

Hope Rising's SafeRx expands efforts in substance use disorders treatment

March 15, 2021 (Clearlake, CA) Leveraging SafeRx's opioid misuse coalition's successful tactics, Hope Rising is expanding efforts to combat the devastating effects of illicit substance use in Lake County. Hope Rising focuses collective efforts on residents struggling with substance use disorders, those living in recovery, reducing the stigma around addiction and seeing lives restored.

Substance misuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including illicit drugs. Given the size of substance misuse in Lake County, Hope Rising and its partners have chosen to expand evidence-based interventions, like policies, which influence the levels and patterns of substance use, related harm and interventions at the health care system level, education, treatment, prevention for all substance use, and particular emphasis on perinatal substance use.

In 2019-2020, Hope Rising distributed 1,600+ Narcan kits to community members, Native American tribes, and local businesses that directly correlated to 40 overdose reversals and lives saved. Combined with the reduction in opioid prescriptions due to SafeRx's 2015 county-wide safe prescribing guidelines, significant measures are in place to continue battling this crisis. By 2018, SafeRx saw a reduction 31% decrease in average dosage per user, a 43% decrease in overall opioid users, and a 78% decrease in unsafe dose users.

"Several of our team members have lived experience with someone affected by substance use or have lost loved ones to the opioid crises," says Allison Panella, Hope Rising Executive Director. "This is something that sits very near to our hearts. A recent article in the [Press Democrat](#) published March 6th factually covered the overdose death rates in Lake County as 'highest in California.' Still, it didn't highlight in-depth some of the work we have been doing to mitigate those statistics."

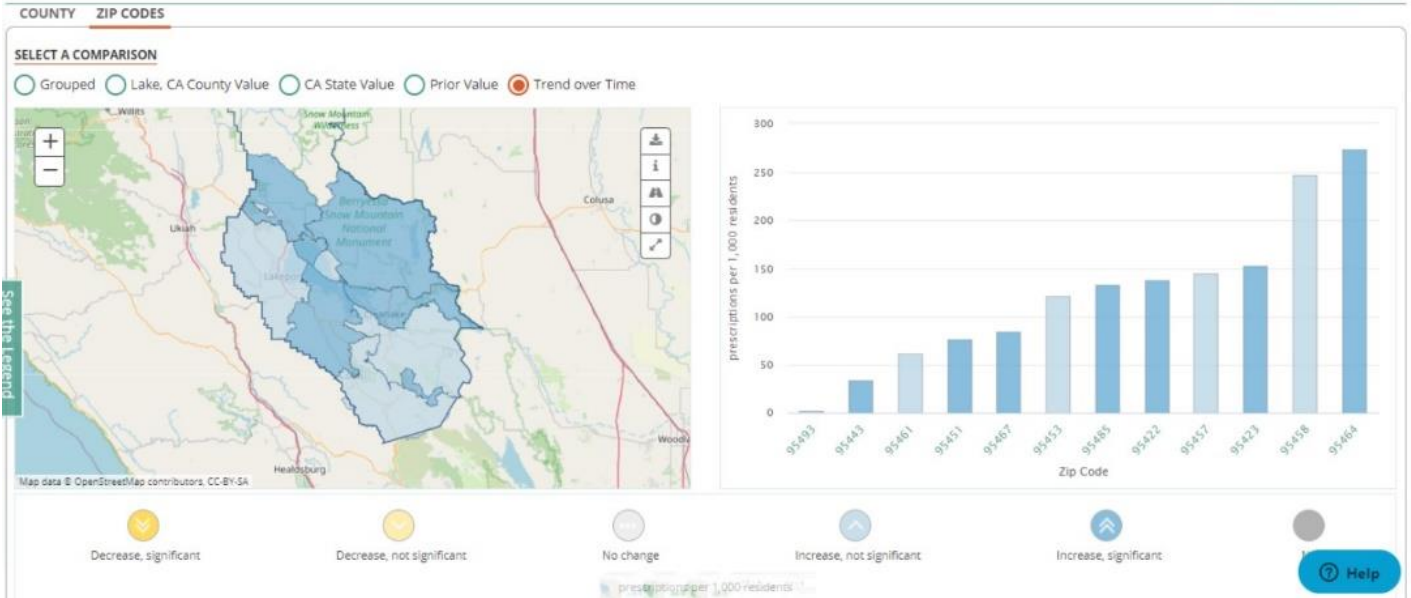
Acknowledging that the battle against substance use disorders in Lake County has a long way to go, Hope Rising made some significant steps to turn the tide. "This crisis didn't occur overnight, nor will it be resolved in a short time." Says Panella. From the inception of the safe prescribing guidelines, training and distribution of Narcan/Naloxone kits, X-waiver training, participation in National Recover Month activities, to hosting Innovation Summits, Hope Rising is actively working on the front lines of prevention. Currently working with Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) services county-wide to align resources and improve access to care, they help those community members who will benefit from extended treatment options. MAT services using Buprenorphine to treat patients with opioid use disorder are on the rise, assisting patients in withdrawing from high opioid doses.

