



HARM REDUCTION SERVICES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Community Engagement Committee

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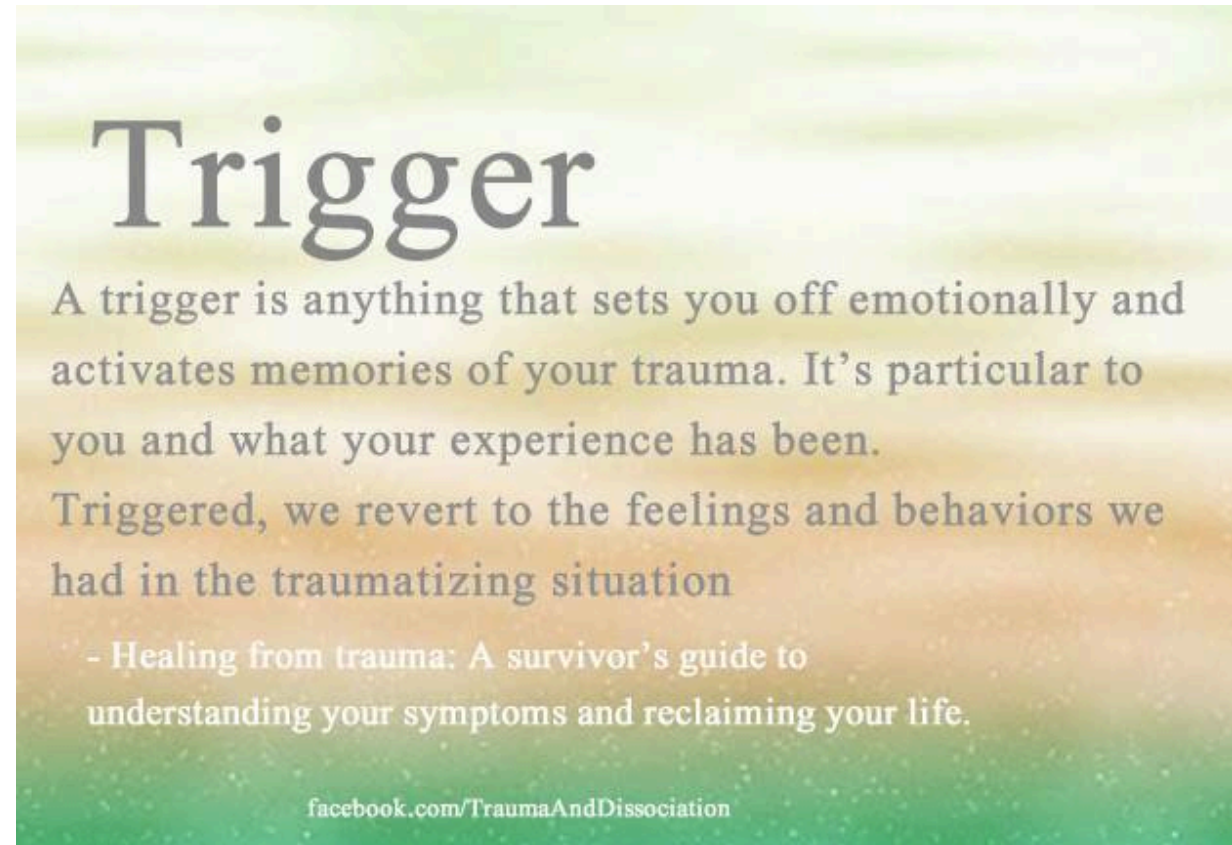
April 19, 2023





TRIGGER WARNING

- Trigger warning for those who are, have been or know, love and work with people who use drugs.



HARM REDUCTION SERVICES



TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Learning objectives
2. Person-first language
3. Harm reduction defined
4. Harm reduction strategies
5. Group activity
6. Highlights from 2022 National Harm Reduction Conference
7. County of San Diego Harm Reduction Strategy
8. Implementation of Harm Reduction Services
9. Q&A

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1. Define harm reduction
2. Describe specific harm reduction strategies
3. Identify relevance of harm reduction to County initiatives and personal work



PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE



PLACING THE PERSON
FIRST AND THE DIAGNOSIS
OR BEHAVIOR **SECOND**
HELPS REDUCE
STEREOTYPES AND STIGMA

AVOID STIGMATIZING LANGUAGE:

Addict, junkie, substance abuser, tecato/a

Substance abuse

Doctor shopper

Replacement/substitution therapy

You should or you shouldn't

Clean or dirty urine

How often did you slip?

