

HARM REDUCTION RESOURCE GUIDE

Introduction: This document is to give an overview of harm reduction and activities conducted in many harm reduction organizations. Use of CDC's Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) State and Local funding for each of these activities is marked as either allowable or not allowable. Activities that are marked as allowable should be understood to be allowable in the context that they are supporting OD2A's broad goal of reducing opioid and stimulant-involved overdoses. Some of the activities that are marked as not allowable may be allowable using other CDC funding or other non-CDC sources of funding.

Approach: For this document, we reviewed CDC and HHS documentation, such as the Department of Health and Human Services guidance on syringe service programs and CDC's OD2A terms and conditions. In this guide, information from web-based resources and databases such as PubMed and the OD2A Technical Assistance Center is included. Additional guidance from peer reviewed journal articles, internal CDC documents, and materials submitted to external partners regarding harm reduction are also included.

Content: Below you will see a list of activities that are conducted as part of harm reduction for people who use drugs. These activities can take place in health departments and community organizations.

Each activity is categorized broadly and there is a brief description. Beside each description the activity is shown to be either allowable or not allowable.

OD2A HARM REDUCTION OVERVIEW

The term “harm reduction” refers to any approach or strategy designed to minimize the harmful consequences associated with a certain behavior, such as substance use, without necessarily targeting the behavior itself.¹ Regarding opioid use disorder, stimulant use disorder, and overdose, harm reduction involves various evidence-based approaches shown to reduce negative health and social outcomes, primarily prevention of death from overdose.²

Below is a description of harm reduction activities (overdose prevention, referral to treatment and services, linkage to care, etc.) Check with other sources of funding (federal and non-federal) if a purchase/activity is not allowable using OD2A funds as these may be allowable through other funding streams.

USE OF OD2A FUNDS FOR HARM REDUCTION

This document provides guidance for use of OD2A funds for harm reduction. As described above, harm reduction is an approach that may be used in a variety of settings. When considering whether OD2A funds may be used to support harm reduction activities, as with other OD2A-funded activities, the funds should be used to support organizations and activities that are focused on reducing overdoses.

If a jurisdiction is interested in using federal funds to support syringe service programs (SSPs) HHS requires that the jurisdiction obtain a determination of need from the CDC. Most OD2A-funded jurisdictions already have this determination of need and federal funds may be used to support SSPs in their jurisdictions. OD2A funds may not be used to set up a new SSP but may be used to support activities at existing SSPs. Additional information on what is allowable for supporting SSPs can be found on page 3 of this document. If a jurisdiction does not have a determination of need they may still use their funds to support SSPs, they will just need to complete a determination of need first. This is a fairly quick and straightforward process, more information can be found [here](#). Applicants may consult [this](#) list to determine if they are part of a jurisdiction with a completed determination of need. Jurisdictions that are not part of a jurisdiction with a completed determination of need would need to complete this process before beginning activities that would use federal funds to support SSPs.

RESOURCES:

1. [Amendment for Education Materials](#)
2. [COVID-19 Resources for People Who Use Drugs and Other Vulnerable Communities](#)
3. [Department of Health and Human Services Implementation Guidance to Support Certain Components of Syringe Services Programs, 2016](#)
4. [Harm Reduction Education Activities](#)
5. [SSP Talking Points for OD2A PO's and PSO's](#)
6. [Syringe Service Programs – A Technical Package of Effective Strategies and Approaches for Planning, Design, and Implementation](#)

¹ Hawk et al., 2015

² Wiessing et al., 2017

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Syringe Service Programs (SSPs)	<p>SSPs include the provision of sterile syringes and other drug preparation equipment and disposal services, OEND, linkage to treatment, education about safe injection practices, wound care, as well as some or all services pertaining to infectious diseases acquired by intravenous drug use (i.e., HIV, viral hepatitis, etc.)</p> <p>Note: this list of activities and the associated classifications of allowable and not allowable are only related to SSPs that support overdose prevention efforts as part of their service offerings. See table at the end of the document for jurisdictions that have completed a determination of need for SSPs</p>	Personnel or staff to support SSP implementation and management ³ for overdose prevention. This does not include provision of SUD treatment that includes MOUD.	X	
		Resources and supplies for SSP personnel (e.g. PPE, postage for mailing harm reduction materials, etc.)	X	
		Costs associated with mobile SSP outreach for overdose prevention (e.g. vehicle lease/purchase, maintenance costs, etc.)	X	
		SSP planning and evaluation of overdose prevention activities that are not research	X	
		Disposal of syringes as part of the prevention component for programs, communities, or activities that use injectable naloxone ⁴	X	
		Fentanyl test strips for “drug checking” ⁵	X	
		Establish a new SSP ⁶		X
		Expand an existing SSP to include co-location of treatment	X	
		Infrastructure costs for SSPs that are not associated with the co-location of treatment (e.g. rent, utilities, etc.)		X
		Drug disposal, including the implementation or expansion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug disposal programs • Drug take back programs 		X

