



# NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS

*Leading the Way to Healthier Communities*

FEBRUARY 2026

## Harm Reduction Newsletter

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### Featured Resources

#### **Housing Supports for People with SUD/OUD: The Opportunity of Opioid Settlement Funds**

States are increasingly using opioid settlement funds to expand housing and wraparound supports for people with SUD/OUD, recognizing that unstable housing contributes to overdose risk and treatment barriers. This resource from The National Academy for State Health Policy outlines how flexible settlement dollars can be braided with other funding streams to support a continuum of housing options—from recovery and transitional housing to permanent supportive housing—along with examples of state strategies in Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. [Click here to learn more and explore the resource!](#)

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#### **Incase You Missed It! | Rights and Protections for Harm Reduction Programs and Clients in an Increasingly Hostile Environment**

Harm reduction programs and participants continue to face challenges related to law enforcement and immigration enforcement in many communities. This recorded webinar provides an overview of relevant legal considerations, individual and organizational rights, and strategies to support the safety of harm reduction clients, staff, and volunteers. The webinar recording and resources are now available on the Public Health Law website. [Click here to view!](#)

### Upcoming Events

#### **Submit an Abstract for the APHA 2026 Annual Meeting and Expo | [Abstract Submission Deadline March 31, 2026](#)**

The Call for Abstracts is now open for APHA 2026! Submit an abstract for the opportunity to share your public health programming and research with peers from across the country. The 2026 APHA Annual Meeting and Expo will take place November 1–4, 2026, in San Antonio, Texas, bringing together approximately 11,000 public health professionals and partners from around the world. Presenters will be notified of abstract decisions in June 2026. [Click here to submit an abstract!](#)

### Alerts and Advisories

## **NYSDOH ISSUES MEDETOMIDINE BRIEF/ADVISORY**

(12/19/25) NYSDOH Community Drug Checking Programs have identified a sharp increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply, often found with fentanyl and associated with prolonged sedation and overdose risk. [Click here to learn more about medetomidine and recommended harm reduction and overdose response strategies.](#)

## **Upcoming Webinars**

### **Bridging the Access in Care for those Experiencing Homelessness | February 6 at 12:00 PM | [Register Here!](#)**

As part of NAHEWD's national webinar series, "Bridging HIV and SUD: Innovations in the Field", this session explores innovative strategies for treating substance use disorder in people at risk for or living with HIV, with a focus on addressing gaps in healthcare for those experiencing homelessness.

Learning objectives include:

- Understanding barriers to healthcare for people experiencing homelessness.
- Examining how access challenges contribute to health inequities.
- Highlighting the importance of meeting people where they are in healthcare delivery.
- Comparing traditional healthcare teams with street medicine teams and their roles in the healthcare system.
- Assessing how street medicine teams improve community health outcomes.

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### **Neuromodulation: Promising New Approaches to Addressing Substance Use Disorders | February 9 at 1:00 PM | [Register Here!](#)**

Neuromodulation is gaining attention as an effective approach for treating substance use disorders. These techniques work by using electrical, magnetic, or soundwave stimulation to stimulate brain circuits affected by addiction. Research shows encouraging results in reducing craving and relapse risk.

During this webinar from the Addiction Policy Forum, leading researchers will provide an overview of neuromodulation, including the different techniques and how they work, and what current science shows about their potential role in addiction treatment. This session is designed for a broad audience and breaks down research in a clear, accessible way, highlighting where the science is today and where it may be headed next.

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### **The Mind-Risk Connection: How Mental Health Can Influence Substance Use | February 11 at 1:00 PM | [Register Here!](#)**

Join this webinar where Partnership to End Addiction's Senior VP of Prevention Research and Analysis, Linda Richter, will join a discussion with Operation Parent on co-occurring disorders — when substance use and mental health disorders happen at the same time. She will help explain this connection, share warning signs, and discuss ways to support your child and reduce risk.

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### **Integrated Safety Planning (Suicide Safety Plans & Overdose Safety Plans) | February 19 at 12:30 PM | [Register Here!](#)**

This training from Zero Overdose focuses on personalized safety planning as a key intervention for individuals at risk of suicide and/or overdose. Participants will learn about the Stanley-Brown Suicide Safety Plan and Zero Overdose's Overdose Safety Plan, with an emphasis on collaborative, client-centered approaches. The session also covers how to integrate planning

when suicide and overdose risks overlap, equipping participants to develop clear, practical safety plans tailored to real-life needs.

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## Lay of the Land – Encouraging Signs and Persistent Challenges Dot the Terrain of America's Evolving Drug Use Epidemic | February 20 at 2:00 PM | [Register Here!](#)

Join this National Drug Early Warning System (NDEWS) webinar where Dr. Levi Bolin, an Experimental Psychologist and Behavioral Pharmacologist at Millennium Health, will present the findings from their forthcoming Signals Report and discuss polysubstance use, including specific substances of interest such as xylazine and carfentanil.

## Articles and Reports

***\*\*Specific to NY***

- (1/29/26) [New Kingston center offers 24/7 mental health and substance use crisis care\\*\\*](#)
- (1/28/26) [Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts and the Yale Program in Addiction Medicine Establish the National Methadone Access and Quality Commission](#)
- (1/27/26) [NYC Health + Hospitals Announces New Simulation Training for Emergency Department Providers Encountering Patients with Opioid Use Disorder\\*\\*](#)
- (1/23/26) [CDC seeks to block 'never use alone' messaging used by overdose prevention groups](#)
- (1/21/26) [Harm reduction vending machines in NYS expand access to overdose treatment, drug test strips\\*\\*](#)
- (1/21/26) [New data shows overdoses fell sharply across Broome County in 2025\\*\\*](#)
- (1/19/26) [Westchester County Develops "Lives Forward" Program – Providing Dual Certification MH and Addiction Peer Training to Currently Justice Involved Individuals\\*\\*](#)
- (1/15/26) [24 hours of chaos as mental health grants are slashed then restored](#)
- (1/13/26) [Massachusetts Creates \\$1.25M Fund Supporting Families of Overdose Victims](#)
- (1/12/26) [GO Health announces new online tool for mental health\\*\\*](#)
- (1/12/26) [AMA 2025 report on substance use and treatment](#)
- (1/9/26) [Chenango County organizations expand community access to free Narcan kits\\*\\*](#)
- (1/8/26) [NYC Council set to consider Mamdani mental health response plan\\*\\*](#)
- (1/7/26) [Onondaga County improves mental health crisis response\\*\\*](#)
- (1/4/26) [Fentanyl's Deadly Footprint: A New Framework for Predicting Overdose Hotspots](#)
- (12/18/25) [Health Center Visits by Adults With Opioid Use Disorder: United States, 2023](#)
- (11/18/25) [Use of low-threshold naloxone boxes for opioid overdose prevention in a Midwestern US State: a public health program evaluation](#)

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