Request for Proposals

Rapid Review of Jurisdictional Responses to Opioid Overdose

Proposals must be received via email to
Cindy Soules
Manager, Research Programs
csoules@msfhr.org
by March 15, 2017

ISSUE DATE: FEBRUARY 22, 2017
1. **Purpose**

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) empowers British Columbia’s (BC) best and brightest health researchers to pursue world-class innovation and stretch the bounds of what health research can achieve. The Foundation helps BC’s health research community discover solutions to our greatest health challenges; connect knowledge and action on provincial priorities; and engage partners to improve the research enterprise. Learn more at [www.msfhr.org](http://www.msfhr.org).

MSFHR is working to support BC’s Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response with an ongoing evaluation of the province’s response to the opioid overdose crisis. The first phase of this work — covered by this request for proposals (RFP) — involves determining how other jurisdictions have responded to similar crises, particularly those involving fentanyl and related analogues. The purpose of this RFP is to commission a rapid review including a review and synthesis of the related literature, with a focus on responses that attempt to integrate health and public safety. The findings will be presented and discussed at a dialogue with Joint Task Force members and researchers with relevant expertise, and will inform BC’s ongoing response to the current public health emergency and the design of a subsequent developmental evaluation of the opioid crisis response strategy. MSFHR plans to launch a separate funding opportunity for the evaluation.

2. **Background**

In April 2016, BC’s Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Perry Kendall, declared a public health emergency in response to a significant increase in drug-related overdoses and deaths in the province. In July 2016, Premier Christy Clark announced the establishment of the Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response. The Joint Task Force is leading an integrated response to the public health emergency across BC’s public health and public safety sectors to prevent and respond to overdoses in BC. Co-led by the health and public safety sectors, the Joint Task Force response strategy focuses on seven key areas:

1. **Immediate response to an overdose** by expanding naloxone availability and the reach of supervised consumption services in the province.

2. **Preventing overdoses before they happen** by improving treatment options for people with opioid dependence and exploring drug checking services and improving health professional education and guidance.

3. **Public education and awareness about overdose prevention and response** through public awareness campaigns.

4. **Monitoring, surveillance, and applied research** by improving timely data collection, reporting and analysis to inform action, evaluating implementation, and applied research.

5. **Improving the scheduling of substances and equipment under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and the Precursor Control Regulations** by regulating drug manufacturing equipment such as pill presses, regulating precursors.
6. **Improving federal enforcement and interdiction strategies** by working with the Canada Border Services Agency to increase enforcement activities to interdict the importation of illicit drugs.

7. **Enhancing the capacity of police to support harm reduction efforts related to street drugs** by providing training to police and other first responders to support safe fentanyl identification and handling practices.

### 3. Research Project Overview

MSFHR is requesting proposals to conduct a rapid review including a review and synthesis of the published and grey literature on how other jurisdictions have responded to opioid overdose crises, particularly those involving fentanyl and related analogues, including clarification between epidemics driven by prescription opioids vs. illicit drug use, while recognizing responses may focus on both.

The rapid review should focus on responses that attempt to integrate health and public safety, and on jurisdictions outside of Canada that are responding to situations similar to the current public health emergency in BC. Specific questions that the literature review should cover will be determined by the successful proponent based on the BC response strategy and discussion with the Joint Task Force and confirmed by members of the task force and MSFHR staff. Interested applicants may request a copy of the BC response strategy from Cindy Soules: csoules@msfhr.org.

The review should include enumeration of key aspects of innovative approaches to drug policy, regulation and legislation in jurisdictions that may be making progress towards improved population-level outcomes on opioid-related morbidity, mortality, community safety and other important social domains. Proponents should consider approaches taken by European countries such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Denmark and Portugal, as well as jurisdictions confronting marked epidemics of opioid overdoses, particularly US states that have been severely impacted.

