

# Planning for Impactful Opioid Settlement Fund Utilization: Lessons Learned from Suffolk County

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NYSACHO 2025 Harm Reduction Symposium for LHDs

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund (OSF)

- Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund: a reserve of money awarded to the County through lawsuits initiated by the County in 2016 against opioid manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies (*The County of Suffolk, New York v. Purdue Pharma L.P.*)
  - Lawsuit aimed to hold these groups accountable for their role in creating and continuing the opioid epidemic.
- Nassau County and other counties in New York State then filed similar lawsuits, as they were also heavily affected by the opioid epidemic
  - Cases were consolidated in 2017, to make a stronger and more streamlined case.
  - The State of New York then joined this lawsuit in 2018. The proceedings mark the first opioid case to move forward with a jury trial in state and federal court.
  - In 2021, the first settlement was reached in this case.
- From 2021-2022, the Suffolk County Legislature passed a series of bills to accepted funds from Rite Aid, CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, Endo, Allergan, and TEVA.
- As part of the settlement terms, conditions have been placed on how the money from the settlement can be used. **The funds from these settlements must only be used for opioid use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services**

2016

Suffolk County initiated initial lawsuit (*The County of Suffolk, New York v. Purdue Pharma L.P.*)

2017

Consolidation of cases filed by Nassau County and other counties in NY

2018

State of New York joined lawsuit

2021

First settlement reached in the case.

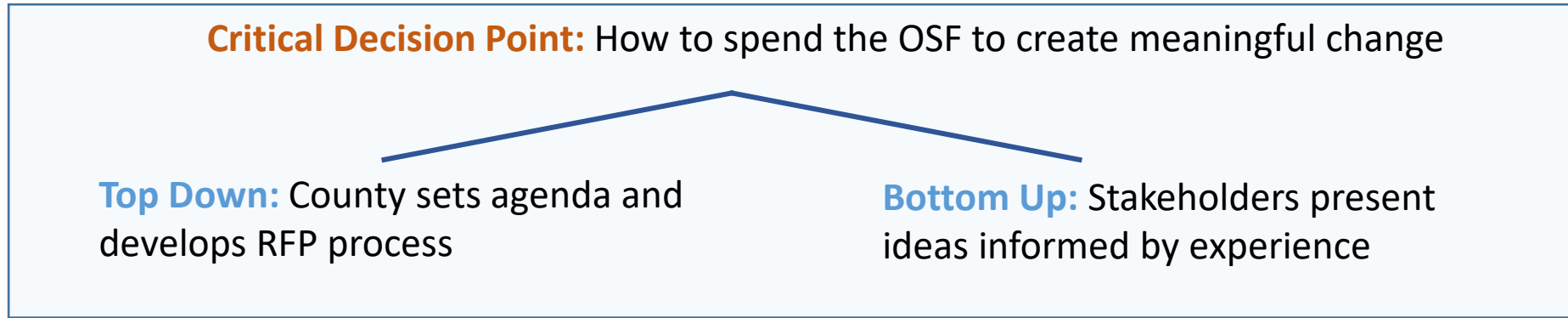
2021 - 2022

Suffolk County Legislature passed a series of bills to accepted funds from plaintiffs

# Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund (OSF)

- **Purpose:** invest in local prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery programs to reduce the harmful impacts of the opioid crisis, and help people to lead healthier and more fulfilling lives
- **Goals:**
  - Educating youth and the wider community, and empowering them to make healthier choices to prevent drug use
  - Expanding evidence based strategies to prevent overdose deaths of people who use drugs
  - Strengthening pathways to treatment and support services
  - Providing more opportunities to engage people using drugs in effective treatment programs
  - Supporting families and social networks to heal together
  - Meaningfully reintegrate people back into community life through a focus on education, job attainment, and housing
- **Approach to use:** reflexive to community needs
  - Support the implementation of new programs
  - Expand the reach of existing programs
    - **Not** supplanting existing funding for programs

# OSF Award Process – Reflexive to Community Needs



- **Bottom Up:** Behavioral health agencies know their clients, social networks, and communities
  - Especially attune to their expressed and observed needs
  - Understand and experience barriers to service provision, across the spectrum
- County developed an open, low threshold, online application portal to ensure equal access to all agencies to apply for funding
  - agencies submitted: descriptions of their proposed programs and budgets, and information on current County contracts, licensures, and any active monitoring plans
- Through the open application process, agencies drew on their experience and informed the County of their ideas
  - Allowed the County to:
    - learn more about observed needs directly from agencies, many of which have direct contact with people who use drugs and their social networks
    - pilot novel approaches
    - involve a wider network of partners from different sectors

# OSF Program Awards: Harm Reduction

- The Opioid Settlement Funding Selection Committee granted awards based on:
  1. The proposed value of the programs to people who use drugs and their social network, and
  2. The observed gaps in care and program suggestions documented by the Suffolk County Opioid Task Force
- Two rounds of applications and awards
  - Round 1 Application Portal Open: July, 2022
  - Round 2 Application Portal Open: August, 2023
- Agency Presenters: Harm Reduction
  - **Community Action for Social Justice (CASJ)**: growth of existing programming and expanding outreach and community stakeholders
  - **Hands Across Long Island (HALI)**: new to harm reduction, novel outreach approach with mobile shower unit



# Community Action for Social Justice (CASJ)



## Harm Reduction Program

CASJ works primarily with people who are using drugs to decrease the harms (to the individual, family, and community) associated with drug use.