USE NEUTRAL, PERSON-CENTERED LANGUAGE:

Person who uses (or injects) drugs

Substance use

Patient, participant, client

Medications for addiction treatment

Would you consider? or Can you try to avoid?

Negative or positive urine

How often did you use last week?

Source: NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Available here: [nonjudgmental-substance-abuse-card.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](https://www.nyc.gov/nonjudgmental-substance-abuse-card.pdf)



HARM REDUCTION DEFINED



WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

An approach to services and policy that protects the life, health, and dignity of people who use illegal drugs and their communities. Unlike approaches that insist that people stop using drugs, harm reduction recognizes that many people are not willing or able to abstain, and that withholding assistance and otherwise punishing people and communities for using illegal drugs only worsens health, racial and economic inequities, and other harms.



Source: Open Society Foundations, 2022



HARM REDUCTION DEFINED



NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION COALITION

- Harm reduction incorporates a spectrum of strategies that includes safer use, managed use, abstinence, meeting people who use drugs “where they’re at,” and addressing conditions of use along with the use itself.



Source: National Harm Reduction Coalition - <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/> - [NHRC-PDF-Principles Of Harm Reduction.pdf \(harmreduction.org\)](#)



HARM REDUCTION DEFINED



HARM REDUCTION BENEFITS

- Increase knowledge around safer substance use
- Reach vulnerable populations and communities
- Generate healthcare cost savings
- Increase referrals to support programs and health and social services
- Reduce overdose deaths and early deaths
- Reduce stigma
- Reduce hepatitis C and HIV
- Reduce sharing of substance use equipment

Source: Overdose Lifeline. Guide to Harm Reduction.



GROUP ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS

- Break into groups
- Brainstorm with group and write down as many drug use related harms as possible. Examples:
 - Medical: HIV Infection
 - Legal: Arrest
 - Personal: Abandonment by family
- Group sharing and discussion

GROUP ACTIVITY



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

NAMING THE HARM

Medical

- Abscess
- Kidney disease
- Sexual dysfunction
- Collapsed vein
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Medical debt
- Heart problem
- Withdrawal
- Twitching
- No medical home
- Use of ER
- Medical screenings – lack of
- No preventive care
- Dental
- Blood stream infections
- Mental health
- Cerebral hypoxia
- Cardiac problems – heart failure
- Seizures
- Malnutrition
- STDs
- Inability to be treated for HIC, HCV – difficult to prioritize

Legal

- Incarceration
- Lack of support
- Medical care
- Can get sued
- Criminalized for substance use
- Coercive tx
- Language barriers
- Sentencing based on substance of choice
- Racial inequities
- Custody – children
- Financial debt
- Housing
- Stigma

Personal

- Stigma
- Shame
- Debt
- Losing children
- Family separation
- Job loss
- Homelessness
- Children abandoned
- Losing access to benefits
- Loss of self respect
- Dignity
- Generation trauma
- Tunnel vision
- Mental health condition
- Decision making
- Hygiene
- Loss of faith
- Risky behaviors
- Stress
- Dependency loss
- Enabling
- Isolation
- Loss of purpose

GROUP ACTIVITY



VIDEO



Source: National Harm Reduction Coalition



HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES



HARM REDUCTION EXAMPLE STRATEGIES

- Naloxone (reverse Opioid overdose) distribution, training, and use
- Syringe service programs
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT)
- Housing that does not require abstinence
- Education and supplies
- Substance use treatment with MAT
- Advocacy for the rights of people who inject drugs



Source: List adapted from Open Society Foundations, 2022. Overdose Lifeline. Guide to Harm Reduction.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE



MAIN SESSIONS

- Centering BIPOC in Harm Reduction
- The State of Harm Reduction
- The Harm Reduction Funding Paradigm
- The Future of Harm Reduction



HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE



PANELS, WORKSHOPS AND ROUNDTABLES

- Clean consumption site for women in Mexicali
- Loss and wellness
- 12 step recovery and harm reduction
- CDC listening and technical assistance
- Messaging harm reduction (bite, snack, meal)



HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE



TAKE AWAYS AND TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Fund and hire people with lived experience
- Drug checking for safety
- Quotes/thoughts from Tara Stamos-Buesig
 - “Self care is not after care, find small moments of joy”
 - “Create safe spaces to talk about not only unintentional overdose but intentional overdose; complex trauma; “if I take a day off, people might die”
 - “If not now, when, if not us, who, living memorial”



HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE



NETWORKING AND SELF CARE

- CASEP
- Acknowledge vicarious trauma
- Recovery is any positive change
- Fashion show, film festival, posters
- Yoga; standup paddleboard; saw manatee with baby walking to conference



Source: This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-ND



HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE



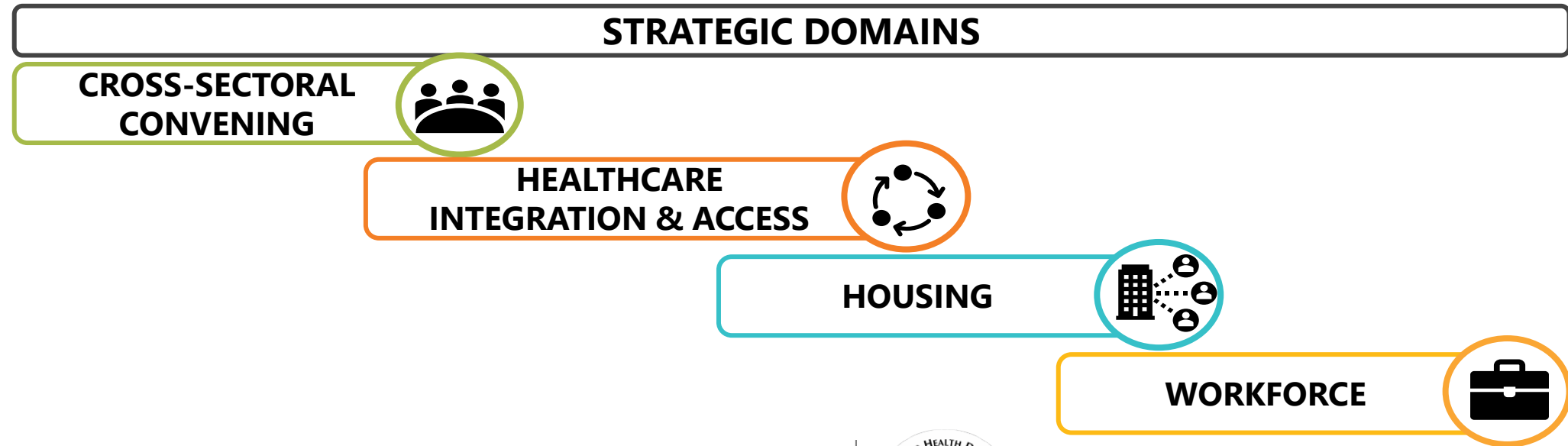
CASEP PUERTO RICO, 2022



COUNTY HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY



- Board action on January 26, 2021
- Multidisciplinary evidence with four strategic domains
- Each focus area is built on a roadmap of immediate, intermediate and long-term tactics



