

# **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TOWN OF HUDSON'S OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS**

Presented by Metropolitan Area Planning Council



# INTRODUCTION TO OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS

- Massachusetts is receiving over \$900 million in opioid settlement funds
  - 60% go towards the state's Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund
  - 40% is allocated to cities and towns
- Town of Hudson is currently estimated to receive a total of \$751,898.31 in settlement funds between 2022-2038
- Funding can be used towards state-approved treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and prevention strategies



# METHODS

## Focus groups (8)

- People with lived experience with substance use
- Loved ones of people with lived experience
- Youth
- Speakers of Portuguese
- YSAP Youth Prevention Coalition
- Post-Overdose Support Team (POST)

## Key Informant Interviews (8)

- Health Department
- Hudson Public Schools
- Health care providers
- Recovery services

## Community-Wide Survey

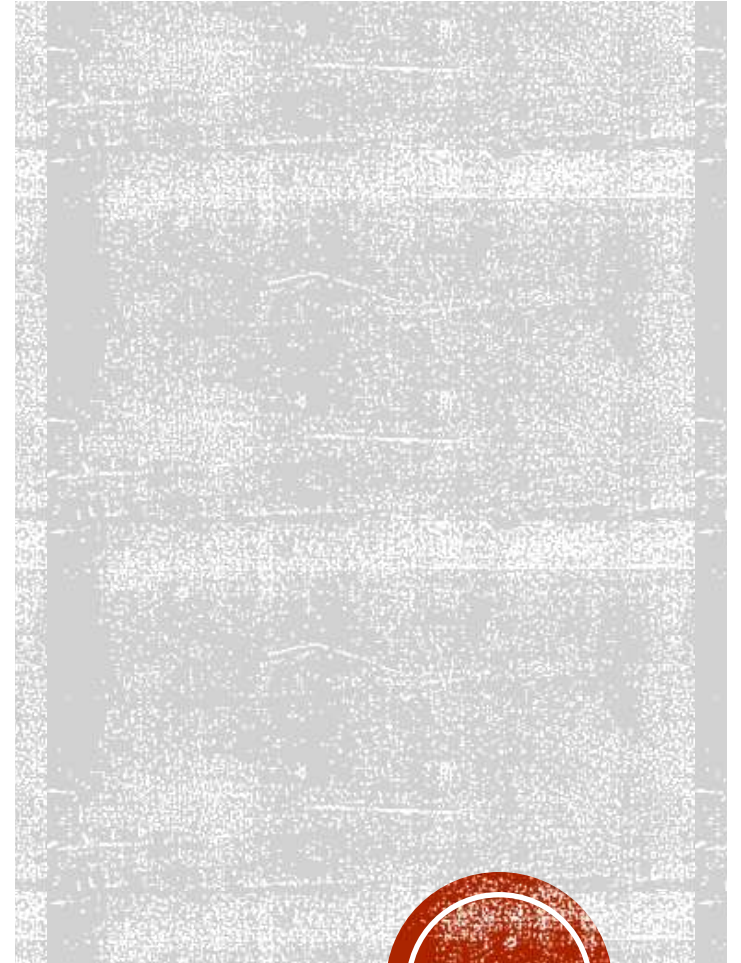
- 107 responses
  - 3% identified as someone who used opioids or are in recovery
  - 41% were family or friends
  - 17% worked in substance use or recovery field

