



# THE SOLVE APPROACH

*A Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the  
Prevention of Harmful Substance Use  
and Overdose in Harnett County*

Adopted November 20, 2023

**S**igma is reduced

**O**wnership is shared

**L**earning is continuous

**V**alues are foundational

**E**quity is centered

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# Background

## Harnett County

According to 2022 estimates, Harnett County's population is approximately 138,800, representing a 4% increase from 2020. 70.7% of the population is white, 22.2% black or African American, 1.7% American Indian and Alaska Native, 1.4% Asian, and 14.5% of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. 12.5% of Harnett County residents under 65 years of age are uninsured. 13.3% of people are in poverty and the per capita income is just under \$27,000. There are five municipalities in Harnett County (Dunn, Angier, Erwin, Lillington, and Coats), which are gathered in the northeastern part of the County, leaving a large portion of the County, and roughly 80% of our population, unincorporated. Our area's rural nature means that the County government has a substantial responsibility to tackle urgent problems like the opioid crisis.

## Opioid Epidemic in Harnett County

The issue of opioid addiction is progressively worsening and affecting every individual in our community, either directly or indirectly. There has been a significant increase in overdose fatalities in Harnett County since 2000, rising from 4 to 71 in 2021, with the number of emergency department visits linked to opioid incidents having doubled since 2016, reaching a total of 280 in 2022.

## Creation of the Opioid Task Force

The opioid epidemic has been increasingly present in the public eye since North Carolina's Opioid Action Plan was released in 2017. The North Carolina opioid settlement funding is providing \$11.5 million to Harnett County over the next 18 years, which encouraged the creation of the Harnett County Opioid Task Force, consisting of county officials, healthcare providers, mental health professionals, leaders from faith-based institutions, and other key stakeholders in the community. The Opioid Task Force was formed in the Fall of 2022 with the intention of bringing together individuals with diverse specialties to address the opioid epidemic in our county with a compassionate and holistic view of the complex set of issues before us. In December 2022, a group of individuals from Harnett County were chosen to participate in the Reaching Rural Initiative, through the US Bureau of Justice Assistance, which has been a crucial learning experience. Through coaching from Reaching Rural and discussion amongst key community members, we are committed to utilize our opioid allegations funding in the most effective way to address the opioid epidemic in our community, as well as the underlying systemic and mental-health related causes for substance use.

# Leaders in the Creation of the Plan

## Opioid Task Force Members

### Reaching Rural Team

**Christopher Appel**, *Senior Staff Attorney, Harnett County*

**Coley Price**, *Deputy County Manager, Harnett County*

**Dr. David Tillman**, *Chair of Public Health, Campbell University*

**Jeff Armstrong**, *Captain, Harnett County Sheriff's Office*

**Dr. Jermaine White**, *Assistant Superintendent, Harnett County Schools*

**John Rouse**, *Health Director, Harnett County*

**Mark Morris**, *Executive Director, Good Hope Hospital*

### Additional Harnett County Employees

**Team Lead: Ally Fouts Gaines**, *Management Analyst, Administration*

**Aaron Meredith**, *Major, Sheriff's Office*

**Alex Belanovich**, *Chief, Emergency Services*

**Barry Blevins**, *Director, General Services*

**Brent Trout**, *County Manager, Administration*

**David Cowan**, *Assistant Medical Director, Emergency Services*

**Gary McNeill**, *Major, Sheriff's Office*

**Jennifer Haney**, *Community Paramedic, Emergency Services*

**Josh Christensen**, *Lieutenant, Sheriff's Office*

**Larry Smith**, *Director, Emergency Management*

**Leslie Owens**, *Community Paramedic, Emergency Services*

**Mary Jane Sauls**, *Local Public Health Administrator, Health Department*

**Paul Polinski**, *Director, Department of Social Services*

**Tim Adamaszek**, *Social Work Supervisor, Department of Social Services*

### Community Partners

**Amy Brown** (*Daymark Recovery*)

**Amy Godwin**

**Anne Kimball** (*Sandhills Center*)

**Bishop Fred Clarida**

**Bishop Reginald S. Hinton, Sr.**

**Cory Hess** (*Harnett Health*)

**Dr. Eric Morse** (*Morse Clinic*)

**Hallie Huffman** (*Morse Clinic*)

**Dr. John Briggs**

**Kiara Mungo** (*The Carter Clinic*)

**Marilyn Gilliam** (*Sandhills Center*)

**Dr. Regina Bray-Brown** (*Harnett Health*)

**Dr. Robert Agnello** (*Campbell University*)

**Dr. Rosa Marie Smith Williams**

**Tammy Williams** (*City of Dunn*)

**Tony Spear**

# Leaders in the Creation of the Plan

## Honorable Mentions

The initiatives outlined here would not be possible without the support and participation of our County Commissioners, Sheriff, and District Attorney.

