It is no secret that Delaware, and Sussex County in particular, grapple with high rates of prescription opioid misuse and abuse. Despite hosting just under a quarter of Delaware’s population, Sussex County accounts for 25.9% of the state’s overdoses, according to the Delaware Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) 2022 Report. This crisis has been further exacerbated by limited access to addiction treatment and healthcare services, creating a complex set of challenges for the community.

The landscape has evolved to include a surge in illicit opioids, such as fentanyl and heroin, which have led to a drastic increase in overdose deaths within Sussex and across the state. According to the 2022 DMI Report, fentanyl is present in 81% of toxicology reports for overdose-related deaths. While tracking newly emerging trends in opioid misuse, we must also be conscious of the dangers of Xylazine and a resurgence of Cocaine, which foreshadows the dangers to come in our communities. It is critical to remain vigilant on all trends surrounding drug usage, including gateway drugs as the landscape changes. These trends and shifts call for a multifaceted approach to address the crisis, including targeted prevention efforts, expanding access to evidence-based treatments, and promoting harm reduction strategies.

At SCHC, we align these initiatives to coalesce the Delaware Goes Purple (DEGP) campaign; by prioritizing DEGP prevention efforts, we can educate community members, especially young people, about the dangers of drug misuse and addiction. By maintaining a
strong focus on prevention and continually reinforcing the importance of drug awareness through the DEGP campaign, we can make a lasting impact on the well-being of our community and reduce the devastating effects of the opioid epidemic.

As the landscape of substance abuse continues to evolve, we must stay at the forefront of prevention and education efforts. At SCHC, we recognize that harm reduction strategies, such as the distribution of Naloxone, do not always reach their target population. In fact, the 2022 DMI Report noted Naloxone contacts via EMS decreased in the state by 16%, as well as distribution, which decreased by 19%. As a result, we are soon to announce our Yes, I narCAN! Save a Life campaign. The distribution of naloxone to the community is essential in saving lives and preventing fatal opioid overdoses by ensuring that individuals and their loved ones have access to potentially life-saving medication in emergency situations.

These campaigns go beyond mere promotional efforts; they are ways community members can easily engage in being part of the larger scale solutions Sussex County and Delaware need. SCHC remains committed to championing substance abuse disorder and drug prevention efforts, diligently working to raise awareness and support for those affected by addiction in Sussex County through DEGP and the emerging Yes, I narCAN! Campaign.

The time to act is now, and this fall, we invite you to join us in doubling down to combat substance abuse and misuse. By wearing your purple or hosting DEGP events within your organization, you are committing to making a stronger and safer Delaware for all.

Our greatest strength is in our partners—if you are unable to attend one of SCHC’s many DEGP events this fall, we encourage you to engage with one of our partners’ many drug-prevention marches and events, with agencies such as the Behavioral Health Consortium, or our friends at Beebe Hospital. There are endless ways to get involved, and for more ideas, reach out to the SCHC team—and remember to keep your eyes peeled for Purple this fall!

Peggy M. Geisler, Executive Director
Hosted a family literacy Day providing youth with the skills of creating positive messaging with the Cause. Youth lead view event for youth to present their message to their peer and family.

First State Community Action

Working with youth summer workers and providing them with a prevention framework, providing PSA my reason why training, giving them the tools to express their feelings in a positive manner.

Delmarva Clergy Social Action

Holding community events with the community of Ellendale, working with the youth to provide free activities that are prevention based including providing PSA workshops and a red carpet event to the families of the youth.

Attacked Addiction

Provided prevention education and alternative activities during prom week at each high school in Sussex County. Serving over 2000 youth.

Community Inspired Action (CIA)

Youth-Driven event where youth will explore how to create positive messages around their reason why. Giving them the tools be change makers.

Neighbor Good Partners

Provided youth driven Narcan POD education at community events in the low income communities. Provided youth lead PSA workshop and celebrations at the Solid Rock Community Center for families to see the youth's creations.

Cornerstone Community Center

Hosted a free youth skate night at risk youth providing an alternative. Providing a group of youth MRV PSA training and teacher youth to be social media influencers with their message.

Del Readiness Team

Held a family resource fair at the Bridgeville Library and educated all parents on the risk and prevention ways to keep youth engages with alternative activities.
Sussex County Health Coalition’s “Let’s Get Healthy, Sussex!” campaign has been an overwhelming triumph, successfully reaching and engaging a wide audience across Facebook and Instagram.