In addition to the review of literature, the project should incorporate key informant interviews with Joint Task Force members (and other experts as required) to ensure the rapid review is focused on key questions that will generate findings relevant to BC’s existing response strategy, as well as to the subsequent developmental evaluation of the provincial opioid overdose response strategy. The review will also benefit from key informant interviews with health and public safety leaders in the relevant jurisdictions included in the review.

The findings of this rapid review will be presented and discussed at a dialogue with Joint Task Force members and researchers with relevant expertise. The purpose of the dialogue is to discuss potential changes to the BC response strategy suggested by the rapid review, determine additional sources of data to ensure the most robust monitoring of the epidemic and response, and inform the design of a developmental evaluation of the strategy.
4. Award Amount and Duration

The maximum amount of the award is up to $50,000 and due to the urgency of this project, the research must be conducted over a maximum period of eight weeks. MSFHR will fund one research team to carry out the proposed project. All expenditures in the submitted budget must be fully justified.

All expenditures related to services provided by the award recipient(s) arising from the RFP including overhead and tax where applicable, will be charged against the project budget.

5. Eligibility Criteria

- Experienced researchers or research teams affiliated with a BC host institution that is eligible to hold MSFHR funds are eligible to submit a grant or contract proposal for this research project. (For a list of current eligible institutions, see www.msfhr.org/sites/default/files/MOU_List.pdf.)
- Experienced BC-based private, for-profit or not for profit researchers, research teams and organizations are also eligible to submit a contract proposal for this research project.

6. Key Competition Dates

The RFP timeline is summarized as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Release of RFP</td>
<td>February 22, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal deadline</td>
<td>March 15, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants notified of funding decision</td>
<td>March 20, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project begins</td>
<td>March 20, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid review presentation at dialogue</td>
<td>May 1, 2017 (TBC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final rapid review report deadline</td>
<td>May 15, 2017</td>
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7. Scope of Work

7.1 Activities

MSFHR seeks a team of researchers who will conduct appropriate activities to complete the project as described in section 3: Research Project Overview and provide the deliverables as described below.
7.2 Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/Item</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of draft presentation outline of rapid review findings</td>
<td>April 21, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of results of the rapid review to a dialogue of Joint Task Force</td>
<td>May 1, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>members and a group of BC’s leading health and public safety scientific experts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery of final report written in the standard 1:3:25 format: one page of key</td>
<td>May 15, 2017</td>
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<td>messages; a three-page executive summary; and a 25-page (maximum) final</td>
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<td>report (excluding references and appendices)</td>
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The selected research team will be required to assist MSFHR with the design of the dialogue.

8. Proposal Content

8.1 Proposal Cover and Signatory Form

The attached Proposal Cover and Signatory Form must be completed and signed by the project lead as well as the lead applicant’s (host) organization to demonstrate agreement with and willingness to adhere to Appendices A, B and C of this RFP.

8.2 Contact Information

Include all information necessary to contact the designated contact person and a back-up person in case MSFHR cannot reach the designate. Either contact must be available during business hours throughout the review period.

8.3 Experience and Qualifications

Identify the project lead and the key team members, including any consultants who will be engaged to support the research project. For each member of your team, describe the role, capability and availability for this project, including knowledge and experience relevant to this research program.

Knowledge and experience in the following areas is required:

- Conducting rapid reviews to inform policy and practice; working with research users
- Qualitative research (including interviews and related analyses, evidence synthesis and other related methodology)
- Responses to population and public health issues
- Evaluation of complex initiatives
- Presentation and facilitation skills
Applicants will be required to submit current CVs or resumes for key team members. MSFHR will not require a CCV submission.

8.3.1 Declaration of Stakeholder Affiliation or Association

Identify any previous, active or anticipated relationships between the research team and MSFHR, and also between the research team and the Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response.

8.3.2 Research Ethics Board

Clearly specify the research ethics board you are affiliated with, if applicable.