### ❖ Overdose Prevention

- > 11,000 kits to 9,112 people

### ❖ Syringe Exchange

- 1,802 unduplicated participants
- > 1,745,000 syringes distributed
- 16,823 service encounters

### ❖ Community Syringe Disposal

- > 2,500 lbs / year

### ❖ Comprehensive Services:

- HIV/HCV Testing
- Buprenorphine (Suboxone)
- HCV Treatment
- Wound Care
- Drug Checking

### ❖ On-Demand Service Model



# Meeting the Need

## ❖ Increase core harm reduction services for PWID:

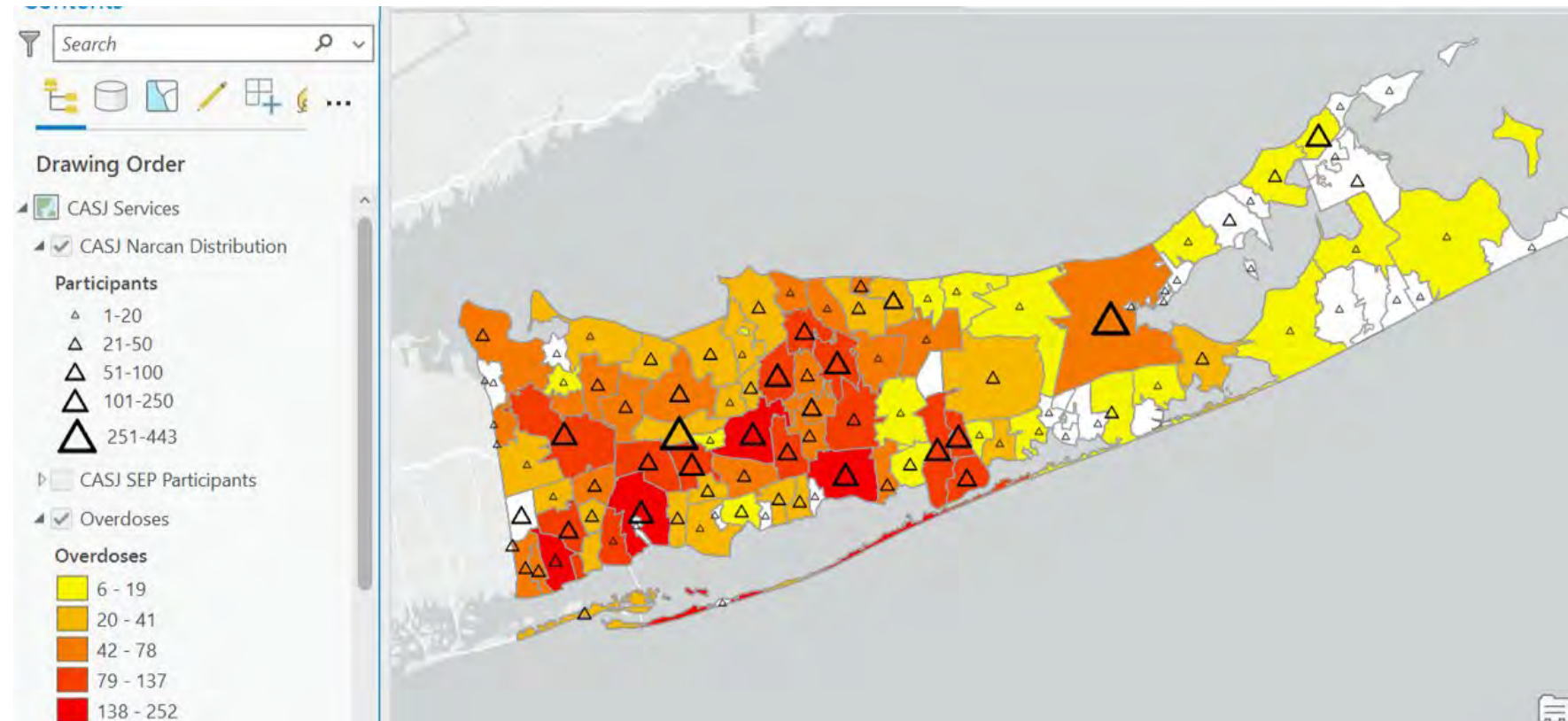
- Weekend hours
- Additional Peers

## ❖ Support comprehensive services for PWUD:

- Outreach to areas where people are living and/or using drugs in public areas
- HIV/HCV rapid testing
- Linkage to Health Hub or other MOUD
- Wound Care (in collaboration with drug checking initiative)

## ❖ Expand scope of target population:

- Naloxone distribution to businesses
- Fentanyl test kit distribution
- Overdose prevention training in correctional settings
- Community-level overdose response



- **Agency:** Community Action for Social Justice
- **Program:** Harm Reduction Expansion
- **Award Period:** June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2026
- **Program Goals:**
  - To expand and deepen existing harm reduction services for our traditional target population (people who use drugs regularly).
  - To broaden the scope of harm reduction education and services (particularly overdose education and naloxone distribution – OEND) for non-traditional populations, specifically recreational drug users, stimulant users, and businesses that frequently serve these groups (bars, vape shops, motels, churches).
- **Program Activities:**
  - Increase syringe service program (SSP) and opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution (OEND) hours (on weekends and evenings to expand wound care, fentanyl testing, and drug checking initiatives).
  - Outreach Team to engage and provide harm reduction services to people living and/or using drugs on public places (frequently homeless encampments in the woods).
  - Field-based human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and Hepatitis C (HCV) testing program for individuals who use drugs
  - OEND sessions for incarcerated individuals at Yaphank and Riverhead Correctional Facilities