We extend gratitude to Dr. Tillman and his graduate students who were pivotal in the gathering and analysis of data to create this plan.

We are appreciative of all other community members who were not listed here, but shared their time, experiences, and insight and helped guide the creation of this document.

### Primary Author of the Plan

Dr. David Tillman, *Chair of Public Health, Campbell University*



### Harnett County Commissioners

**District 1:** Barbara McKoy

**District 2:** William Morris (Vice-Chairman)

**District 3:** Brooks Matthews

**District 4:** Lewis Weatherspoon

**District 5:** Matthew Nicol (Chairman)

### Harnett County Elected Officials

District Attorney Suzanne Matthews

Sheriff Wayne Coats

# The Strategic Planning Process

Over a nine-month period (December 2022 to August 2023), comprehensive strategic planning brought together community stakeholders from across the county to effectively address the issues of overdose and harmful substances in our community. This multifaceted approach involved several key steps, including roundtable discussions for feedback gathering, qualitative data collection through key informant interviews, analysis of secondary data, and the active participation of a task force in priority-setting. By integrating these elements, this group of stakeholders was able to develop targeted and informed strategies to address these pressing issues.

## Roundtable Discussions

The process began with a series of roundtable discussions where community members, local organizations, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, educators, and other relevant stakeholders came together to share their perspectives and insights. These meetings served as a platform for open dialogue, enabling participants to voice their concerns, ideas, and experiences related to overdoses and substance use. By soliciting diverse viewpoints, task force members gained a comprehensive understanding of the challenges they faced and potential solutions.

## Qualitative Data Collection

In parallel, qualitative data was collected through key informant interviews. Key informants, including healthcare providers, social workers, community leaders, and individuals in recovery, were interviewed to gather in-depth insights into the root causes of substance use and overdoses and the existing resources and gaps in the community. These interviews offered a nuanced and personal perspective that complemented quantitative data and informed the development of culturally sensitive and contextually relevant prevention strategies.

## Analysis of Secondary Data

As part of the strategic planning process, the analysis of secondary data came into play. Relevant data sources, such as hospital records, law enforcement reports, and existing research studies, were examined to identify trends, demographics, and patterns of substance use and overdose occurrences within the community. This quantitative analysis helped to substantiate and contextualize the qualitative findings, providing a data-driven foundation for decision-making.

## Task Force Priority-Setting

To facilitate focused and coordinated efforts, a task force was established, comprising representatives from various sectors, including healthcare, education, law enforcement, social services, and community advocacy. This task force played a pivotal role in reviewing the feedback gathered from public meetings, synthesizing insights from key informant interviews, and analyzing the secondary data. Through collaborative discussions, the task force identified priority areas and goals for the prevention efforts, considering the unique needs and strengths of the community.

## The Finished Product

Once priorities were identified, the task force worked collectively to develop a comprehensive strategic plan. This plan outlined specific objectives, actionable steps, and timelines for implementing evidence-based prevention strategies. It included initiatives such as community education programs, accessible treatment options, harm reduction initiatives, law enforcement collaboration, and support services for individuals and families affected by substance use disorders and overdoses.



The strategic plan documented here is the result of a comprehensive strategic planning process for preventing overdoses and harmful substance use that was a collaborative and data-informed process that engaged stakeholders through public meetings, qualitative interviews, data analysis, and task force participation over the past nine months (December 2022 to August 2023).

By harnessing the insights and expertise of diverse community members, this approach resulted in tailored and effective strategies that address the complex challenges of substance use disorders within a framework of equity, inclusivity, and shared responsibility.



# The SOLVE Approach

In Harnett County, we realize that addressing the challenges of harmful substance use and overdose will require flexible implementation and continuous evolution of our plan. Therefore, perhaps the most fundamental work of the strategic planning process is a commitment to a framework for implementation that we refer to as the SOLVE approach. The SOLVE approach outlines guidelines for thinking and action which form the basis of our implementation year-over-year. This five-fold path should provide a strategic lens for leaders at all levels of decision-making.

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**S** **tigma is reduced.** We commit to addressing life-threatening community stigma that acts as a barrier to treatment & recovery.