## Secondary Data Review

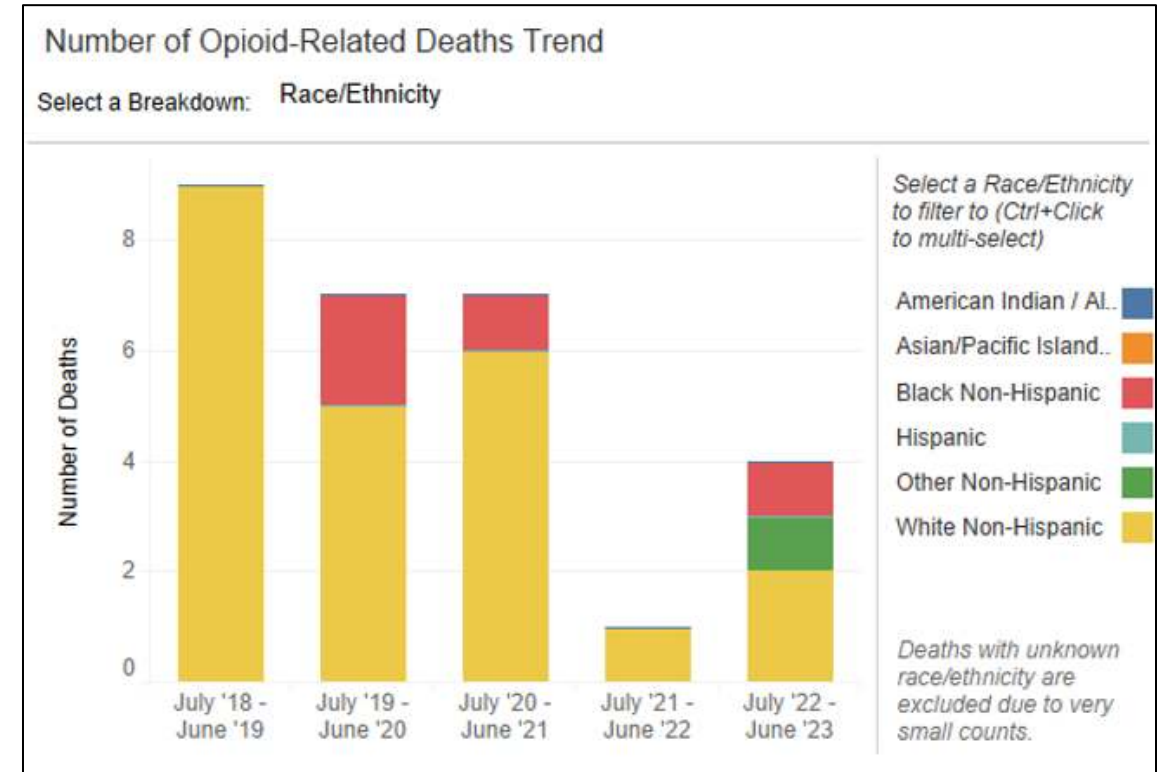
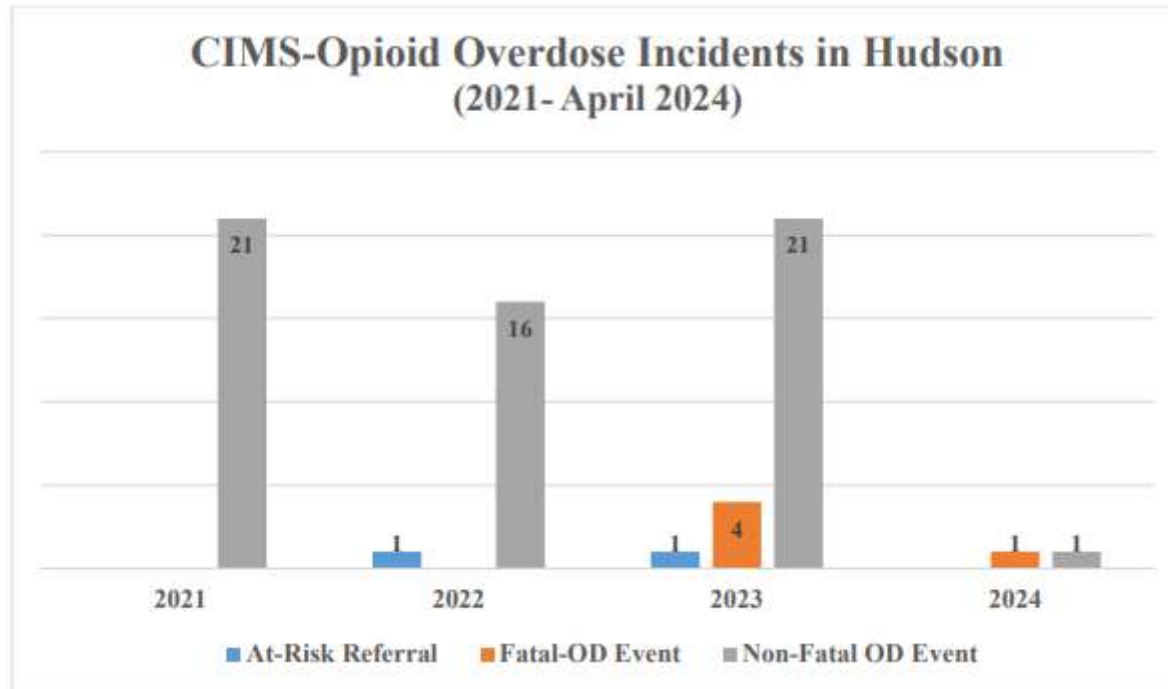
- BSAS Substance Use Dashboard
- Hudson Opioid Overdose Report
- MassCall3 Regional Youth Substance Use Survey
- Hudson Public Schools Curriculum