³ DHHS 2016

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

⁶ DHHS 2016

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug drop box • Drug disposal bags 		
		Provision of equipment solely intended for illegal drug use such as: ⁷ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookers/spoons • Syringes • Pipes 		X
		Procurement of other equipment solely intended for preparing drugs for illegal drug injection such as: ⁸ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sterile water • Filters • Tourniquets • Razors • Straws • Plastic cards • Tiny spoons 		X
		Procurement of equipment associated with the use of injectable naloxone (e.g. alcohol pads, antiseptic wipes, personal fitpacks/sharps containers [that are used to carry naloxone and dispose of syringes used with injectable naloxone])	X	
		Facilitating the introduction of wraparound services to SSPs such as the collocation of MOUD, linkage to care, and other services to reduce harms related to substance use disorders. ⁹	X	
		Safe injection sites (controlled environments that facilitate safer use of illicit drugs by providing medical staff, clean facilities, and education) ¹⁰		X

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ CDC-RFA-CE19-1904

¹⁰ Lefor, S. R. (2019). Safe Injection Sites and the Ethics of Harm Reduction

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND)	OEND trains participants on proper naloxone administration technique and how to prevent, recognize, and respond to an opioid or stimulant overdose ¹¹	Developing education materials, including information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer injection practices • Overdose prevention • Reversing an opioid overdose with naloxone^{12,13} 	X	
		Staff salaries	X	
		Distribution of naloxone	X	
		Provide training on how to use naloxone ¹⁴	X	
		Mail-in naloxone distribution (including postage, mailing supplies, etc.) ¹⁵	X	
		Fentanyl test strips for “drug checking” ¹⁶	X	
		Naloxone vending machines (not the naloxone itself) ¹⁷	X	
		NaloxBoxes and other methods of community-access to naloxone (not the naloxone itself) ¹⁸	X	
		Education and counseling to reduce overdose risk ¹⁹	X	

¹¹ Oliva 2014

¹² OD2A 2020

¹³ DHHS 2016

¹⁴ Seale et al., 2005

¹⁵ OD2A Proposed Allowable Activities – Prevention

¹⁶ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

¹⁷ OD2A Proposed Allowable Activities – Prevention

¹⁸ Capraro & Rebola 2018

¹⁹ DHHS 2016

		Provide overdose prevention materials to participants of SSPs including education materials and supplies not used for the preparation or use of illicit drugs	X	
		Purchase of naloxone ²⁰		X

²⁰ Seale et al., 2005

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Education and Communication	Education and communication activities regarding harm reduction strategies and overdose prevention	Educational activities, including mass media, print media and digital technologies to improve knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of harm reduction strategies, including: ²¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm reduction messaging • Overdose prevention • Linkage to care • Safer injection methods • Awareness of fentanyl in the drug supply • Stigma reduction • SSPs and linkage to care at SSPs • Administration of naloxone 	X	
		Staff salaries	X	
		Communications evaluation to inform educational activities, such as formative evaluation to better understand opinions on harm reduction strategies ²²	X	
		Direct outreach methods, including trainings and community events, to raise awareness and distribute educational products related to harm reduction ²³	X	
		Risk reduction messaging for disproportionately affected populations (e.g. pregnant women and justice-involved persons) ²⁴	X	

²¹ Pasalic & Schier 2020

²² SSP Talking Points for OD2A

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ CDC-RFA-CE19-1904

		Training and education on SUD and harm reduction ²⁵	X	
		Developing educational outreach and guidance or materials (including mass media, print, digital, or other) about supervised injection facilities ²⁶		X

²⁵ Pasalic, E., 2020

²⁶ Pasailic & Schier 2020

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Service Delivery Models* *OD2A funds may not be used for the purchase or distribution of syringes	There are several harm reduction service delivery models that can be used to support overdose prevention activities	Purchase or distribution of syringes		X
		Vehicle lease, purchase, or other transportation (uber/lyft/other car services, taxi, etc.) for linkage to care and/or post-overdose outreach harm reduction activities ²⁷	X	
		Staff salaries	X	
		Mobile/street-based outreach, education, and linkage to care by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot • Bicycle • Van • Bus • Motor coach Can be used in conjunction with a fixed site program or as a stand-alone. ²⁸	X	
		Fixed-site provision of harm reduction services, education, and linkage to care (harm reduction facility is housed in a building or single location) ²⁹	X	
		Peer outreach in which education and outreach occurs within peer networks of the clients of harm reduction organizations. ³⁰	X	