Age-Adjusted Buprenorphine Prescription Rate

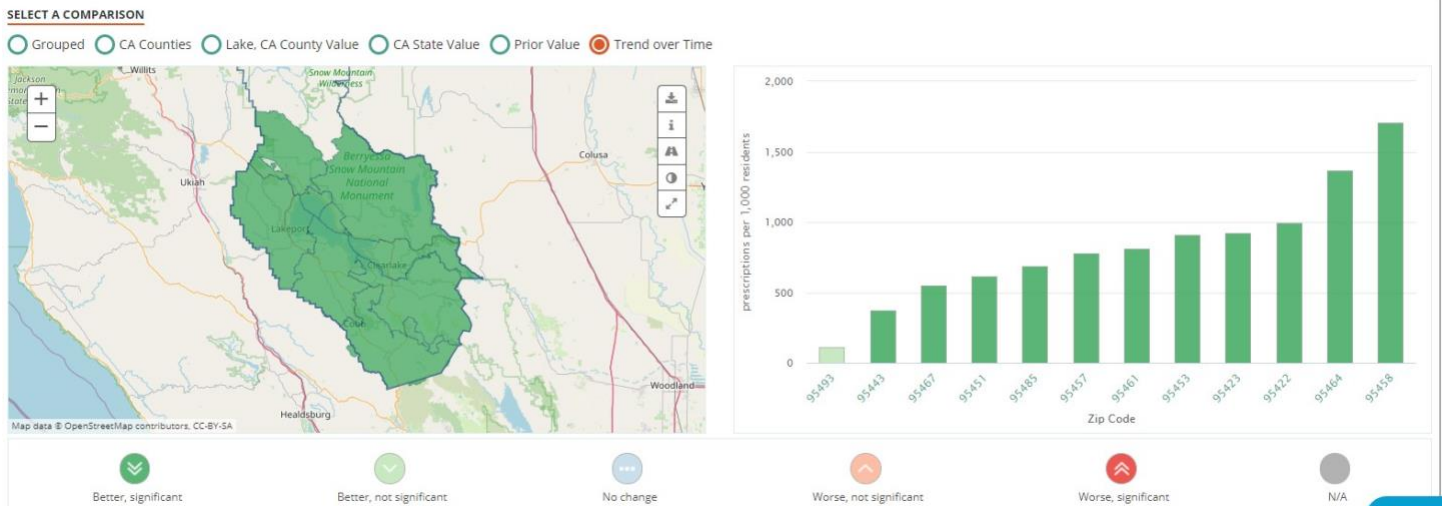
Select a Zip Code

Measurement Period: 2018

Filter: none (all Zip Codes)



In a county battling staggering substance use disorders, compounded with a year-long pandemic stay-at-home order and isolation, the age-adjusted opioid prescription rate is still improving in all county zip codes, due to the efforts of the SafeRx initiative.



In addition to reducing substance use disorders, Hope Rising has been working to prevent drug use in youth through two SafeRx programs. A collaboration with Sonoma and Humboldt Counties led to creating the *Find Your Way* campaign through the Youth Opioid Response Grant. This initiative helps to support local youth with their experiences surrounding substance use disorder. The online website and Instagram account have received over 2 million media impressions since its inception. SafeRx is requesting additional grant funding to sustain all counties' operations ([Lake County | Find Your Way \(findyourwayca.com\)](http://Lake County | Find Your Way (findyourwayca.com))). SafeRx has also partnered with the Clearlake Youth center to initiate a youth group focused on wellness and prevention.

Positive reinforcement, peer support, building self-worth, and steps to a healthier life are just a few of the topics covered in the program ([Hope Rising \(hoperisinglc.org\)](http://www.hoperisinglc.org)).

Hope Rising serves as a neutral convener to bring together leaders in our county to identify issues, develop innovative solutions, and implement agreed-upon actions with accountability and measurable outcomes. Hope Rising acts to raise, manage and disburse funds. Additionally, Hope Rising provides facilitation and project management support to drive the work forward and keep projects on track, ensuring active engagement of stakeholders and a focus on outcomes. Learn more about Hope Rising at [http://www.hoperisinglc.org/](http://www.hoperisinglc.org)