



**Care Massachusetts  
The Opioid Abatement  
Partnership**

# Care Massachusetts Core Training and Technical Assistance Team



**Donna Beers**  
*BMC*



**Carly Bridden**  
*BMC*



**Miriam Harris**  
*BMC*



**Cheryl Sbarra**  
*MAHB*



**Kate Lena**  
*JSI*



**Sasha Bianchi**  
*JSI*



**Gretchen Shoemaker**  
*JSI*



# Background: Care Massachusetts

Care Massachusetts is working collaboratively with cities and towns across the state to take action to end the overdose crisis.

## **We provide resources and technical assistance with:**

- Connecting municipalities with the people most impacted by the overdose crisis
- Promoting the selection and implementation of proven public health strategies
- Educating the public on the source and purpose of the funds
- Facilitating collaboration across municipalities



# Communications Needs Survey

Link to survey:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CsYuOU2ACtrrbTHMdF\\_KNav3BsdNbpW5ALOZI9Uf82Q/viewform?edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CsYuOU2ACtrrbTHMdF_KNav3BsdNbpW5ALOZI9Uf82Q/viewform?edit_requested=true)



# Harm Reduction Resources and Opportunities

---

**Office Hours**  
**5/23/24**



# PRESENTERS



**Emily Levine**

*Bureau of Infectious  
Disease and  
Laboratory Sciences  
(BIDLS), MA DPH*



**Brittni Reilly**

*Bureau of Substance  
Addiction Services  
(BSAS), MA DPH*

# Objectives

1. Learn what harm reduction is and how it shows up in the State Subdivision Agreement
2. Hear about existing harm reduction resources in MA
3. Brainstorm how municipalities may use abatement dollars to supplement these resources





# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Opioid Abatement Office Hours

## DPH-Funded Harm Reduction Resources Spotlight

May 23, 2024

Emily Levine, MSW, Office of HIV/AIDS, Bureau of Infectious  
Disease and Laboratory Sciences (BIDLS)

Brittini Reilly, MSW, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services  
(BSAS)



# State Subdivision Agreement and Harm Reduction

## **Support efforts to prevent overdose deaths or other opioid-related harms through strategies that:**

- Increase availability of naloxone
- Providing training + education regarding naloxone
- “Naloxone Plus” strategies
- Approve and fund syringe services programs + other programs to reduce harms associated with drug use
- Support mobile units that offer or provide referrals to harm reduction services, treatment, recovery supports, primary and behavioral healthcare
- Promote efforts to train people in crisis training + harm reduction strategies
- Active outreach strategies like- Post Overdose Support Team model
- Provide outreach + services for people who are actively using drugs

# Recognizing Harm Reduction in the Care Continuum



HHS.gov

# PRINCIPLES OF HARM REDUCTION

**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.**

---

## **FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES CENTRAL TO HARM REDUCTION**

Harm reduction incorporates a spectrum of strategies that includes safer use, managed use, abstinence, meeting people who use drugs “where they’re at,” and addressing conditions of use along with the use itself. Because harm reduction demands that interventions and policies designed to serve people who use drugs reflect specific individual and community needs, there is no universal definition of or formula for implementing harm reduction.

