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Project Opioid Miami-Dade Engages Community on International Overdose Awareness Day, August 31st

Miami, FL – August 25th – Project Opioid Miami-Dade, a coalition that brings together business, faith, government, and philanthropic leaders to create a major impact on the overdose crisis in the community, is participating in International Overdose Awareness Day next Tuesday, August 31st. The annual event is the world’s largest campaign to end overdoses, remember without stigma those who have died, and acknowledge the grief of the families and friends left behind.

The overdose crisis has increased at the fastest pace on record during the 17 months of the COVID-19 pandemic, and overdose is now the leading cause of death in Miami-Dade County for those 40 years old and younger. An alarming new trend has also emerged with a disproportionate increase in deaths in both Black and Latino communities. A recent study utilizing Department of Health data for Florida from the early months of the pandemic found that overdoses within the Black community were up 110% in the first 4 months of the pandemic, compared to 51% overall; Hispanic communities saw a 67% increase in overdoses in the same period. “It is imperative that we alert the community on how overdose deaths are surging to levels we could not have imagined, and as we continue to work to mitigate the ongoing pandemic, we must find ways of doing more on this dangerous crisis,” said Andrae Bailey, CEO and Founder, Project Opioid.

Michael A. Finney, President and CEO of the Miami-Dade Beacon Council, is urgently asking for community support. “The crisis has reached levels we have never experienced before. Now is the time to act, and as a business community we really can make a difference to save lives.”

To help promote International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31st, The Beacon Council – Project Opioid’s Advocates for Miami-Dade County – is partnering to present “The Changing Overdose Crisis: How Can Leaders Respond?”, a complimentary statewide webinar for community leaders across Florida. The distinguished panel includes Maria Alonso, President and CEO, United Way of Miami-Dade; Board Member, Miami-Dade Beacon Council; and Leadership Committee Member, Project Opioid Miami-Dade. To register, please click [here](#).

In a show of solidarity on International Overdose Awareness Day, numerous buildings and landmarks in Downtown Miami have agreed to be illuminated in purple to help shine a light on the urgent need to actively address the opioid crisis. Participating buildings include Miami Tower, Miami Dade College’s Freedom Tower, Brickell World Plaza, Miami-Dade County Courthouse, The Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science, Panorama Tower, and Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM). The FTX Arena (formally known as the American Airlines Arena) will also be featuring a Project Opioid Overdose Awareness Day announcement.

About Project Opioid Miami-Dade

Project Opioid is a coalition that brings together business, faith, government, and philanthropic leaders to create a major impact on the overdose crisis in their communities. Backed by Florida Blue, this statewide initiative educates leaders on how to build a coalition, launch a regional overdose initiative, and do high-level advocacy to transform and save the greatest number of lives in their communities.

For more information on Project Opioid, please visit <https://projectopioid.org/>