# '24-'25 Program Impacts

## ❖ Syringe Exchange

- 719 Unduplicated participants (339 new enrollments)
- > 5,000 syringe exchange visits

## ❖ Overdose Prevention

- 5,931 Kits distributed to 3,191 people
- 3,578 Fentanyl test kits distributed
- 201 Naloxone housing units supplied to 292 businesses trained

YOU CAN HELP SAVE  
SOMEONE FROM  
OVERDOSE



866-599-7260  
CASJ.ORG

866-599-7260  
CASJ.ORG



Suffolk County Sheriff's Off... • Follow ...

3d •

## Program Impacts

Community Action for Social Justice generously donated an Overdose Emergency Kit to the District Court in Central Islip, helping ensure life-saving resources are readily available in the event of an opioid overdose.



### ❖ Corrections

- 292 Narcan kits provided for Sheriff's deputies and 6 naloxone housing units installed in courts, domestic violence unit, and fire safety units
- 7/18/25: CASJ began weekly overdose prevention and harm reduction trainings for people incarcerated in Riverhead jail

### ❖ Community Overdose Response

- CASJ mobilized street outreach teams throughout the weekend following a cluster of fatal overdoses
- 9 overdose reversal reports received



# Hands Across Long Island (HALI)

## 1988 - Hands Across Long Island (HALI)

- Founded by psychiatric survivors
- Peer-led, peer-staffed
- MH, co-occurring, trauma, SDOH
- Housing, employment exploration, community bridging



## 2017 - Mobile Shower Unit (MSU)

- Unmet hygiene need on street
- Custom built trailer
- Staff w people who've been unhoused
- Partner w/ churches, libraries, food pantries





## 2023 – Opioid Settlement Fund opportunity

*The mental health peer movement has always been based on self-determination, rights, dignity of risk – we just didn't call it Harm Reduction*

### 2023 MSU TRENDS:

- Most in-demand service @ HALI
- Covid moratorium on evictions over
- Monster vehicle taking a beating!
- Desperation people undocumented
- NIMBY louder & prouder

### PROPOSAL:

- Second vehicle – standard build, smaller, nimbler (skip the W&D!)
- Require bilingual, lived expertise w substance use challenges
- Additional giveaways, services, referrals

*MSU program continues to meet immediate, self-defined needs of community*

*Safety, comfort, respect, dignity are paramount*

*Relationships build over time → creates space for mutual problem solving on “root cause”*

*Team polite, patient, and persistent – never pushy/coercive*

**SUCCESSFUL HOMELESS OUTREACH DOES NOT LEAD WITH A HOUSING APPLICATION**



- **Agency:** Hands Across Long Island, Inc.
- **Program:** Mobile Shower Unit Expansion
- **Award Period:** May 1, 2024 – April 30, 2027
- **Program Goal:**
  - Expand Mobile Shower Unit (MSU) services to increase access and comprehensiveness of services to homeless individuals who struggle with opioid use disorder (OUD) or are at risk of OUD or other co-occurring disorders, and are in need of treatment, recovery, and harm reduction supports.
- **Program Activities:**
  - Adding an additional Mobile Shower Unit (MSU) to program, enabling HALI to:
    - increasing the number of locations services,
    - improving touchpoint frequency at service locations,
    - expanding hours to serve more individuals in need.
  - Engaging individuals through peer support
  - Referrals to recovery-supporting services including housing, harm reduction, clinical services, and care coordination.

## 2025 to date (8-month period)

- 1,000 + showers provided
- 42 Narcan trainings/kits, fentanyl test strips
- 60 pairs shoes distributed
- Socks, underwear, condoms, hats/gloves
- Water, street-friendly food
- Extended hours to 9PM
- Expanded sites, including Southampton
- Partnering w mobile primary care
- 5 successful placements permanent housing



## Impact Story #1

- Individual navigating alcohol use made use of MSU on and off over course of months, making use of support and showers but uninterested in services. Ultimately on own terms interested in reducing/stop use and team connected to local AA meetings. Today, celebrating eight months of abstinence by choice.

## Impact Story #2

- Pregnant couple living on the street with no prenatal care used MSU. Referred to FQHC clinic and continued to receive ongoing support. Have now secured an apartment where they are preparing to welcome their baby!

## Impact Story #3

- 38 year old man had been going to Manhattan methadone clinic. After breakup with girlfriend ended up in Suffolk and used MSU at a church food pantry site. Spoke to HALI staff member about fear of withdrawal and plans to use, since would not get clinic before it closed. Discussed options and made plan: went to new Suffolk methadone clinic and received naloxone and fentanyl strips, had discussion about safe using if decided to go that route.



# Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund Data Dashboard

**Need:** Comprehensive data source and increased transparency of the OSF utilization

## 1.) Community Feedback to County

- Press coverage in local, popularly consumed publications
  - Limited sources for public to be informed about OSF happenings
  - Lack of coverage of funded agency work or impacts
  - Incomplete representation of awards, funding dispersed, and sustainability
- Community members contacting County Government to ask for more information

## 2.) Comprehensive pathway to routinely report back to the public

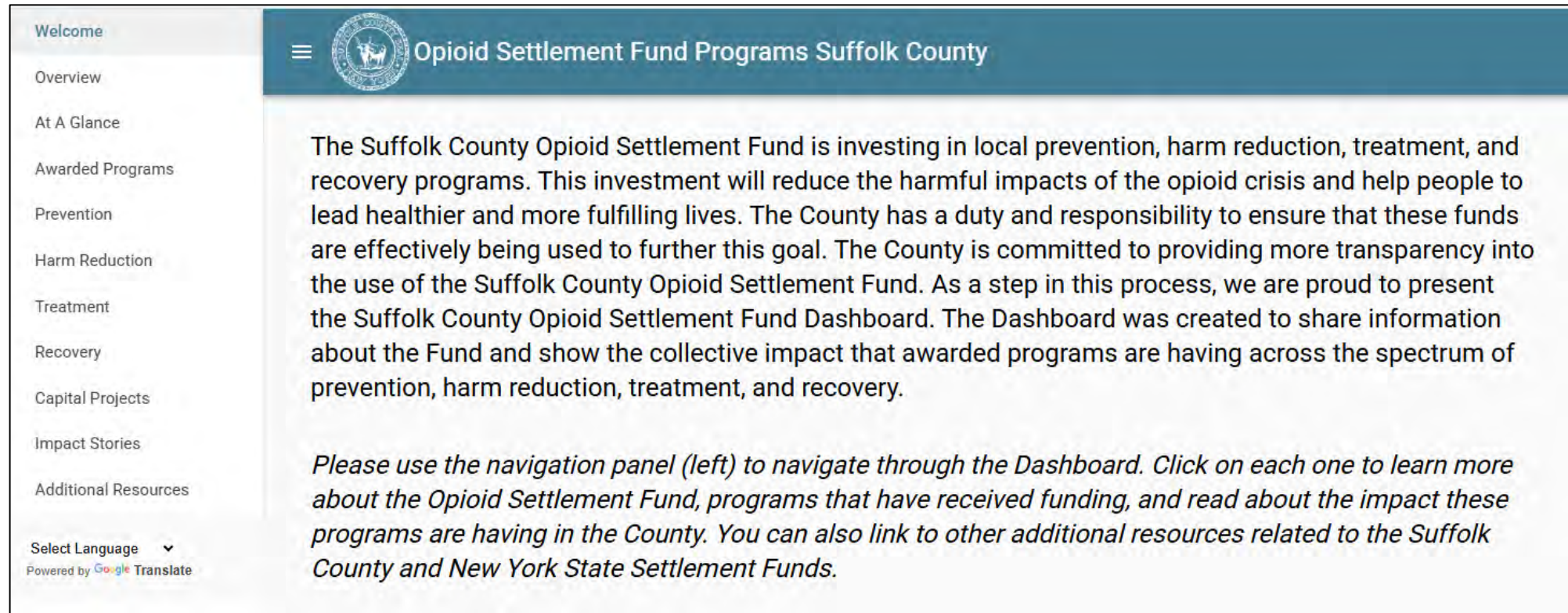
- Assurances that funding is being used for opioid use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery purposes *only*
- Transparency regarding agency application and program selection process
- Detailing program monitoring and data collection
- Demonstration of how these programs are reaching people
- Informing the public of new programs that are available to them



# OSF Data Dashboard – Meeting the Need

## Meeting the Need: Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund Dashboard

- **Objective:** Increase transparency by sharing information with the public about the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund, and show the collective impact of awarded programs across that prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery spectrum.
  - Additionally fulfills transparency requirements of recipients of the New York State Opioid Settlement Sharing Agreement, which states that recipients must publicly post information about the utilization of funding on their website, in addition to reporting to the New York state Office of Addiction Services and Supports (Senate Bill S4639).