# Examples of Everyday Harm Reduction



**SUN  
SCREEN**



**SEAT  
BELTS**



**SPEED  
LIMITS**



**BIRTH  
CONTROL**



**CIGARETTE  
FILTERS**

IGNORANCE = FEAR



# Syringe Service Programs

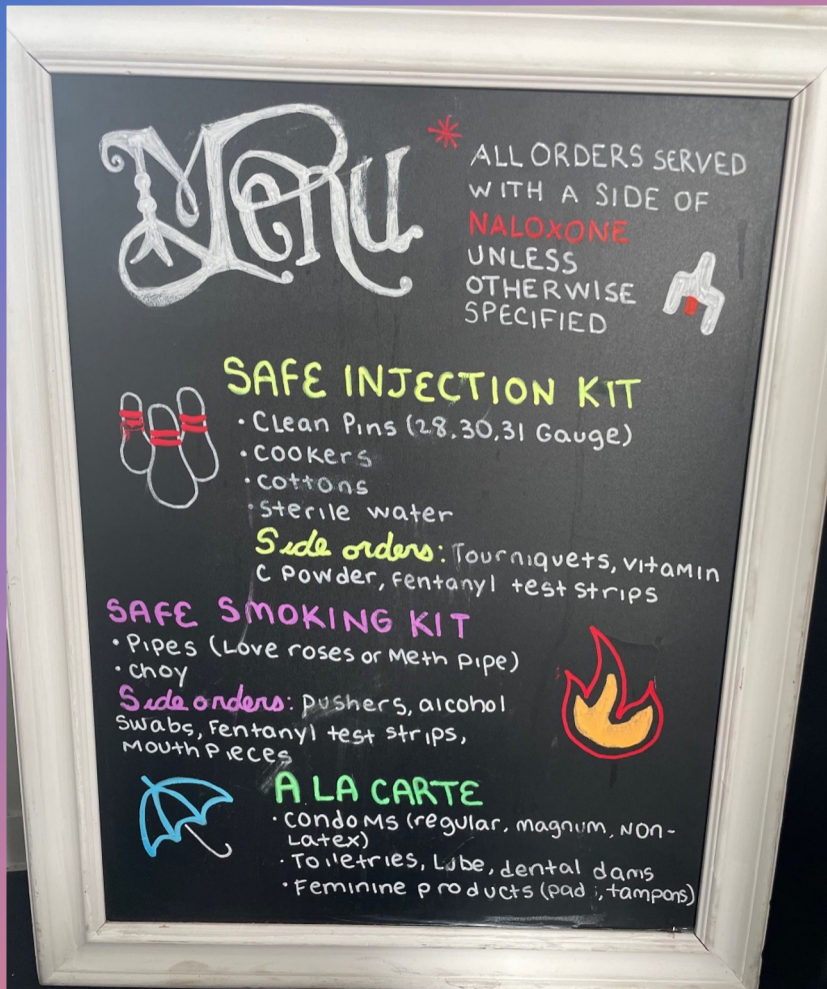
SILENCE = DEATH ▲ FIGHT AIDS ACT UP

© K. Hoving 89

# What to know about DPH funded Syringe Service Programs (SSP)

- **Syringes are available in retail pharmacies in MA – no ID is required**
- Anyone in MA can distribute syringes and other safe consumption supplies- **do not need state funding or approval to do so**
  - State Supreme Court ruling in 2017
- To receive DPH funding for services you must:
  - Hold a current contract with the Office of HIV/AIDS (OHA)
  - Have approval from your Board of Health
- Syringe Service Program does not = Overdose Prevention Center/Safe Injection Site





# What happens at a DPH funded SSP?

- Love, kindness, and support
- Non-judgmental and compassionate care
- Access to safer consumption supplies
- Overdose education and naloxone distribution
- Syringe collection and disposal
- HIV, HCV, STI education, testing, and linkage to care/treatment
- Linkage to PrEP, PEP, substance use treatment, mental health services, health care, insurance, Partner Services, etc.
- Sexual health risk reduction supplies
- Vaccinations: HAV, HBV, COVID, flu, etc
- Information regarding drug supply safety and drug checking services
- Vein and wound care

# How Syringe Service Programs operate

- Client-centered services delivered by harm reduction professionals
- Data-driven strategies
  - Client engagement
  - Outreach and mobile services
  - Offer the right supplies
- Syringe Access programs are more than just supply distribution
- Services can be provided in many locations: mobile, street outreach, brick-and-mortar spaces