8.4 Background and Objectives

Describe your understanding of the expectations for the research project including its purpose, target audience(s), and overall scope.

8.5 Project Approach

Describe the project approach and research methodology that will be utilized to achieve the results as described in section 3: Research Project Overview, section 8: Scope of Work. Describe in detail how the research will be carried out (where, how, methods, personnel, etc.) including data collection and synthesis methods for the literature review and key informant interviews.

8.6 Work Plan and Budget

Based on your project approach, provide a detailed work plan that ensures the objectives of the project can be met within the proposed budget and timeline. Provide a work breakdown with project start and end date, significant milestones as well as activity details, success indicators, and the expected level of effort required by the team members in sufficient detail to enable understanding of how and by whom the work will be carried out.

Provide a detailed, clearly explained budget that aligns with the work plan.

8.6.1 Ineligible Expenses

The following expenses are ineligible and should not be included:

- Rent of office premises and other related overheads (e.g. utilities)
- Capital expenses (e.g. office equipment, computer equipment and associated software)
8.6.2 MSFHR Supplied Resources

MSFHR reserves the right to supply certain services or supports where direct supply of such services can be arranged by MSFHR at a lower cost than that proposed by a research team. Examples include the costs of printing, photocopying services, teleconferencing services, travel, etc.

8.7 Proposal Format

To be eligible for review, all proposals must adhere to the instructions for presentation and content, and use the numbering system provided. Except for the appendices, all materials must be presented as follows:

- All materials, except appendices, must be a minimum 11 point size, Calibri (regular), single spaced, on one side of a letter-sized (21.25 cm x 27.5 cm / 8.5” x 11”) page, with a one-inch margin on all sides of the page.
- All pages should be consecutively numbered.
- All print must be black, of letter quality and easy to read.
- A header with the project name on the top left-hand corner, and footer with the page number on the lower right-hand corner of each page.
- The research proposal must not exceed 10 pages. This does not include appendices, a cover letter, project summary, Proposal Cover and Signatory Form, letters of support, or table of contents. Additional pages beyond the maximum will be removed and shredded by MSFHR prior to further processing.

8.7.1 Appendices

References and charts, tables, diagrams or surveys/questionnaires to support the proposal should be attached to the proposal package as appendices.

8.8 (Host) Organization Financial Administration

Provide the name, title, department and full address of the financial administrator who will be responsible for administering the award.

The signature of an authorized person representing the (host) organization is required in this section. By signing, the (host) organization agrees to Appendix B – MSFHR Signature Statement.
9. RFP Process

The following section describes the conditions under which responses will be accepted from research teams.

9.1 Submissions

Provide one electronic copy of the proposal in PDF format only no later than 4 p.m. on March 15, 2017. Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered. The proposal must include the signatures of the research team co-leads. Proposals should be submitted to:

RFP Submission
c/o Cindy Soules
Manager, Research Programs (Provincial Initiatives)
Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
200 – 1285 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6H 3X8

Email: csoules@msfhr.org

9.1.1 Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this RFP are to be directed to Cindy Soules by email at csoules@msfhr.org.

9.2 Selection Process

The proposal review will be MSFHR-led, with a review team composed of key representatives from MSFHR and the Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response, as well as two external-to-BC experts.

9.2.1 Selection Criteria

All proposals will be judged against a standard set of criteria, which includes:

- Understanding of the project purpose and scope
- Demonstrated experience, qualifications and knowledge of the applicant/team to carry out the proposed project (expertise as outlined above, synthesis methods, information retrieval, key informant interviews, etc.)
- Appropriateness of the rapid review methodology or approach and of the work plan, including timelines for the design and conduct of the activity
- Demonstrated capacity to prepare the required deliverables within the stipulated timelines
Appendix A: Terms and Conditions

1.1 Reject Proposals

MSFHR may, in its absolute discretion, reject in whole or in part any and/or all proposals for any reason or after taking into account factors considered relevant.

