The University of Florida (UF) is a comprehensive land, sea and space grant public university; its missions extend throughout the state, nation and world. With 16 colleges, including six health science colleges (Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health and Health Professions, Veterinary Medicine) UF is Florida’s only member of the prestigious American Association of Universities. In the third most populous state with the highest percentage of older adults, and 1.8M people living in rural areas, UF is focused on reducing opioid related deaths, ranked second highest in America.

Educational training in addiction is launched primarily through six health science colleges, which, along with UFHealth’s multiple hospitals, research centers and institutes, comprise the Southeast’s most comprehensive academic health center. Each health professions college is actively engaged in educating future clinicians in therapeutic use and risk of opioids, along with other drugs of addiction. Graduate and postdoctoral training programs educate future leaders in addiction and recovery research and clinical practice. Examples include a NIDA-funded training grant, “Substance Abuse Training Center in Public Health”, several training grants with emphases on pain, pharmaceutical genomics and alcohol use, a medical residency in addiction/recovery, and a graduate certificate in addiction/recovery for working professionals.

UF and UFHealth take a systems level approach to mitigate the risks that may arise from prescribing opioids including: quality improvement initiatives to optimize opioid prescribing, addressing patient needs for pain management, partnering with the DOH as evaluators of the Florida Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP), and caring for those with addiction through the UFHealth Florida Recovery Center.

Ongoing efforts in the areas of prevention, treatment and recovery services are implemented through UF centers/institutes: Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Center for Addiction Research and Education; Pain Research and Intervention Center of Excellence; Center for Research into Substance Use and Pain; Center for Pain Research and Behavioral Health; and Southern HIV and Alcohol Research Consortium. The Substance Abuse Research from Bench to Community Group brings multi- and interdisciplinary collaborators together monthly.

UF’s robust $25M+ grant portfolio related to addiction/opioid/pain covers the translational spectrum from cells to society and includes: underlying mechanisms, drug discovery of non-addictive pain medications, pain management, mitigation of risks of addiction, prevention, classification of addiction, back translational models of addiction, overdose interventions, alternatives to opioids, consequences of opioid use, and distribution of deactivation pouches. UF is also a leader in biomedical informatics and big data, network analysis, pharmacoepidemiology, community engagement, and precision medicine/precision public health. Partnerships include our OneFlorida data trust of 15M patients, the Surgeon General and Department of Health, and safety net agencies. Investigators are members of NASEM and NAM panels relevant to the opioid crisis.

The breadth and depth of expertise at UF allow educational, research and clinical practice to thrive in areas central to the opioid crisis. Bringing these exceptional resources to bear, UF investigators and leaders commit to NAM’s Action Collaborative on Countering the US Opioid Epidemic. We will work with the Collaborative to share experiences and adopt best practices in all four areas of focus.