Curriculum Syllabus

Our goal is to provide you with the finest educational experience possible for your immediate ROI.

Operational Readiness for Police Officers: OUD

Effective Strategies & Practical Techniques for Addressing Opioid Use Disorder and Co-occurring Conditions

This course is designed to prepare law enforcement officers to effectively handle crises involving Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and related mental health conditions. With the opioid epidemic posing significant challenges for public safety, officers need the tools to respond with empathy, safety, and precision. Through four comprehensive modules, this course covers the complexities of OUD, including the legal considerations, the impact of co-occurring mental health disorders, and best practices for de-escalation. The goal is to equip officers with practical strategies to manage these crises safely, while building trust with individuals in need.

Each module introduces key concepts such as the CARE approach—Calm the Situation, Assess for Danger, Respond with Empathy, and Engage Resources—which serves as a practical framework officers can apply in the field. Officers will learn how to assess and manage high-risk situations, utilize verbal and non-verbal communication techniques, and connect individuals to appropriate care services. In addition, the course provides real-world case studies and scenario-based exercises that reinforce these skills and strategies in action.

Supplementary materials such as eBooks, discussion templates, posters, and referral network guides will be provided to further enhance learning. These resources ensure officers have easy access to important information and can build on their skills beyond the course itself. They also serve as quick reference guides during real-world situations where immediate action is necessary.

Ultimately, this course is aimed at improving officer-community relations by fostering trust and reducing the stigma around addiction. By focusing on harm reduction and non-punitive approaches, officers will be better positioned to support individuals with OUD, reduce the risk of escalation, and strengthen community ties through compassionate, effective interventions.

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Program Summary

The program consists of four modules, as listed below:

> 1: Understanding OUD & Co-occurring Conditions
>
> 2: Recognizing & Responding to OUD
>
> 3: Best Practices for Field Collaboration
>
> 4: Real-World Application & Resource Utilization

Each module contains video presentations, lively discussions, hands-on assignments, knowledge challenges, helpful reference posters, eBooks, and is wrapped up with an optional resource page, allowing you to take a deeper dive into subjects that interest you, from various viewpoints.

The main topics of each module are summarized below:

Module 1: Understanding OUD & Co-occurring Conditions

This module provides an in-depth exploration of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and its common co-occurring mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD. You will learn to recognize the behavioral and physical signs of OUD, understand the challenges posed by co-occurring conditions, and explore the best practices for identifying individuals at risk. By the end of the module, you will have a foundational understanding of how to respond effectively to these crises, focusing on compassionate care and safe intervention

Main topics	Description
Recognizing & Responding to an Opioid Overdose Emergency	Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of a suspected opioid overdose and how to respond effectively. This includes checking for responsiveness, calling 911, administering Naloxone, providing rescue breathing or CPR, and offering aftercare.
Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and the Opioid Crisis	Gain an understanding of OUD and the current state of the opioid crisis. We'll explore the causes and consequences of opioid misuse, identify common signs and symptoms of OUD, and examine the impact of this crisis on individuals and communities. This foundational knowledge is crucial for recognizing and responding to opioid-related crises effectively.
Signs of an Overdose and Co-occurring Mental Health Disorders	Learn how to identify the critical signs of an opioid overdose and understand the importance of quick intervention. You'll also explore the connection between Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and co-occurring mental health disorders, such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD. By recognizing both the physical signs of overdose and the underlying mental health struggles, you'll be better equipped to respond effectively in crisis situations.

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Discussion: Working to Reduce the Stigma	People who struggle with issues like Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or mental health conditions are often stigmatized, which can prevent them from seeking help or being treated with compassion. Recognizing and addressing stigma is crucial to fostering more supportive, respectful environments for individuals in crisis. Read this article to learn more, then join the discussion.
Assignment: Your Self-Assessment	Using the SHAPE framework - Strength, Helpfulness, Awareness, Proactivity, and Empathy - this self-assessment is designed to help you reflect on your current skills and identify areas for improvement as you progress through the course.

Module 2: Recognizing and Responding to OUD

This module equips you with the tools and techniques necessary to recognize and respond to individuals experiencing a crisis due to OUD. You will explore the key behavioral and physical signs of opioid use and learn how to apply verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques to safely manage high-risk situations. The module emphasizes crisis intervention strategies that prioritize both officer and public safety while helping individuals with OUD receive the care they need.

Main topics	*Description*
Crisis Intervention for OUD	In this presentation, you'll be introduced to the unique challenges of responding to crises involving individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You'll learn how to approach these situations safely and effectively using proven crisis intervention techniques, prioritizing both safety and empathy. This video provides a foundation for understanding the importance of de-escalation and trust-building when handling high-risk OUD situations.
Verbal De-escalation Techniques for Crisis Intervention	Explore essential verbal de-escalation techniques for effectively managing crises involving individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You'll learn how to use calm, non-confrontational language and active listening to build trust and reduce tension during high-stress situations. These techniques will help you communicate more effectively and safely when engaging with individuals in crisis.
Discussion: The Power of Words in De-escalating Crisis Situations	Read the article on the importance of language in de-escalation, offering practical examples of how specific words, tone, and phrasing can either defuse or escalate a crisis. It highlights techniques such as active listening, reflective statements, and the use of neutral, calming language to create trust and rapport in tense situations. Then, grad a reference poster and join the discussion.