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**O** **wnership is shared.** We commit to addressing this epidemic collectively and using all of our resources and all of our systems to care for all of our people.

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**E** **quity is centered.** We commit to comprehensive action that works to ensure the needs of all groups within our community are being addressed.

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## **Stigma is reduced.**

We commit to addressing life-threatening community stigma that acts as a barrier to treatment and recovery. Stigma plays a significant role as a barrier to both substance use disorder prevention and overdose prevention. Stigma creates an environment where individuals are reluctant to seek help or discuss their struggles openly due to the fear of judgment, shame, and discrimination. This inhibits people from accessing necessary information, support, and treatment for substance use disorders. Additionally, when it comes to overdose prevention, stigma can prevent timely intervention and emergency assistance, as witnesses or bystanders might hesitate to intervene or call for help out of concern for being stigmatized. Addressing stigma is crucial to fostering a supportive and open community where individuals feel empowered to seek help, engage in prevention efforts, and potentially save lives through prompt overdose response.

## **Ownership is shared.**

We commit to addressing this collectively and using all of our resources and all of our systems to care for all of our people. When a community collectively takes responsibility for these issues, it creates an environment of mutual support, empathy, and shared knowledge. This ownership involves community members looking out for one another, raising awareness, and promoting education about substance misuse and its risks. In our county, seeing this crisis as a crisis we all share encourages active collaboration between local organizations, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and policymakers to implement effective prevention strategies, treatment options, and harm reduction initiatives. This united effort contributes to a safer and healthier community that is better equipped to address and mitigate the challenges posed by substance use disorders and overdoses.

## **Learning is continuous.**

We commit to ongoing work to understand best practices, to learn from latest research, and to evaluate our own efforts. These ongoing processes involve studying and understanding the ever-evolving patterns of substance misuse, identifying risk factors, and assessing the effectiveness of prevention strategies. By continuously learning from past experiences and evaluating the impact of interventions, we can refine our approaches, develop targeted initiatives, and adapt to emerging challenges. This iterative process ensures that prevention measures remain evidence-based, relevant, and responsive to the changing landscape of substance use and overdose risks.

## Values are foundational.

We commit to cultivating responses rooted in the shared values of our community—including our faith communities. Community values, rooted in empathy and compassion, can reduce stigma surrounding addiction, making it easier for individuals to seek help without fear of judgment. By uniting community members and drawing upon our fundamental values and principles, our efforts create a more comprehensive approach to prevention, addressing both the physical and emotional aspects of substance use disorders and overdose risks.

## Equity is centered.

We commit to comprehensive action that works to ensure the needs of all groups within our community are being addressed. Equity plays a pivotal role in substance use disorder prevention and overdose prevention by ensuring that everyone, By addressing the root causes of substance misuse, such as poverty, trauma, and social disparities, equity-focused approaches strive to create a level playing field where individuals--regardless of their background or circumstances--has access to resources, information, and support.. This includes tailoring prevention strategies to meet the specific needs of diverse communities and providing culturally sensitive interventions that acknowledge and respect different perspectives. Through an equitable lens, we can break down barriers, reduce inequalities, and empower all individuals to make informed choices, seek help when needed, and ultimately prevent substance use disorders and overdose events in a more inclusive and just manner.

*We will*  
**S O L V E**  
*this together.*

# Tiered Prevention Logic

This plan aims to construct a robust framework of prevention strategies designed to combat harmful substance use and overdose. This comprehensive framework involves three distinct tiers—primary, secondary, and tertiary—to guide the county's efforts to safeguard its community members from the devastating consequences of substance abuse. By taking a proactive approach, intervening at critical junctures, and providing comprehensive support, Harnett County envisions a future marked by reduced substance-related harm and enhanced well-being for its residents.

## Primary Prevention

Harnett County leaders will collaborate to initiate a robust primary prevention strategy that fosters resiliency among children and youth, particularly those with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). ACEs are traumatic events that occur during childhood and have been linked to increased risk of substance abuse and other negative outcomes. Recognizing this, the county will implement trauma-informed educational initiatives in schools to raise awareness about ACEs and provide tools for building emotional resilience. These efforts will empower educators, caregivers, and mentors to create supportive environments that buffer against the development of substance use as a coping mechanism. Additionally, Harnett County will organize community workshops to equip parents and caregivers with the skills to address ACEs and promote healthy coping strategies within the family unit.