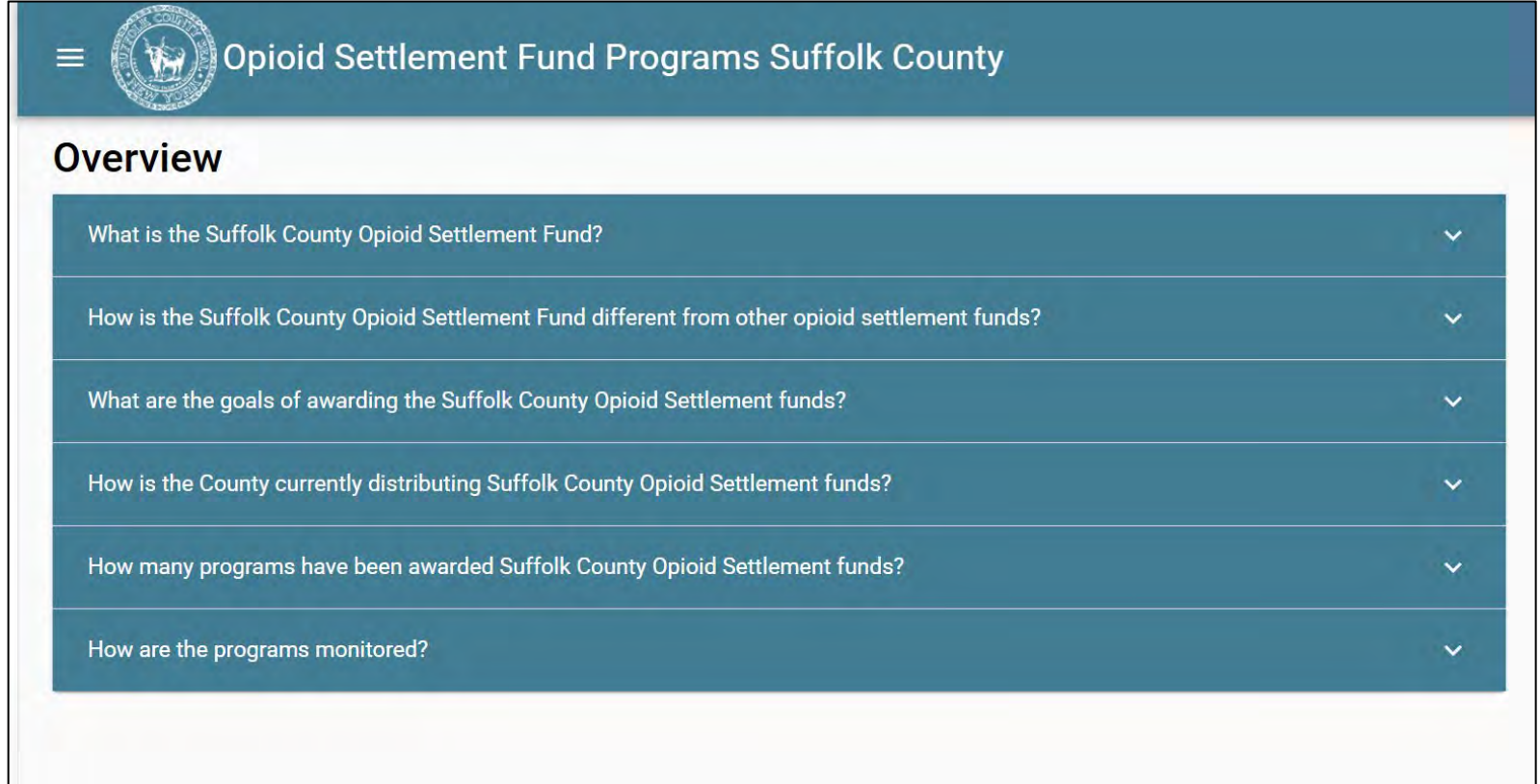


- **Welcome:** Dashboard landing page and instructions
- **Overview:** Q & A prompts addressing:
  - what the Suffolk County OSF is and how it differs from other funds
  - the goal of fund utilization and how funds are being distributed
  - monitoring of awarded programs
- **At a Glance:** Summary depictions of the number of awarded agencies and programs, and funding allocated/ distributed, to date
- **Awarded Programs:** Listing and descriptions of all awarded programs, to date, across prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery categories
- **Prevention Data:** Aggregated data visualizations pertaining to prevention activities
- **Harm Reduction Data:** Aggregated data visualizations pertaining to harm reduction activities
- **Treatment Data:** Aggregated data visualizations pertaining to treatment activities
- **Recovery Data:** Aggregated data visualizations pertaining to recovery activities
- **Capital Projects:** Listing and descriptions of all awarded capital projects, to date
- **Impact Stories:** Collection of stories from funded agencies about how their work is having a direct and lasting effect on the lives they touch
- **Additional Resources:** More information and links to external resources related to OSF

# OSF Data Dashboard – Overview Page

**Overview Page:** Addresses content knowledge needs and establishes a consistent, baseline understanding of the establishment of the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund, and how these funds have been used

- Outlines to goals of the OSF and affirms use for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery
- Clarifies the application, review, and selection process of funded programs and projects
- Informs how the programs are being monitored to ensure that funding is utilized appropriately and measure impact



The screenshot displays the 'Overview' page of the 'Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County' dashboard. The header features the Suffolk County seal and the title 'Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County'. Below the header, the word 'Overview' is prominently displayed. A list of six questions, each with a downward arrow icon, is presented in a dark teal box. The questions are: 'What is the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund?', 'How is the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund different from other opioid settlement funds?', 'What are the goals of awarding the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?', 'How is the County currently distributing Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?', 'How many programs have been awarded Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?', and 'How are the programs monitored?'.

Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County

## Overview

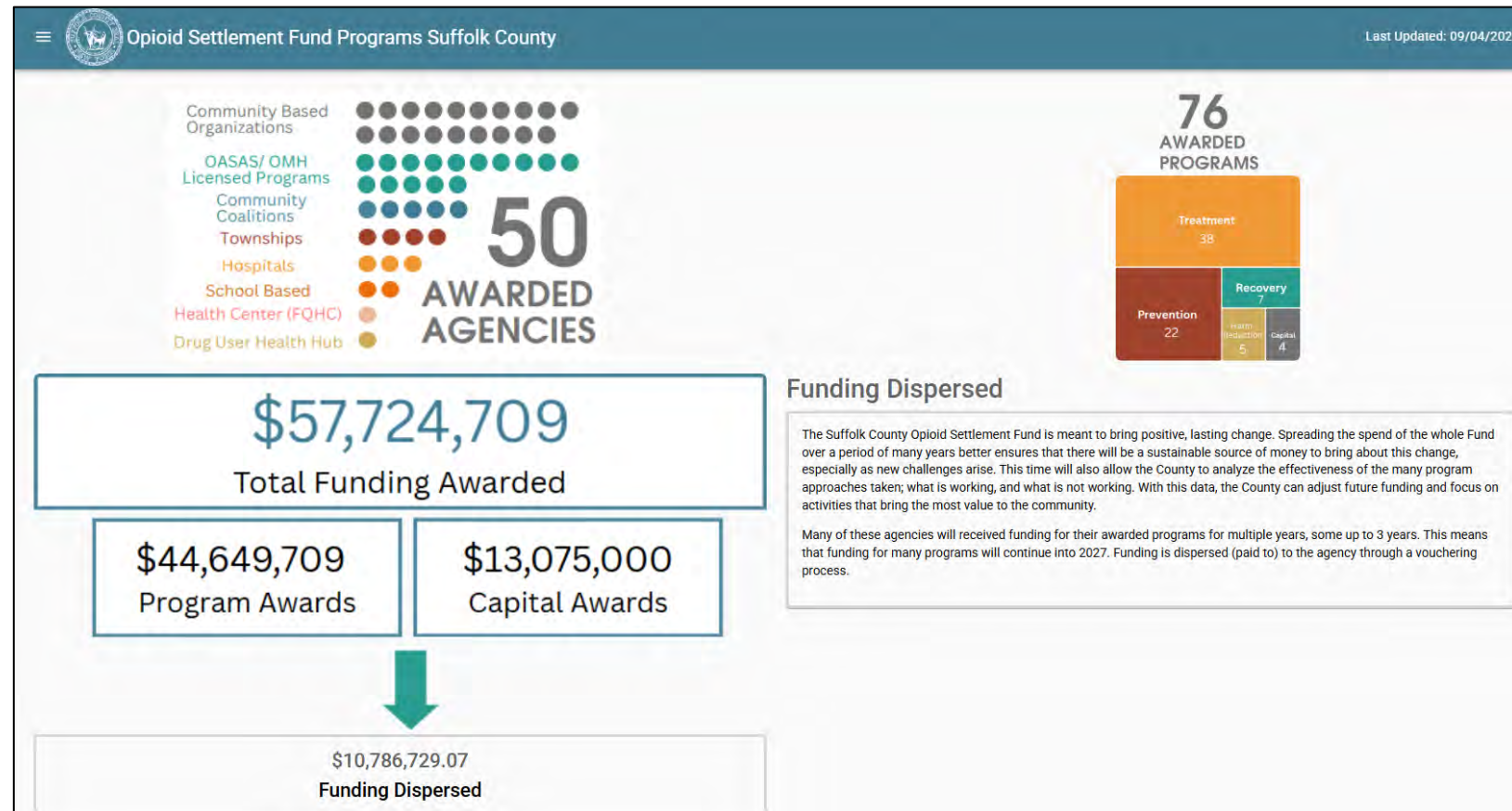
- What is the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund?
- How is the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund different from other opioid settlement funds?
- What are the goals of awarding the Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?
- How is the County currently distributing Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?
- How many programs have been awarded Suffolk County Opioid Settlement funds?
- How are the programs monitored?



# OSF Data Dashboard – At a Glance

**At a Glance Page:** Addresses misleading interpretations of funding awarded v. funding dispersed

- Summary depictions of the number of awarded agencies and programs, and funding allocated/ distributed, to date
- Provides context to how funding has been awarded/dispersed to agencies
  - Vouchering process
  - Duration of program awards
  - Sustainability of funds to address future challenges



# OSF Data Dashboard – Awarded Programs

 Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County

## Awarded Programs

### PREVENTION

Opioid use prevention efforts aim to stop this substance use behavior before it starts by assisting individuals, families, and communities in developing the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to make healthy choices. Prevention practices enhance protective factors (skills, strengths, resources, supports or coping strategies) and reduce risk factors that can lead to opioid use. Effective prevention strategies should use evidence based practices (EBPs).

CLICK FOR A LIST OF AGENCIES

### HARM REDUCTION

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. People who use drugs may not be ready to enter treatment, or stop their use. Harm reduction strategies recognize this, and support people to make changes, when they are ready, to reduce their health and safety risks.

CLICK FOR A LIST OF AGENCIES

### TREATMENT

Treatment for opioid use disorder can be provided in different settings and may involve a team of providers such as counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and physicians and peer support professionals. Treatment should be evidenced based, and fit with the individual needs of the person seeking care.

CLICK FOR A LIST OF AGENCIES

### RECOVERY


Treatment is a very important step to make a behavior change. After treatment is over, many people will need help to keep making healthy choices. Recovery services give this ongoing support to people as they transition into daily life, after treatment.

Recovery services can help people to:

- Maintain recovery from substance use
- Find ways to prevent relapse
- Reach a life with rewarding relationships and sense of purpose

CLICK FOR A LIST OF AGENCIES



 Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County

## Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. People who use drugs may not be ready to enter treatment, or stop their use. Harm reduction strategies recognize this, and support people to make changes, when they are ready, to reduce their health and safety risks.

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION


HANDS ACROSS LONG ISLAND, INC. (HALI)

PHOENIX HOUSES OF LONG ISLAND, INC.

THOMAS HOPE FOUNDATION INC.

BACK



 Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County

## Community Action for Social Justice

1-866-599-7260

<https://casj.org/>

Program Name: Harm Reduction Expansion

Program Description: Community Action for Social Justice (CASJ) has expanded their harm reduction services to reach new individuals in need of naloxone (NARCAN®), fentanyl test strips, syringe exchange, wound care, drug testing, and other harm reduction services. To accomplish this expansion, they have been able to hire and train additional staff, including Peers (people with lived substance use experience), who are conducting outreach across Suffolk County, including to individuals who are unhoused. CASJ has also expanded their HIV/HCV (Hepatitis C) field testing program, which includes referrals to treatment where needed. Additionally, their drug checking program allows people who use drugs to test to bring a small sample to CASJ, who can analyze and educate the individual about its actual contents. This can help people informed decisions and use safer practices.

