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Oregon Coalition Recognized for Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse **Oregon Efforts to Curb Opioid Epidemic Stand Out Nationally**

Portland, OR - The Oregon Coalition for Responsible Use of Meds (OrCRM)—a statewide coalition convened by Lines for Life—has won a national award for Outstanding Prevention, Treatment, or Public Health Effort from the National High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program. Selected from over 150 award nominees nationwide, OrCRM launched in 2013 to reduce abuse, misuse, and overdose from prescription drugs.

"Many organizations and coalitions across the country are working very hard to prevent opioid drug abuse and its tragic consequences," says Chris Gibson, executive director of Oregon-Idaho HIDTA—a counter-drug grant program that aims to identify, disrupt, and dismantle drug trafficking organizations. "OrCRM's unique approach is multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary and regionally based—a design that makes them stand out from other prevention efforts. It's easy for people to get together and talk about a problem, but it's difficult for them to come to consensus on strategies to solve problems and even more difficult to implement those strategies once consensus is reached. OrCRM has successfully worked through these difficulties and is accomplishing the goals that they have set. The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA program is very proud to support OrCRM's work and of this well-deserved recognition."

OrCRM is most well-known for convening broad arrays of stakeholders at statewide summits designed to develop regional-level action plans. The coalition has convened nearly 1,000 stakeholders in five regions across the state. The action plans developed in each region target four key objectives: (1) reduce the number of pills prescribed by improving pain management practices, (2) expand access to treatment services, (3) better disposal of unused meds, and (4) educate healthcare providers and the public about the problem.

"In the Portland Metro Area, prescription drugs killed as many people as heroin in 2015 and are frequently the gateway to heroin initiation," says Multnomah County Health Officer Paul Lewis. "OrCRM has become the statewide organizing center for coordinating the needed series of strategies required to defeat this epidemic. We're extremely proud to be part of OrCRM as it receives recognition for its tireless efforts in Oregon."

The coalition has generated action across the state to decrease the impacts of the prescription drug abuse epidemic. Strategies range from health system improvements such as better integration of behavioral health care to deployment of naloxone (a drug that reverses the effects of opioid medications to prevent overdose injuries or death) in rural law enforcement patrol cars.



Lines for Life staff will receive OrCRM's award from Office of National Drug Control Policy at a Washington D.C. ceremony this evening. This is the second time Lines for Life has received a national HIDTA award.

About Lines for Life

Founded in 1993, Lines for Life is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing substance abuse and suicide. We promote healthy communities through 24-hour crisis intervention services, prevention services, and public policy and advocacy.

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