

Top Hat Consulting

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Topic Title: Fighting the Scourge of Fentanyl on Campus: A Model Program Developed by Pfizer

Executive Summary

Fentanyl overdoses are happening across the country; however, the problem is not confined to heavy-drug users and addicts. In fact, for Americans aged 18-45, the leading cause of death is fentanyl. The fentanyl epidemic is becoming increasingly prevalent among university campuses as students search for means to self-medicate mental health conditions, like anxiety, as well as to cope with the pressures surrounding college life. Fentanyl is being used to lace various medications students use – some of which are counterfeits of drugs originally produced by Pfizer. It is for this reason that Pfizer continues to commit to providing a solution to the fentanyl crisis and has enlisted the help of Top Hat Consulting to explore the ethical, legal, and financial considerations of designing a model program for universities.

We recommend developing a pilot program, funded by Pfizer, to increase access to life-saving education and resources on college campuses. This pilot program would feature a one-time grant to public universities in West Virginia.

This funding would cover prevention methods, including the Second Chance Promise, which would offer universities a strategy for students to “come back” from first offenses without fear of dismissal. Ideally, this would lead to students being more likely to ask for help before it is too late. This grant also would cover a stipend for student ambassadors on campus who would provide “boots on the ground” for the program. Ambassadors would be responsible for providing assistance to peers who struggle with drug use by organizing outreach programs to increase access to resources, as well as training for what students can do to help their peers in the event of an overdose. Ideally, this grant would also provide funding to expand overall access to already existing on-campus resources, such as providing free therapy sessions for students and training for staff members who would work closely with students in this process. The funding would also be utilized to provide materials necessary for such training, such as Narcan and fentanyl testing strips.

This solution is not only the right thing to do, but provides dividends for Pfizer as its public image and goodwill increases in response. Pfizer is already supporting efforts at harm reduction, as shown by their partnership with Fight The Fakes and donation of one million doses of life-saving Narcan to DirectRelief. Our model program would be the next step in supporting public health in the United States.