

Peers, Data, and Partnership: Integrated Harm Reduction in Dutchess County, NY

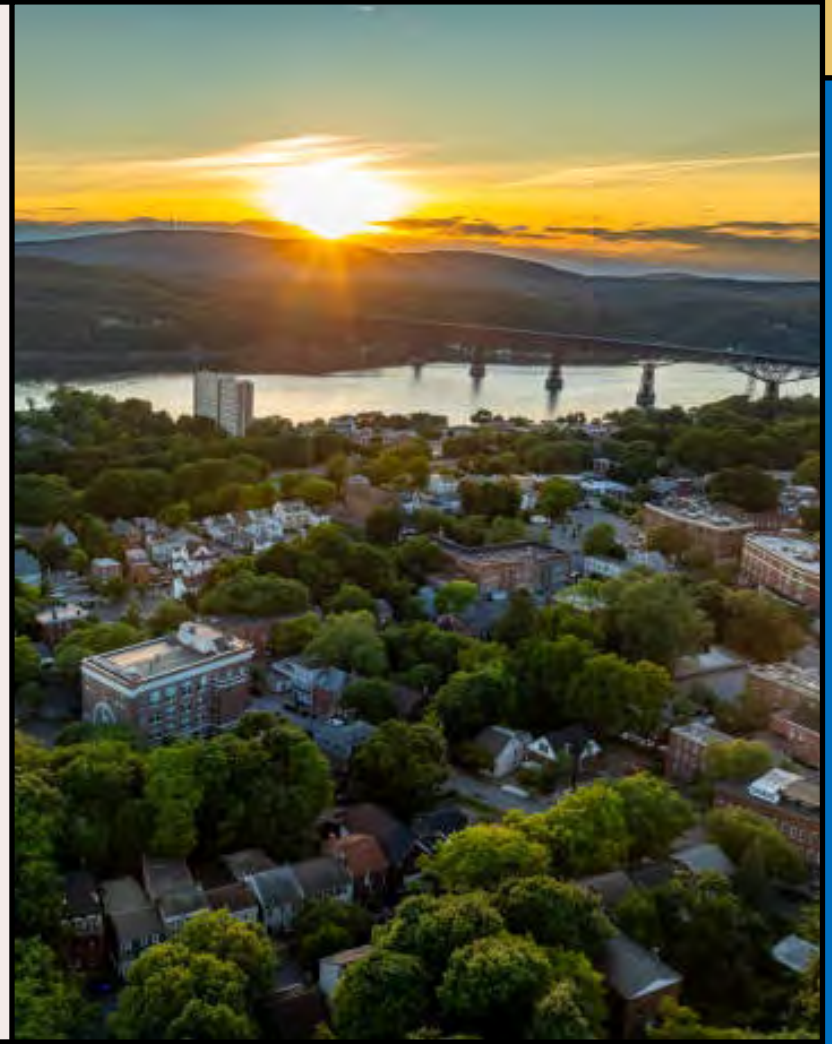
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- ❖ **Lori Levine, MSPH**, Quality Improvement Coordinator, Dutchess County Department of Health
 - ❖ **Allison M. Smith, MPH**, Chief Epidemiologist, Dutchess County Department of Mental Health
 - ❖ **Gregory Gallo, LCSW**, Clinical Program Manager, Dutchess County Department of Mental Health
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Peers, Data, & Partnership

Integrated Harm Reduction in Dutchess County, NY

2025 Statewide Harm Reduction Symposium

September 12, 2025



Who we are



Gregory Gallo, LCSW
Clinical Program Manager
Empowerment Center, DMH

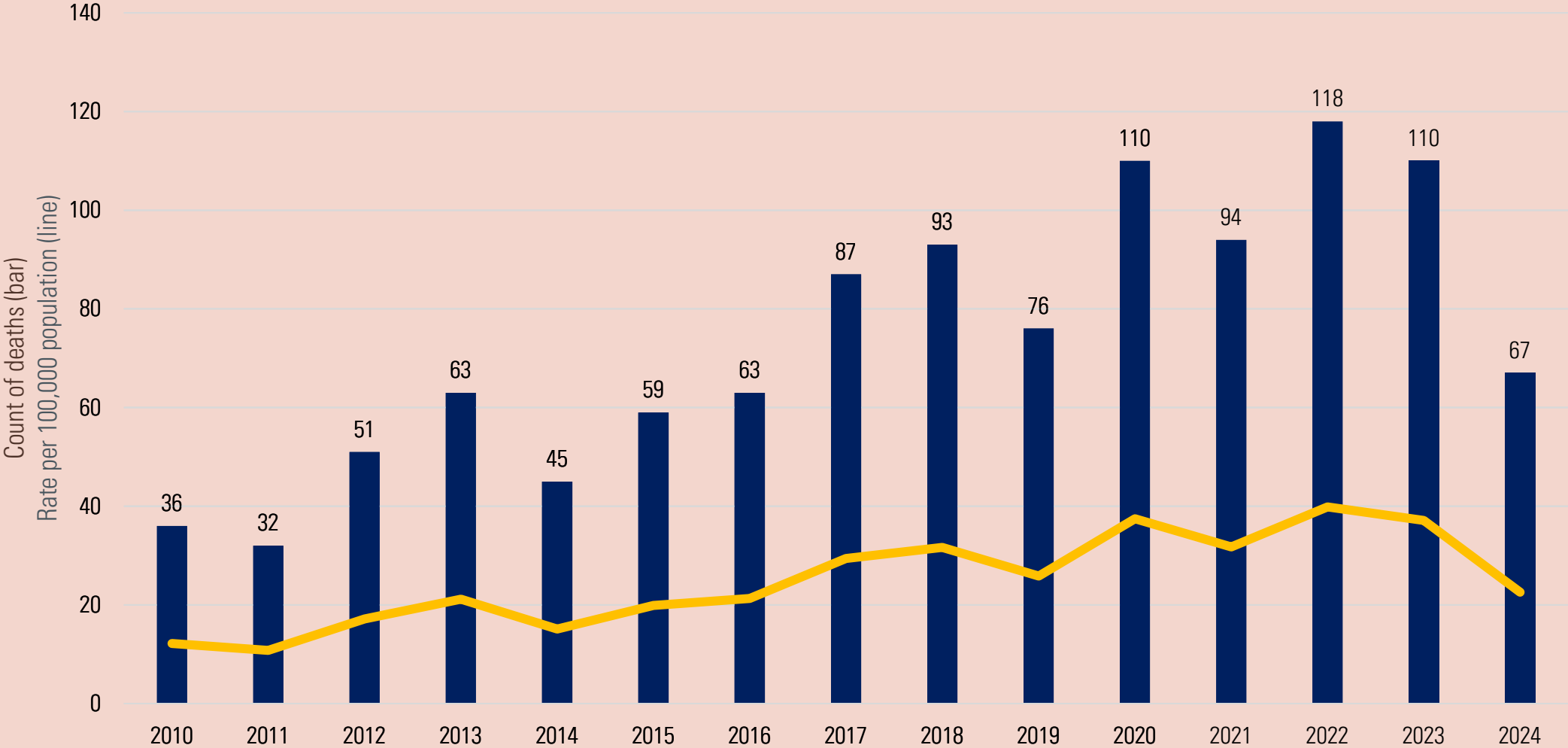


Lori Levine, MSPH
Quality Improvement
Coordinator, DOH



Ally Smith, MPH
Chief Epidemiologist,
DMH

Accidental Overdose Fatalities, Dutchess County Medical Examiner Investigations



2014

Epidemic Intensifies

- DC Substance Abuse Workgroup appointed

2015-2017

Early infrastructure

- OOPP launch
- MAT pilot in DCJ
- Stabilization Center opens
- Opioid Task Force expands
- 911 call surveillance begins

2018-2019

Prevention & outreach

- Naloxone provided at DCJ discharge
- Pharmacist & maternal health provider conferences held
- Countywide billboard campaign

2020

Harm reduction growth

- OTF subcommittees formed
- DCJ MAT induction expands
- Fentanyl test strip distribution begins
- Virtual naloxone training added

2021-2022

System strengthening

- Empowerment Center opens
- Fatality Review Committee launches
- Naloxone distribution/training continues during pandemic

2023

New strategies

- Opioid prescriber study and outreach
- Xylazine test strip distribution
- Harm reduction vending machine installed downtown

2024

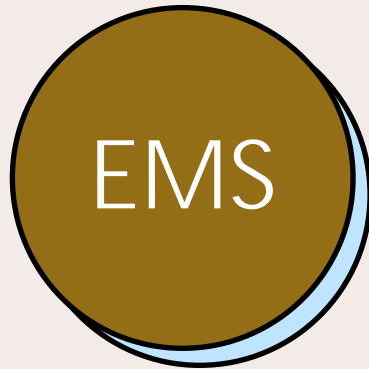
Response Expansion

- Spike Response Team mobilizes
- First Responder Conference held
- Leave-Behind Kit Program
- Naloxbox distribution launched

