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Frederick County Health Department

# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Frederick County Health Department to participate in Appalachian Save A Life Day**

FREDERICK, MD -- On September 14, 2023, all 13 Appalachian states will be hosting over 300 free naloxone events for the first ever "Appalachian Save a Life Day." The Frederick County Health Department will participate by providing free overdose response training, naloxone, fentanyl testing strips, and disposable breathalyzers during Alive at Five on Carroll Creek Amphitheater, and along the creek near C. Burr Arts Public Library from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Additional outreach will also be conducted throughout the day in the city of Frederick. All trainings are provided by Peer Recovery Specialists and other harm reduction staff.

"We are excited to host our first Save a Life Day event in Frederick County. Our goal is to meet people where they are without judgment, reduce stigma associated with substance use disorders, offer tools to inform, educate, and empower both people who use drugs and the community," stated Marisa Shields, Harm Reduction Program Coordinator with the Frederick County Health Department.

The 13 participating states are all recognized as part of the Appalachian region by the Appalachian Regional Commission: West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Maryland, and New York. A region wide map of events, list of sponsors and more information can be found at

[www.savealifeappalachia.org](http://www.savealifeappalachia.org).

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Naloxone is a medication with no adverse side effects that works to reverse opioid overdoses. One common brand is Narcan, an easy-to-use nasal spray. [CDC](#) data show that half of the ten states with the worst overdose rates are a part of Appalachia while Appalachian states lost 40,560 loved ones in 2021, representing 38% of the nation's fatalities that year.

According to Iris Sidikman, Appalachian Save a Life Day Coordinator, "This day of action is about showing how Appalachia is also a place people can look to for solutions. We are a region rich in mutual aid. We're a place where everyone has lost somebody. And on Sept. 14th and every other day- we are turning that pain into care, courage, and power."

The theme for September 14th is "Partnering with People with Lived Experience." Many sites won't just be serving people who use drugs or people in recovery but working alongside them - to organize outreach teams to high-risk areas while making sure naloxone gets into the hands of people who need it the most. Recovery coaches will also be present and available at hundreds of events.

Across Appalachia, organizers plan to distribute over 30,000 naloxone doses throughout the day. Each location is powered by local volunteers who attended training to be able to participate. Frederick County Health Department is serving as the lead contact for Save a Life Day in Frederick County.

Anyone who wants to be prepared to save a life is welcome to join us on September 14, 2023 at Carroll Creek. For anyone interested but unable to attend, the Frederick County Health Department provides free overdose response training virtually and in-person every Friday at 1 p.m. and the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. For more information call 301-600-1777 or visit, <https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/ORT>.

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