1.2 Liability for Errors

While MSFHR has used considerable effort to ensure an accurate presentation of information in this RFP, the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for Applicants. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by MSFHR, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve Applicants from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.

1.3 Errors in Proposals

The Applicant has the responsibility, at all times, to request any instruction, decision, or direction which may be required to prepare its proposal, or to notify the designated MSFHR contact person in writing of any ambiguity, divergence, error, omission, oversight, or contradiction contained in its proposal as it is discovered.

MSFHR reserves the right to request clarification of the contents of any proposal. MSFHR may require Applicants to submit supplementary documentation clarifying any matters contained in their proposals and may seek the Applicant’s acknowledgement of that interpretation. This is not an opportunity for the Applicant to submit new information modifying the proposal. Notwithstanding the foregoing, MSFHR is not obliged to seek clarification of any aspect of a proposal.

1.4 Limitation of Liability and Indemnity

MSFHR will not be obligated or liable in any way whatsoever to an Applicant except where MSFHR has awarded and entered into a written contract with that Applicant for the performance of the work contemplated by this RFP, and in which case that contract shall govern all such obligations and liabilities.

It is a fundamental condition of this RFP and the receipt and consideration of proposals by MSFHR that MSFHR, and its respective employees, consultants and agents, will not and shall not under any circumstances, including without limitation whether pursuant to contract, tort, statutory duty, law, equity, any actual or implied duty of fairness, or otherwise, be responsible or liable for any costs, expenses, claims, losses, damages or liabilities (collectively and individually all of the foregoing referred to as “Claims”) incurred or suffered by any Applicant or the Applicant’s sub-contractors as a result of or related to any one or more of the RFP, the preparation, negotiation, acceptance or rejection of any conforming or non-conforming proposal, the rejection of any Applicant, or the cancellation, suspension or termination of the RFP process, and by submitting an proposal each Applicant shall be conclusively deemed to waive and release MSFHR and its employees, contractors, consultants and agents, from and against any and all such Claims.

Each Applicant shall indemnify and hold MSFHR and its employees, contractors, consultants and agents, harmless from and against any and all Claims brought against them arising out of any act or omission of the Applicant, the Applicant’s sub-contractors, or by third parties arising out of or relating to the Applicant’s receipt of this RFP, or the preparation, submission and negotiation of any proposal submitted by the Applicant, where such third parties were directly or indirectly engaged by or through the Applicant in connection with any of the foregoing, or where personal injury, bodily damage or property damage is caused by the negligent acts or omissions of the Applicant. Such indemnification shall survive completion of the goods or services provided under the contract and the termination of the contract.

1.5 Confidentiality of Information

This document, or any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals. Information pertaining to MSFHR or related parties obtained by an Applicant as a result of participation in this process is confidential and must not be disclosed except for the purpose of responding to this RFP or as required by law.

1.6 Ownership of Proposals

All documents, including proposals, submitted to MSFHR become the property of MSFHR. They will be received and held in confidence, subject to the provisions of BC Personal Information Protection Act.

1.7 Applicants’ Expenses

Applicants are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing a proposal. If MSFHR elects to reject all proposals, MSFHR will not be liable to any Applicant for any Claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the Applicant in preparing the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final agreement, or any other matter whatsoever.
1.8 Irrevocability of Proposal

By submission of a clear and detailed written notice, an Applicant may amend or withdraw his/her proposal prior to the closing date and time. At closing, all proposals become irrevocable. Proposals must be open for acceptance for at least 90 days after the closing. In the event that MSFHR requires more than 90 days to evaluate proposals, additional time will be requested of all Applicants.