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Non-Verbal Communication and Body Language in Crisis Intervention	This presentation focuses on the critical role that non-verbal communication and body language play during crisis interventions with individuals affected by Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You'll learn how your posture, gestures, and facial expressions can either help calm a situation or unintentionally escalate it. Understanding these non-verbal cues will allow you to engage more effectively with individuals in crisis, ensuring a safer and more controlled response. Plus, download the "De-Escalation Field Guide" for your continued reference.
Assignment: Applying Crisis Intervention Strategies	Apply the verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques learned by responding to real-world crisis scenarios involving individuals with OUD. For each situation, you'll explain how you would use both verbal and non-verbal strategies to de-escalate the crisis safely and effectively.

Module 3: Best Practices for Field Collaboration

Next, focus on the collaborative approaches essential for managing crises involving individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You will learn how to engage with healthcare providers, treatment centers, and community resources to ensure individuals receive the appropriate care. Emphasizing harm reduction principles, this module covers best practices for field collaboration and the importance of building strong partnerships with local and state resources. By integrating these strategies, you will improve outcomes and foster safer interactions in the field.

Main topics	*Description*
Introduction to Harm Reduction and Treatment Options	Learn about harm reduction strategies and the different treatment options available for individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). We'll discuss how harm reduction focuses on safety and minimizing risks, even when individuals aren't ready to stop using. You'll also get an overview of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) and how combining medical and behavioral therapies can support long-term recovery.
Identifying Readiness for Treatment and Making Referrals	You'll learn how to recognize when someone with OUD is ready for treatment and how to make effective referrals. We'll explore the signs that indicate a person is open to change, as well as strategies to motivate them toward recovery. You'll also see how partnering with community resources, like Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT), can help ensure individuals get the support they need.
Discussion: Motivational Interviewing - Helping People Change	By using motivational interviewing, you can encourage positive decisions, build trust, and promote cooperation without confrontation. For police officers, this method is particularly valuable in crisis situations where individuals may be struggling with issues like OUD or mental health challenges. Read the article, download the "Practical Guide to Motivational Interviewing" eBook, and join the discussion.

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Building and Navigating Local Referral Networks	Learn how to effectively map and navigate local referral networks to support individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and co-occurring conditions. You'll discover how building partnerships with community resources, treatment centers, and Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) can lead to better outcomes. We'll also cover the importance of formalizing these relationships through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to create lasting, effective collaborations. After the lesson, download the "Building Trust in Communities" eBook for your continued reference.
Assignment: Best Practices For Field Collaboration	Apply the collaboration strategies you've learned by responding to real-world scenarios involving individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You'll demonstrate how to use harm reduction strategies, assess readiness for treatment, make referrals, and build local referral networks.

Module 4: Real-World Application & Resource Utilization

This module brings together everything you've learned through scenario-based exercises designed to apply the skills and strategies needed to handle crises involving Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). You will participate in realistic scenarios, using the CARE approach—Calm the Situation, Assess for Danger, Respond with Empathy, and Engage Resources—as well as de-escalation techniques, collaboration skills, and referral processes to connect individuals with the appropriate resources.

Main topics	Description
The CARE Approach	You'll discover the CARE approach, a step-by-step method designed to help you de-escalate crises, connect individuals to resources, and minimize risks. The CARE approach—Calm, Assess, Respond, Engage—guides you through each phase of handling real-world scenarios involving individuals with OUD. By applying these strategies, you'll be better equipped to ensure safety while supporting individuals in need. Then download the CARE Approach poster for your reference.
Real-World Scenario: Handling a Crisis in a Public Setting	Next, you'll walk through a real-world scenario where an individual with OUD experiences a crisis in a public setting. We'll guide you step-by-step through the process of applying the CARE approach to de-escalate the situation, manage bystanders, and connect the individual to the right resources. You'll learn how to stay calm, maintain safety, and effectively navigate the challenges of a high-visibility crisis.
Discussion: Applying the CARE Approach	Grab the "De-Escalating with CARE" poster describing using the CARE approach for a structured way to overcome resistance and handle crises effectively, overcoming barriers while keeping safety and compassion at the forefront. Then, join the discussion.

