

Tribal Opioid Wellness Summit: Bridging Harm Reduction and Recovery

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The Utah State University Extension Tribal and Rural Opioid Initiative Resource Center in Roosevelt announces the 2021 Intermountain Tribal and Rural Opioid Wellness Summit: Bridging Harm Reduction and Recovery in Rural Communities. The free summit, held via Zoom May 18 to 20, offers best practices, community panels and opioid harm reduction education for professionals and community members.

Panelists for the summit include tribal and rural addiction specialists, community officials, leading researchers, service providers and community members who will discuss the intersection of opioids, mental health and well-being. Lunch and afternoon session topics include naloxone training, holistic health, interpersonal communications and peer support specialist classes.

Suzanne Prevedel, USU Extension associate professor and director of the Tribal and Rural Opioid Initiative Resource Center, said the goal for the summit is to inform and strengthen rural and tribal prevention, treatment and recovery services through increased understanding of harm reduction, stigma and supportive recovery environments.

"I am excited to see the lineup of leading researchers and engaged community professionals who are willing to share their expertise with our summit guests," she said. "It has been incredible to work with the USU Office of Health Equity and Community Engagement team and our community partners to bring this event together. We are also thrilled to bring back a highlight from the 2020 Intertribal Opioid Wellness Summit – a live broadcast

of the podcast, 'Debunked,' sponsored by Utah Public Radio's Access Utah with hosts Tom Williams and Don Lyons."

Keynote speakers on May 18 are Megan Westand VaRonica Little, opioid grant administrators from the Utah Department of Human Services Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. They will provide an overview of the opioid crisis nationally and what it looks like specifically in Utah. Featured presenters are Shawn and Cassandra Dorius, community recovery-readiness researchers from Public Science Collaborative at Iowa State University, who will discuss, "Is Your Community Recovery Ready?"

On May 19, Kasey Shakespear, senior program manager for the Utah Center for Rural Health at Southern Utah University, will provide updates from the Rural Health Association of Utah and Utah Rural Opioid Healthcare Consortium. Bill Newell, Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area drug intelligence officer and partner in the Overdose Response Strategy, will discuss innovative public health and public safety collaborative efforts around the country.

The Tribal and Rural Opioid Initiative Resource Center, located in the USU Extension office in Roosevelt, was created in 2018 as a resource to reduce stigma around harm reduction and substance use disorder and provide holistic wellness programs that promote healthier communities throughout Utah's rural and tribal communities.

To register for the summit, [click here](#) or visit bit.ly/2021OpioidSummit. The first 200 registered participants will receive a wellness box that includes presenter materials, wellness activities and community resources. Up to 12 free CEUs are available for the summit. The summit is co-hosted by USU Extension, the USU Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services and the USU College of Humanities and Social Sciences. It is supported by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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