## Secondary Prevention

Primary care and clinical settings will play a pivotal role in Harnett County's secondary prevention efforts. Healthcare providers will be supported in conducting routine screenings for substance use risk factors during patient visits. By utilizing standardized screening tools, clinicians will identify individuals who exhibit signs of substance misuse or those who are in high-risk situations, such as individuals with a history of substance use, mental health issues, or justice system involvement. Recognizing the potential impact of early intervention, primary care providers will offer brief interventions and referrals to specialized treatment services, steering individuals away from the progression of substance-related problems. In addition, we will establish collaborative networks with schools, social service agencies, and community organizations to ensure that at-risk individuals receive comprehensive support, including counseling and access to resources that address underlying vulnerabilities.

## Tertiary Prevention

Harnett County envisions a robust tertiary prevention framework that embraces harm reduction, comprehensive treatment access, and recovery support, particularly for justice-involved individuals. Harm reduction initiatives are implemented to minimize the risks associated with ongoing substance use, including the provision of clean needles, supervised injection facilities, and access to naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses.

Moreover, the county will prioritize equitable access to a full range of treatment supports, encompassing detoxification programs, medication-assisted treatment, and intensive outpatient services. This commitment will ensure that individuals seeking recovery have a spectrum of options to address their unique needs. Additionally, we will reinforce the additional recovery services that facilitate long-term recovery--including transportation assistance, housing support, and job-seeking.

In a concerted effort to support justice-involved individuals, Harnett County will establish specialized programs within correctional facilities that provide counseling, skill-building workshops, and peer support for substance abuse recovery. Upon reintegration into the community, individuals will be connected with ongoing recovery resources, vocational training, and social services to facilitate their transition and reduce recidivism rates.

In the envisioned future of Harnett County, a comprehensive approach to prevention will drive the efforts to combat harmful substance use and overdose. By simultaneously addressing the spectrum of prevention—primary, secondary, and tertiary—and prioritizing resiliency-building efforts for children and youth with

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), the county will create a landscape where individuals are empowered to make informed choices, access support at various stages, and navigate their journeys towards recovery and wellbeing. Through these multifaceted strategies, Harnett County is poised to forge a brighter, healthier future for its community, built on a foundation of comprehensive prevention and compassionate support.



# Our Strategies

Addressing harmful substance use and preventing overdoses requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that encompasses prevention, treatment, and harm reduction. This three-fold strategic response recognizes the interconnected nature of these challenges and aims to create a well-rounded framework that addresses the diverse needs of individuals and communities. By focusing on prevention, supporting treatment and recovery, and reducing harm, this approach seeks to not only mitigate the immediate risks associated with substance use but also promote long-term health, well-being, and community resilience.

## Goal 1: Prevent Harmful Substance Use

The first goal focuses on transforming community-level systems to prevent the onset of harmful substance use. This entails instituting evidence-based prevention programs in schools, community centers, churches, and other pertinent environments, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of these systems to equip individuals, particularly youth, with the knowledge and skills necessary for informed decision-making. By elevating awareness regarding the challenges of substance use disorders, advocating for healthy coping mechanisms, and cultivating a sense of belonging and purpose, the strategies aligned with this goal empower the community to foster positive conditions and deter the progression towards addiction.

## Goal 2: Support Treatment and Recovery

The second goal focuses on providing accessible and effective treatment options for individuals struggling with substance use disorders. This involves expanding the availability of addiction treatment services, including counseling, therapy, medication-assisted treatment, and support groups. By reducing barriers to entry, such as stigma and lack of resources, individuals are more likely to seek help and embark on a path of recovery. Furthermore, ongoing support is essential in sustaining recovery efforts. Peer support networks, mental health services, and vocational training programs contribute to holistic healing and empowerment, enabling individuals to rebuild their lives and regain a sense of purpose.

## Goal 3: Reduce Harm

The third goal centers on harm reduction, recognizing that some individuals may continue to use substances despite efforts to prevent or treat addiction. This approach seeks to minimize the negative consequences associated with substance use, such as overdose and the spread of diseases. Nationally, harm reduction initiatives include the distribution of naloxone, a medication that can reverse opioid overdoses, safe injection sites, needle exchange programs, and access to clean and safe supplies. By providing a safe and nonjudgmental environment, Harnett County's harm reduction efforts will not only save lives but also create opportunities for individuals to engage with healthcare providers and access resources that can facilitate their journey toward recovery.