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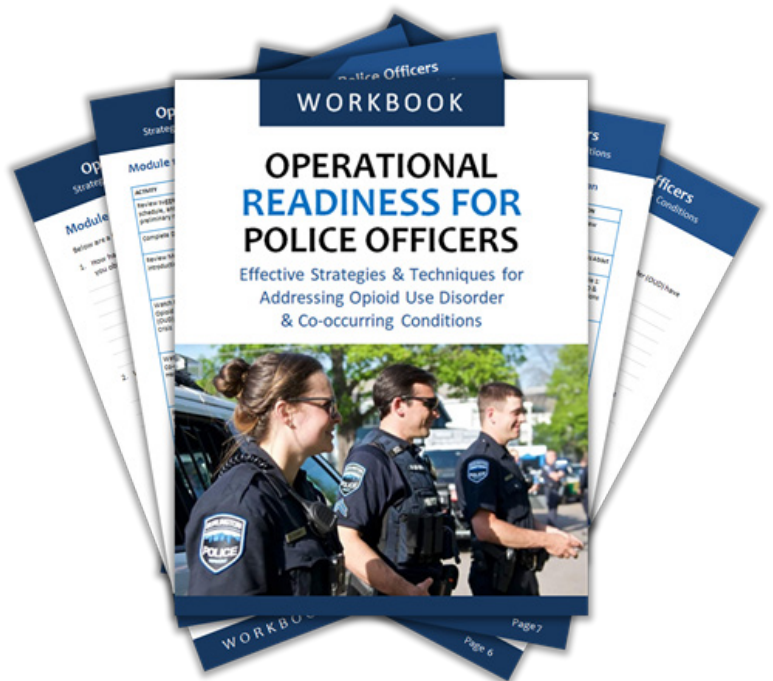|	
Real-World Scenario: Handling a Crisis in a Residential Setting	In this final presentation of the course, you'll work through a real-world scenario where an individual with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) experiences a crisis in a residential setting. We'll show you how to apply the CARE approach to safely de-escalate the situation, navigate challenges unique to residential environments, and connect the individual with the resources they need. You'll learn how to prioritize safety while managing a more private, less controlled crisis environment.
Assignment: Developing a Crisis Intervention Action Plan	Develop a detailed action plan for managing a crisis involving an individual with OUD in a residential setting. Using the CARE approach and other strategies you've learned, you'll outline how to de-escalate the situation, ensure safety, and connect the individual and their family to local resources.

The Course Workbook

This "Operational Readiness for Police Offices Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) Workbook" is designed to guide you through this short course on understanding and responding to individuals affected by OUD and co-occurring mental health conditions. As law enforcement officers, you play a crucial role in addressing the challenges posed by the opioid crisis. This workbook contains course descriptions, lesson plans, discussion topics, and plenty of space for your notes. Use it as your personal guide to reinforce your skills and apply what you've learned with confidence.

This workbook is not only a resource for you to collect your notes, but also to use as a discussion guide. If you're experiencing the course together as a team, reflect on the discussion points provided for each module to reinforce key concepts.

Print and use this workbook to stay organized and get the most out of your learning experience! It's designed to guide you through the course with course descriptions, lesson plans, discussion topics, and plenty of space for notes. Keep everything in one place as you build your skills and apply what you've learned with confidence.

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Program Outline

This outline provides a deep dive view at the course sessions for each section.

Course Overview

1. Schedule & Program Details
2. Your Faculty
3. Your Course Workbook
4. Discussion: Tell us about yourself!

1: Understanding OUD & Co-occurring Conditions

1. Presentation: Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and the Opioid Crisis
2. Video: Recognizing & Responding to an Opioid Overdose Emergency
3. Presentation: Co-occurring Mental Health Disorders
4. Discussion: Working to Reduce the Stigma
5. Presentation: Legal Considerations and Crisis Intervention
6. Assignment: Your Self-Assessment
7. Knowledge Challenge
8. Helpful Resources

2: Recognizing and Responding to OUD

1. Presentation: Crisis Intervention for OUD
2. Presentation: Verbal De-escalation Techniques for Crisis Intervention
3. Discussion: The Power of Words in De-escalating Crisis Situations
4. Presentation: Presentation: Non-Verbal Communication and Body Language in Crisis Intervention
5. Assignment: Applying Crisis Intervention Strategies
6. Knowledge Challenge
7. Helpful Resources

3: Best Practices for Field Collaboration

1. Presentation: Introduction to Harm Reduction and Treatment Options
2. Presentation: Identifying Readiness for Treatment and Making Referrals
3. Discussion: Motivational Interviewing - Helping People Change
4. Presentation: Building and Navigating Local Referral Networks
5. Assignment: Best Practices For Field Collaboration
6. Knowledge Challenge
7. Helpful Resources

4: Real-World Application & Resource Utilization

1. Presentation: The CARE Approach

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2. Presentation: Real-World Scenario: Handling a Crisis in a Public Setting
3. Discussion: Applying the CARE Approach
4. Presentation: Real-World Scenario: Handling a Crisis in a Residential Setting
5. Assignment: Developing a Crisis Intervention Action Plan
6. Knowledge Challenge
7. Helpful Resources

Program Wrap-Up

1. Overall Course Feedback
2. Collect the Entire Power Pack
3. Getting Your Certificate and Badge