# **SUBSTANCE USE LANDSCAPE IN HUDSON**



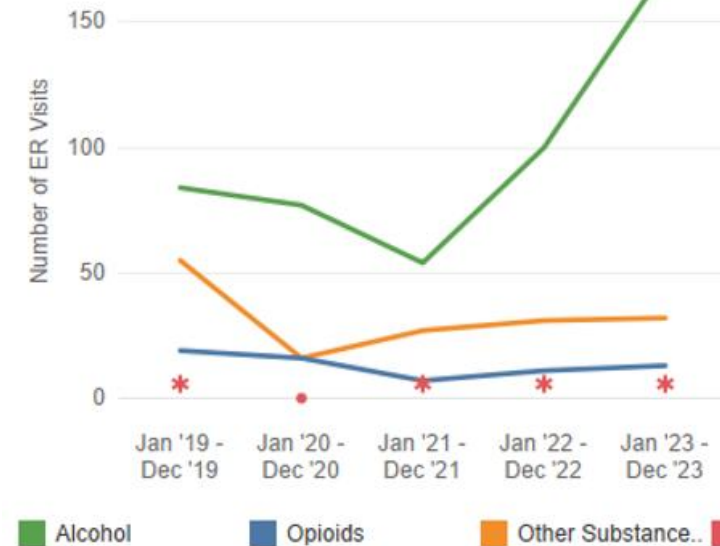
# OPIOID-RELATED INCIDENTS IN HUDSON





# Alcohol use contributes to the most ER visits and fatalities in Hudson

ER Visits by Associated  
Substance(s) Trend  
Last 5 complete 12-month intervals of data



## Community Profile

Select a community


Hudson

Select


Population: 20,092

### Deaths July 2022 - June 2023

 [Notice on deaths data](#)

12 Any Substance-Related Deaths 

4 Opioid-Related Deaths 

3 Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths 

8 Alcohol-Related Deaths  

5 Stimulant-Related Deaths 



## Hudson

- Health Department
- Town Social Worker
- Boys & Girls Club
- Post-Overdose Support Team (POST)
- AA Groups
- Willis House Shelter

## Regional

- Addiction Referral Center (ARC) in Marlborough
- Recovery Connection in Marlborough
- Advocates in Marlborough and Framingham
- JRI Program RISE in Framingham



High density of establishments  
that serve alcohol

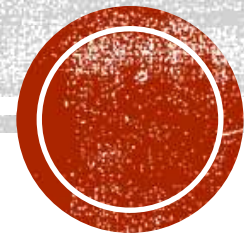
Family substance use

Mental health

Easy access to substances



# **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS**



# Across all methods, participants wanted Hudson to focus on two areas the most:

1. Opioid Use Disorder Treatment
2. **Support People in Treatment and Recovery**
3. Connections to Care
4. Harm Reduction
5. Address the Needs of Criminal-Justice-Involved Persons
6. Support Pregnant or Parenting Women and Their Families, Including Babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
7. **Prevent Misuse of Opioids and Implement Prevention Education**



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS

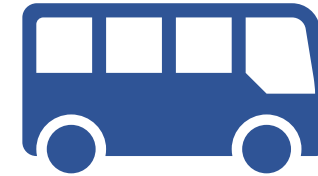
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**Youth Prevention**



**Recovery Services**



**Mobile Outreach**



**Transportation**



**Naloxone Distribution**



**Recovery Housing**



# YOUTH PREVENTION

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- Hudson uses health education curriculum for grades 5-12, but participants overwhelmingly called for it to start at a younger age
- Youth noted that they'd like to learn about substance use prevention from peers or young adults

“[We need] community education for youth, parents and school systems. We need to begin the conversations and education in middle school without scare tactics but with a collaborative process to help the youth learn how to talk about this with their support networks. In addition, [we need to] support parents and teachers to know how to notice the warning signs of substance use, withdrawal symptoms, as well as how to navigate these issues throughout the youths next 10+ years of life.” – Recovery Provider



# YOUTH PREVENTION (CONTINUED)

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- **Recommendations:**

- Expand health education to elementary school
- Provide professional development to teachers of all ages on the signs of substance use and how to respond
- Create protocols for schools to do a warm handoff to the Town Social Worker or a social service agency when they observe parents/guardians using substances
- Form a Youth Advisory Council that compensates its members to provide guidance on youth substance use interventions
  - Example: [Gloucester Youth Leadership Council](#)
  - Example: [Chelsea's Teen Action Project](#)





