



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER HARM REDUCTION



Substance Use Disorder (SUD) harm reduction incorporates strategies, policies, and programs focused on safety, health, and wellness that are proven to reduce the negative effects of substance use. The goals are to improve quality of life and decrease the risks that occur with substance use rather than specifically eliminate substance use altogether. Harm reduction strategies can be utilized with anyone who uses substances, especially those who use substances intravenously. Harm Reduction strategies keep people safe and build relationships in hopes they will engage in care.

Examples of Harm Reduction Services

- Information on substance use and risks
- Naloxone distribution and NaloxBox
- Safe use sites
- Fentanyl test strips
- Syringe Service Programs (SSP)
- Cleaning supplies to sterilize use items
- Condoms and safe sex kits
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and health screenings
- Sharps containers and medication lock boxes
- Non-abstinence-based employment
- Housing First models
- Referrals to services

Harm reduction services meet people where they are geographically and motivationally. By building a relationship that values neutral service delivery and is based on acceptance and understanding, we can reach members who would not normally receive resources.

Harm reduction can prevent:

- ✓ Overdose
- ✓ Infections
- ✓ Infectious diseases
- ✓ Unplanned pregnancies
- ✓ Incarceration
- ✓ Loss of employment or housing
- ✓ Loss of family and other meaningful relationships

Harm reduction works.

New users of Syringe Service Programs are five times more likely to enter drug treatment and three times more likely to stop using drugs than those who don't use the programs.¹

Naloxone is indicated to reverse the effects of opioids.

In states that enacted naloxone access laws, opioid overdose deaths decreased by 14%². With fentanyl often found in many substances, families with loved ones who use any substances are encouraged to have naloxone available. Naloxone is a covered benefit to CareSource members and can be obtained through prescription or at any pharmacy.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/ssp/syringe-services-programs-summary.html>

² McClellan, C., et al., Opioid-overdose laws association with opioid use and overdose mortality. *Addictive Behaviors*, 2018. 86: p. 90-95.