# Syringe Service Programs in Massachusetts

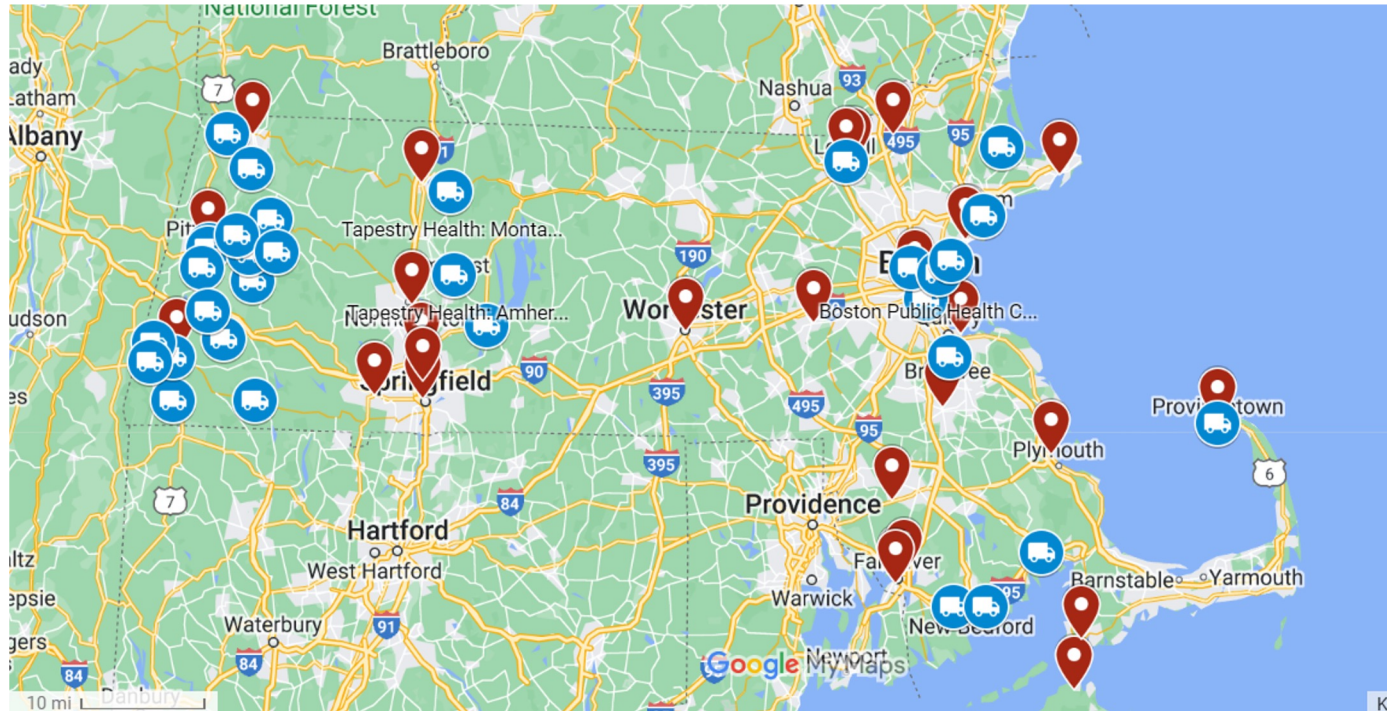
By the numbers (as of 5/6/24)

- 90 cities/towns have local Board of Health (LBOH) approval; of these, 86 have approval documented by an official letter.
- There are 18 agencies operating 65 BIDLS funded SSPs in 58 cities/towns across Massachusetts



# Syringe Service Program Locator

[mass.gov/info-details/syringe-service-program-locator](https://mass.gov/info-details/syringe-service-program-locator)



# Agencies funded by DPH to provide SSP

- AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod (Cape and the Islands)
- Tapestry Health (Western MA)
- AIDS Project Worcester (Central MA)
- Lowell Community Health Center (Northeast)
- Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (Northeast)
- AHOPE (Boston)
- Fenway (Boston, Cambridge, Somerville)
- Berkshire Harm Reduction (Western MA)
- Manet Community Health Center (South Shore)
- BAMSI (Southeast)
- Brockton Neighborhood Health Center (Brockton)
- Healthy Streets (North Shore)
- North Shore Health Project (North Shore)
- JRI (Boston and Metro West)
- Seven Hills (Southeast)
- Health Innovations (Lowell, Metro Boston)
- Community Health Connections (North Central)
- SSTAR (Southeast)

# Vending Machines: a primer for a hot topic



- Vending machines are a great way to offer low-threshold access to supplies
- Community buy-in is critical!
- User input is necessary
- Co-location of a sharps container or plan for community clean up activities
- Supplies that can be offered:
  - Syringes, pipes, and other safe consumption supplies
  - Narcan
  - Hygiene kits
  - Condoms
  - Emergency contraception
- Link back to supportive services
- **DPH funding is not necessary to implement this strategy**

A large field of purple flags is laid out on a grassy area in a park. In the background, there are several city buildings, including a tall modern skyscraper and older brick buildings. People are walking around the field, and some are wearing purple shirts. The sky is clear and blue.