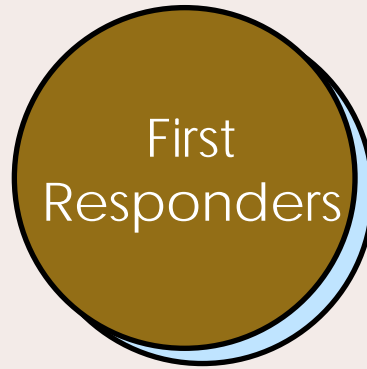
Overdose Incident Surveillance



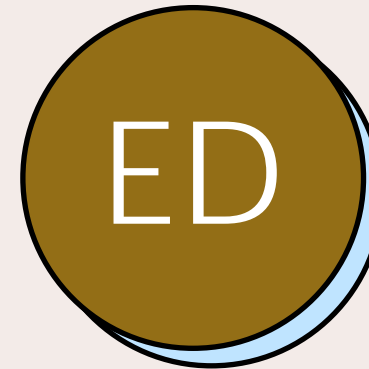
Emergency
Response



NYSDOH
Biospatial



ODMAP



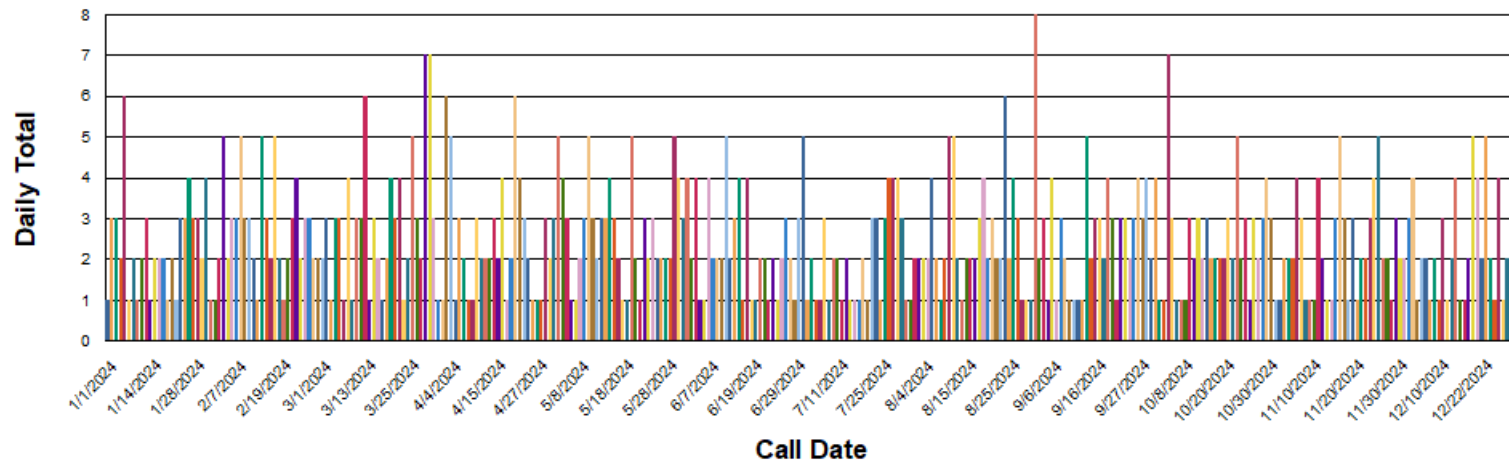
NYSDOH
ESSS



Medical
Examiner's
Office

Overdose Incident Surveillance

Dutchess County Department of Health EMS Calls For Service Involving Overdose Between 1/1/2024 and 12/31/2024



Data includes:

- Date/time
- Address/Municipality
- Nature of Call/Narrative text
- Demographics- Age, Sex
- Hospital Transfer

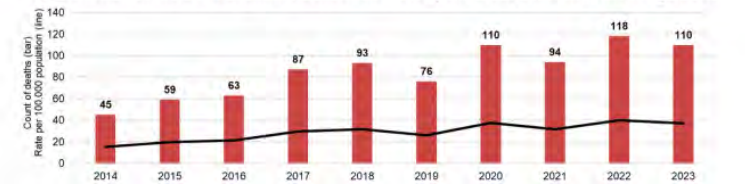
Detects anomalies

- Within set time periods
- County-wide
- By municipality

ACCIDENTAL OVERDOSE FATALITIES, 2023

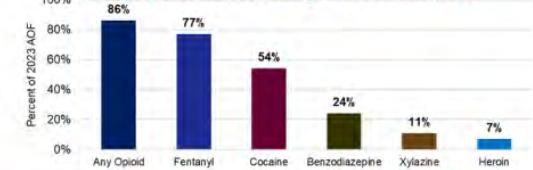
DUTCHESS COUNTY

Accidental Overdose Fatalities, Dutchess County Medical Examiner Investigations

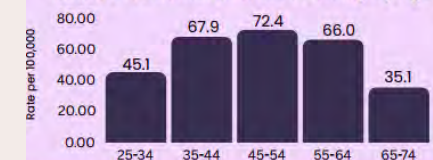


Unintentional Injury is the **4th** Leading cause of premature death in Dutchess County
NYSDOH Vital Stats, 2020

Drugs of Interest, Percentage of Decedents, 2023



Rate of Accidental Overdose Fatality by Age

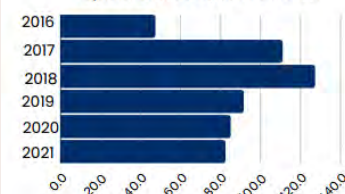


  **2 ²/₃ : 1**
Male : Female

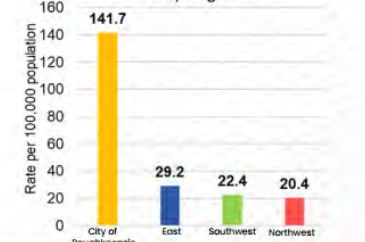
Males' rate of accidental overdose death was **2.67x** that of **females**

While 68% of deaths in 2023 occurred amongst White NH, the fatality rate was proportionate amongst all racial and ethnic groups

Crude Rate of ED Visits Involving Any Opioid Overdose, SPARCS 2024



Rate of Accidental Overdose Fatality by County Region



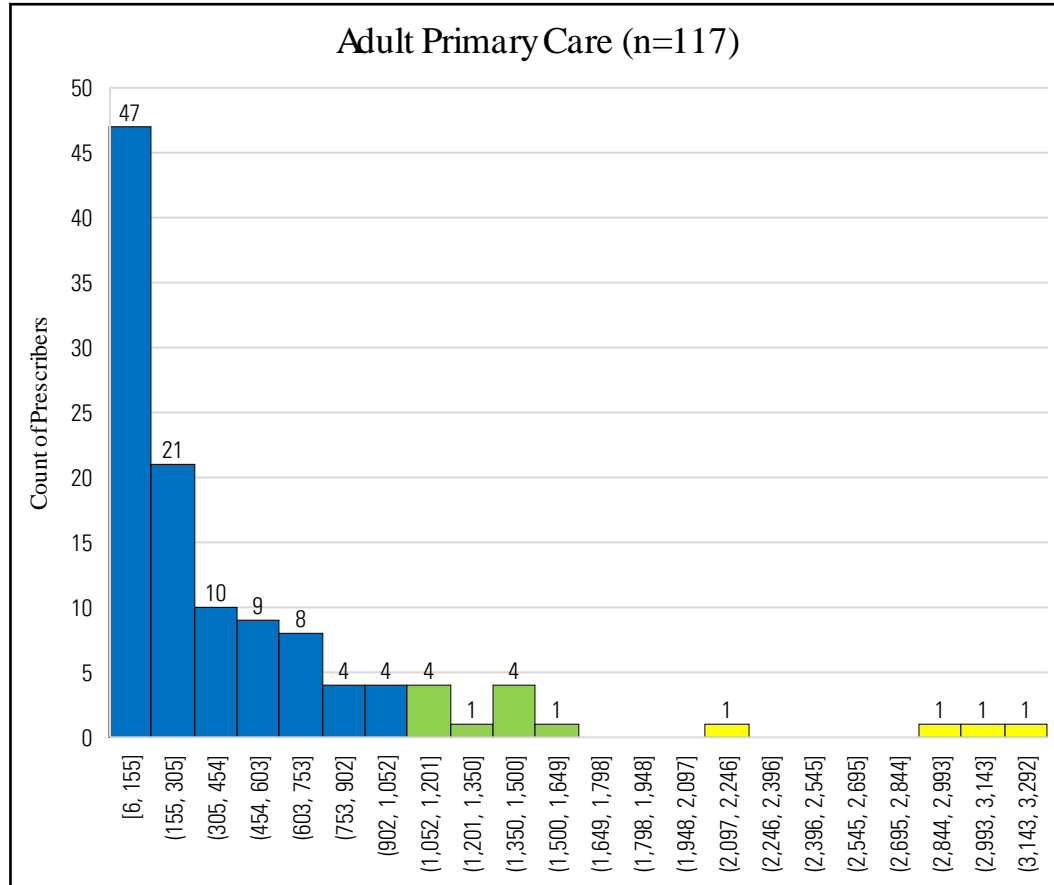
All data sourced from DOH investigations for 2023 unless otherwise specified. This report has been generated with the latest data, but may be yet to be finalized. Only values are subject to change after the report's publication. DOH is not responsible for misrepresentation.

