Governor Dan McKee’s Overdose Task Force
January 10, 2024

Louis Cerbo, EdD; Acting Director, Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals
Philip Chan, MD, MPH; Consultant Medical Director, Rhode Island Department of Health
Ana Novais, MA; Assistant Secretary, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Richard Charest, MBA; Secretary, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Thomas Joyce, LCDP, CPRS; Task Force Community Co-Chair
Cathy Schultz, MPH; Task Force Director, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Welcome and Announcements
In Memory

Celebrating the Work of Bob Houghtaling
Remembering Bob Houghtaling
Elevating youth voices - even during a pandemic
"I'll remember you. When I've forgotten all the rest. You to me were true. You to me were the best."

Bob Dylan
Forever in Memory

"I'll remember you. When I've forgotten all the rest. You to me were true. You to me were the best."

Bob Dylan
Rhode Island’s Center For Harm Reduction & Recovery Services

Presented by: Ashley Perry, Deputy Director
Harm Reduction

Harm reduction, or harm minimization, refers to a range of public health policies designed to lessen the negative social and/or physical consequences associated with various human behaviors, both legal and illegal.

Definition from National Harm Reduction Coalition

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.
Radical Love/Radical Neutrality
Sex Worker Support Group:

- Started May 2023
- Funded by National Council for Mental Wellbeing to Prevent Overdose in Marginalized Populations
- Has served 100 Women & gender nonconforming individuals
- Over 90% of participants have experienced an OD in the past
Project Break

EST Since 2019

Funded by SAMSHA in partnership with Miriam Hospital

Primarily serves men who have sex with men and who uses meth

“Our services are designed to engage individuals who identify as gay, bisexual, queer+ who are thinking about how to gain new ways to manage their substance use, develop healthier ways of living, and work towards living a life in line with their values and goals.”

Enrolled 175 - 132 of those were enrolled at PWR

There were 94 six-month follow ups done on time.

Provided 1,141 therapy sessions

We had 3,773 Project break encounters in total
- 1,849 were case management
- 2,893 were peer support
- 600 weeks of rent
BEYOND the Understanding of Gender

- Partially funded through AIDS United
- Served 84 individuals in 2023
- Had over 600 case management sessions
- Has become a resource for trans and non gender conforming people to access treatment
Recovery Housing

In 2023, we placed 500 individuals into recovery housing. In total, we paid for 23,000 nights in recovery housing.
Thank You
aperry@weberrenew.org
Woonsocket Overview

Christa Thomas-Sowers
Community Outreach Coordinator
Community Care Alliance
Community Support

• Made possible by support from Community Overdose Engagement (CODE), Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), and Health Equity Zone (HEZ) collaboration

• Support from numerous community partners: Blackstone Valley Prevention Coalition (BVPC), Thundermist, Landmark Hospital, New Beginnings, MAE Organization, CTC/Discovery House, Parent Support Network (PSN), Milagros Project, AIDS Care Ocean State (ACOS), Preventing Overdose and Naloxone Administration (PONI), and MORE!
We <3 Our Community Partners!
Woonsocket Mobile Outreach Team

• Supported by the RIDOH
• Targeting overdose hot spots and engaging with individuals who are at high risk for overdose
• Consistent engagement within our community to maximize distribution of information and improve health outcomes for our people!
• Connection to individuals in emergency shelter projects in NRI
Safe Haven Drop-In Center

- Supported by funding from BHDDH
- Peer-led program opened February 2021
- Currently serving 50-100+ people daily
- Have served more than 1,195 unduplicated visitors
- Meet basic needs, provide peer support, naloxone, needles, safer smoking kits, condoms, and other harm reduction materials
- Referrals to detox, treatment, primary care, and additional supports
- A comfortable place for people to get warm, build relationships, and be connected to peer supports and other resources
What’s Working!

• Harm Reduction!
  • Narcan Distribution
  • Safer Use Materials
  • Dissemination of Information

• Connection to PCP Doctors/First Aid
  • Thundermist
  • Wound Care Kits
  • Vaccine Clinic

• Peer Support and Interventions
  • Improved outcomes for treatment readiness

• Research/Surveys
  • Brown, Lifespan, PONI
What We Need:

- **Suitable, adequate** shelter beds and Permanent Supportive Housing for *every* type of client
- Ability to focus on harm reduction and recovery supports, not the housing crisis
- Appropriate wages and supports for peers and other frontline workers
- Access to safe transportation for clients
Dream Team!