# Overdose Prevention Resources

# NEW: YouCan Website

New interactive website with quick videos to support training and educational needs at the community level.

URL: [youcan.info](http://youcan.info)

you can.

GET CALL 911 Using alone? Español

**you can.**  
**Use safely.**  
**Protect yourself.**

With these simple steps, you can reduce your own risk – and that of others.

Three basic ways you can help prevent an overdose:

- 1) Start low, go slow.
- 2) Use with others instead of alone.  
To connect with a trained operator who can call for help in case of overdose, [click here](#).
- 3) Practice rescue breathing and carry Narcan®.

If everyone around you knows what to do, you'll all be safer if something goes wrong.

Video: Who is at risk for an overdose?

Video: How to prevent an overdose?

I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for Narcan®.

Learn how to access and administer Narcan® here

**you can.**  
**Save a life with Narcan®.**

Visit [youcan.info](http://youcan.info) for more information.

# DPH Funded Overdose Prevention Resources

SafeSpot is a 24/7 phone-based overdose detection service to prevent an overdose from becoming fatal.

<https://safe-spot.me/>



**1-800-972-0590**

## USE FENTANYL TEST STRIPS

### TAKE THESE STEPS:

- 1 Prepare the test
- 2 Dip the strip
- 3 Wait 5 minutes
- 4 Read results
- 5 Make a plan

Print materials such as posters and wallet cards, as well as resources such as fentanyl test strips and rescue breathing masks are available at the MA Health Promotion Clearinghouse: <https://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/>



## STREET CHECK COMMUNITY DRUG CHECKING

The Massachusetts Drug Supply Data Stream offers community drug checking resources and trends on the drug supply at [info.streetcheck.org](http://info.streetcheck.org)



# DPH Naloxone Resources

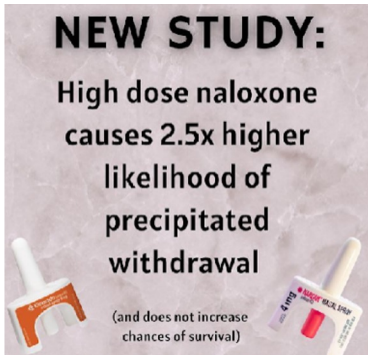
- Municipal departments (**police, fire, schools**) that need naloxone for the purpose of **emergency response** may purchase naloxone at the state negotiated public interest price from the DPH State Office of Pharmacy Services
  - Current price: **\$31.12 per 2 dose pack** of OTC Brand Name Narcan Nasal Spray
  - Price subsidies may be offered to customers contingent on state and federal funding availability
  - Other formulations may be more affordable such as 2mg/2mL naloxone with nasal atomizer or intramuscular naloxone
- Municipal health departments interested in establishing a **community naloxone distribution** program may consider applying to participate in the BSAS managed Community Naloxone Programs
  - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/community-naloxone-program-cnp>
  - Price subsidies may be offered to customers contingent on state and federal funding availability





# Naloxone Considerations

- Naloxone Nasal Spray 4 mg/.1 mL is FDA approved for over-the-counter sales
  - Many retail settings such as community pharmacies sell OTC naloxone as well as online retailers such as Amazon
  - Community members should consider using their insurance benefits at the pharmacy to cover the costs of naloxone
  - **How can your municipality promote naloxone access through settings such as retail pharmacies and stores? How can you maximize reimbursement?**



## Be extra careful navigating the pharmaceutical market!!!

- As we all have learned from these settlements, there is a profit motive at work in Big Pharma
  - In the overdose reversal medication market, **higher doses, longer lasting products, and flashy device gimmicks DOES NOT EQUAL better or more effective products.**
  - .4mg/1mL naloxone has been used to save lives around the world for decades and continues to be used around most of the United States

# Stay informed with reputable sources!

WEBINAR SERIES

## PLUNDER, PROFIT, AND PUNISHMENT:

### Exposing & Addressing Drug War Profiteers

This series will explore how private & public companies, agencies, and organizations profit off the drug war and plunder entire communities.