Prescriber Outreach

- **Evaluate Opioid Prescriber Data** from NYS Dept. of Health – Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement
 - **Data Cleaning & Preparation**- focused on outpatient prescribed doses of opioid medication. Included the provider, specialty and number of doses prescribed for the calendar year.
 - 54 specialties grouped into **20 categories**; those with <10 providers excluded from specialty analysis
 - **Analysis Performed:**
 - Descriptive stats for eligible specialties.
 - Flagged providers ≥ 1 SD and ≥ 2 SD above the average prescribing level in their specialty
-

Prescriber Outreach

Dutchess County Outlying Opioid Prescribers, 2023



Specialty	Count of Prescribers	Count (%) of Prescribers +1 SD	Count (%) of Prescribers+2 SD
Adult Primary Care	117	14 (12.0%)	4 (3.4%)
Family Practice	81	8 (9.9%)	5 (6.2%)
Dentist; Endodontics; Periodontics	51	3 (5.9%)	3 (5.9%)
Medical Subspecialties	50	5 (10.0%)	4 (8.0%)
Midwifery; Obstetrics & Gynecology	48	4 (8.3%)	1 (2.1%)
Orthopedics; Orthopedic Surgery	44	4 (9.1%)	2 (4.5%)
Emergency Medicine	38	4 (10.5%)	1 (2.6%)
General Surgery	32	6 (19.0%)	3 (9.4%)
Surgical Subspecialties	29	4 (14.0%)	2 (6.9%)
Oncology; Hospice	26	2 (7.7%)	1 (3.8%)
Podiatry	18	2 (11.1%)	1 (5.6%)
Urology	17	4 (23.5%)	1 (5.9%)
Behavioral Health; Psychiatry & Neurology	15	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)
All Prescribers	625	26 (4.16%)	11 (1.8%)

SUE GERINO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



LIVIA SANTIAGO-ROSADO, MD, FACEP
COMMISSIONER

DUTCHESS COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

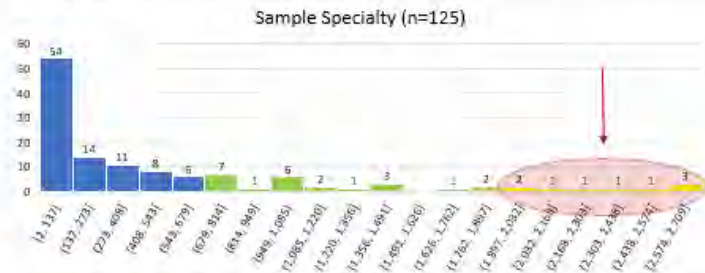
[Provider Name]
[Provider Practice]
[Address line 1]
[Address line 2]

[Date]

Dear [Provider],

As you are aware, the opioid use disorder (OUD) epidemic rages on. For many patients, OUD has been traced to opioids prescribed by a provider. The likelihood of chronic use increases with each additional day of medication starting with the third day and rising even more sharply by day five (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6610a1.htm>). Additionally, surplus prescribed doses are not infrequently diverted into the hands of unintended recipients.

Specialty-specific data obtained through the Prescription Monitoring Program have identified you as an extreme outlier in terms of opioid doses prescribed in Dutchess County. In fact, the total doses you prescribed were more than two standard deviations above the mean for your specialty.



Prior to prescribing opioids, always consider:

- Alternatives to opioid therapy (e.g., massage, rest, nonsteroidal oral or topical analgesics)
- Limiting opioid prescription duration to no more than 3-5 days of treatment
- The patient's predicted risk of OUD (e.g., higher in those who smoke)
- Educating patients on risk of diversion and appropriate disposal of opioids

I thank you in advance for your attention to, and consideration of, this important information. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best Regards,

Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD, FACEP, Commissioner
Santiago@duchesny.gov

743 Main Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 12520 (518) 848-1000 | Fax: (518) 848-1021
111 County House Road, Millbrook, New York 12545 (518) 877-4000 | Fax: (518) 877-4000
88 Court Street, 10th Floor, PO Box 1000, New York, NY 12501 (518) 848-1000 | Fax: (518) 848-1021 | duchesny.gov/DRCH

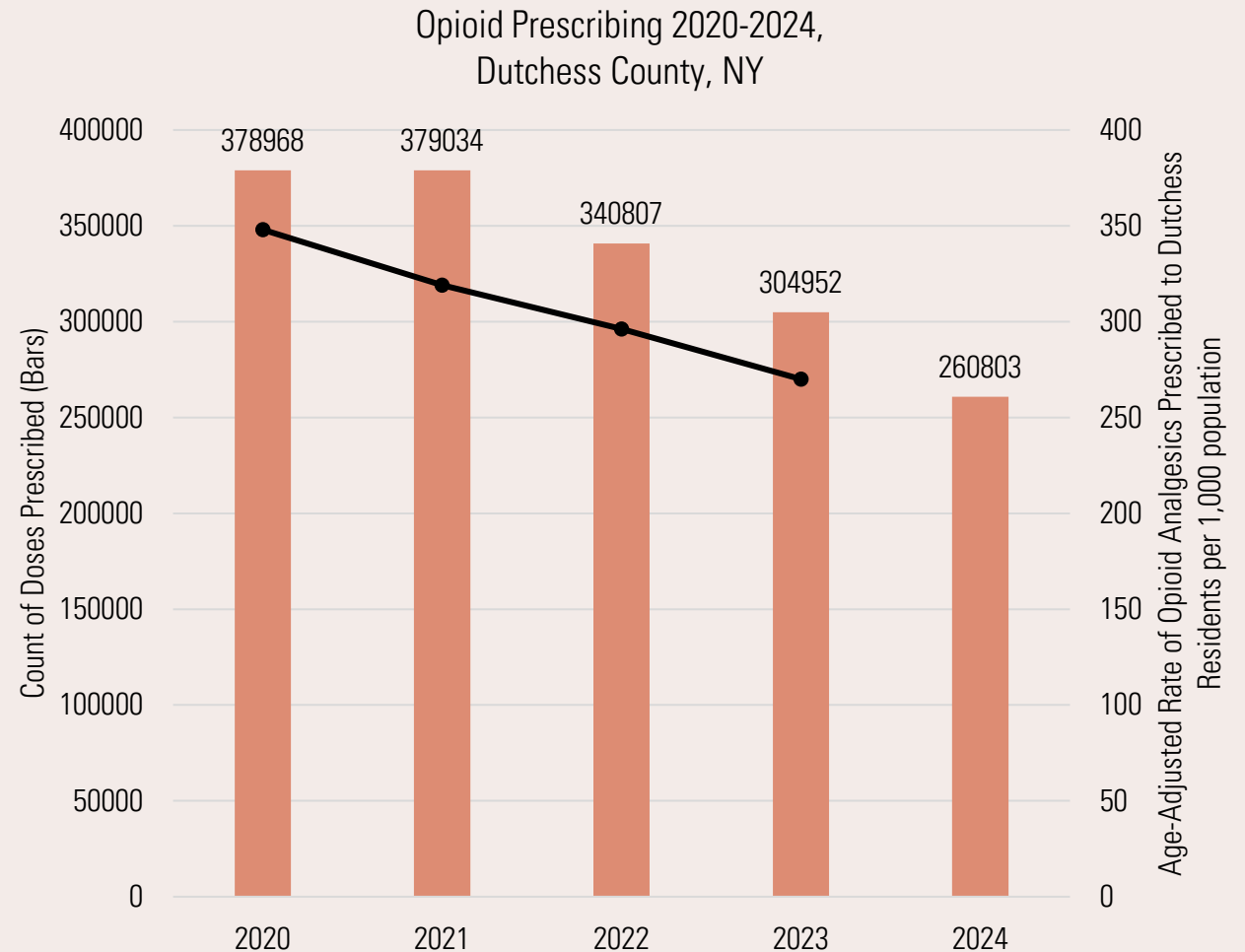
Prescriber Outreach

Letters sent from LHD commissioner to outlying prescribers alerting them of their standing amongst their peers

Details practices and strategies to limit opioid prescribing

Prescriber Outreach

- Dutchess County providers prescribed 31.18% fewer doses of opioids in 2024 when compared to 2020.
- Over the study period, 54 providers were found to be outlier prescribers at least once.
- New analysis of the 2024 data to review prescribers with increasing prescribing practices.



Opioid Overdose Prevention Program

Increase
Public
Awareness

Reduce
Stigma Around
Substance Use

Expand
Naloxone
Access and
Training

Engage and
Train
Community
Partners

Support Harm
Reduction
Strategies

Enhance Data
Collection
Monitoring

Increase Public Awareness



Public Awareness
Campaigns

**Learn how to give Narcan.
Save a Life.**

Dutchess County Residents:
4th Wednesday Every Month
4:30-5:30 pm
Free Narcan Training


You can save a life by knowing how to respond when you suspect an opioid overdose.

Led by staff from the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health, this training will teach you:

- why naloxone (Narcan) works to reverse an opioid overdose
- what to do when an opioid overdose is suspected
- how and when to give someone Narcan

Each trainee will receive a FREE Narcan kit to take with them at the end of the training.

