



# The PORCH Project

Columbus, Georgia

April 4, 2019

Dear Community Stakeholders,

Thank you for your interest in the PORCH Project. This project seeks to enhance public safety through equipping all local first responders with the overdose reversal drug. This project is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at \$125,000 annually for 4 years.

According to the CDC, drug overdose deaths and opioid-involved deaths continue to increase in the United States. The majority of drug overdose deaths (more than six out of ten) involve an opioid. Since 1999, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids quadrupled. From 2000 to 2015 more than half a million people died from drug overdoses. 91 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

In Georgia from June of 2016 to May of 2017, the total number of opioid doses prescribed to Georgia patients surpassed 541 million. To put that in perspective, that is approximately 54 doses for every man, woman and child in Georgia. Georgia is also among the top 11 states with the most opioid overdose deaths, and 55 Georgia counties have an overdose rate higher than the national average.

<https://law.georgia.gov/opioid-abuse>

In 2014, Columbus had an opioid prescription rate of 99.6 for every 100 people - almost one prescription for every man, woman and child living in the city, according to statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In 2016, the latest year for which statistics were provided by local officials, the city's opioid prescription rate remained one of the highest in the state at 90.7 per 100 people. That compared to the state average of 77.8 per 100 people and the national average of 66.5 per 100 people.

According to the Georgia Department of Health, from 2010-2017, the number of opioid involved overdose deaths increased by 245% in Georgia. From 2016-2017 there was a 17% increase in heroin involved overdose deaths and a 53% increase in fentanyl involved overdose deaths. The highest numbers of heroin and opioid involved overdose deaths, emergency department visits and hospitalizations occurred predominately in urban areas: Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, **Columbus** and Savannah. ([Opioid Overdose Surveillance](#). Georgia Department of Public Health, Epidemiology Section.)

Georgia loses more than 1,000 people each year to drug overdose resulting Governor Nathan Deal signing HB 965, also known as the 911 Medical Amnesty/ Naloxone Law into law on April 24, 2014.. It is hoped that the law will help reduce drug overdose deaths and offer an opportunity for treatment to those struggling with addiction. (The Fix, 2014)

We look forward to working with your agency to create a healthier and safer Columbus; for our community and for those who police it.

Sincerely,

*Dayna Solomon*

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