*By addressing these three dimensions, communities can establish a comprehensive approach that promotes well-being, resilience, and inclusivity. This multifaceted strategy recognizes that addressing substance misuse requires a collaborative effort that values education, compassion, and the provision of a range of resources and services to support individuals on their paths towards healthier lives.*

# Goal 1: Prevent Harmful Substance Use

The overarching objective of Goal 1 is to proactively address and mitigate the occurrence of harmful substance use within the community. By implementing a series of strategic initiatives, this goal seeks to create an environment that discourages the initiation and progression of substance misuse, thereby safeguarding the well-being and futures of individuals.

## Strategy 1.1: Targeted Support for Youth and Families

Strategy 1.1 centers on offering specialized assistance to individuals and families who are particularly susceptible to the risks associated with harmful substance use. Through tailored interventions, resources, and guidance, this strategy aims to empower at-risk youth and their families with the necessary tools and knowledge to make informed decisions and steer clear of substance misuse. By addressing potential vulnerabilities early on, this approach contributes to the prevention of substance-related issues before they escalate.

### 1.1 Key Initiatives

- Implement an evidence-based targeted support program in Harnett County Schools for students at-risk for harmful substance use
- Provide awareness and education in Harnett County Schools to reach all youth, including those who are not considered “at-risk”
- Cultivate collaboration between faith communities, the Department of Social Services, and the Health Department to reinvigorate educational programs and support groups for foster families and grandparents raising kids

## Strategy 1.2: Leverage Peer Support Networks and Community Advocacy

Strategy 1.2 capitalizes on the strength of community connections and peer support networks to cultivate an environment of mutual encouragement and responsible decision-making. By fostering a sense of solidarity among individuals who have overcome similar challenges, this strategy promotes positive behaviors and dissuades harmful substance use. Additionally, through community advocacy efforts, this approach raises awareness and mobilizes collective action, reinforcing the community's commitment to prevention and reinforcing social norms that discourage substance misuse.

## 1.2 Key Initiatives

- Encourage the formal incorporation of a parent advocacy group for Harnett County Parents with lived experience of the devastating effects of harmful substance use on their children’s lives (example of similar initiative: JoCo Angels)
- Develop a recovery community organization led by individuals with direct lived experiences with substance use challenges to provide recovery-oriented advocacy, education, and community-building (example: Wilkes Recovery Revolution)



## Strategy 1.3: Engage Faith Communities in Education & Stigma Reduction

Strategy 1.3 involves collaborating with faith communities to educate their members on the perils of harmful substance use while simultaneously addressing the stigmatization associated with addiction. By integrating substance use education within faith-based teachings, this strategy fosters a culture of understanding, compassion, and support. Through proactive efforts to reduce stigma, faith communities become catalysts for change, creating an environment where individuals are more inclined to seek help and resources without fear of judgment.



## 1.3 Key Initiatives

- Convene a conference for faith leaders in Harnett County and the surrounding region to explore models for engaging faith communities in all tiers of prevention of harmful substance use and overdose
- Facilitate the engagement of local faith communities in Mental Health First Aid training as well as more advanced, in-depth training for clergy
- Establish a communication network with affiliated clergy and congregations across the county

# Goal 2: Support Treatment & Recovery

The central aspiration of Goal 2 is to provide comprehensive assistance and resources to individuals grappling with substance use disorder, fostering their journey towards treatment and sustained recovery. By embracing targeted strategies, this goal endeavors to establish an ecosystem of care that addresses the diverse needs of affected individuals and facilitates their transition towards healthier, fulfilling lives.

## Strategy 2.1: Adopt Treatment Models for Justice-Involved Individuals

Strategy 2.1 centers on implementing specialized treatment models that are tailored to individuals who have been involved with the justice system. By recognizing the unique challenges and requirements of this population, this strategy seeks to break the cycle of substance use and criminal behavior through effective interventions, counseling, and support. By integrating treatment within the justice system, this approach endeavors to reduce recidivism and promote lasting recovery.

### 2.1 Key Initiatives

- Establish MAT/MOUD in the jail for incarcerated individuals currently in treatment (Phase I) and those who would like to initiate treatment in jail (Phase II)
- Create a law enforcement assisted diversion (LEAD) pre-arrest program redirecting individuals involved in low-level offenses toward community-based support services rather than traditional criminal justice processing
- Expand on the current Veterans Treatment Court program to develop a similar recovery court for the general population which offers individuals with substance use disorders an alternative to incarceration, focusing on treatment, supervision, and rehabilitation for recovery.

