

Bladen County Summary of Proposed Opioid Settlement Funds

Number of Allocations	Fiscal Year Received	Total Annual Amount	Timeframe	Average/year
1	FY23	\$2,764,701.00	18 years	\$153,584.50
2	FY24	\$2,213,081.97	18 years	\$122,948.99

Bladen County’s Strategic Plan and long-term goal is to develop a Recovery Oriented System of Care for Substance Use Issues across the County with the following features:

Prevention, Harm Reduction, Intervention, Treatment, Post-Treatment/Recovery Supports



Bladen County’s Use of Opioid Settlement Funds:

Bladen updated its strategic plan to incorporate 7 of the 12 available Strategies allowed by the memorandum of understanding issued by the Attorney General’s Office and applicable to every county and state receiving funds from the Opioid Settlement Law Suits. Funds coming from the

settlement must be spent on services that have a current provider license issued by the North Carolina Division of State Health Service Regulations (NCDSHR) when applicable.

1. **Collaborative Strategic Planning.** The Bladen Substance Use Strategic Plan was updated to incorporate strategies that will serve as the base for developing other SUD services within the county. The County is permitted to use these funds to enhance the Opioid Settlement Funds allocated and the County used fund to apply for a federal grant through the Bureau of Justice Services to support the establishment of an adult drug court in Bladen County. Judge Scott Ussery has volunteered to manage the Drug Court. Grant awards will be announced September 2023 and implemented October 2023 if awarded.
2. **SUD Treatment Services.** Bladen County executed a contract with the Healing Place of New Hanover County for 1825 bed days for Bladen County adults with addiction issues. HPNHC opened its doors February 6, 2023. Bladen County established a call center referral line for any adult in Bladen County who requests a referral to HPNHC for detox/stabilization, short and long-term recovery services. Bladen County also applied for a grant offered by Trillium to provide Vivitrol to any Bladen County resident at HPNHC who is addicted and requests to take Vivitrol to help them with long term cravings. The HPNHC provides transportation from Bladen County to its facility in Wilmington NC upon referral if an individual does not have a ride. The HPNHC has a total of 200 beds; 100 women, 100 men, and offers 24/7 admission into detox, homeless shelter beds and short and long term treatment and recovery support. This will be an annual expense supported by Opioid Settlement Funds which will allow the county to maintain a 24 hour response to those needing immediate help and admission into detox.
3. **Recovery Housing Support.** The HPNHC has agreed to work with Bladen County to provide Oxford Houses within the County. Additionally, HPNHC has agreed to work with the self-help community to provide self-help meetings for recovering individuals as well as their families. The Bladen County Health Department has been working with local churches to find space to start self-help groups in the County.
4. **Early Intervention for Children and/or Adolescents.** Bladen County received a \$1.0 million HRSA federal grant in 2019 to support a Resource Coordinator and several Licensed Substance Addiction Counselors in the County. The grant also supports the initial phase of an Evidence Based Practice Prevention program for the Bladen County School System. The 2023 school year is the first year the program has been initiated across all 6th grade classrooms. A total of 244 6th grade students have been taught the curricula which addresses issues of alcohol, drug use, smoking, bullying and mental health issues. The plan is for this curricula to be expanded annually until it is taught in grades 5-9 throughout the county school system. The HRSA grant will expire in 2025 and the Opioid Settlement Funds will be available to support the prevention program in the school system.