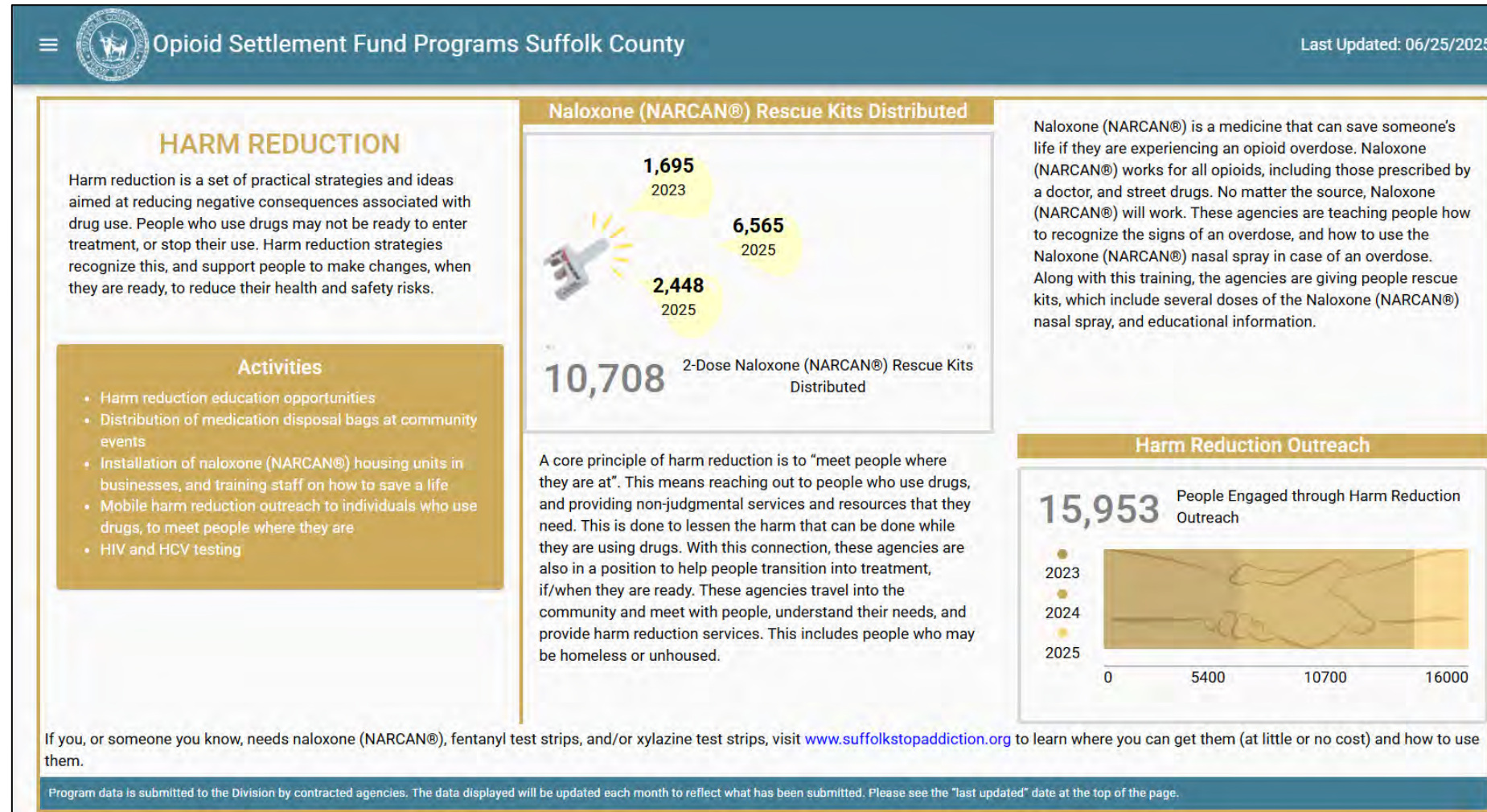
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# OSF Data Dashboard – Data Pages

**Data Pages:** Illustrates the ongoing efforts of funded agencies through aggregate visualizations

- Highlight key elements of program category
- Educates on visualization topic and how it is applicable and needed for people who use drugs/ their social networks
- Updated monthly
- Demonstration of program monitoring through data collection and analysis






