

Improving Opioid Response

Working in partnership with communities to build a path to recovery



The opioid epidemic is an ongoing public health crisis that continues to impact families and communities across the country. Job losses and social isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have further exacerbated this crisis.

State and local decision makers now have a unique opportunity to improve their response, with new funding available from the federal government and from opioid settlement funds.

Thankfully, best practices are emerging to guide implementation and ensure funding is spent effectively.

Best practices include:

- Funding **warm hand-off** programs and recovery services: the settlement recommends **expanding services** available in the recovery journey, facilitating access to holistic supports
- Supporting **data collection and research** on availability and quality of programs, and services, including collecting data in smaller populations, by creating equal partnerships with communities

Source: [Primer on Spending Funds from the Opioid Litigation A Guide for State and Local Decision Makers](#) Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Design effective interventions

- Care in the clinical setting alone is not sufficient to address prevention, treatment, and recovery. Individuals with substance use disorders need clear access to **comprehensive services** including employment, childcare, and housing.
- Building a path to recovery requires **shared infrastructure** to support community participation, coordinate care across service areas, and identify and activate **evidence-based programs** that effectively address diverse needs.
- Timely data is essential to monitor emerging trends, **inform decision-making**, and **evaluate impact** of investments and services provided.

Access holistic recovery journey

- Unite Us connects health and human service providers in a **holistic recovery journey** through our technology and community engagement on the ground. Care teams can easily screen and address co-occurring physical, behavioral, and social needs in a centralized platform shared with partners across sectors.
- **There is “no wrong door” to receiving assistance.** Providing one accountable, coordinated ecosystem, we remove barriers and increase **access** to timely and quality services.
- Our leading **social needs data** standards and analytics enable real-time monitoring of service utilization and outcomes, so as to facilitate resource allocation and investment decisions. With the support of our Research and Evaluation experts, we help select and integrate evidence-based interventions that address the unique experiences and needs identified in each community. We help evaluate their performance and impact on improving access to and engagement with care.

Coordinated ecosystem

- Multiple entry points to access comprehensive services for individuals and families
- Effective processes via pre-built tools, data standards, and privacy and security compliance (HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, FERPA, FIPS, and state and local guidelines)
- Increased efficiency for care teams via shared platform, removing barriers to collaboration across sectors

Community partnerships

- Expansion of traditional care services to include recovery community, community health workers and trusted local partners (e.g., churches, barbershops)
- Access to “ready to go” accountable networks of vetted community providers
- Ability to identify, activate, and evaluate evidence-based programs tailored to each community

Data-driven decision-making

- Increased visibility and understanding of root causes, diverse needs, and gaps in service delivery
 - Analytics lens to ensure equitable and effective distribution of new funding sources and access to hard-to-reach populations
 - Real-time monitoring and evaluation of funding impact to drive program design and optimize investment decisions
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