1.9 Conflict of Interest

Applicants are responsible for disclosing to MSFHR any and all real or perceived conflicts of interest. Proposals will not be evaluated if the Applicant’s current or past corporate or other interests are, in the opinion of MSFHR, deemed to be a conflict of interest in connection with this RFP or the activities or mandate of its facilities. MSFHR reserves the right to disqualify and reject an proposal in whole or in part where the Applicant or directors, officers, shareholders or any other person associated with the Applicant has a Claim or has initiated a Claim or legal proceeding against MSFHR or against whom MSFHR has a Claim or has instituted a legal proceeding with respect to any previous contracts, tenders or business transactions.

Applicants shall not engage in any form of lobbying whatsoever to influence the outcome of this RFP. Further, Applicants shall not attempt to communicate or make any representation or solicitation to any director, officer or employee of MSFHR except to the designated MSFHR contact person.

1.10 Verification

MSFHR reserves the right to verify any statement or claim contained in any proposal or made subsequently in any interview or negotiation. That verification may be made by whatever means MSFHR deems appropriate and may include contacting the references provided by the Applicant. In submitting a proposal, the Applicant is deemed to consent to MSFHR verifying any information from third parties including the Applicant’s bank references, and receiving additional information regarding the Applicant, its directors, officers, shareholders or owners and any other person associated with the Applicant as MSFHR may require.

1.11 Request for Proposal Cancellation

MSFHR is not bound to accept any proposal and reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to postpone or cancel this RFP at any time for any reason. Further and without limiting the foregoing, MSFHR will not be bound to accept the lowest or any bid and reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part, to discuss with any Applicant different or additional items and terms to those described in this RFP or received in any proposal, or to amend or modify any term of this RFP. MSFHR, in its sole discretion, may invalidate and cancel this RFP entirely and may issue a new RFP if considered in the best interests of MSFHR. No Applicant will acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges relative to the services prior to full execution of a written agreement for the services required.

1.12 Contract Terms

By submitting a proposal to MSFHR, Applicants shall be conclusively deemed to have accepted and to have agreed to be bound by each and every term, condition, and provision of this RFP, and any services, specifications, warranties, guarantees or representations stated in the accepted proposal or made during the RFP and selection process.

1.13 Contract Award

By submission of its proposal, the Applicant agrees to negotiate in good faith and execute a contract with MSFHR incorporating the terms and conditions of this RFP, the Applicant’s proposal, and such other terms and conditions as MSFHR may reasonably require. MSFHR may negotiate modifications, additions or variations to such terms and conditions or to the goods or services set out in a proposal in order to satisfy its operational or administrative requirements. The RFP and the contract, if any, entered into subsequently shall take precedence over any and all documents submitted by the Applicant. MSFHR will not accept an Applicant’s standard purchase agreement.

1.14 Sub-Contracting

All sub-contractors and/or partner(s) must be identified in the proposal. No sub-contracting or assignment of any contract or of any services to be provided is permitted without the prior written consent of MSFHR. Applicants are to identify all proposed sub-contractors including the company name, contact name, phone number, fax number, email address, type of service the sub-contractor will be performing or providing, and the length of time the Applicant has been using the services of the sub-contractor. No additional sub-contractors will be added nor will other changes be made to this list without the written consent of MSFHR.

1.15 Governing Law

Applicants must comply with all applicable laws. This RFP will be governed exclusively by, and construed and enforced in accordance with, the laws of the Province of British Columbia. The Applicant agrees to attorn to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the Province of British Columbia in the event of any dispute concerning this RFP or any matters arising out of this RFP.
1.16 Appendices

All appendices to this RFP are deemed to be incorporated herein and form part of the RFP.

1.17 Copyright

All material produced or developed as a result of this Award ("Material") and all copyright and other intellectual property rights in that Material shall belong to the Project team members identified in the submitted proposal ("Project Team") in accordance with their respective institutional intellectual property rights and ancillary policies. Researchers will be asked to delay any publication of this work for three months following completion of the project. The Host Institution on behalf of the Project Team members shall undertake to negotiate an Intellectual Property Sharing Agreement (IP Agreement") with all Project Team members and/or their respective institutions and provide a copy of the IP Agreement to MSFHR.