## Strategy 2.2: Enhance Existing Healthcare Networks to Improve Continuum of Care for Individuals with Substance Use Disorder

Strategy 2.2 is focused on strengthening the existing healthcare infrastructure to ensure a seamless continuum of care for individuals with substance use disorder. By fostering collaboration and coordination among medical professionals, counselors, and support services, this strategy aims to provide comprehensive and integrated care that addresses both physical and psychological aspects of addiction. Through enhanced communication and shared expertise, individuals can access a more holistic treatment experience that supports their recovery journey.



## **2.2 Key Initiatives**

- Establish a post-overdose response team in the county that utilizes community paramedicine and primary care providers alongside other professionals to provide immediate support and resources after an overdose to connect individuals to treatment and prevent future overdoses
- Equip primary care providers to effectively manage medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders in primary care settings
- Increase access to the full range of behavioral health services and MAT/MOUD, including expanded use of mobile clinics and telehealth services
- Develop a local inpatient detoxification center to provide a medically supervised process where individuals with substance use disorders receive intensive care and support to safely manage withdrawal symptoms in a controlled environment

## **Strategy 2.3: Develop Community Supports for Recovery**

Strategy 2.3 involves the creation of a supportive environment that addresses the multifaceted needs of individuals in recovery. This strategy recognizes the importance of providing essential community supports such as transportation, stable housing, and employment opportunities. By removing practical barriers that often hinder recovery, this approach enhances individuals' ability to sustain their progress and reintegrate into society, thus reinforcing the foundation for long-term well-being.

## **2.3 Key Initiatives**

- Create a pilot program for enhancing HARTS transportation services through microtransit and/or rideshare to facilitate recovery through improved access to healthcare appointments, counseling/therapy, group meetings, appointments with social service providers, and grocery stores
- Expand the availability of recovery and transitional housing options in Harnett County
- Develop a program to incentivize employers in Harnett County to become designated recovery - friendly workplaces



# Goal 3: Reduce Harm

The overarching aspiration of Goal 3 is to minimize the negative consequences associated with substance use, focusing on safeguarding the well-being of both individuals and the community as a whole. By implementing a set of strategic initiatives, this goal aims to create an environment that prioritizes safety, health, and harm reduction, thereby mitigating the risks and adverse outcomes often linked with substance misuse.

## Strategy 3.1: Universal Access to Naloxone

Strategy 3.1 centers on ensuring widespread availability and accessibility of naloxone, a medication that can reverse opioid overdoses. By making naloxone readily accessible to both individuals at risk of overdose and their support networks, this strategy enables timely intervention in emergency situations, potentially saving lives. The promotion of universal naloxone access aligns with the goal of reducing harm by providing a vital tool to address the immediate and life-threatening consequences of overdose incidents.



### 3.1 Key Initiatives

- Ensure naloxone availability at every school within Harnett County Schools
- Make free, low-barrier naloxone available for every individual who is released from detention in Harnett County Detention Center, along with overdose prevention and response training
- Explore distribution of naloxone through networks of community-based organizations and faith-based organizations

## **Strategy 3.2: Improve Health and Safety for People Who Use Substances**

Strategy 3.2 seeks to enhance the overall health and safety of individuals who use substances. This approach encompasses a comprehensive range of measures, including the provision of harm reduction services, access to medical care, and the dissemination of accurate information about safer substance use practices. By prioritizing the well-being of substance users and offering resources to mitigate potential risks, this strategy contributes to minimizing adverse health outcomes and promoting responsible behaviors within the context of substance use.

### **3.2 Key Initiatives**

- Develop and distribute locally-adapted health and safety kits for people who use drugs that include a quick guide to local resources, overdose education, reproductive health and STI prevention, sanitizing wipes, wound care supplies, fentanyl test strips, and naloxone
- Provide technical assistance (including grantwriting support) to community-based organizations and/or faith-based organizations to establish a syringe service program in Harnett County

## **Strategy 3.3: Eliminate Accidental Exposures in the Community**

Strategy 3.3 focuses on creating a community environment that is free from accidental exposures to drugs and associated paraphernalia. This approach involves targeted efforts to address issues such as improper disposal of substances and related items, as well as the creation of safe spaces for substance users to engage in their activities without endangering themselves or others. By eliminating accidental exposures, this strategy contributes to enhancing community safety, reducing the potential for harm, and fostering a more supportive and secure environment for all members of the community.