# RECOVERY SERVICES

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- Participants were grateful for the services that ARC provides and hoped it would expand its services to Hudson
- Participants wished Hudson offered the following:
  - A recovery coach who could begin working with individuals upon release from detox, the hospital, or the criminal justice system
  - Job training for individuals in recovery
  - Additional support groups based in Hudson

“There needs to be more human interaction. When you’re in crisis mode and looking for help, there’s a small period of time where you can get it.” – Person in Recovery

“We need job training. Something where people could gain some kind of employment so they can move on to live their life.” – Parent Who Has Lost a Child to Substance Use



# RECOVERY SERVICES (CONTINUED)

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- **Recommendations:**

- Increase Recovery Coach Capacity in Hudson:

- Prioritize hiring a bilingual recovery coach
    - Would serve as a liaison between hospitals, criminal justice system, and detox to work with clients upon release

- Enhance Employment Services Offered:

- Work with service agencies to bolster job training opportunities for people in recovery
    - Work with businesses to become “Recovery Friendly”

- Expand Support Groups in Hudson:

- Work with service agencies to provide additional support groups, including those with a harm reduction framework
    - Prioritize support groups for:
      - Youth
      - Speakers of Portuguese and Spanish
      - Parents who have kids who use substances



# MOBILE OUTREACH

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- Focus group participants called for more outreach to people who use drugs in Hudson
- Mobile van could provide naloxone, safe supplies, and connections to other services
- **Recommendation:**
  - Explore the possibility of a regional or Hudson-specific mobile van
  - Explore if a service provider could operate the van

“Addiction is transient. People tend to move around. So the van would be a very consistent thing that [people who use drugs] could count on.” — Parent Who Has Lost a Child to Substance Use



# TRANSPORTATION

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- Many of the key substance use services (such as detox, recovery, and harm reduction) are located in Marlborough or Framingham
- ARC and Program RISE provide transportation to Hudson residents
- Hudson Health Department has transportation assistance program that is primarily used by seniors
- **Recommendation:**
  - Provide additional funding to the Health Department transportation assistance fund
  - Health Department should publicize this assistance as available to people who use substances or are in recovery



# NALOXONE DISTRIBUTION

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- Focus group participants and survey respondents called for increased naloxone (also known as Narcan) availability in Town
- Health Department currently distributes naloxone at Town Hall and town events, and the high school has it available in the nurse's office and will soon have it in the main office
- **Recommendation:** Continue distributing naloxone widely including to businesses, the Boys & Girls Club, and social service agencies

"I'd like to see Narcan dispensers. We have the defibrillator dispensers in schools and would like to see Narcan in schools, Town Hall, the skate park, public buildings, Riverside, Morgan Bowl, etc. We're okay with someone saving them if it's a heart attack, but not an overdose. I want to reduce the stigma by making things very public. Where there's life, there's breath, there's hope." – Parent Who Has Lost a Child to Substance Use





# RECOVERY HOUSING

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- Hudson lacks enough recovery housing to meet the demand
- Affordability is another concern
  - ARC has a sober housing assistance program that provides the first month of rent
- **Recommendation:**
  - Explore partnering with a social service agency to establish MASH-certified recovery housing in Hudson
  - Ensure recovery housing aligns with SAMHSA's Best Practice for Recovery Housing
  - Simultaneously, explore opening housing that uses a "Housing First" philosophy, which allows people who are not abstinent to access housing

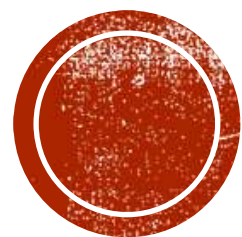
"There used to be more sober housing, but there isn't anymore" – Person in recovery

"Hudson could have a fund for people in Hudson in recovery to get them a few free months of rent or security deposit" – Person in recovery