#### Session 1: Profiting from Treatment and Recovery

May 15, 1:00 – 2:30pm ET

#### Session 2: Profiting from So-Called Social Support Systems

May 22, 1:00 – 2:30pm ET

#### Session 3: Privatization and Profit in the War on Drugs

May 29, 1:00 – 2:30pm ET

#### Session 4: Curbing the Influence of Drug War Profiteers

June 5, 1:00 – 2:30pm ET

**DRUG  
POLICY  
ALLIANCE.**

[bit.ly/DrugWarProfiteering](https://bit.ly/DrugWarProfiteering)

ASL interpretation and live transcription provided.  
Access needs/questions: [acohen@drugpolicy.org](mailto:acohen@drugpolicy.org)

RSVP NOW

Drug Policy Alliance hosts regular researcher round tables to bring you the latest from world renowned subject matter experts.



Changing The Narrative is a network of reporters, researchers, academics, and advocates concerned about the way media represents drug use and addiction. Our mission is to help journalists and opinion leaders provide accurate, humane, and scientifically-grounded information in this contested terrain. We offer expert sources—including people with lived experience of the issues—and up-to-date, fact-checked, and evidence-based information on news and

# Discussion

A wide-angle photograph of a large park area. The foreground and middle ground are filled with a vast field of small, purple, triangular flags planted in the grass. In the background, several multi-story city buildings are visible under a clear blue sky. People are scattered throughout the park, some standing in groups on the right side, and others walking on paths. The scene is bright and sunny.

# Harm Reduction and Your Municipality

- What types of services are needed in your community?
  - How are you assessing need?
  - How are you including people with living experience in the assessment process?
- What services would you like to see?
  - What supports would you need to operationalize that?
- Is there a harm reduction program nearby?
  - If yes, have you engaged with them on collaboration opportunities?





# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**Thank you! Any questions?**

**[Emily.Levine@mass.gov](mailto:Emily.Levine@mass.gov)**

**[Brittni.Reilly@mass.gov](mailto:Brittni.Reilly@mass.gov)**

# Harm Reduction and Your Municipality

- What types of services are needed in your community?
  - How are you assessing need?
  - How are you including people with living experience in the assessment process?
- What services would you like to see?
  - What supports would you need to operationalize that?
- Is there a harm reduction program nearby?
  - If yes, have you engaged with them on collaboration opportunities?





# Massachusetts Department of Public Health

**Thank you! Any questions?**

**[Emily.Levine@mass.gov](mailto:Emily.Levine@mass.gov)**

**[Brittni.Reilly@mass.gov](mailto:Brittni.Reilly@mass.gov)**

# Resources Referenced

## Safety and Effectiveness:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/ssp/syringe-services-programs-summary.html>

## FAQs for SSPs:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/syringe-services-programs/php/faq/index.html>

## Community based SSP and impacts

- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38745887/>

## Comparison of 4 mg and 8 mg naloxone

- [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7305a4.htm?s\\_cid=mm7305a4\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7305a4.htm?s_cid=mm7305a4_w)

## All About Low Dose Intramuscular Naloxone

- <https://remedyallianceftp.org/pages/all-about-naloxone>

## Xylazine agonist on opioid receptor – naloxone works but has harsher withdrawal

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2772392524000142?via%3Dihu>

## DPA webinars:

- <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/plunder-profit-and-punishment-exposing-addressing-drug-war-profiteers-tickets-888769352057?aff=oddtcreator>

## Changing the Narrative:

- <https://www.changingthenarrative.news/>



# Questions



# NEXT STEPS

## **Upcoming Office Hours:**

- Thursday June 6th, 2-3pm - Office Hours: Spotlighting a Small Municipality's Planning Process: A Presentation from Swampscott  
\*\*Register [here](#)
- Thursday June 20th, 2-3pm - Office Hours: Prevention Resources and Opportunities  
\*\*Register [here](#)

**[Previous Office Hours slides and recordings](#)**

**[Request individualized technical assistance](#)**

**Sign up for our [listserv](#)**

**Deadline extended: Update your contacts by May 24**



# FEEDBACK SURVEY

**Please take a couple minutes to respond to the anonymous feedback survey after the call ends**



# THANK YOU!

Questions: [abate@jsi.com](mailto:abate@jsi.com)