### **3.3 Key Initiatives**

- Conduct a multi-level messaging campaign to prevent accidental drug exposures in young children--including printed messaging to faith communities, social media campaigns, community workshops, and local broadcast media
- Encourage safe disposal of needles and other drug paraphernalia through supervised collection sites and secure sharps containers in public places throughout the county

# Appendices

We will

**S** **O** **L** **V** **E**

*this together.*

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**1**

**Goal 1: Prevent harmful substance use**

- 1.1 Targeted support for youth and families
- 1.2 Leverage peer support networks and community advocacy
- 1.3 Engage faith communities in education and stigma reduction

**2**

**Goal 2: Support treatment and recovery**

- 2.1 Adopt treatment models for justice-involved individuals
- 2.2 Enhance healthcare networks to improve continuum of care
- 2.3 Develop community supports for recovery

**3**

**Goal 3: Reduce harm**

- 3.1 Universal access to naloxone
- 3.2 Improve health and safety for people who use substances
- 3.3 Eliminate accidental exposures to drugs and paraphernalia

# Comprehensive Strategy Table

## Goal 1: Prevent Harmful Substance Use

### *Strategy 1.1: Targeted Support for Youth and Families*

- Implement an evidence-based targeted support program in Harnett County Schools for students at-risk for harmful substance use
- Provide awareness and education in Harnett County Schools to reach all youth, including those who are not considered “at-risk”
- Cultivate collaboration between faith communities, the Department of Social Services, and the Health Department to reinvigorate educational programs and support groups for foster families and grandparents raising kids

### *Strategy 1.2: Targeted Support for Youth and Families*

- Encourage the formal incorporation of a parent advocacy group for Harnett County Parents with lived experience of the devastating effects of harmful substance use on their children’s lives (example of similar initiative: JoCo Angels)
- Develop a recovery community organization led by individuals with direct lived experiences with substance use challenges to provide recovery-oriented advocacy, education, and community-building (example: Wilkes Recovery Revolution)

### *Strategy 1.3: Engage Faith Communities in Education & Stigma Reduction*

- Convene a conference for faith leaders in Harnett County and the surrounding region to explore models for engaging faith communities in all tiers of prevention of harmful substance use and overdose
- Facilitate the engagement of local faith communities in Mental Health First Aid training as well as more advanced, in-depth training for clergy
- Establish a “SERVE & S.O.L.V.E.” communication network with affiliated clergy and congregations across the county

## Goal 2: Support Treatment and Recovery

### *Strategy 2.1: Adopt Treatment Models for Justice-Involved Individuals*

- Establish MAT/MOUD in the jail for incarcerated individuals currently in treatment (Phase I) and those who would like to initiate treatment in jail (Phase II)
- Create a law-enforcement assisted diversion (LEAD) pre-arrest program redirecting individuals involved in low-level offenses toward community-based support services rather than traditional criminal justice processing
- Expand on the current Veterans Treatment Court program to develop a similar recovery court for the general population which offers individuals with substance use disorders an alternative to incarceration, focusing on treatment, supervision, and rehabilitation for recovery

### *Strategy 2.2: Enhance Existing Healthcare Networks to Improve Continuum of Care*

- Establish a post-overdose response team in the county that utilizes community paramedicine and primary care providers alongside other professionals to provide immediate support and resources after an overdose to connect individuals to treatment and prevent future overdoses

- Equip primary care providers to effectively manage medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders in primary care settings
- Increase access to the full range of behavioral health services and MAT/MOUD, including expanded use of mobile clinics and telehealth services
- Develop a local inpatient detoxification center to provide a medically supervised process where individuals with substance use disorders receive intensive care and support to safely manage withdrawal symptoms in a controlled environment

### ***Strategy 2.3: Develop Community Supports for Recovery***

- Create a pilot program for enhancing HARTS transportation services through microtransit and/or rideshare to facilitate recovery through improved access to healthcare appointments, counseling/therapy, group meetings, appointments with social service providers, and grocery stores
- Expand availability of recovery and transitional housing in Harnett County
- Develop a program to incentivize employers in Harnett County to become recovery-friendly workplaces

## **Goal 3: Reduce Harm**

### ***Strategy 3.1: Universal Access to Naloxone***

- Ensure naloxone availability at every school within Harnett County Schools
- Make free, low-barrier naloxone available for every individual who is released from detention in Harnett County Detention Center, along with overdose prevention and response training
- Explore distribution of naloxone through networks of community-based organizations and faith-based organizations