²⁷ Decision Memo: Clarification on OD2A Vehicle Lease or Purchase

²⁸ Module 1: Planning and Design | Harm Reduction Coalition. Harm Reduction Coalition, 2020

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

		Hospital-based outreach, education, and linkage to care ³¹	X	
		Pharmacy voucher program provides participants with vouchers redeemable for free syringes at participating pharmacies ³²		X
		Safe syringe disposal to reduce community presence of syringes ³³		X
		Purchase of syringe disposal containers for Strategy 3 surveillance projects that are conducting toxicology testing of syringes used by people who inject drugs in order to better track the public health risks of the illicit drug supply	X	

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Summary of Information on The Safety and Effectiveness of Syringe Services Programs (SSPs) | CDC, 2020

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)	Medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat opioid use disorder (OUD) involving misuse of either prescription or illicit opioids. ³⁴ MOUD with a harm reduction approach allows individuals to choose to reduce or stop their opioid use rather than being coerced into treatment and reduces the risk of overdose while continuing use of opioids.	Purchase of medications such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methadone ▪ Buprenorphine ▪ Naltrexone 		X
		Provision of SUD treatment that includes MOUD ³⁵		X
		Outreach to encourage providers to seek out training and education for Drug Addiction Treatment Act (DATA) waivers ³⁶	X	
		Educational materials with information about MOUD ³⁷	X	
		Paying for fees associated with providers obtaining waived status for DATA waivers. Applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct reimbursements and contracts ▪ Waiver fee³⁸ 		X

³⁴ Kolla & Strike, 2019

³⁵ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ DHHS 2016

³⁸ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Referral, Linkage to Care or Services & Treatment	<p>Activities that support access to treatment for OUD and linkage to care or services.</p> <p>Note: While we highly encourage the co-location of services, we do not pay for those services (salary, rent, utilities, etc.)</p>	Navigation services to ensure linkage to substance use disorder treatment and medical and mental health care ³⁹ including transportation and communication needs related to treatment and care access (e.g. transportation reimbursement, transportation services, provision of cell phones, phone cards, etc.)	X	
		Staff salaries	X	
		Directly funding or expanding the provision of substance use treatment ⁴⁰		X
		Treatment and providing medical/clinical care ⁴¹		X
		<p>Referral, linkage, and retention to services such as (note we are not paying for these services only referral or linkage to them):⁴²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment for substance use disorder (MOUD) • Behavioral therapy (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy) • Housing assistance • Food assistance • Travel assistance • Medical care • HIV/HCV and other STD/STI testing • Specialized clinical care, if indicated, such as pain management 	X (referral, linkage, and retention only)	X (not paying for the services)

³⁹ DHHS, 2016

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

⁴² DHHS, 2016

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other wraparound services that prevent drug overdose, treat drug overdose, support long term recovery, or address barriers to care = mental health, transportation, peer support, or risk or harm reduction services 		
		Provide technical assistance to support and enable collocation of services within harm reduction organization	X	
		Support case management, web-based intake, or referral systems to help connect individuals to wrap around services (i.e., mental health, treatment, etc.)	X	
		Support outreach to SSPs/harm reduction organizations to introduce additional health services (i.e., mental health, treatment, etc.)	X	
		Support referrals to harm reduction services from primary care physicians, public safety, and other groups	X	

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Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Other Supplies for Clients and Staff	This includes any other supplies that may be provided to individuals with OUD as a part of harm reduction activities	PPE (personal protective equipment)	X	
		Low cost incentives for disproportionately affected populations to recruit for overdose prevention services (food, snacks, water, etc.)	X	
		Safer sex kits (condoms and lubricant)		X
		Child care and child care-related purchases (e.g. pack-n-play)		X
		Furniture or equipment (generally, but note that purchase or leasing vehicles may be allowable expenses for linkage to care activities) ⁴³		X
		Fentanyl test strips for “drug checking” ⁴⁴	X	

⁴³ CE19-1904 Overdose Data to Action Terms and Conditions

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Description and List of Harm Reduction Activities			Allowable vs. Not Allowable Costs with OD2A State and OD2A Local Funds	
Category	Description	Activities	Allowable	Not Allowable
Miscellaneous	A list of other harm reduction activities allowable or unallowable with OD2A funds	Research ⁴⁵		X
		Prevention of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as a standalone activity ⁴⁶		X

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

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OD2A: Harm Reduction Education Activities and the NOA Amendment

OD2A Proposed Allowable Activities – Prevention

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