5. **Post Overdose Response Team.** The county will develop a community paramedic team to follow up with all overdose and substance use EMS calls that occur in the county. The Community Paramedic will engage the individual with the substance use problem, encourage a referral into treatment and educate the individuals living with the individual to support the treatment referral. Additionally, the community paramedic will make Narcan available to the individual who has overdosed from opioids as well as those living in the same household. The second year of Opioid Settlement Funds can support 2 full-time Community Paramedic positions.
6. **Criminal Justice Diversion Team.** Bladen County joined with Columbus County in applying for a federal bureau of justice grant to support and adult drug court in Bladen County.
7. **Naloxone Distribution.** Bladen County will purchase Naloxone (Narcan) for use by its first responders and have it available for individuals served by the community Paramedic program.
8. **Recovery Support Services.** The HRSA Grant currently pays for a full-time Resource Coordinator position at the Bladen County Health Department. Funding for this position will expire in 2025 and Opioid Settlement Funds can support that position or a similar contract position. The position will maintain a current active list of resources, answer the 24/7 call referral phone line and coordinate the Health Department's messaging related to issues of opioid and other substance use issue. The second wave of Opioid Settlement Funds can also support 5 strategically placed billboards throughout the County with messages of recovery, SUD services and the help line to encourage individuals to call for treatment and assistance with substance use issues.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON 2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

Bladen County SUD Needs Assessment 2019 Strategic Plan Progress Chart

Number	Area	Issue	Progress Since 2019
1	Opioid Task Force	Rename Task Force to Substance Abuse Task Force.	In 2019, Task Force was renamed the Bladen County Substance Abuse Task Force to reflect all substance abuse issues affecting the County.
2	County Leadership	Convene a leadership group of County Department Directors, Law Enforcement and Schools to get buy-in for coordinated county-wide approach to alcohol and other drug abuse issues.	Upon the award of the HRSA Grant in 2021 to Bladen County a Leadership Group of Health Department, Department of Social Services, Department of Child Protective Services, and medical service meet monthly to coordinate SUD intervention and prevention efforts across departments. Leadership Group meets monthly under the direction of the Director of the Bladen County Health Department.
3	Eastpointe LME	Determine if issue with Eastpointe LME can be resolved so that Bladen County can have more immediate access to all services levels, particularly involving SUD cases.	Bladen County held a number of meetings with Eastpointe LME to identify the challenges the County had with Eastpointe and with Eastpointe Providers. Eastpointe was not able to address the County's concerns in a timely, effective manner and consequently, the County Commissioners petitioned the NC State DHHS to allow the County to disengage from Eastpointe LME and re-engage with the Trillium LME. That disengagement was approved, and Bladen County joined the Trillium LME in February 2021.
4	Law Enforcement	Law Enforcement Activities need to be coordinated between the Bladen County Sheriff's Department and the municipal Police Departments.	No activity to date.
5	Court System	Encourage Judges to consider seeking Bureau of Justice funding for creating a Drug Court.	In 2022, the District Attorney for Bladen County has been actively encouraging the creation of a shared Drug Court for Bladen and Columbus Counties. Several meetings have taken place in 2022 to encourage support among the law enforcement and criminal justice entities. Judge Ussey has expressed an interest in stepping into the role of coordinating Judge for the court and recently attended a National Meeting to begin the training process and learning about the <i>Engaging Moms Program</i> model (EMP) for Drug Courts. Drug Court funding is available from the US Department of Justice on a rotating cycle annually.
6	Schools	Adopt an Evidence-Based Prevention (EBP) Model for all public schools in Bladen County.	Bladen County was awarded a Federal 3-year, \$1M HRSA (Human Resources Services Administration) Grant which included the implementation of an EBP Model for the Public Schools in Bladen County. In consultation with the School System, a model was identified, faculty were trained, and the curricula is being implemented in Fall 2022.

