

OPIOID ABATEMENT FUNDING FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Overview: From our original 100 community surveys that were taken, a group of 5 was gathered for each of the following sub groups.

- Work force (business owners, front lines EMS, FD, PD, city hall, etc.)
- Community (anyone who resides in Revere)
- Life Experience (self or family directly affected by OUD)
- Bereaved family (mother, father, children, siblings)

Objective: Gather opinions, gaps, needs, services, experiences, innovative ideas, for funding to be used for.

Notes: Less people showed up for the focus group than we hoped for. We ended up getting 2 people for each group instead of the intended 5.

Questions and summarized responses:

1. What do you believe are the most pressing issues related to OUD in Revere?

Work Force/Community: Medication Management, parent involvement/support, schools are not equipped to manage SUD with children, not enough programs for people without private insurance or beds are not available for people to get help.

Bereaved: post-recovery services are lacking- no money after treatment, back in survival mode and cycle keeps repeating

Life Experience: Having more connections when being released from jail or a program with SUD/OUD.

2. How have you seen OUD affect your community?

Work Force/Community: crime in apartment buildings (people coming in not living there, needles around parking lot of building, violence)

Bereaved: increase in homelessness and crime in the city

Life Experience: Cost a lot of people their lives. Once you get put on the street its hard to come back from.

3. How should the settlement funds be prioritized?

Work Force/Community: education to younger and older groups of people on use and medication management. Older generations seem to brush it under the rug and younger generations seem to not take this very serious. Being consistent with a message would be helpful, holding different events for education and information.

Bereaved: Start prioritizing education and prevention then we won't need to fix the problem of treatment not being available or needs being met post treatment. Prevention is the root of the problem.

Life Experience: Programs for post prison/jail to help with work force training and development. More money in sober homes for structure.

4. What specific programs or services do you think would be most effective?

Work Force/Community: A talk show or podcast, getting on a radio show to get information out there

Bereaved: find a connection to kids, like a music program or a contest or something to get them involved and educated at the same time

Life Experience: Work programs, people who use or have history of using and jail time struggle to find work based off of a record. For example a union program for people with SUD or jail history, having a contract with unions for them to take a certain number of people who fit this category would be helpful. If you leave jail and have no income and no housing you're going to use again.

5. How can community members be more engaged in addressing OUD?

Work Force/Community: Churches should be involved in addressing this issue since they are forgiving and non judgmental. Platforms for community members to be involved, such as info sessions at the bigger apartment complexes to let them know about groups and resources, etc. giving them a space for their voices to be engaged and heard.

Bereaved: end the stigma and more people will be involved and engaged in conversation. I think a lot of people are embarrassed and ashamed that they have been affected by OUD and don't share their experience or opinions.

Life Experience: Not sure.

6. What role do you think local organizations or businesses should play?

Work Force/Community: They should be informed on what OUD is and how it is affecting their business and be prepared to assist in an overdose.

Bereaved: Sponsoring events, supporting ending stigma and carrying NARCAN.

Life Experience: They shouldn't have to do anything.

7. What role should local government play?

Work Force/Community: Should be more accessible place to ask for help, knowing there is an office dedicated to SUD and what resources are available will help and having a face in public for people to see and connect with. Hosting events.

Bereaved: Be more vocal and take a public stance on their beliefs, continuing to educate other people in city hall about NARCAN and the reality of living with someone with OUD because it can happen to anyone.

Life Experience: None

Other Ideas:

- Pharmacies in Revere should give NARCAN with Opioid prescriptions
- Recovery center/ space in building
- More flyers and sharing resources
- Understanding when to seek help, when does it turn to addiction? How does someone know if they are addicted?