



Medicaid Transformation Project Opioid Response Project

Purpose

The Opioid Response Project is an opportunity to address the opioid crisis in our region by using practical, evidence-based approaches to prevent initiation of use by changing the way opioids are prescribed by doctors in the region, change the way providers engage with drug users with trainings and education, create protective factors for youth and families, prevent overdose deaths by expanding access to naloxone, increase access to medically assisted treatment (MAT), and increase recovery supports.

What is Harm Reduction?

Harm reduction is a public health policy designed to address the harmful consequences of drug use along with the drug use itself. Harm reduction is pragmatic, evidence-based, and cost-effective. It is a human rights focused model of care that calls for non-judgmental, non-coercive, dignity-based services that seeks to empower drug users. The goals of harm reduction include improving quality of life and public safety.

What is Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)?

MAT combines behavioral therapy and medications to provide a “whole-patient” approach to treating substance use disorder. These medications relieve withdrawal symptoms that cause chemical imbalances and physical reactions in the body.

Goals

- Create coordinated and integrated systems of care that engage with people who have opioid use disorder (OUD) in a respectful way
- Provide people with OUD the tools they need to survive (i.e. information, education, naloxone, clean injection supplies, access to treatment for those who are ready)
- Facilitate a process for people who use drugs to move along a continuum of treatment to address acute health issues, access to MAT (if chosen by patient), supporting them in stabilizing other behavioral and physical health issues, and connecting people to resources to improve their lives and enhance their recovery

Recovery Support Services Include:

- Health – overcome or manage one’s disease(s) or symptoms
- Home – have a safe and stable place to live
- Purpose – conduct meaningful daily activities, and possess the independence, income, and resources to participate in society
- Community – have relationships that provide support, friendship, love, and hope