



## CASE STUDY 1

# Substance Use Disorder Response: Fighting the Opioid Crisis in Rural America

## Arkansas Mobile Opioid Recovery (ARMOR)

### The Problem:

The opioid crisis has hit rural America with devastating force. In Arkansas, entire communities have lost friends, neighbors, and loved ones to substance use disorder. For many, treatment is hours away, making it hard to keep appointments and stay on the path to recovery.

### Barriers to Health:

- ❗ **No nearby clinics:** One third of Arkansas counties have no addiction treatment providers. Treatment programs are concentrated in just four urban counties, and some residents must drive up to two hours for care.
- ❗ **Daily medication requirements:** Standard opioid treatments require daily in-person visits, which is unrealistic for farm and shift workers.
- ❗ **Stigma:** Communities are tight-knit and individuals fear being seen at an addiction clinic.
- ❗ **Insurance:** Many in the communities have no insurance or gaps in coverage.

# ARMOR shows how mobile health can bring life-saving addiction treatment directly to rural communities, removing barriers, reducing stigma, and creating hope.

## The Mobile Solution:

Launched in 2021, ARMOR brings evidence-based addiction care directly to rural communities through two mobile units funded by state opioid settlement dollars, grants, and insurance reimbursement. They park at community hubs such as churches and parole offices to deliver:

- ✓ Medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD)
- ✓ Behavioral health and counseling
- ✓ Primary care for coexisting conditions
- ✓ Harm reduction tools (naloxone kits, safe disposal)
- ✓ Case management and referrals
- ✓ Peer recovery support from specialists with lived experience

This model removes the need for long-distance daily travel, making ongoing, life-saving care possible for remote patients.

## Their Impact:



**1,700+**

patients served across 37 rural counties in 2024



**1,200+**

naloxone kits distributed



**Increasing repeat visits**

showing retention and recovery progress



**All high-need areas**

visited at least biweekly



**Patients gain access**

to both addiction treatment and basic healthcare for previously untreated chronic conditions



**Peer specialists**

build trust and reduce stigma, helping patients engage in long-term recovery

## Diversified Funding Ensures Sustainability:

ARMOR's model, using multiple funding streams, demonstrates how states can create financially stable mobile addiction treatment programs with proven outcomes.



**Many clients are already traveling into town for mandatory appointments; the mobile unit gives them a safe, accessible place to get healthcare they may not have received before.**

*— Megan Copeland, Program Director*