# OSF Data Dashboard – Capital Projects

**Capital Projects Page:** Listing and descriptions of all awarded capital projects, to date

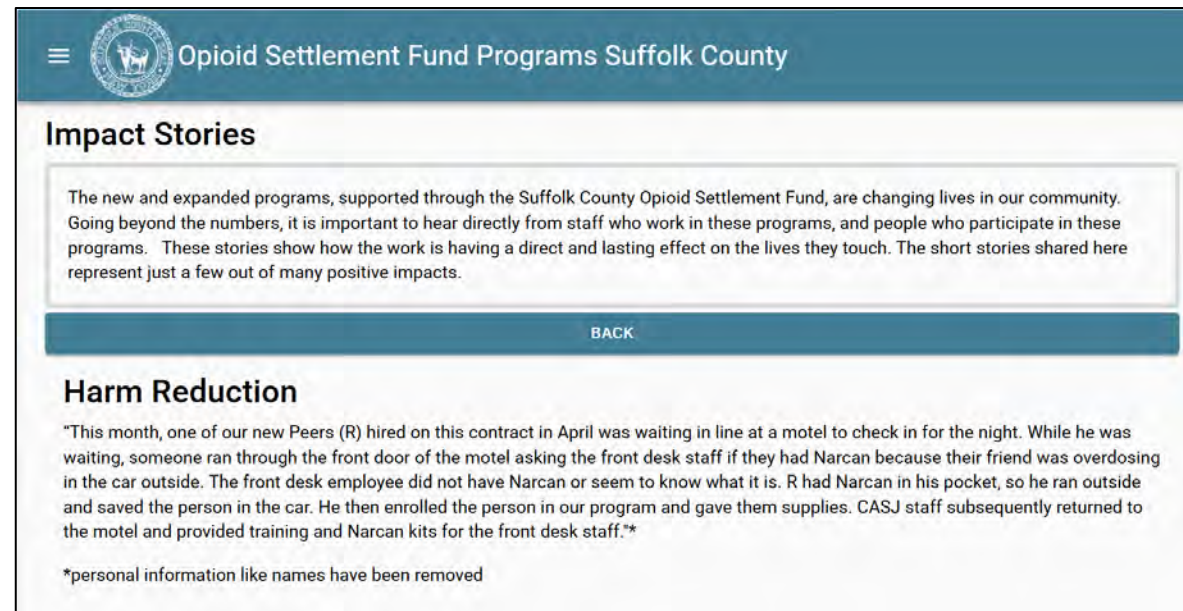
- Describes what capital projects are and why they are needed to implement or expand services
- Increases transparency to capital award recipients and initiatives the OSF is supporting

 Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County			
What are Capital Projects			
Capital projects are major investments that make improvements in infrastructure. This can include building new structures, or renovating existing buildings. These large projects are sometimes needed to launch new programs, or improve existing services. They can allow an agency to serve more people, or bring needed services to a new area.			
<b>Town of Babylon</b> Beacon Family Wellness Center (631) 422-7676 <a href="https://www.townofbabylonny.gov/182/Drug-Alcohol-Services">https://www.townofbabylonny.gov/182/Drug-Alcohol-Services</a>	<b>Catholic Health</b> St. Charles Hospital (631) 476-6000 <a href="https://www.catholichealthli.org/st-charles-hospital">https://www.catholichealthli.org/st-charles-hospital</a>	<b>Northwell Health</b> Mather Hospital (631) 473-1320 <a href="https://www.matherhospital.org/">https://www.matherhospital.org/</a>	<b>Phoenix House of Long Island</b> 1(844) 815-1508 <a href="https://phoenixhouseny.org/">https://phoenixhouseny.org/</a>
The Town of Babylon is constructing a new Medically Supervised Outpatient Clinic for the evaluation and treatment of persons who have been diagnosed with an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or persons at risk of an OUD or other co-occurring disorders and significant others who can be treated in a community setting. The new clinic will provide assessments, referrals, medication assisted treatment, psychiatric evaluation, medication management, family, individual and group treatment services on an outpatient basis to individuals and their families impacted by an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or persons at risk of an OUD or other co-occurring disorders.	Catholic Health is increasing substance use treatment access through the construction of the St. Charles Outpatient Chemical Dependency Treatment Center. The facility will provide a full spectrum chemical dependency treatment model which will include intensive counseling alongside medication assisted treatment services.	Northwell will renovate the Mather Hospital Outpatient Chemical Dependency Clinic to establish a new Rapid Access Intake Center. Adolescents and adults seeking immediate care will be able to see providers without an appointment and connect with needed mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The project helps ensure timely access to treatment, preventing the escalation of symptoms that can lead to hospitalization as well as reducing hospital stays and emergency department wait times.	Phoenix House will renovate two (2) residential substance use disorder treatment facilities at the Edward Miller Center in Ronkonkoma. Phoenix House provides treatment for substance use disorder and related mental health conditions to adult men and women, with a focus on the needs of veterans. Renovations will include both the Women's Treatment Program building and the Men's Treatment Program building.

# OSF Data Dashboard – Impact Stories

**Impact Stories Page:** Collection of stories from funded agencies demonstrating how their work is having a direct and lasting effect on the lives they touch


- Provides for a perspective beyond the numbers
- Formatting is adaptable and more examples will be added
- Personal identifiable information removed



# OSF Data Dashboard – Additional Resources

**Additional Resources Page:** More information and links to external resources related to OSF

- Increases transparency by linking directly to publically-available Suffolk County Legislature Opioid Settlement Fund Resolutions
- Provides a linkage to the Settlement Terms (Schedule C)
- Directs readers to the NYS Opioid Settlement Fund Dashboard
- Highlights the Suffolk County Directory of Behavioral Health Services, as a resource support



## Opioid Settlement Fund Programs Suffolk County

### Additional Resources

Suffolk County Legislature Opioid Settlement Fund Resolutions	▼
Suffolk County Addiction Prevention and Support Advisory Panel	▼
Settlement Terms - Schedule C	▼
NYS Opioid Settlement Dashboard	▼
Suffolk County Directory of Behavioral Health Services	▼

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## Suffolk County Opioid Settlement Fund Dashboard



<https://apps2.suffolkcountyny.gov/Health/osfdb/>