# **LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH**

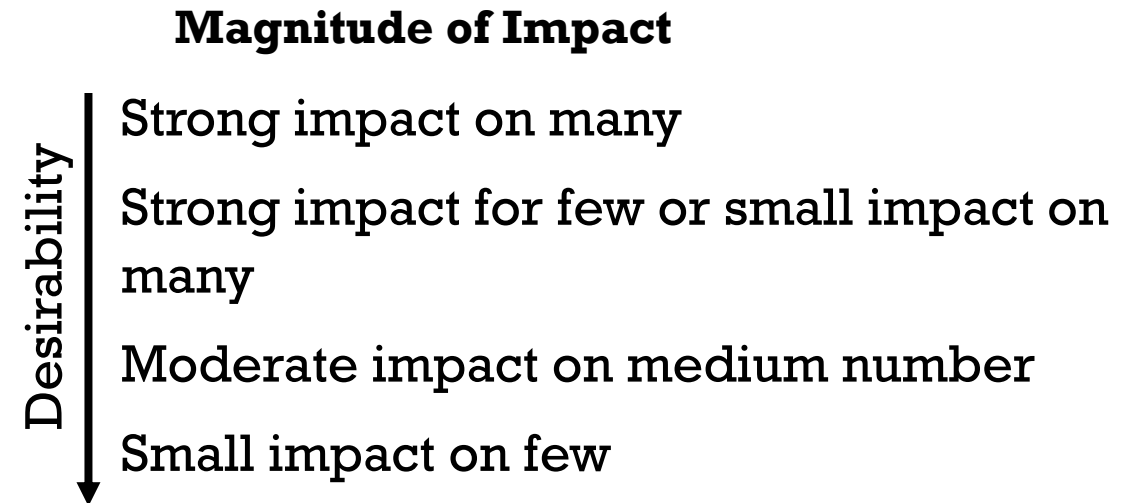
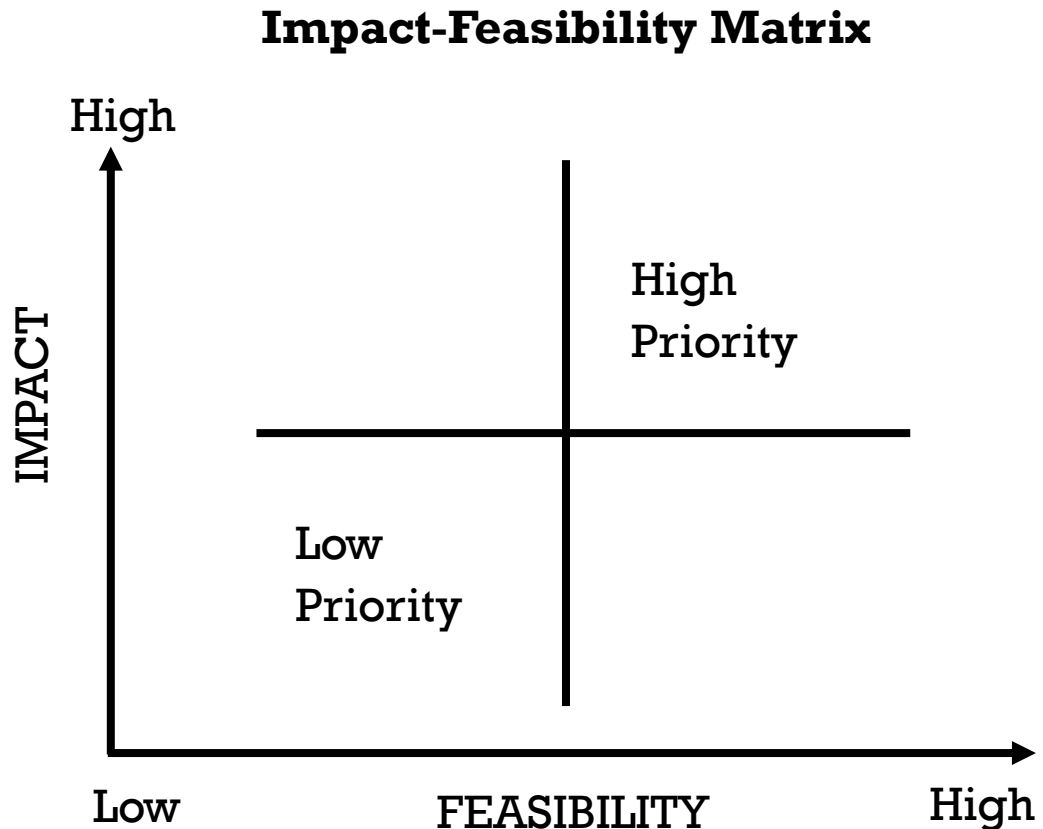
- Most focus group participants and survey respondents identified as white
- Most focus group participants who were in recovery had lived experience with a substance that was not an opioid



# NEXT STEPS



# PRIORITIZE RECOMMENDATIONS



# ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

RIZE Mosaic  
Municipal  
Matching Grant

Pool opioid  
settlement funds  
with other  
municipalities







# THANK YOU

**Questions?**

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