



## Statewide News Release

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## State Officials Hold Harm Reduction Summit

*Discuss current harm reduction strategies and response measures*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Apr. 9, 2019)** – Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Secretary Adam Meier, Department for Public Health (DPH) Commissioner Jeff Howard and other public health representatives, renowned harm reduction experts and response partners gathered in Covington today for the 2019 Kentucky Harm Reduction Summit.

The informational summit held at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center brought together healthcare professionals, law enforcement, state and local community and government leaders, community mental health centers, first responders and numerous service organizations from across the state. The group gathered to spotlight the current harm reduction strategies at work in the state and discuss work still needed at the heart of harm reduction and drug policy.

“It is important that we gathered together at this summit today to discuss and focus our efforts on harm reduction from the perspectives of law enforcement, leadership, families and recovery experts,” said Secretary Meier. “Our discussions here today spotlight the valuable work that has been done in our local communities and allowed us to define further work needed to better understand the issues at hand surrounding harm reduction in Kentucky.”

“This summit focuses on a number of perspectives from prevention to recovery,” said Dr. Jeff Howard, Public Health Commissioner. “It also provides an opportunity to examine and discuss harm reduction principles including participant-centered services, sociocultural factors, and health and dignity.”

Topics discussed at the harm reduction summit included: Law Enforcement Support of Harm Reduction; Prevention and Harm Reduction; Community Planning for Harm Reduction; Harm Reduction 101; Harm Reduction Leadership; and Harm Reduction and Families in Recovery.

The new DPH statewide Harm Reduction Mobile Unit was also onsite and available for tours during the day to provide training and distribution of naloxone to those interested.

Additional information on the summit is available at <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/Pages/harmreduction.aspx>.

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*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*