COUNTY HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY

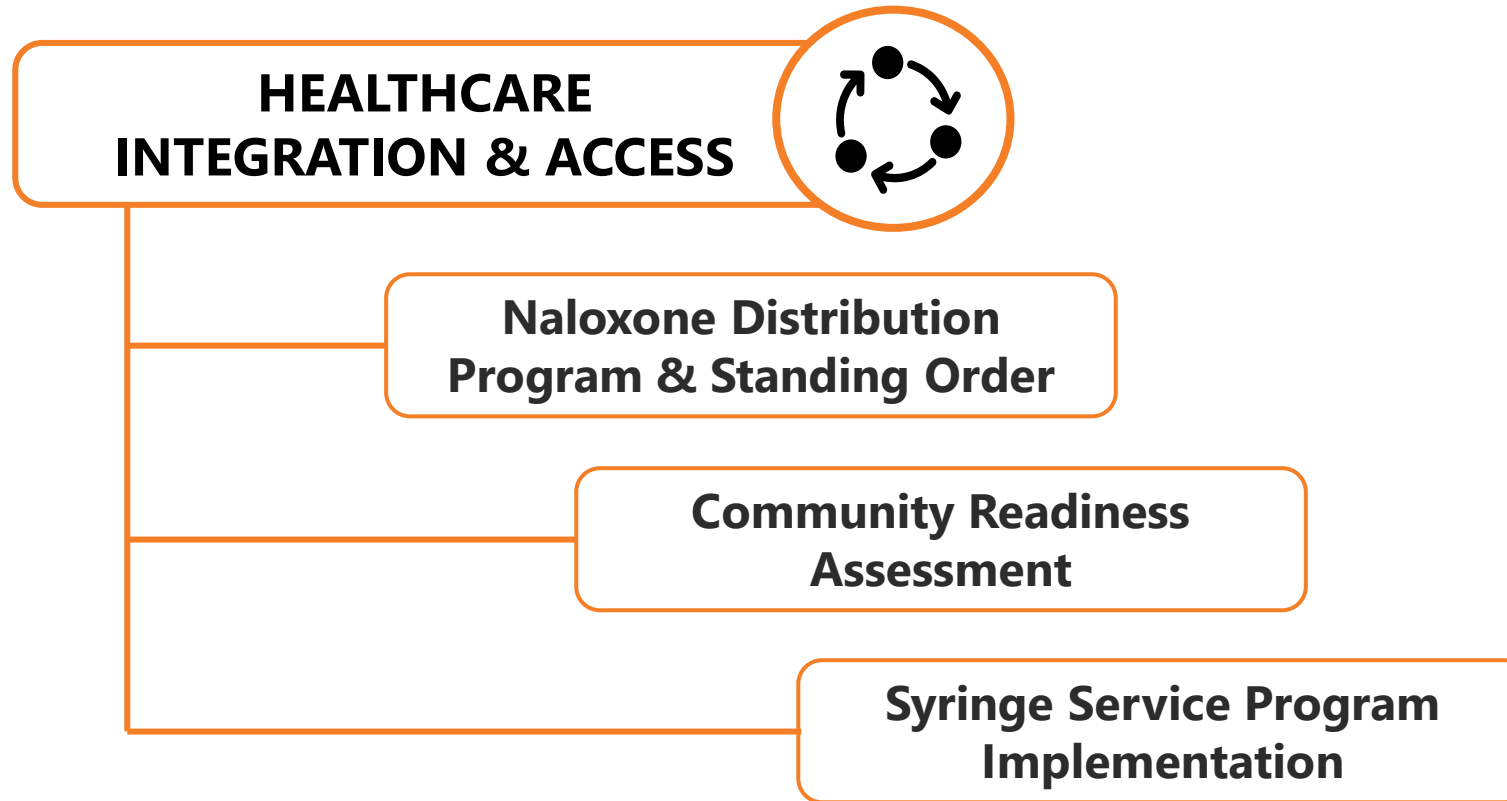


GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Human rights and dignity
- Diversity and social inclusivity
- Health and well-being promotion
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Participation (“nothing about us without us”)
- Accountability and improvement



COUNTY HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY





NALOXONE DISTRIBUTION EFFORTS

- Naloxone is an emergency medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose
- In July 2021, the County of San Diego launched its Naloxone Distribution Program
 - >10,000 naloxone kits distributed to date



HARM REDUCTION SERVICES



WHAT ARE SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAMS?

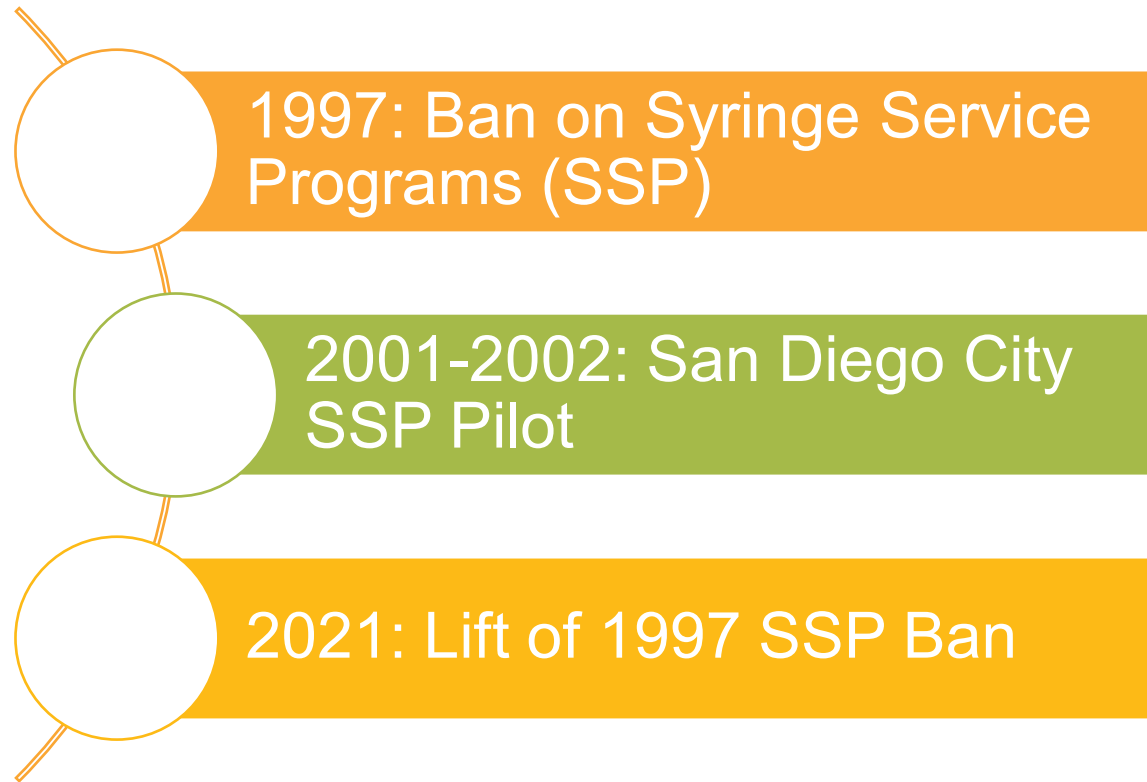
EDUCATION Information Knowledge Application	ACCESS To Harm Reducing Tools	SUPPORT Basic Health and Social Needs	LINKAGES To Services HIV, HEP C, SUD, Mental Health



