

Bright Spot Application County: *Hancock County*

Initiative Name: *Substance Misuse & Drug Overdose/ Kick Cancer's Butt 5K*

Primary Prevention Focus Area(s): *Substance Misuse, Drug Overdose & Literacy*

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Bright Spot Award Questions

Why is this initiative important to your community?

With a population of 6,757, Hancock County adult obesity rate is at an all-time high of 41%. The adult smoking percentage has continued to increase from 25% in 2017 to 30% in 2020¹. This year's focus was on substance misuse and providing healthcare resources to the public. The burden of substance use has been apparent and particularly high in rural Central Appalachia. According to 2021 data, Hancock had 23 reported overdoses ². This data indicates that this population is in need more access to physical activities, health services and resources. This yearly event provides such assistances.

Is this initiative contributing to a policy, systems, and/or environmental change in the community?

The Kick Cancer's Butt 5K provides system change by providing more access to physical activity and provided healthcare resources as well as tobacco, and substance misuse information. The Kick Cancer's Butt 5K has brought the community together to help fund local cancer patients in Hancock County by assisting with the financial burdens such as transportation, groceries, medical bills, etc. This community event was established by the Hancock County Health Department in 2017, as a community event to increase physical activity and promote tobacco free lifestyles changes. This year's focus was to provide substance misuse awareness and resources to the residences of Hancock County. This event includes other health community partners which contribute their services and resources to the public. Community partners include Hancock County Rescue Squad, Sneedville Fire Department, Ballad Hancock County

¹ [Explore Health Rankings | County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)

² <https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/pdo/pdo/data-dashboard.html>

Hospital, Hope for Hancock, ETSU School Based Health Center, Hancock County Middle School Cheerleaders, and We Run Events.

What are the SMART objective goals and major purpose(s) of this initiative?

Goal: *Hancock County Health Department will observe improved availability of drug prevention education and awareness for all populations in Hancock County as evidenced by decreased NAS births and overdose deaths.*

Objective: *By November 30, 2022, the Hancock County Health Department will collaborate with community partners to hold a 5K for the community to bring awareness to substance misuse.*

- *Strategy: Track number of attendees at the 5K.*
- *Strategy: Track number of community agencies participating in the 5K.*

What is the annual budget and funding source for this initiative? If no funding is available, how have you implemented or sustained the initiative?

The 5K is financially sustainable without the need of local health department resources. The event has an entry fee, which pays for the event, shirts, awards, and the remaining funds are given to the Hope for Hancock to assist with local cancer patients. This year, the Hope for Hancock was able to raise \$5,000 from this 5K event.

Have community partners helped with the initiative? What are the roles of these partners?

All community partners play a supporting role. With the support of the director of schools the health department was able to secure the date and the facility to organize the event. The Kick Cancer's Butt 5K was held on November 5, 2022, at the Old Hancock County High School. The Health Department used We Run Events to promote and disseminate the link to register for the occasion. Door prizes were secured through Hope for Hancock and Hancock Strong. Lastly, the community partners aided in the 5K by setting tables and providing their services and resources to the public. Community partners (fire department, EMS, hospital, sheriff's department etc.) also volunteered their services for this event.

Describe your staff's involvement, including the interdisciplinary team approach taken with this initiative? Begin with the planning process; explain staff roles in planning and implementing the initiative. Discuss how you foster creative scheduling so that clinical staff can lend their expertise?

This event involved all health department staff. The Hancock Health Department has hosted this event every year, since 2017. They plan and implement this event, which involve securing the location, contacting local department to assist with the 5K. The health department puts all information about the event, in a year in advance through the We Run Events website. The staff creates the logo for the flyers, t-shirts, and medals. The ordering of t-shirts, snacks and water are all done by the Hancock Health Department staff. Lastly, they assist with setting up and breakdown on the day of event, which includes placing signs, water stations, providing volunteers along the 5K route and assisting with trash pickup after the event.

In what way is this initiative especially innovative? How is this initiative different from other similar programs? Is there a specific idea tested with this approach? Is this work informed by relevant literature or research studies?

This 5K event is placed in a central location. Residence do not have to travel a long distance to participate in this event. The route of this 5K goes through a lot of residential area, which promotes involvement and engagement within the population. This event attracts a diverse group of individuals and ages. Social participation is critical in fostering community vitality and promoting health. According to research, many rural communities are geographically isolated. Rural residence face barriers on access health services and health activities³. Therefore, it is vital to meet the people where they are, which this event provides. 5K races have become a very popular way to raise money and create visibility for causes and organizations. In Hancock it has opened the door to improve the knowledge and awareness of substance misuse and other health issues within the community. It also offers the community partners the ability to provide their resources to the community to help improve the population's health and wellbeing. There is no significant research on this type of activities currently. However, the event has proven successful through the amount of people who participated in the race (81 individuals) and the amount of community partners (8 community agencies) who assist in these efforts.

Is this initiative considering or addressing an inequity in your community? What is that inequity and how are you addressing it?

Due to Hancock County being in a very rural area, it provides increased risk of isolation and a decrease in health promotion activities. As indicated, The Kick Cancer's Butt 5K provides an opening to promote health as a community and addresses these inequities in this area.

How are you evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative? Is the initiative on track to achieve stated goals or has it achieved stated goals?

Effectiveness of the Kick Cancer's Butt 5K was determined by the number of participations and community partners who participated in the event. This year's 5K was proven to be successful. According to record, there were 81 individual participants and 8 community agency who participated in the event. Number of participants have ranged from 80 to 138 people each year.

What limitations or obstacles might be expected if others wished to replicate this initiative?

There are some challenges in organizing a 5K. One of the vital elements to a 5K finding a location and route for the race. Many times, this involves talking to local government officials to utilize and determine the best area to hold a race. Getting a permit can be time consuming process and it is recommended to give yourself plenty of time to go through this process. Once the details have been sorted, getting the word out is vital. There are many outlets that can be used in promoting an 5K event. The most successful outlet used in Hancock was utilizing social media, websites, flyers, and an online race registration.

³ [Rural Health Disparities, Population Health, and Rural Culture | AJPH | Vol. 94 Issue 10 \(aphapublications.org\)](#)

Is this initiative sustainable without the resources of the local health department being involved?

The event is financially sustainable; however, the event needs substantial manpower and organizing to implement. Hancock Health Department has taken the lead and have facilitated this event since 2017. If there is another community organization that is willing and able to organize this event, then this initiative could be sustainable without the need of the local health department.