As opioid recovery continues, group hopeful their services eventually won’t be needed

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UNTINGTON — Statistics show overdoses and overdose deaths continue to decline locally and nationally, and while that trend could be interpreted different ways, it remains difficult to say what exactly has led to the decrease. It could be because fewer people are using. It could be because more people are getting into recovery. It could be because more people are lending a helping hand. One of those groups of people is Huntington’s Quick Response Team, which retraces the steps of Cabell County EMS ambulances, seeking those battling substance use disorder in an effort to get them into recovery. While Huntington turns from being known as the “opioid capital” to the “recovery capital” of the United States, members of Huntington’s Quick Response Team aren’t sure the need for their services — which focus on getting drug users into recovery — will ever go away.

Into the great unknown
The QRT team uses EMS-driven data to know who to seek within a one- to three-day time period of the person having experienced an overdose. Its goal is to get to those people before EMS even interacts with them, however, and that’s why they pass out information and speak with anyone who might seem like they’re in need of service.
At any given time, four people will go out with the team — a full-time leader, faith leader, paramedic, counselor, and faith leader. That team grows as needed.