To register: Contact Lori Levine at (845) 486-2844 or llevine@dutchessny.gov



Opioid Education and
Naloxone Training

**HAVE YOU , OR ANYONE
YOU KNOW, EVER DONE
COCAINE?**

INCREASINGLY, COCAINE IS BEING LACED WITH
AN OPIOID CALLED **FENTANYL**

NALOXONE, OR "**NARCAN**" IS THE DRUG THAT CAN SAVE
SOMEONE WHO IS OVERDOSING FROM AN OPIOID,
INCLUDING FENTANYL.

IN 2021, **71,000 PEOPLE** DIED FROM FENTANYL OR
FENTANYL RELATED SUBSTANCES

**GET NARCAN TRAINED.
SAVE A LIFE.**

CALL US FOR MORE INFO
 **123-456-7890**

 llevine@dutchessny.gov
 HealthInfo@DutchessNY.gov

 November 23, 2022
1 PM - 2 PM

Targeted Messaging

Conferences

SAVE THE DATE

Dutchess County Department of
Behavioral & Community Health presents

Substance Use Disorder in the Maternal Population: Public Health and Primary Care Interventions

Featuring Keynote Speaker
Dr. Anita Ravi, MD, MPH, MSHP

November 7, 2019 8AM - 2PM
Marist College - Poughkeepsie, NY

Narcan training available!

For more information, call (845) 486-3419



The Pharmacy Role in Addressing the Opioid Epidemic



Integrating Practice with Public Health and Harm Reduction Strategies

Sunday, November 3, 2019

8 am to 4 pm

(8-9 am breakfast/registration)

Marist College

**3399 North Road
Poughkeepsie, NY**



Hudson Valley Pharmacists are invited to attend a free, full-day conference with some of New York State's leading voices in addressing our local opioid epidemic. Attendees will learn about:

- The unique role pharmacies play in public health through harm reduction
- Increasing accessibility to harm reduction tools through pharmacies
- Building your pharmacy's capacity for consumer engagement
- Understanding and enrolling in NCAP and ESAP
- Medication Assisted Treatment
- Advanced opioid-specific counseling strategies
- Prescriber guidelines and dispensing law

Conference admission is sponsored by the Data Driven Opioid Response Collaborative, and includes: continental breakfast, catered lunch, and Continuing Education Units through The University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

To register: <http://nhpharm.org/buffalo.edu/expanded-hudson-valley>

For more information: valued@nuyhva.org

This project was supported by Grant No. 2018-AR-BX-K121 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. Refreshments sponsored by Nuvance Health and Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health.

Conference Partners

Dutchess County
Opioid Task Force
Data Driven Opioid
Response Collaborative

Harm Reduction Coalition

Hudson River Healthcare

Hudson Valley Pharmacy
Society

NYS Department of Health

University of Buffalo School of
Pharmacy and
Pharmaceutical Sciences

Food Sponsor



The University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education. This knowledge-based live activity has been assigned ACPPE# 0044-9999-19-043-L01-P, and will award 5.5 contact hours (5.5 ceus) of continuing pharmacy education credit for pharmacists. No partial credit within an individual session can be awarded.

Reduce Stigma around Substance Use

- Use of person-first, non-judgmental language
- Bring Information to community events and local businesses
- Normalize conversations to reduce stigma and promote acceptance



Expand Naloxone Access and Training

- Stabilization Center 24/7
- Increase Regular Monthly Trainings/Library Partnership
- Restaurant Initiative
- “Tupperware” Analogy
- Unusual Sites
- Vending Machine/Naloxboxes

Learn how to save a life by administering Narcan

Friday, October 7, 5:00 pm
Libby Funeral Home
55 Teller Avenue
Beacon, NY 12508



In 2020, 91,799 deaths occurred in the U.S. as a result of drug overdose.
Naloxone, or Narcan, can be used in emergency situations to counteract the effects of a narcotic overdose. Join our Narcan workshop to learn how to properly administer this life-saving treatment.

In this workshop, you will learn:

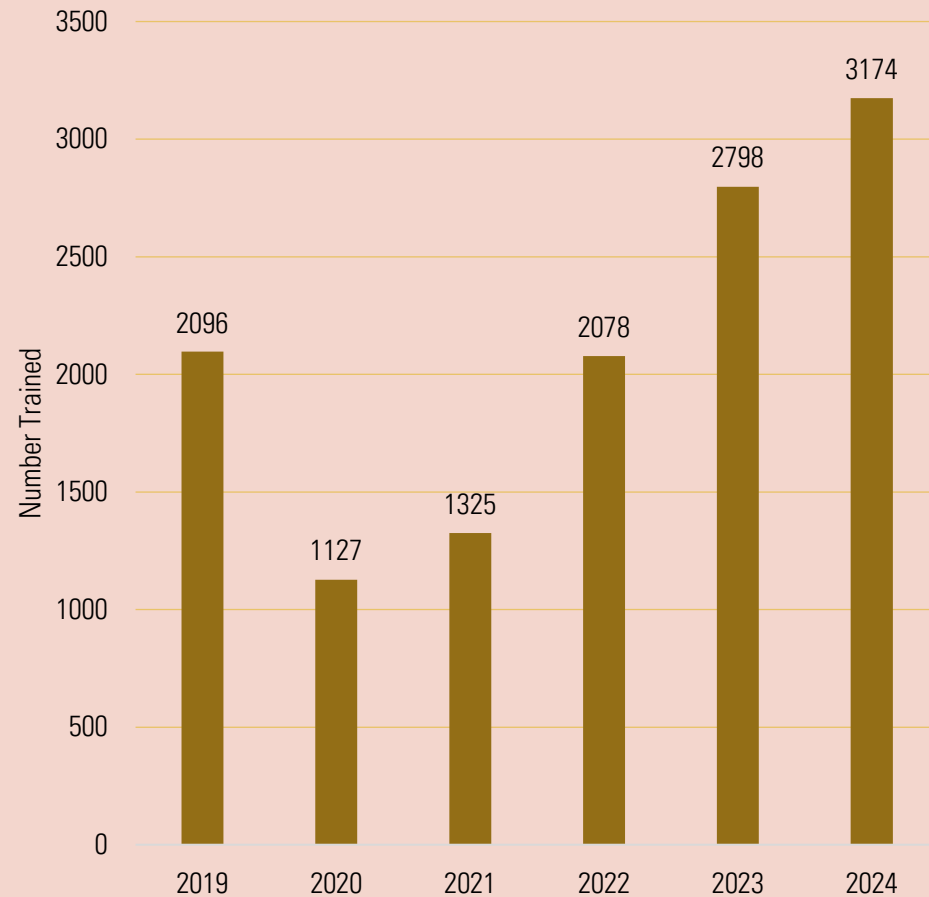
- The life-saving properties of Narcan and how it works
- How to recognize the signs of an opioid overdose
- How and when to administer Narcan

Participants will go home with a free Narcan kit.
Space is limited - please register by calling (845) 831-0179 or scanning the code.