UPDATED STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

Bladen County Opioid Settlement Option A Strategic Plan 2022 Worksheet

Opioid Settlement Option A Service Category	Area	Issue	Funding Category Opioid Settlement Funds	Opioid Settlement funds	Other Funds
1	Collaborative Strategic Planning	Update Strategic Plan to include Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) Services and develop data reporting requirements for County	Option A. Section 1.	\$ 60,000	
2	Evidence-Based Practice Addiction Treatment	Purchase 5 beds at the new Healing Place of New Hanover County opening in January 2022	Option A. Section 2.	\$ 118,625	
		Bladen County responded to a Trillium Grant for Opioid Services August 2022. Grant totaled \$77,319 for injectable Vivitrol for Healing Place Admissions needing MAT and \$5,319 to purchase medication lockboxes for the Bladen County Health Department to make available to County Residents.			\$ 77,319
3	Recovery Support Services	Healing Place of New Hanover County has proposed they will work with the Self-Help Community to establish more regular AA, NA, CA, Al-Anon and Nar-Anon Meetings in Bladen County to support the individuals returning to the County to live once they have completed treatment.	No Cost to the County	0	
4	Recovery Housing Supports	Healing Place of New Hanover has agreed to work with the Oxford House of NC to assist in the startup of Oxford Houses in Bladen County.	No Cost to the County	0	
6	Early Intervention Children and/or Adolescents	Need to deal with School Interventions and for families who are struggling with adolescents/teens with Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) issues. Trillium could be providing this through its regular service providers. Need to advocate with Trillium to ensure services are available to deal with adolescent AODA issues.	Potential Grant Application		X
8	Post Overdose Response Team	Re-establish the Community Paramedic Service for EMS to provide Post Overdose linkage to treatment, follow-up, and referrals. 1 FTE= \$39,894; Fringe = \$16,453; Total = \$56,347.00	Option A. Section 8.	\$ 56,347	
10	Criminal Justice Diversion Team	Potential Grant Application			X
11	Addiction Treatment for Incarcerated Individuals	Potential Grant Application			X
12	Re-Entry Programs	Potential Grant Application			X

7	Social Services and Child Welfare	Bladen County DSS and CPS need to employ an EBP screening tool for Alcohol and Other Drug (AODA) issues during the application and/or investigation process to screen the parents and applicants for AODA issues and make referrals for treatment when appropriate.	The above-mentioned HRSA Grant was awarded to Bladen County to establish Licensed Addiction Counselors in the Health Department, Social Services, Child Welfare, and an integrated medical practice in the County with the express goal of administering an EBP screening instrument to individuals requesting services in those locations to screen, intervene, and refer for treatment. Licensed staff have been hired for those locations and have been instrumental in screening and referring individuals for treatment and follow up services.
8	Bladen County Health Department	All clinics operating within the Bladen County Health Department should implement AODA screenings and referrals and train every staff person making home visits to recognize warning signs of substance use and appropriate intervention techniques where the substance use is harmful and/or endangering the family unit.	The above-mentioned HRSA Grant was awarded to Bladen County to establish Licensed Addiction Counselors in the Health Department, Social Services, Child Welfare, and an integrated medical practice in the County with the express goal of administering an EBP screening instrument to individuals requesting services in those locations to screen, intervene and refer for treatment. Licensed staff have been hired for those locations and have been instrumental in screening and referring individuals for treatment and follow up services.
9	ABC Boards operating in Bladen County	Meet w ABC Boards and advocate that they earmark a percentage of the ABC profits to support indigent SUD treatment for residents of Bladen County	
10	Oxford Houses	Advocate with Oxford House NC to open 2 Oxford Houses in Bladen County 1 M, 1 F.	Oxford Houses were contacted but challenges exist in finding steady employment. This needs to be an ongoing effort in the County to establish sober housing alternatives for individual in the County.
11	Self-Help Groups	Advocate for the establishment of AA, NA, Alanon, Nar-Anon support groups within the County.	AA Regional Reps were contacted to encourage the establishment of self-help meetings in Bladen County. The status of the number of meetings has not changed since 2019.
12	Community Education and Awareness Campaign	Seek funding to support a county-wide community education campaign to educate Bladen County communities about the dangers of alcohol, opioids, and other substance use, where and how to seek help, and promote a Bladen County culture of recovery.	The HRSA grant has community education and awareness activities build into the grant. A Resource Coordinator position is subsidized through the HRSA funds, has been hired, and is actively working to establish a credible resource list.