

Bladen County Impact Report Narratives for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Each local government that receives opioid settlement funds is asked to share an Annual Settlement Update describing how they have made use of settlement funds during each fiscal year. For each strategy funded, local governments also share additional narratives to describe their progress and successes (success information is optional for some local governments). Across all funded strategies, each local government selects one progress narrative and one success narrative to spotlight each fiscal year.

Bladen County provided the following narrative information for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (July 2023 through June 2024):

Annual Settlement Update

During FY2023-24, Bladen County identified 2 strategies to fund with its opioid settlement allocation:

- **Collaborative Strategic Planning:** In 2021, Bladen County had completed a strategic plan which outlined its vision for addressing the substance use crisis, in particular the crisis the County was experiencing with opioids. In 2022, the County chose to update its strategic plan and conducted 2 sessions with its Bladen County Substance Use Task Force to prioritize the strategies the county would fund. In FY23, Bladen Substance Use Task Force recommended that the County expand its opioid settlement strategies to include Option B and conducted an update to its existing strategic plan covering years FY2025-2027 and expanded the strategies to be funded beginning in FY25. The County used other funds to update its strategic plan and involved individuals with lived experience, social service and provider organizations, law enforcement, schools and other funders, and health providers in its input and planning process.
- One of the significant gaps Bladen identified was access to 24/7 detox and short and long term residential treatment/recovery supports. Bladen chose to develop a contract with the Healing Place in New Hanover County to provide detoxification/stabilization and short and long-term substance use treatment. The county had received a grant from Trillium Health Resources to fund Vivitrol injections (MAT) and provided those funds to the Healing Place of New Hanover County to provide MAT to any Bladen County resident with an OUD who wanted MAT.

Strategy Spotlights

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 3: Recovery Support Services

Progress Narrative

Bladen County has contracted with the Healing Place of New Hanover County (HPNHC) to provide 24/7 access to social setting detox and short- and long-term rehab services for OUD and SUD to Bladen County residents in need of crisis stabilization and initial recovery services. During state FY 24, Bladen referred 8 total individuals to HPNHC for detox and stabilization: of the 8, 4 listed opioids as their primary drug of choice. Total days served were 1007 and average length of stay was 125.87 days with a range between 6-259 days in residence.

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 3: Recovery Support Services

Success Narrative

Bladen County referred a 32-year-old woman using fentanyl to the Healing Place for stabilization and detoxification. This particular individual stayed a total of 219 continuous days without relapsing. During her stay at the Healing Place, she was referred to PORT Human Services for MAT and received naltrexone for 3.5 months of her stay in the program and remained in recovery.

Progress and Success Narratives for All Funded Strategies

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 1: Collaborative Strategic Planning

Progress Narrative

Originally, Bladen County decided to implement Option A. They consulted with the NC attorney general's office as to how to expand into Option B and were directed to update their original strategic plan and meet all of the requirements of Option B. In January 2024, Bladen contracted with ACT Associates, LLC to facilitate that process, appointed an Opioid Steering Committee, and held 6 meetings with local focus groups and the Steering Committee to update the plan, look at the causative factors, rank order the priorities, and send the final plan and recommendations to the Commissioner on 9/16/24 for approval.

Success Narrative

One of the participants invited to attend the strategic planning focus groups represented the local office of NC Works in Elizabethtown. He attended all meetings and at the final meeting made a public statement about coming into the process not knowing anything about the local services that were available to help his clientele and expressed gratitude for the process and services available in the Bladen Community.

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