### ***Strategy 3.2: Improve Health and Safety for People Who Use Substances***

- Develop and distribute locally-adapted health and safety kits for people who use drugs that include a quick guide to local resources, overdose education, reproductive health and STI prevention, sanitizing wipes, wound care supplies, fentanyl test strips, and naloxone
- Provide technical assistance (including grantwriting support) to community-based organizations and/or faith-based organizations to establish a syringe service program in Harnett County

### ***Strategy 3.3: Eliminate Accidental Exposures in the Community***

- Conduct a multi-level messaging campaign to prevent accidental drug exposures in young children-- including printed messaging to faith communities, social media campaigns, community workshops, and local broadcast media
- Encourage safe disposal of needles and other drug paraphernalia through supervised collection sites and secure sharps containers in public places throughout the county

# Initiative Timeline Checklist

## 2023

### Quarter 4

- ❑ Ensure naloxone availability at every school within Harnett County Schools
- ❑ Expand MAT/MOUD program in the jail to include those who would like to initiate treatment in jail

## 2024

### Quarter 1

- ❑ Convene a conference for faith leaders in Harnett County and the surrounding region to explore models for engaging faith communities in all tiers of prevention of substance use and overdose
- ❑ Encourage the formal incorporation of a parent advocacy group for Harnett County parents with lived experience of the devastating effects of harmful substance use on their children's lives
- ❑ Establish a post-overdose response team (PORT) in the county that utilizes community paramedicine and primary care providers alongside other professionals to provide immediate support and resources after an overdose for both the individual who experienced the overdose and their family

### Quarter 2

- ❑ Facilitate the engagement of local faith communities in Mental Health First Aid training as well as more advanced, in-depth training for clergy
- ❑ Make free, low-barrier naloxone available for every individual upon release from detention in Harnett County, along with overdose prevention and response training

### Quarter 3

- ❑ Implement an evidence-based targeted support program in Harnett County Schools for students at-risk for harmful substance use
- ❑ Provide educational programming in Harnett County Schools to reach all youth, including those who are not considered "at-risk"
- ❑ Equip primary care providers to effectively manage medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders in primary care settings
- ❑ Encourage safe disposal of needles and other drug paraphernalia through supervised collection sites and secure sharps containers in public places throughout the county

### Quarter 4

- ❑ Conduct a multi-level messaging campaign to prevent accidental drug exposures in young children—including printed messaging to faith communities, social media campaigns, community workshops, and local broadcast media
- ❑ Establish a "SERVE & S.O.L.V.E." communication network with affiliated clergy and congregations across the county
- ❑ Explore distribution of naloxone through networks of community-based organizations and faith-based organizations
- ❑ Increase access to the full range of behavioral health services and MAT/MOUD, including expanded use of mobile clinics and telehealth services



## 2025

### Quarter 1

- ❑ Cultivate collaboration between faith communities, the Department of Social Services, and the Health Department to reinvigorate educational programs and support groups for foster families and grandparents raising kids

### Quarter 2

- ❑ Develop a recovery community organization led by individuals with direct lived experiences with substance use challenges to provide recovery-oriented advocacy, education, and community-building

### Quarter 3

- ❑ Provide technical assistance (including grantwriting support) to community-based organizations and/or faith-based organizations to establish a syringe service program in Harnett County

### Quarter 4

- ❑ Create a pilot program for enhancing HARTS transportation services through microtransit and/or rideshare to facilitate recovery through improved access to healthcare appointments, counseling/therapy, group meetings, appointments with social service providers, and grocery stores
- ❑ Develop and distribute locally-adapted health and safety kits for people who use drugs that include a quick guide to local resources, overdose education, reproductive health and STI prevention, sanitizing wipes, wound care supplies, fentanyl test strips, and naloxone

## 2026

### Quarter 4

- ❑ Create a law-enforcement assisted diversion (LEAD) pre-arrest program redirecting individuals involved in low-level offenses toward community-based support services rather than traditional criminal justice processing
- ❑ Develop a local inpatient detoxification center to provide a medically supervised process where individuals with substance use disorders receive intensive care and support to safely manage withdrawal symptoms in a controlled environment
- ❑ Expand availability of recovery and transitional housing in Harnett County

## 2027

### Quarter 1

- ❑ Develop a program to incentivize employers in Harnett County to become recovery-friendly workplaces

## 2028

### Quarter 4

- ❑ Expand on the current Veterans Treatment Court program to develop a similar recovery court for the general population which offers individuals with substance use disorders an alternative to incarceration, focusing on treatment, supervision, and rehabilitation for recovery