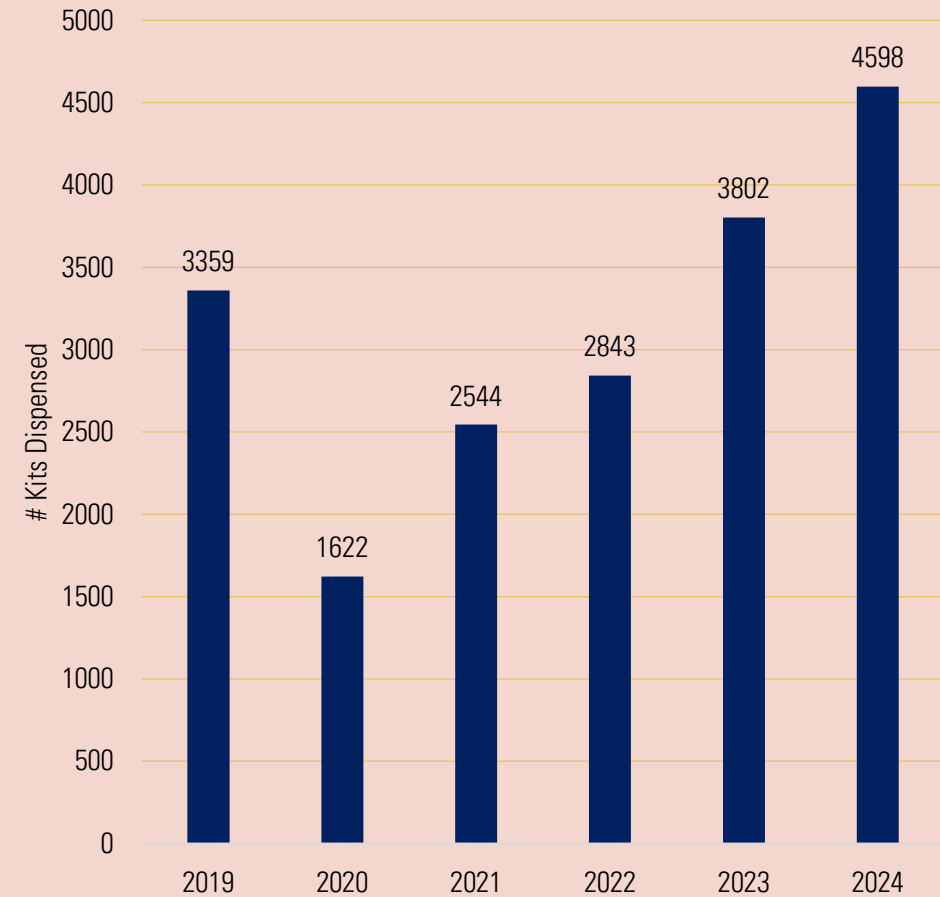

Register Now

Opioid Overdose Prevention Program

Naloxone Trained: 2019 -2024
N=12,598



Naloxone Kits Dispensed 2019-2024
N=18,768



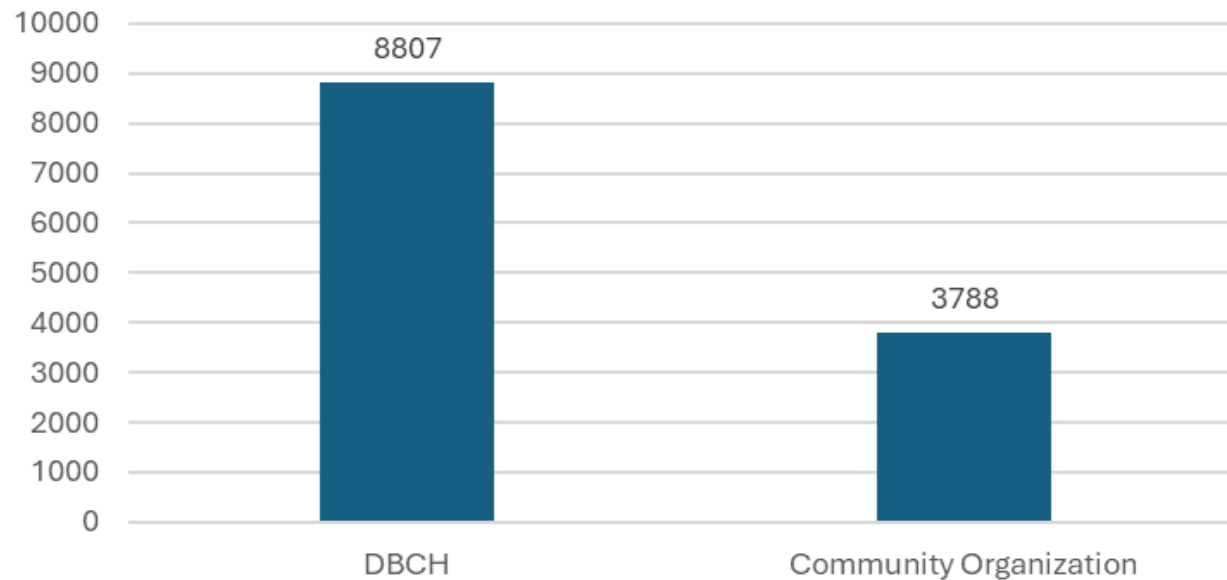
Engage & Train Community Partners

- Kit Assembly - MRC
- Train Partners to Train and Distribute Naloxone
- First Responders /“Leave Behind Kits”
- Prescriber Surveillance



Naloxone Trained by Organization 2019 to 2024

N=12,595



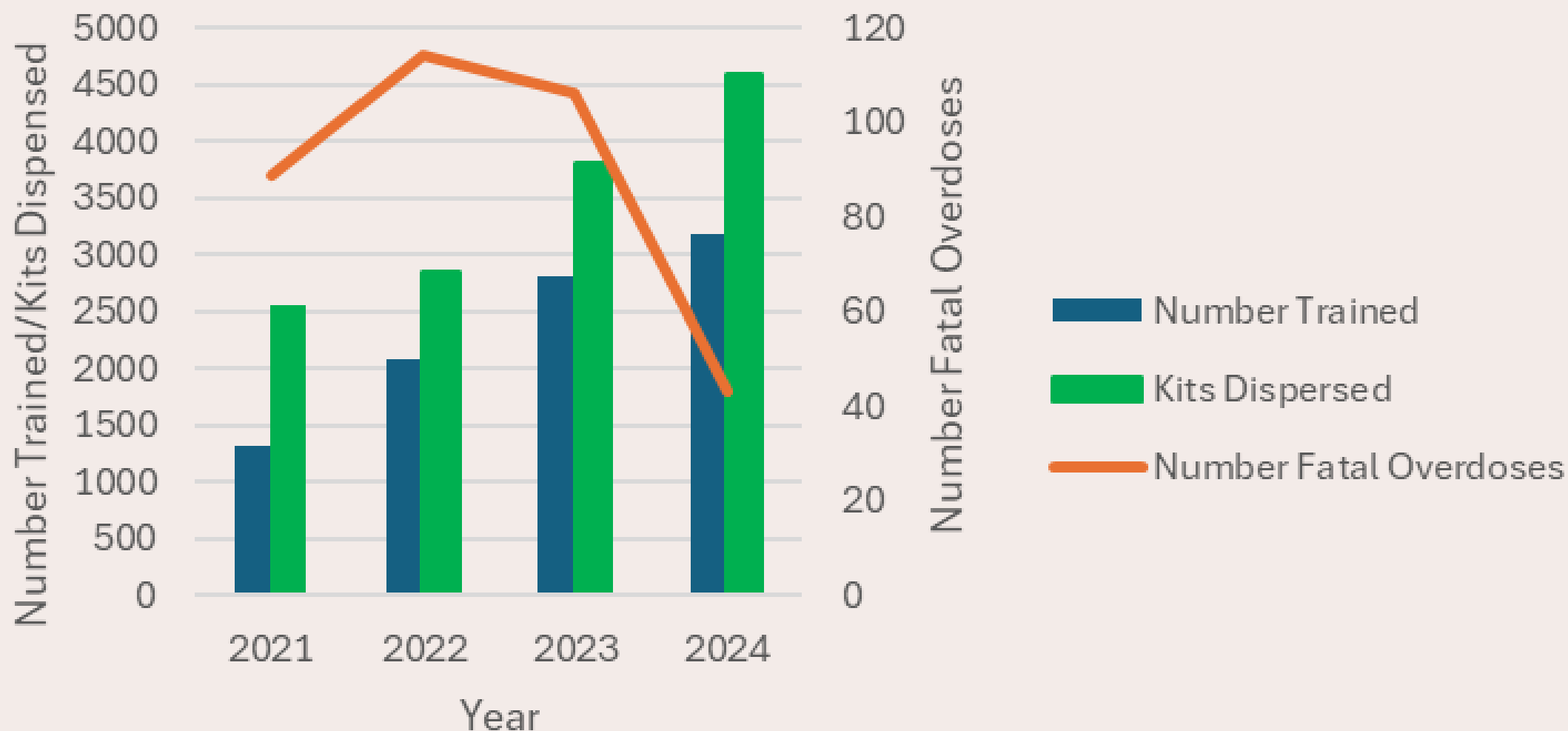
**30% TRAINED
BETWEEN 2019
AND 2024 WERE
TRAINED BY
COMMUNITY
PARTNERS**

Community Partners

- Colleges
- Coalitions
- Community Organizations
- Secondary Schools
- Police and First Responders
- Transitional Housing
- Non-Profit Agencies
- Other Dutchess County Government



Narcan Trained/Kits Dispensed vs. Overdose Deaths: Trends 2021-2024



What is the Empowerment Center?

The Empowerment Center is a place where people support each other. It helps adults 18 + who are dealing with substance use or mental health challenges, no matter what their situation is. The

Center is not a clinic, instead, it focuses on building personal connections and responding to the needs of the people and the community.



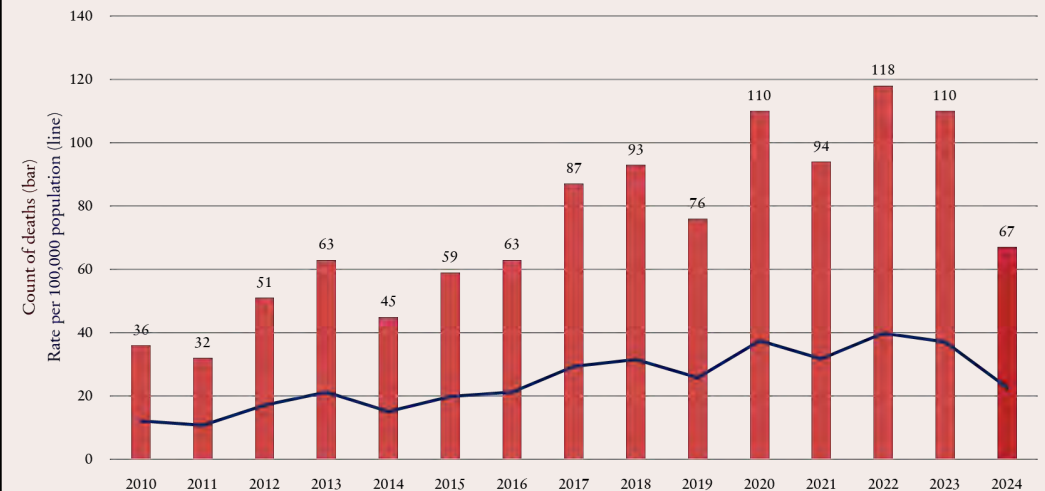
- Staffed by – 4 Recovery Coaches, 1 Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Open 5 days a week
- Provides free services in and out of the Center
- Low barrier, no intakes, no paperwork
- One-on-one Coaching, wellness activities, street outreach and more
- Harm reduction

Opioid Task Force – Focus Group 2020

Dutchess County Opioid Task Force's Empowerment and Resiliency Workgroup conducted focus groups from to better understand the needs of people who use drugs. There were 110 accidental overdose fatalities in 2020, the highest recorded for the County up until that time.

