



# Care Massachusetts The Opioid Abatement Partnership

MOAR Western MA Policy Form  
Monday, June 24, 2024  
American International College

# Care Massachusetts Core Training and Technical Assistance Team



**Carly Bridden**  
*Boston Medical Center  
Western MA TTA Provider*



**Kate Lena**  
*JSI  
Southeast and Metrowest  
MA TTA Provider*



# Objectives

- ❑ Introduce Care Massachusetts
- ❑ Present a summary of the opioid settlement + abatement priorities
- ❑ Review requirements for towns + cities as part of the settlement process
- ❑ Share tips on how to involve people with lived and living experience in municipal abatement activities



# 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



# History of the Opioid Settlements

- July 2021 - MA Attorney General announced the state's participation in a \$26 billion nationwide resolution with opioid distributors + manufacturers
- Resolved claims that these companies engaged in misconduct that enabled and perpetuated vast increases in opioid over-dispensing and diversion (e.g., unfair and deceptive sales tactics, failed to monitor suspicious orders, avoided professional responsibility)
- More than \$900 million coming to Massachusetts for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery over 18 year period



# Massachusetts Abatement Terms

The Commonwealth and its municipalities have a shared commitment to using abatement funds recovered from statewide opioid settlements to **supplement and strengthen resources** available to Massachusetts **communities and families for substance use disorder prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery**



# We Encourage You To:

- ❑ Fund evidence-based services
- ❑ Pool your funding on a regional or subregional level
- ❑ Partner with current direct-service providers
- ❑ Focus on specific unmet needs
- ❑ Use the resources available (e.g., BSAS data, Care Mass)



# You Are Required to:

- Center lived + living experience
- Center equity
- Not supplant funds
- Submit an annual report if your community or pooled communities has received \$35k+
- Spend the funds within the 7 strategies listed in the State Subdivision Agreement





# Municipal Use of Abatement Funds: Strategies

- 1 Enhance Opioid Use Disorder Treatment
- 2 Support People In Treatment & Recovery
- 3 Facilitate Connections to Care
- 4 Promote Harm Reduction
- 5 Needs of Criminal-Justice-Involved Persons
- 6 Support for Pregnant or Parenting Woman
- 7 Prevent Misuse of Opioids & Implement Prevention Education



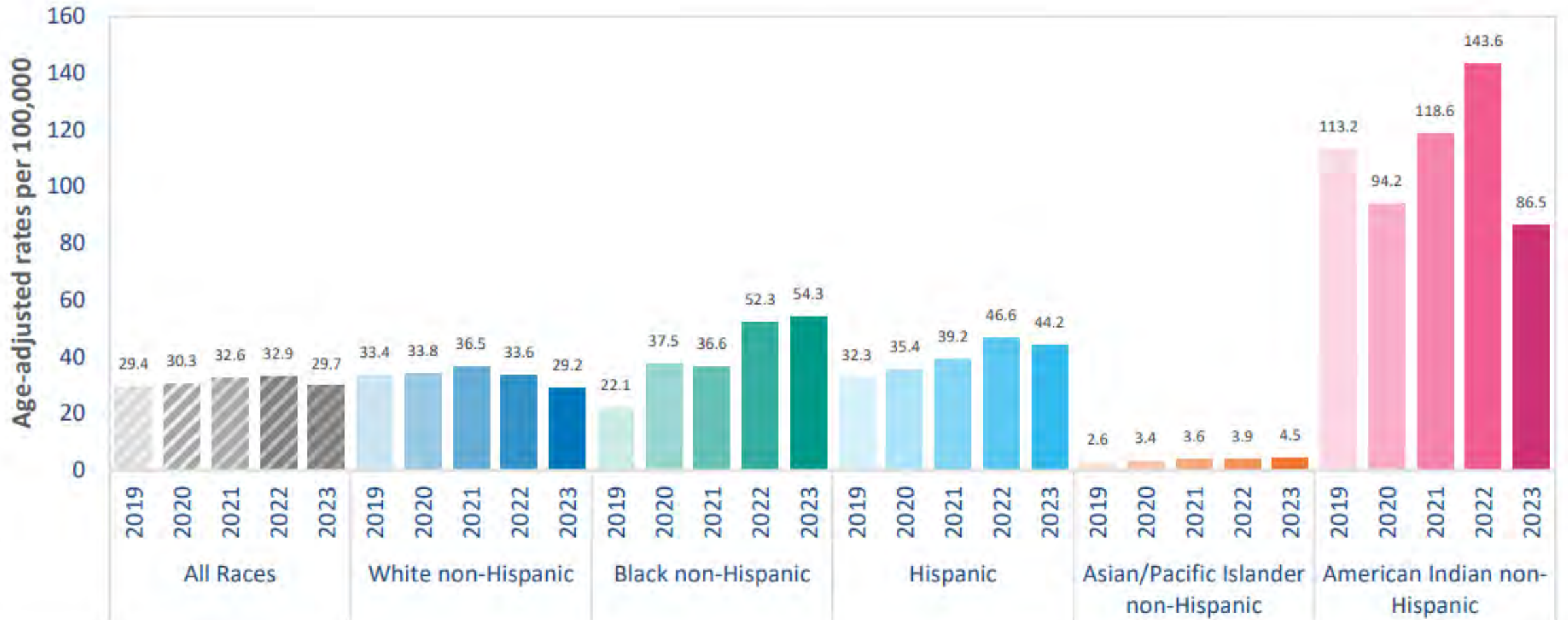
# Western MA Opioid-related Overdose Deaths 2013 - 2023