HARM REDUCTION SERVICES



BRIEF HISTORY OF SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAMS IN SAN DIEGO





SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAMS OPERATING IN SAN DIEGO

Family Health Centers of San Diego,
Safepoint

- A mobile van offering one-for-one exchange.

Harm Reduction Coalition of San
Diego, **On Point**

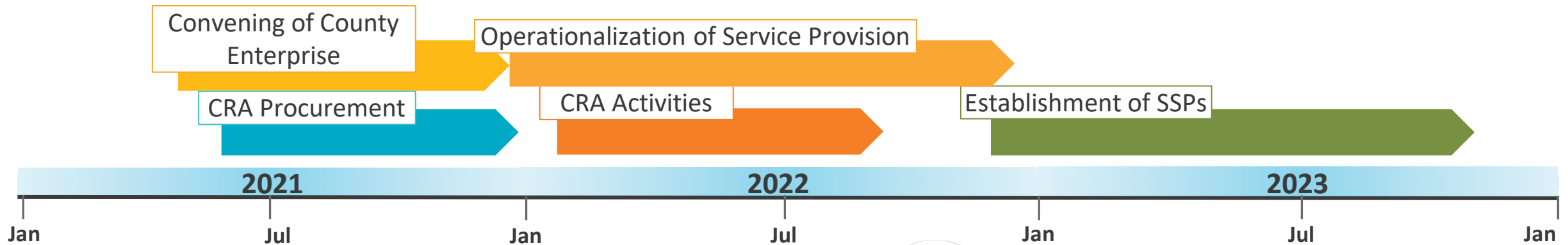
- Needs-based mobile/home delivery model.

HARM REDUCTION SERVICES



SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

- Engage San Diego County stakeholders and residents via Community Readiness Assessment (CRA)
- Convene County departments
- Develop policies and procedures
- Implementation and ongoing evaluation





COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

- **Purpose:** Gather feedback from staff/stakeholders, community members, and people who inject substance(s) to:
 - Assess knowledge of syringe service programs
 - Identify organizations in support of programs
 - Understand concerns related to program operation
 - Examine successful practices
- **Data Gathered:** The Institute for Public Health (IPH) at SDSU collected **158** public opinion surveys, **92** staff/stakeholder interviews, and **61** priority population interviews in late 2021 and 2022.
- IPH also reviewed overdose and other data points, as well as best practices from literature and existing programs.

COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

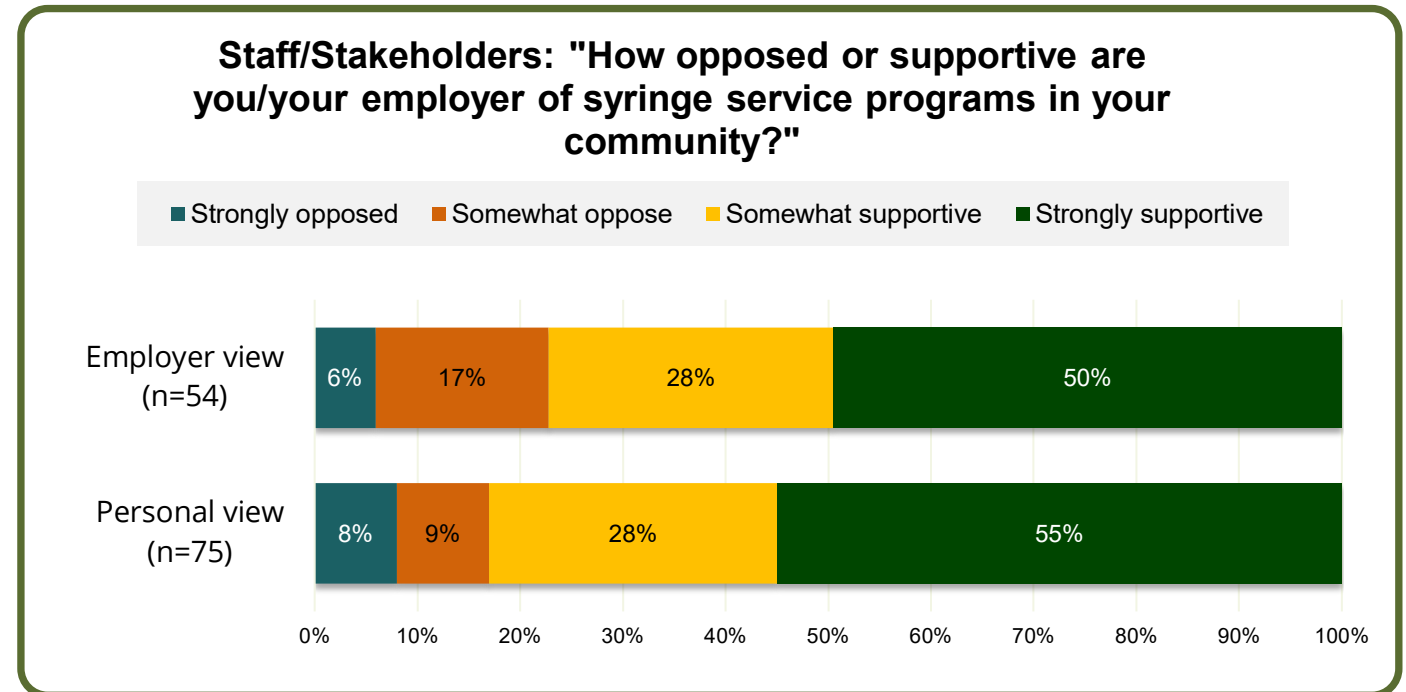


VIEWS OF STAFF/ STAKEHOLDERS

92 staff and stakeholder interviews represented **77** agencies throughout San Diego County.

Agency types included:

- Public and mental health
- Substance use disorder treatment organizations
- Businesses/chambers of commerce
- Community/planning groups
- City/elected officials
- Law enforcement



COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT

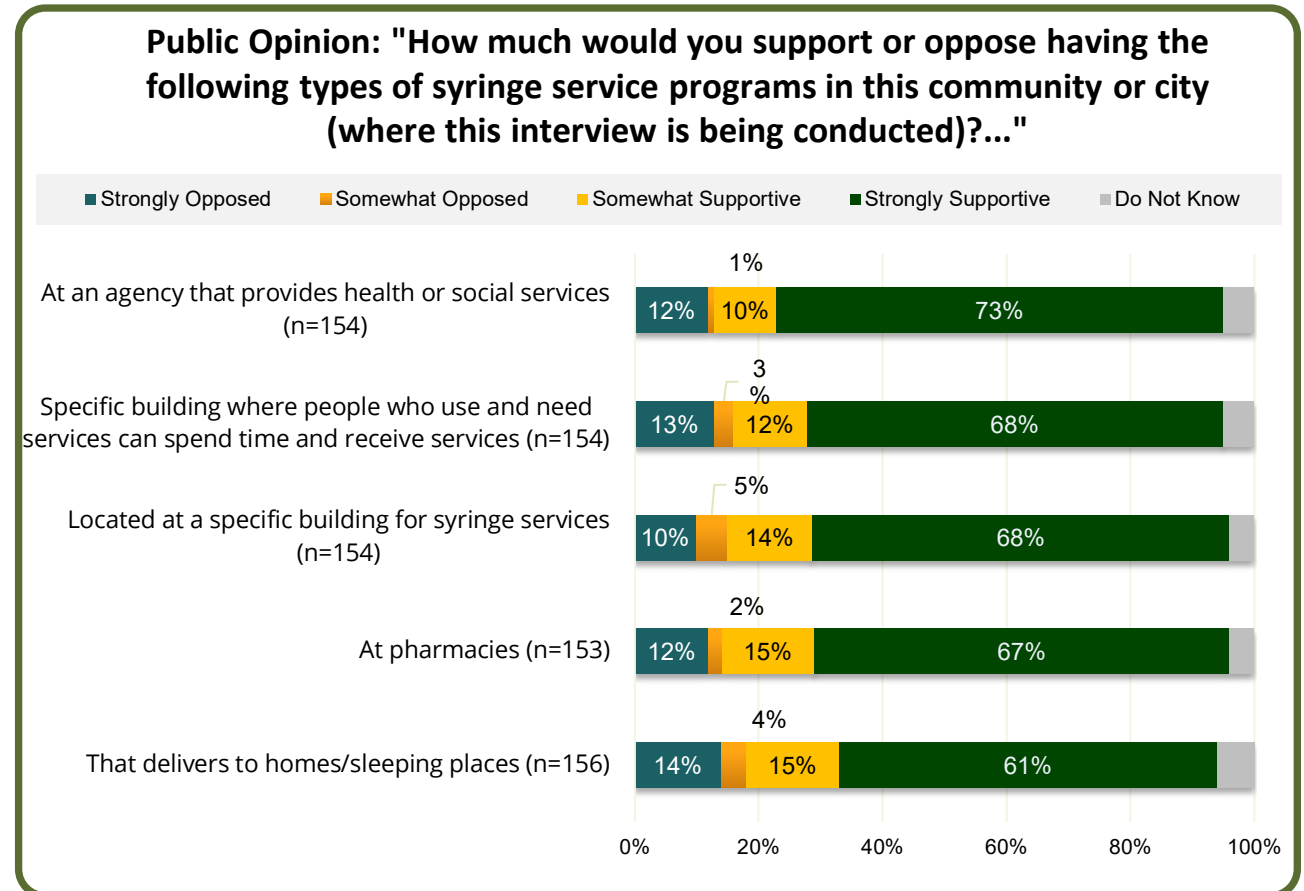


VIEWS OF PUBLIC OPINION

Among the **158** public members interviewed, 22% had heard of syringe service programs prior to their interview.

Interviews were collected in:

- El Cajon/Santee/Lakeside
- San Ysidro/Imperial Beach/Border
- Kearny Mesa/Clairmont Mesa
- Escondido
- Oceanside



COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT



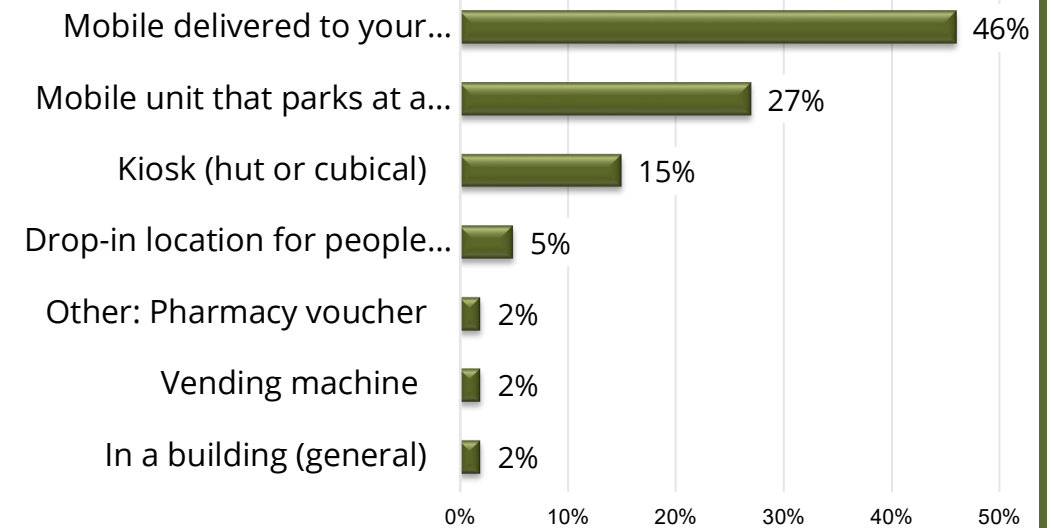
VIEWS OF PRIORITY POPULATION

A total of **55** interviews and one focus group (6 participants) with the priority population were conducted in the six different regions of San Diego County.