- 6-8 participants
- 4 settings, RESTART at the jail, Latinx Spanish speaking, 2 outpatient substance use treatment offices

Accidental Overdose Fatalities, Dutchess County Medical Examiner Investigations 2010 – 2024



2020 Focus Group Questions

Is there anything you need that you currently don't have?

(Probe: Harm reduction services like risk reduction counseling, naloxone, syringe exchange, drug treatment, or recovery support? Food, clothing, benefits, housing, education, or employment assistance?)

If so, what is getting in the way of you getting what you need?

Do you have any suggestions about how we can help improve the lives of people who use drugs or reduce overdoses in Dutchess County?

What do you think about having an Empowerment Center for people who use drugs in Pok?

There is no one definition of "Empowerment Center" but we were thinking about creating a place for people who have a history of drug use, to gather, provide mutual support, and learn more about how to organize and advocate for themselves and other people who use drugs. For example, the Empowerment Center could offer trainings in personal financial and leadership trainings on how to advocate for better policies for people who use drugs.

(Probe: Is this something you might be interested in? If so, what kind of trainings or activities would you like to have there?)

We are looking for community members who might like to volunteer to be part of the Dutchess County Opioid Task Force

Results

- COVID19 not a significant concern
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Stigma against people who use drugs and those with mental health challenges
 - Requests for harm reduction education
 - Resources guides
 - Online services
 - Peer support
 - Recovery services
 - Aftercare upon release
 - Drug free recreation
 - Latinx participants explained that the need to protect themselves, their families, and friends from arrest and deportation was primary. A deep mistrust of the government and white providers stops Latinx residents from seeking support outside of the community. Providers who speak Spanish are in short supply. As a result, many service needs go unmet.
-

Empowerment Center Meeting The Needs

COVID19 not a significant concern

- In person peer support in group and individual settings

Housing, employment, resource guides

- One on one recovery coaching
- Connection to resources, participant creating an app

Online services, peers support, drug free recreation

- Wellness in Numbers, individual One on one recovery coaching, Recovery Connections, Recovery In Motion, Enriched Roots

Harm reduction education, addressing stigma

- Outreach, harm reduction trainings, supply distribution, Restoration League

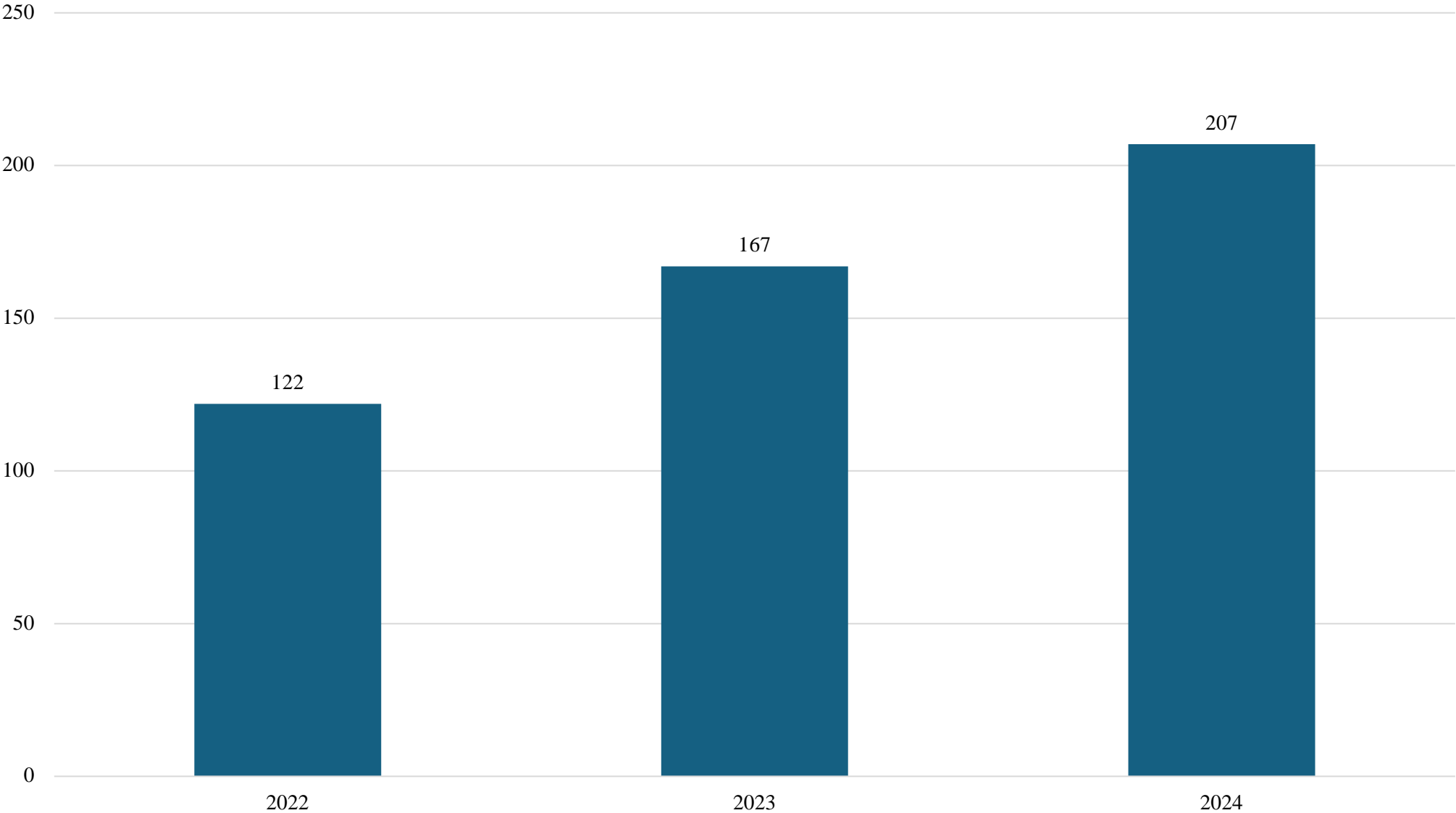
Aftercare upon release

- Recovery Coach in Dutchess County Jail

Need for Spanish speaking, trustworthy services

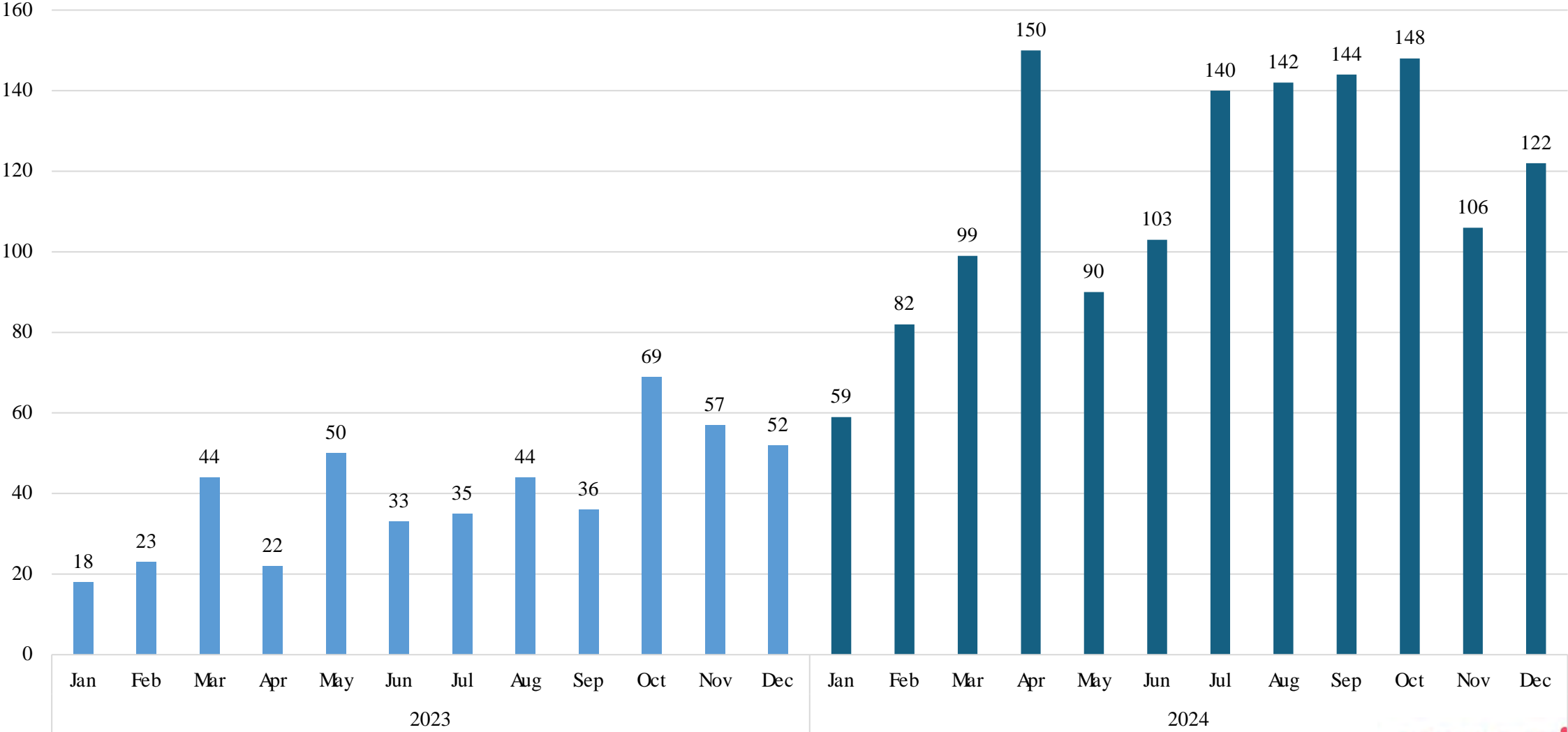
- Spanish speaking Recovery Coach with Latinx track