A term of the IP Agreement must be that the Project Team members grant MSFHR a perpetual non-exclusive, irrevocable, world-wide, fully paid up and royalty-free license to use, make, copy, distribute, translate, practice, reproduce, and adapt the Material produced pursuant to this Award and other intellectual property arising under this Award for scientific, educational, public good and other non-commercial uses.
Appendix B: MSFHR Signature Statement

Signing the Proposal Cover and Signatory Form indicates agreement with the MSFHR Signature Statement. The following statements apply to all signatures required by MSFHR for any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.

The signature of the project co-leaders confirms that s/he declares and agrees:

- That the information on the proposal is complete and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge.
- That s/he has met the eligibility requirements to apply.
- To inform MSFHR and the host organization of any changes in eligibility status or in the information provided in this proposal.
- To meet all reporting requirements of MSFHR.
- To comply with the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (December 2011).
- To meet all privacy, ethical and research policies outlined by the (host) organization and/or MSFHR.

Where a research team is affiliated with an eligible host institution, the signature of the (host) organization in section 3: Organization Financial Administration confirms that the host organization agrees to:

- Administer, monitor, investigate and report on all MSFHR award funds in accordance with MSFHR’s program guidelines, conditions of award and policies, and any other requirements, as it may be outlined in memorandums of understanding and the policies and procedures of the (host) organization.
- Provide MSFHR with any other information that is relevant to the operation of the award upon request from MSFHR. Notify MSFHR immediately of any known changes in status of the award recipients.
- Withhold MSFHR funding to the award recipient(s) until all award conditions of MSFHR and the host organization have been met, including eligibility and compliance with:
  - The ethical and research policies outlined by the:
    - Host organization
    - MSFHR
    - The Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (December 2011)
    - The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (December 2014)
  - Institutional, regional, and national requirements for animal care, biohazards and research activities having potential effects on the environment.
Appendix C: MSFHR Privacy Agreement

Signing the Proposal Cover and Signatory Form indicates agreement to the MSFHR Privacy Agreement. All information submitted by the applicants for the research project will be governed and protected in accordance with applicable privacy legislation in the Province of British Columbia and the following terms.

As MSFHR applicants, we declare and attest that:

- I authorize MSFHR, or other authorized assignee of MSFHR, (collectively “MSFHR”) who is responsible for the development and administration of the above noted research project to collect, use and disclose the information provided for the purposes of approval, monitoring, evaluating and/or administering proposals for funding, management of all subsequent awards and business activities. In addition, MSFHR is authorized to share information that I provide with those persons who support, approve, monitor, administer and/or evaluate proposals for funding and any subsequent awards, including the appropriate administrative representatives of the (host) organization, supervisors, co-applicants, peer reviewers, funding partners or authorized employee or assignee of MSFHR.

- I authorize MSFHR to also use the information collected for statistical, research and business purposes, to provide me with specific health research publications or to contact me in the future with respect to my possible participation in research related task forces, peer reviews, surveys, etc.

- I authorize MSFHR and its funding partners to use the information collected, including identifiable information, for the purposes of communicating successful proposals to the general public through their media formats including websites, newsletters, publications, etc.

- I agree that MSFHR and its funding partners are not liable in any way for the subsequent use or misuse, by any member of the public, of any of my information that is published to the general public.
Rapid Review of Jurisdictional Responses to Opioid Overdose

Please complete and submit this form as part of the proposal package. This form must be signed by the project lead and the (host) organization. Add additional pages as needed.

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<th>TITLE OF PROPOSAL</th>
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<th>DETAILS OF PROJECT CO-LEADERS</th>
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<td></td>
<td>We the undersigned have read Appendix A – Terms and Conditions, Appendix B – MSFHR Signature Statement, and Appendix C – MSFHR Privacy Agreement, and agree to the terms outlined.</td>
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### 3 ORGANIZATION FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

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