County	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2013 - 2023
Berkshire	22	29	32	35	30	40	40	56	62	47	48	441
Franklin	10	11	18	14	9	22	17	20	36	26	28	211
Hampden	69	64	98	130	113	209	199	215	213	230	231	1771
Hampshire	30	26	16	36	28	38	39	34	44	37	29	357
Worcester	115	162	222	246	251	281	267	278	279	331	278	2710

Source: [Opioid-related Overdose Deaths by County - June 2024](#)



## Confirmed Opioid-Related Overdose Rates, All Intents, by Race and Hispanic Ethnicity



Source: [Opioid related overdose deaths](#)

# Why Involve Your Community Members

- ❑ Involving people who are using drugs from the beginning will set the stage for their meaningful + thoughtful involvement throughout
- ❑ People who are using drugs have been directly affected by the opioid epidemic + are at highest risk of fatal opioid overdose
- ❑ Recognize that people with lived + living experience often have years of experience as community organizers in policy, research, direct services spaces, and informal mutual aid
- ❑ Ensuring that people most affected by the opioid overdose epidemic have an active role will maximize the impact of your work

Information borrowed from February 1, 2024 Care Massachusetts office hours: How to Engage with People Who Use Drugs. [Slides and recording can be found here](#)



# How to Involve Your Community Members

- ❑ Contact organizations led by people who use drugs, other advocacy groups, substance use coalitions, service providers, Peer Recovery Support Centers, syringe services programs
- ❑ Recognize the disproportionate impact on people of color in your community + connect with organizations led by and serving people of color
  - Incorporate cultural humility + understanding, opportunities to provide input in multiple languages

# How to Involve Your Community Members

- ❑ Offer ongoing, meaningful opportunities for engagement
- ❑ Follow-up to report back on how feedback was incorporated (or not) into funding decisions + why
- ❑ Validate experiences + emphasize the importance of the voices of people with lived + living experience
- ❑ Use different types of engagement events and tools (interviews, surveys, community forums, in-person/virtual options, anonymous feedback)

# Pay People for Their Time

- ❑ Use multiple types of incentives for engagement (stipends, travel supports, food/beverages at events, childcare)
- ❑ Cash or Visa gift cards are the best option
  - Otherwise, ask your community members how they would like to be paid if cash is not an option
- ❑ Partner with a community organization if easier to process individual payments through them



# How to Pay People for Their Time: 30B

- ❑ 30B Applies to the procurement of supplies or services for a governmental body in the amount of \$10k or more
  - Stipends to community members would be well under that
  - Contact the Office of the Inspector General for more information
    - Call: 617-722-8838
    - Email: [30BHotline@mass.gov](mailto:30BHotline@mass.gov)
    - [www.mass.gov/forms/chapter-30b-technical-assistance-form](http://www.mass.gov/forms/chapter-30b-technical-assistance-form)
- ❑ Trainings with the OIG Academy:
  - [www.mass.gov/info-details/oig-academy-schedule-and-class-information](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/oig-academy-schedule-and-class-information)





# Who in Your Community to Involve

- People who are actively using substances
- People who identify as in recovery
- People who are receiving addiction treatment
- Family members
- People working in direct service at harm reduction, recovery, treatment, + prevention programs



# Tips for Smaller Rural Towns

- Involving community members + building a coalition can create new capacity
- Regionalize
- Partner with community organizations providing direct services
- Recognize not everyone has access to consistent, fast internet.  
Offer low-tech options for getting their voices heard
- Provide opportunities for anonymous and private, confidential participation
- It's ok to have a short and long-term plan if you can't do everything you want to at once

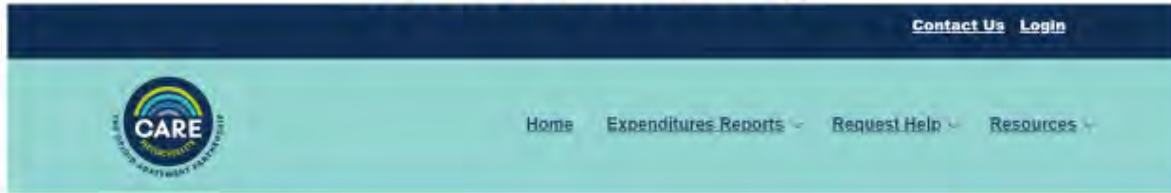


**QUESTIONS?**



# Care Massachusetts Resources

[www.caremass.org](http://www.caremass.org)



Need help utilizing the Opioid Legal Settlement funds?  
Help is here!

This website is devoted to you, those addressing the opioid crisis in your communities. Whether you need to file your [Expenditure Form](#) or [Request Help](#) in how best to use your settlement funding to address the opioid crisis in your community, we are here to help. The State of Massachusetts has contracted with JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. to support all municipalities in implementing, enhancing, or expanding a range of non-clinical evidence-based opioid abatement strategies and community collaborations. [Request Help](#) to request assistance.

- ❑ [Previous Care Mass presentation slides and recordings](#)
- ❑ [Request individualized technical assistance](#)
- ❑ **Sign up for our [listserv](#)**



# THANK YOU!

Contact us: [abate@jsi.com](mailto:abate@jsi.com)

