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Ohio Advances New Solutions to Prevent and Treat Drug Abuse and Addiction

Prize Recipients Announced in Phase Two of the Ohio Opioid Technology Challenge

COLUMBUS, OH -- Sept. 12, 2018 – Ohio continues to make significant progress in finding new solutions to combat drug abuse and addiction. The second phase of the [Ohio Opioid Technology Challenge](#) invited the worldwide business and innovation communities to advance technical solutions in the following areas: diagnose, prevent, connect and protect. More than 50 proposals were submitted from across the world, and today 12 prizes were awarded for the most promising technology-based advancements.

“Ohio is dedicated to addressing the opioid epidemic. Advancing innovation and technology is another way to ensure that no stone is left unturned,” said David Goodman, chair of the Ohio Third Frontier Commission. “As the state and the nation continue to fight this battle, we are committed to getting new products to market and saving lives.”

At the request of Ohio Governor John R. Kasich, the Ohio Opioid Technology Challenge leverages \$8 million of an up to \$20 million commitment to advance new ideas in the battle against drug abuse and addiction. The Challenge is a three-phase, prize-based competition to identify technology-based solutions that address the opioid epidemic.

The first phase collected bold and creative ideas from hundreds of researchers, caregivers, service providers and citizens from across Ohio, the U.S. and the world. The second phase sought technical solutions from the global community. Proposals that came from outside Ohio had to demonstrate partnership with an in-state entity. The third and final phase of the Challenge will begin in late September and run through July 2019. In the third phase of the Challenge, the most promising solutions will receive funding to refine and cultivate the solution into a product for market entry.

The top 12 proposals from this second phase of the Challenge each received \$200,000 prizes:

Ohio Opioid Technology Challenge Phase Two Prize Recipients

Apportis LLC (Dublin, Ohio): Philip Payne and the Apportis team have created an integrated platform that allows patients to connect electronically to licensed healthcare professionals and opioid addiction resources, as a complement to medication-assisted therapies. The platform, also accessible at clinics, hospitals, shelters and kiosks, would lessen the distance between patients and providers to deliver personalized medical support during a time of great need.

Brave Technology Coop (Vancouver, Canada): Gordon Casey and the Brave Technology Coop team are building an online platform for remote supervision of people who use drugs in isolation, providing them with community-based support and access to overdose prevention and response. Tools in development include a mobile app, short text message tools, and wearable technology for early detection of overdose.

DynamiCare Health (Boston, Massachusetts): Eric Gastfriend and the DynamiCare Health team have created a digital platform, using evidence-based psychosocial treatments to help patients struggling with opioid addiction. The platform combines frequent monitoring with immediate incentives to support recovery.

Innovative Health Solutions (Versailles, Indiana): Brian Carrico and the Innovative Health Solutions team have developed a device for addressing symptoms of opioid withdrawal. The solution includes an electrical nerve field stimulator that is placed behind a patient's ear to reduce the adverse effects of withdrawal symptoms, allowing for the transition to medication-assisted treatment.

InteraSolutions (Orem, Utah): Trish Henrie-Barrus and the team at InteraSolutions have developed an opioid risk assessment screening app that identifies patients with risk factors for opioid abuse. The screening would enable medical professionals to flag at-risk patients and direct them towards alternative methods of pain management, preventing a potential path towards opioid dependence.

OpiSafe.com (Denver, Colorado): Robert Valuck and the OpiSafe team are developing an automated patient monitoring system for opioid prescribers that would include alerts about opioid dosage, pain and function scoring, toxicology lab integration, etc. New functionality would enable OpiSafe to detect opioid use disorder at its earliest stages, helping to prevent addiction and enable early treatment referrals.

Prapela, Inc. (Concord, Massachusetts): John Konsin and the Prapela team are developing a device to help treat opioid-exposed newborns with postnatal drug withdrawal syndrome. The solution includes placing the newborn on a specially designed vibrating pad to reduce hyperirritability and improve normal breathing and heartbeats.

relink.org (Aurora, Ohio): Ray Dalton and the team at relink.org have developed a website to enable people struggling with addiction to find recovery service providers, ranging from detox to housing to employment. The team plans to continue to build out the technology, increase the number of providers in the database, increase awareness and utilization of the site, and conduct pilot studies to measure the impact of relink.org.

The University of Akron (Akron, Ohio): Abraham Joy and the team at the University of Akron proposed a solution to help first responders quickly identify the presence of an opioid on a person or surface, using a specially designed glove that will change color upon contact with an opioid. Based on the glove's color, the first responder can then take appropriate secondary actions, helping to decrease stress while carrying out their duties and potentially save lives.

University Hospitals (Cleveland, Ohio): Eric Beck and the University Hospitals team are developing a computer-aided dispatch technology for opioid surveillance and tracking in real-time. The tool would identify patients at-risk for addiction or opioid use disorder, make referrals to nonpharmacologic resources, and identify opportunities for patient education (pre-discharge) on opioid use and disposal.

University of Wisconsin-Madison (Madison, Wisconsin): Dave Gustafson and the Center for Health Enhancement Systems Studies team have developed a smartphone app to prevent relapse of opioid abuse. The app, which provides a suite of tools to increase patient's coping ability, recovery motivation and emotional support, is used in collaboration with treatment agencies to provide clinicians with insights into patients' progress between visits.

Vuronyx Technologies (Woburn, Massachusetts): Sandip Agarwal, Melissa O'Meara and the team at Vuronyx Technologies are developing paper analytical device test cards that are portable and self-contained to quickly and reliably test for the presence of opioids. The product would enable testing of opioids in field settings for first responders, law enforcement agents, medical professionals and crime scene investigators.

More information about the Ohio Opioid Technology Challenge is available at <http://www.OpioidTechChallenge.com>.