This community-driven initiative has effectively promoted health and wellness, leaving a positive impact on Sussex County residents.

With over 400 followers on Facebook and Instagram, the campaign quickly gained momentum and established a dedicated online community. One of the highlights of the campaign was a post titled “The Healthy Habit: Sleep.” The post achieved exceptional results, with an impressive reach of 2,051 on Instagram and 4,993 on Facebook. These numbers indicate that the campaign’s message, and this post specifically, resonated with a large audience.

Throughout the campaign’s duration, the Sussex County Health Coalition managed to make a significant impression on social media users, with a total of 132,178 content impressions across both platforms. This means that their posts were displayed on users’ screens over 132,000 times, indicating extensive visibility and engagement.

The campaign’s total reach extended to an impressive 29,309 people, showcasing the effectiveness of SCHC’s content in reaching a substantial portion of the community. The Coalition’s ad campaign also made a notable impact, with ads being displayed a remarkable 982,131 times and reaching at least 331,392 individuals.

This powerful advertising effort helped the campaign extend its reach and spread its message even further.

Understanding the audience and platform played a crucial role in the campaign’s success. For example, on Facebook, most of the audience were women, at 92.8%, with an average age falling within the 55-64 range. The top cities that engaged with the content were Georgetown, Milford, and Seaford in Delaware. On Instagram, the gender distribution was 78.3% women and 21.7% men, with an average age of 35-44. The top cities that showed significant interest in the Instagram campaign were Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, and Harbeson in Delaware.

The community’s response to the campaign was overwhelmingly positive, as it succeeded in fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility for health and wellness. By providing valuable information and encouraging healthy habits, the “Let’s Get Healthy, Sussex!” campaign has left a lasting impact on Sussex County!

DATA FROM “LET’S GET HEALTHY” MEDIA OUTREACH

**TV Commercials**
Reach—74,939 Households or 191,853 People 2+

**Radio Commercials**
WBOC 102.5 Weekly—25,490 People 12+
WTDK 107.1 Weekly—33,300 People 12+

**DelmarvaLife Segments**
Daily Reach—14,951 Households or 35,882 People 2+

**CoastLife Segment (Brand New Show)**
Daily Reach—1,549 Households or 3,717 People 2+

**Digital Social Targeting**
Impressions—214,440
Clicks—576
100% Video Views—1,010
Creating Social Impact requires a unified effort of nonprofit organizations, foundations, government agencies and businesses working together to tackle community-wide issues. To create community change organizations must engage cross-sector stakeholders in collective work and utilize organizations well versed in the nuances to achieve that goal. SCHC, working in tandem with University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, will provide expertise through facilitation and community wide assessment over a 12 month period to build out a Countywide action plan that will support the needs in Sussex County with regards to nutrition security.

SCHC, in partnership with UD Cooperative Extension, will lead a council of stakeholders to guide the process to complete a SNAP ED landscape analysis that includes:

1. Assessing access to SNAP
3. Accessing service providers barriers and needs to increased enrollment and engagement of snap participants.
4. Identifying current strength based practices for scalability.
5. Recommending Pilots that can address barriers to engagement and increasing utilization/behavior change.

SCHC will provide services in the form of strategic partner engagement, community landscape analysis, report with recommendations and action plans for implementation. A pilot build out and deployment may be available based on availability of funds.

“The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension has awarded Sussex County Health Coalition as a subrecipient on the SNAP-Education Plan for Delaware. Over the next year, SCHC will work with UD Cooperative Extension and the State of Delaware Health and Social Services to dive deeper into the education, systems and environmental needs of communities in the county that have residents eligible for SNAP dollars. The idea of this process is to ensure that it is collaborative and responsive to community needs. The Coalition will lead a planning process that will ultimately provide programming to Sussex County that is aimed at improving access to and education around healthy foods. Look for more information in the next year about engaging in the conversation and plans for future programming!”

—Gina Crist, Community Health Specialist, UD Cooperative Extension
With a mission to promote racial equity and social justice for Sussex and Kent County residents, the Sussex County Health Coalition has developed, and executed, systems that are growing the Community Health Worker (CHW) labor force in Delaware. The goal of adding 150 new CHWs to the public health workforce and extending the skills of an additional 50 current CHWs over three years is well on its way to success.