Unique Participants Served at the Empowerment Center by Year, 2022 – 2024

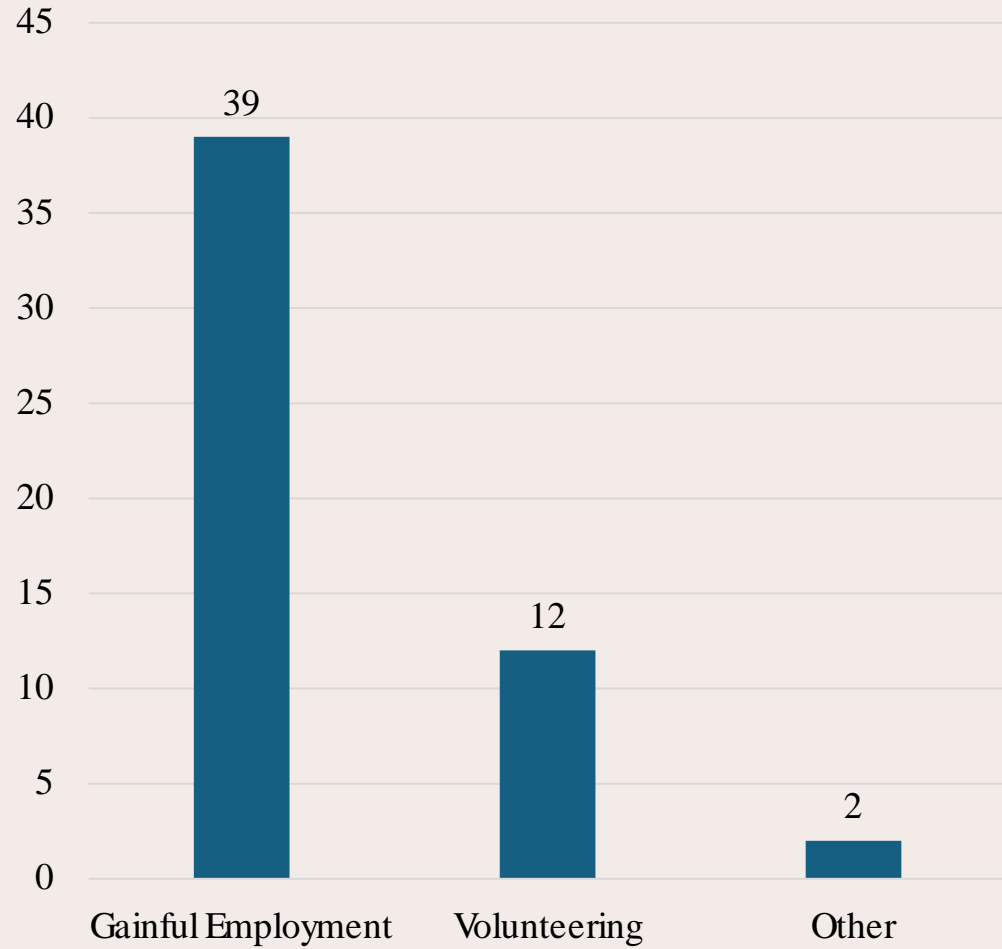


*2024 data still active and not fully finalized

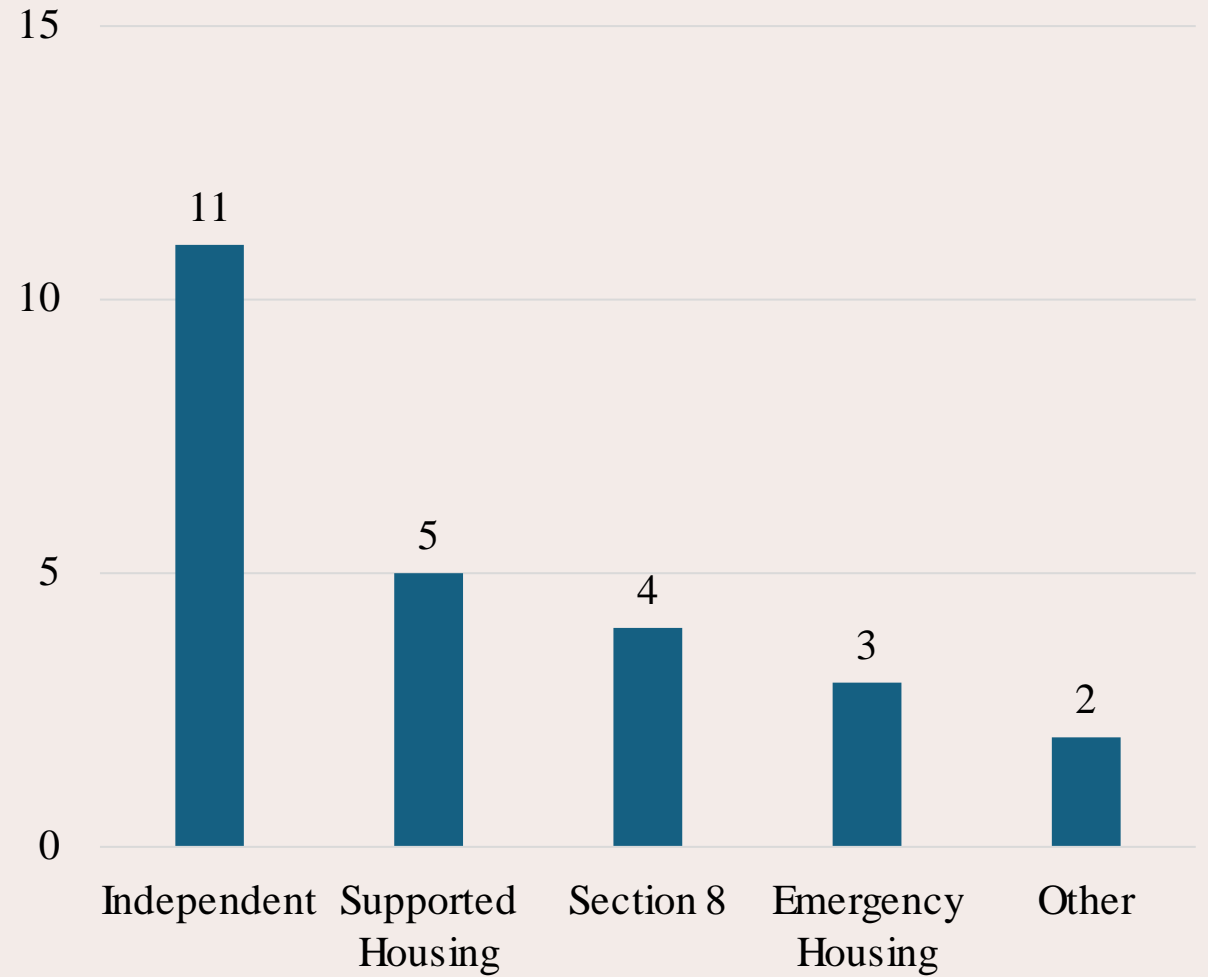
Empowerment Center Visitors by Month, 2023-2024, n=1859



Count of Vocational Opportunities Gained, 2024



Count of Housing Obtained, 2024



ENRICHED ROOTS GARDENING



Tomatoes & Pumpkins from last summers' harvest

Join us Wednesdays 2:30-4pm
230 North RD Entrance 3

Get your hands dirty, discover gardening tips and see how to use gardening as a tool for mindfulness, personal growth, and community building.

No experience needed—just bring comfortable shoes, a water bottle and a willingness to connect and grow with others.

