, LCSW at ewiley@prevented.org for a copy of a report, for questions on accessing services, or to become more involved in the Consortium or its work.