The collaboration with the Department of Public Health has yielded two completed cohorts of trainees, with another underway. With the help of Tapp Network, social media and website branding has begun, generating wait lists for current and future trainings. A partnership has been developed with the Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA), allowing for the upskilling of current CHWs in a much-needed health literacy curriculum.

Not only is growth being seen in the training programs, but in May 2023, a State of Delaware Community Health Worker apprenticeship was designed and approved by the Department of Labor. This first ever CHW apprenticeship program will bring employers and trainees together to enhance supportive services to those in marginalized communities. The first class is complete and the July class is under way.

There is a waitlist for fall classes, and new additional sessions are being explored. This LEARN, EARN, and SERVE model resonates with participants and helps with removing barriers to training.

If you would like to join our network of employers, or know someone that would benefit from these trainings, please contact us at info@chwtr.com.
The Haitian Coalition of Delaware (HCODel) is grateful for the support received from the Sussex County Health Coalition in building the organization's infrastructure. The Haitian population has experienced substantial social inequity and considerable unmet needs, such as language barriers and a lack of resources, to name a few.

**The mission of the HCODel is to advocate for the Haitian population in Delaware, ensuring that this community is adequately represented through social, educational, and economic development and ultimately help advance this community.**

We envision breaking down silos and cycles of intergenerational poverty and infrastructural disenfranchisement by connecting, cultivating, and empowering our community to create systematic change.

Midline Oware and Keda Dorisca founded the HCODel, and currently serve as co-chairs of the organization. These two young women have an immense background in human services and, as Haitian descendants, are passionate about serving their community. Together in 2020, they gathered a group of like-minded individuals who formed a steering committee to help drive the development process and address ethnic disparities during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to increase awareness, testing, and vaccination in the Haitian community. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the already significant social issues facing this community. The HCODel wanted to ensure equity in COVID education efforts and decisions implemented in Delaware specific to the Haitian population.

In the upcoming year, HCODel's goal is to convene stakeholders to establish a formal committee structure and conduct an in-depth landscape analysis of the Haitian population in Delaware. Over the past several decades, the Haitian community has grown exponentially in Delaware. The U.S. Census Bureau reported 2019 that an estimated “1.1 million people of Haitian ancestry [live] in the U.S.” Although there is no significant data per county on the population size of Haitian residents in Delaware, according to Data USA, there are **6,418 Haiti residents in Delaware**, with Haiti being the third most common birthplace for foreign-born Delaware residents.

Further, Haitian Creole is one of the most common non-English languages spoken as the primary language in households in Delaware – 4,740 homes. There has been an uptick in migration to Delaware due to the recently enacted Biden parole program launched in January of 2023 by the Biden-Harris Administration. The hope is that the landscape analysis will yield critical data that will help the HCODel and other stakeholders across the state better address the needs of this vulnerable community through collective impact measures. **Stay tuned for additional updates!**
Mental, Physical and Spiritual Health are important aspects of Avenue United Methodist Church. We carry this thought process not only with our congregation, but also the community.

The Health Ministry Program at Avenue United Methodist Church (AUMC) offers the following programs:

- In June and July classes alternating between chair and regular Yoga will be taught by Bonnie Russell on Mondays at 12:30–1:30PM at no cost to the community.
- On Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings, from 9:00–9:30 AM we host Tai Chi with Henrietta Chilton and Rachel Susen, instructors. There is no cost to the community.
- On Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 5:30–6:30 PM we host Zumba classes at a low cost of $3 a class. However, for the month of August, Zumba classes will be provided at no cost.
- On August 17 we are sponsoring Zumba for the town of Milford, “Keep It Moving.”
- For the winter we are planning to offer the St. John Health walking program called “The Walk to Jerusalem by Easter.” This program “is an imaginary walk that encourages walkers to increase physical activity, spiritual growth, and cultural awareness through a virtual tour to Jerusalem.” Participants will not only track their steps but also learn about the different cultures of the areas we pretend to walk through.

The first meeting for participants will be in December with the program kick off January 1 and ending on Easter. Everyone is invited to join us. Other organizations are encouraged to join us. There is no cost to the community for this program.

Please contact Health Ministry at AUMC if you are interested in joining us in this educational and healthy program. You can email us at healthministry@avenueumc.com or call 302-422-8111.