For details and to sign up, email
empowermentcenter@dutchessny.gov
Or call (845) 486-2893

Dutchess County Empowerment Center, 230 North Road, Poughkeepsie,
DutchessNY.gov/EmpowermentCenter

Programming

Recovery Connections

Join us for monthly wellness activities, trips and more!

August Connections



Wilcox Lake
August 14th 10am-2pm
Swimming / Beach Area!
Yard Games!
Splash Park!

RSVP REQUIRED!

For details and to sign up, email delder@dutchessny.gov
or text (845) 216-6728

Dutchess County Empowerment Center, 230 North Road, Poughkeepsie
DutchessNY.gov/EmpowermentCenter

Recovery in Motion

Fridays: 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Join us for fun activities to help promote healthier habits!



Find out what's happening this week!

RSVP REQUIRED

For details and to sign up, email cfontana@dutchessny.gov
or text (845) 216-6728

Dutchess County Empowerment Center, 230 North Road, Poughkeepsie
DutchessNY.gov/EmpowermentCenter



The Dutchess County Empowerment Center
presents

Wellness In Numbers

A virtual, peer-run group
Held Virtually Tuesdays 2:30-3:30PM via Microsoft Teams

This group is designed for individuals impacted by
mental health and/or addiction.

Participants at any stage in their recovery are welcome to join
to develop healthy relationships and strengthen personal wellness!

We highlight healthy themes, resources, and activities
to share positive methods of creating wellness

For more information, contact a Recovery Coach at 845-486-2893
or email empowermentcenter@dutchessny.gov

JOIN THE RESTORATION LEAGUE!

Give back to your community and help those struggling
with substance abuse and mental health issues.

MEETS EVERY THIRD FRIDAY 2-3PM

THE EMPOWERMENT CENTER

230 NORTH ROAD, POUGHKEEPSIE

Members help assemble and distribute harm reduction
kits, participate in community clean-ups, and more.

For more information, call 845-486-2893
or email empowermentcenter@dutchessny.gov

Abierto para citas y
eventos de conexión
Lunes a viernes de 9AM-4PM

Horario de atención sin cita previa
de All Access
Lunes, miércoles y viernes de 1:30PM-4PM

ABIERTO A CUALQUIERA 18+ BUSCANDO APOYO Y COMUNIDAD
¡Todos son bienvenidos! ¡Los servicios son GRATUITOS!

APOYO DE RECUPERACIÓN INDIVIDUALIZADO

Obtenga apoyo de entrenadores de recuperación capacitados mientras se
concentra en sus propios objetivos.

PLANIFICACIÓN DE RECUPERACIÓN Y BIENESTAR

Cree un plan de bienestar para fortalecer sus estrategias de adaptación,
identificar detonantes y ayudarlo a lograr un futuro saludable.

ACTIVIDADES Y APOYO

¡Conéctate con otros en el camino hacia
la recuperación a través de actividades
interesantes!

REDUCCIÓN DE DAÑOS EDUCACIÓN Y SUMINISTROS

Hay disponibles kits de prueba de
naloxona (Narcan), fentanilo y otros
suministros para la reducción de daños.

FORMAR COMUNIDAD

Participa en eventos y actividades
grupales para conectarse y apoyar
a otros en su comunidad.

**DONDE
ENCONTRARNOS**
230 North Road, Entrada 3
Poughkeepsie, NY



CONTACTÉNOS

845-486-2893 | empowermentcenter@dutchessny.gov
DutchessNY.gov/EmpowermentCenter

Considerations from the peer staff

“ The awareness that we’re peers trying to build rapport with individuals and having government seals is a huge barrier to that and things like we did like hiding the seals is massively beneficial. Not forcing peers to dress formally all the time is a huge thing to do. I love to dress nice sometimes but dressing nice out in the community might have the opposite effect that we want.”

Encourage personality

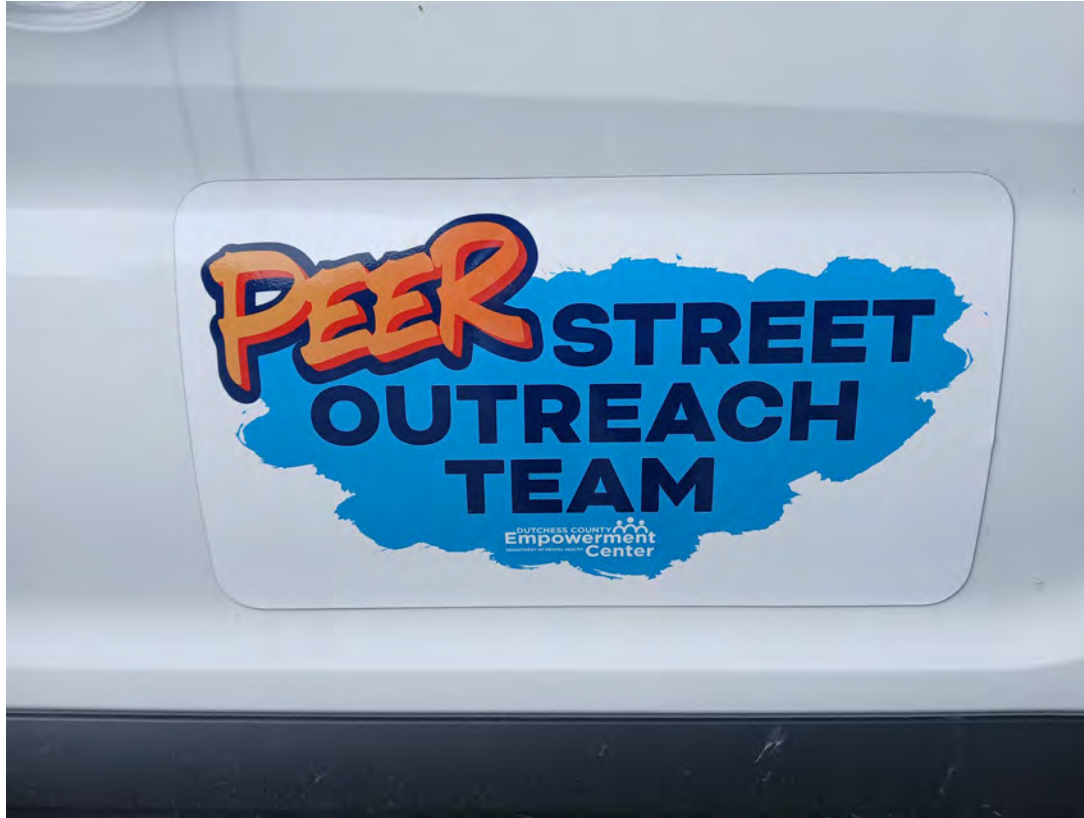
“They understand that our job is not the mundane every day job, they let us dress the part, they let us be ourselves”



Before



After



Let go and empower peers

“

From day one of my interview, you were both very open to ideas...I thought I wasn't going to get the job because I was telling you what it takes to make a good program.... I knew I didn't want the job if you guys weren't open to understanding that we are special, different, unique.... I knew what would help you guys build this place, from day one you were like 'ok guys let's make this happen'

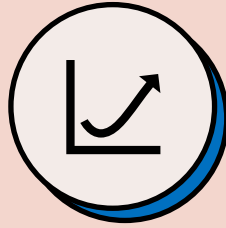
– *Recovery Coach with 3 years on the job*

”

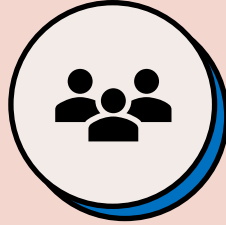
Let go and
empower peers



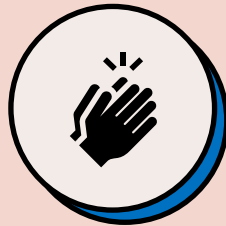
Awareness of Scope



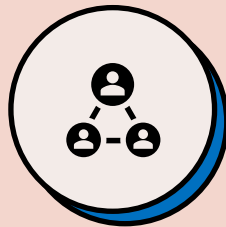
"Helping navigate the difference between clinical work and peer support work....you said this to me awhile ago 'is this an area of growth or is this outside of your scope'"



Group work



Therapist or junior counselor vs role model/cheer leader/accountability partner



Case manager vs resource broker, gap filler



Managing conflicts of interest, court

Advice for leadership from the peers

"The proper training of staff....trainings, mental health first aid, motivational interviewing, person centered practices, trauma informed practices...non-violent crisis intervention, de-escalation technique, ASIST for suicide prevention, MAT, CRPA...."

"Being aware they're hiring individuals with lived experience with mental health and substance use, just the awareness and maybe checking up on their coaches quality 'how are you doing?'"

"EAP system, it's very, very important for me, it's been really, really helpful. If you're working with peers you have to keep them well. Use peer collaboratives, peer supervision, peer ethics training....as a peer you might be working with someone that is kicking things up for you, so you need to talk about it in Supervision, and the EAP program, you need space to unpack that...promote self-care"

"A supervisor who is both clinical background but is also educated and trained in specifically peer workers...being open to ideas and suggestions, it's different eyes, when a peer is telling you, 'I've seen this work' and not shutting them down with a clinical mind"

Thank you!

Special thanks to

Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD, MPH

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Amy Ghattas, MPH

