



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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## **Yolo County and CommuniCare Urge Community Awareness and Prevention of Unintentional Overdose Deaths**

(Woodland, CA) – International Overdose Awareness Day, an annual commemoration to raise awareness of overdose prevention and reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths, will be recognized this year on August 31. Yolo County has seen the number of deaths due to unintentional overdose risk increase throughout 2022, largely due to the presence of fentanyl, which can be lethal in very small doses and is undetectable to users. Fentanyl is 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. According to recent national data, over 99 percent of all oxycodone pills submitted to crime labs contained fentanyl.

As part of the effort to end the overdose epidemic, CommuniCare Health Centers and the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) are partnering to present a fentanyl awareness video campaign to encourage Yolo County residents to carry Narcan and act quickly when they suspect an overdose. Narcan, or naloxone, is a nasal spray that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose.

“Throughout history public media campaigns have proven to be one of the most effective ways to decrease the negative effects of substances and increase prevention, harm reduction, and treatment engagement, raise awareness and decrease stigma,” states Ian Evans, Yolo County Alcohol and Drug Administrator. “As a community, we must begin rallying around individuals struggling with substance use the same we would with anyone struggling with a disease or illness, bringing connection and support in the same way we would to a friend, family member, or co-worker who was fighting cancer, heart disease, or diabetes. We must do this through partnership and collaboration, and we’re incredibly grateful to have partners like CommuniCare here in Yolo that can help us spread that message, get lifesaving Narcan out into the community, and treat substance use like any other health care issue.”

We are encouraging the community to help share the awareness videos linked below and use the tag line: ***Carry the Narcan, Save a Life. Yolo County CAN end opioid overdoses.*** For more information on HHSA’s substance use continuum of care options in Yolo County, please visit [bitly.com/YoloSUDS](https://bitly.com/YoloSUDS). For more information on International Overdose Awareness Day, please visit [www.overdoseday.com](http://www.overdoseday.com).

Links to videos:

English: <https://youtu.be/syv-wDfkTnU>

Spanish: <https://youtu.be/y22-IE7hrIs>

"We recognize the devastating impact fentanyl and other opioids have on individuals, their families, and the larger community, says Sara Gavin, Chief Behavioral Health Officer for CommuniCare. "CommuniCare is committed to continuing to bring awareness, education and access to high-quality, de-stigmatized, accessible services to anyone who needs them. Having safe, readily available life-saving resources like Narcan in the event

of an opioid overdose is imperative. We all need to work together to get messaging out to the local community that Narcan is available and partner on normalizing substance use treatment services as a part of overall health care."

#### About CommuniCare Health Centers

CommuniCare Health Centers is a Federally Qualified Health Center providing health care to those in need since 1972. Using the client-centered health home model of care, CommuniCare puts patients and clients first by providing comprehensive quality health care services delivered by a dedicated team of providers and support staff. Our services include primary medical and dental health care, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, health education and support services. Our goal is to develop and maintain a long-term healing partnership with each of our patients to achieve the best possible health outcomes. Serving communities throughout the region, CommuniCare Health Centers cares for one of every nine residents of Yolo County.

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