Mobile services delivered to their homes, or a meeting place was the most preferred program type.

Most Preferred Syringe Service Program Types: Interviews with the Priority Population

(n=41 respondents)



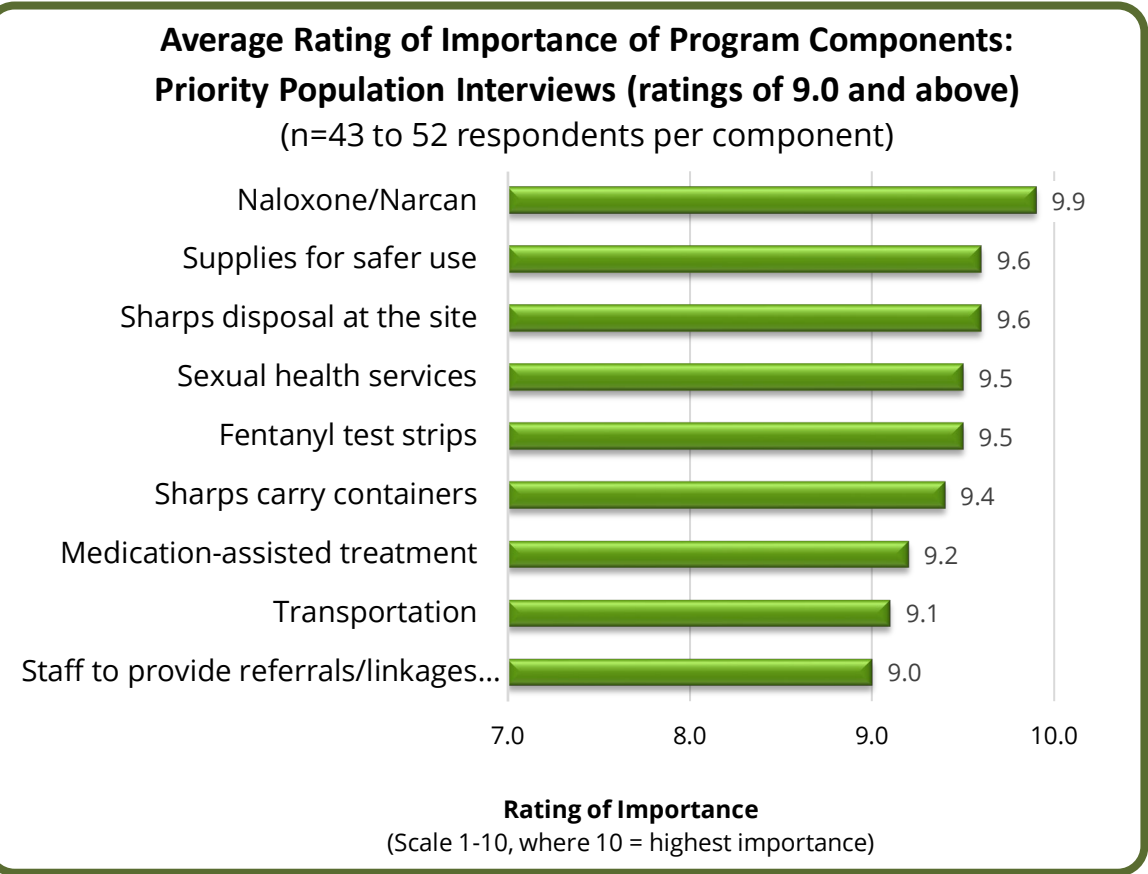
COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT



VIEWS OF PRIORITY POPULATION

A total of 55 interviews and one focus group (6 participants) with the priority population were conducted in the six different regions of San Diego County.

Medication to reverse and overdose, supplies, and safe places to dispose of supplies were rated as the most needed items.



TYING THINGS UP



USING DATA TO INFORM DECISION MAKING

- The need
 - Review of public health data
 - Results from Community Readiness Assessment
 - Input from stakeholders
 - Review of programs and literature
- Where
 - Available County locations
 - Proximity to law enforcement facilities and schools
 - Space requirements
- Accessible
 - Client centered
 - Volume of people
 - Proximity to transportation



HARM REDUCTION SERVICES



QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

