



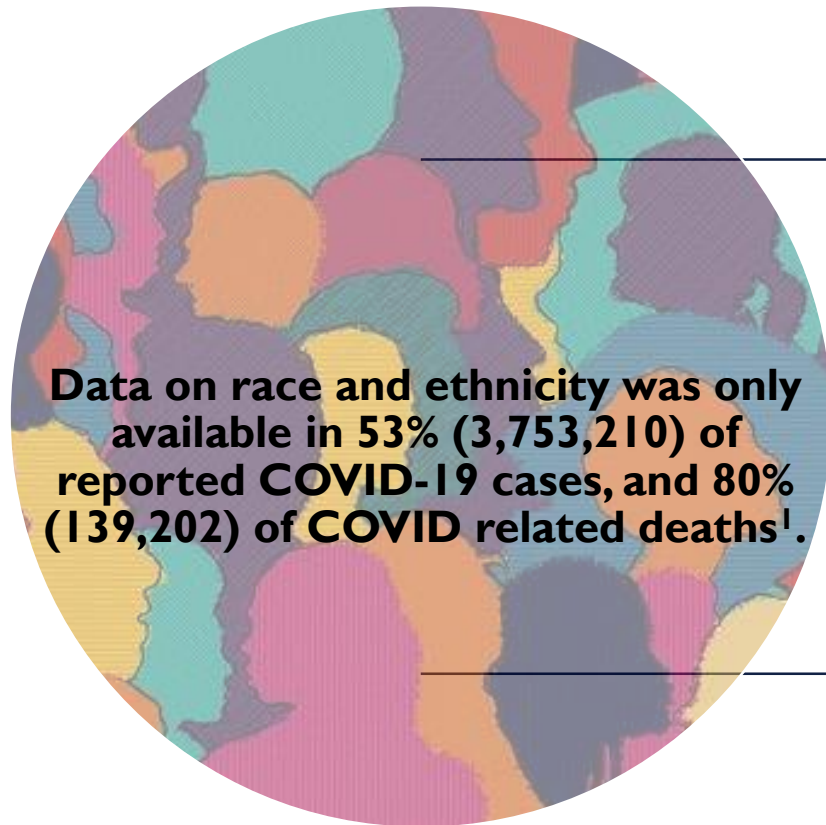
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, RACISM AND
HEALTH DISPARITIES IN THE AGE OF
COVID-19

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Commissioner, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

November 12th, 2020

COVID-19 AND RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS



Infections:

- 27% Hispanic/Latino (1,011,879)
- 16,3% Black/non-Hispanic (612,268)¹.



Deaths:

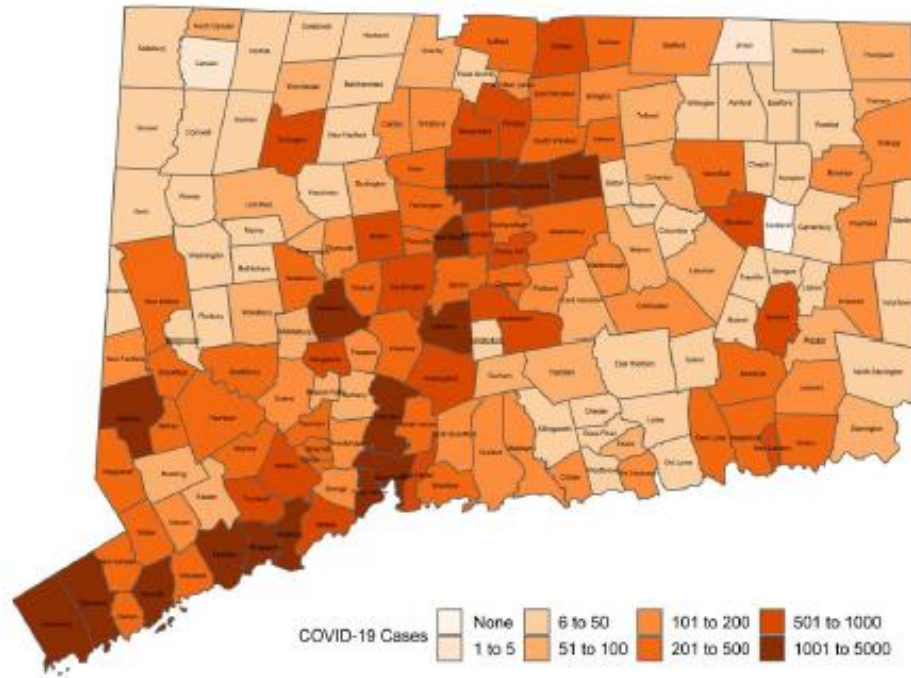
- Hispanic/Latino 15,9% (22,173)
- Black non-Hispanic 20% (27,829)¹.

1. CDC COVID Data Tracker.

https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcases-updates%2Fcases-in-us.html#demographics

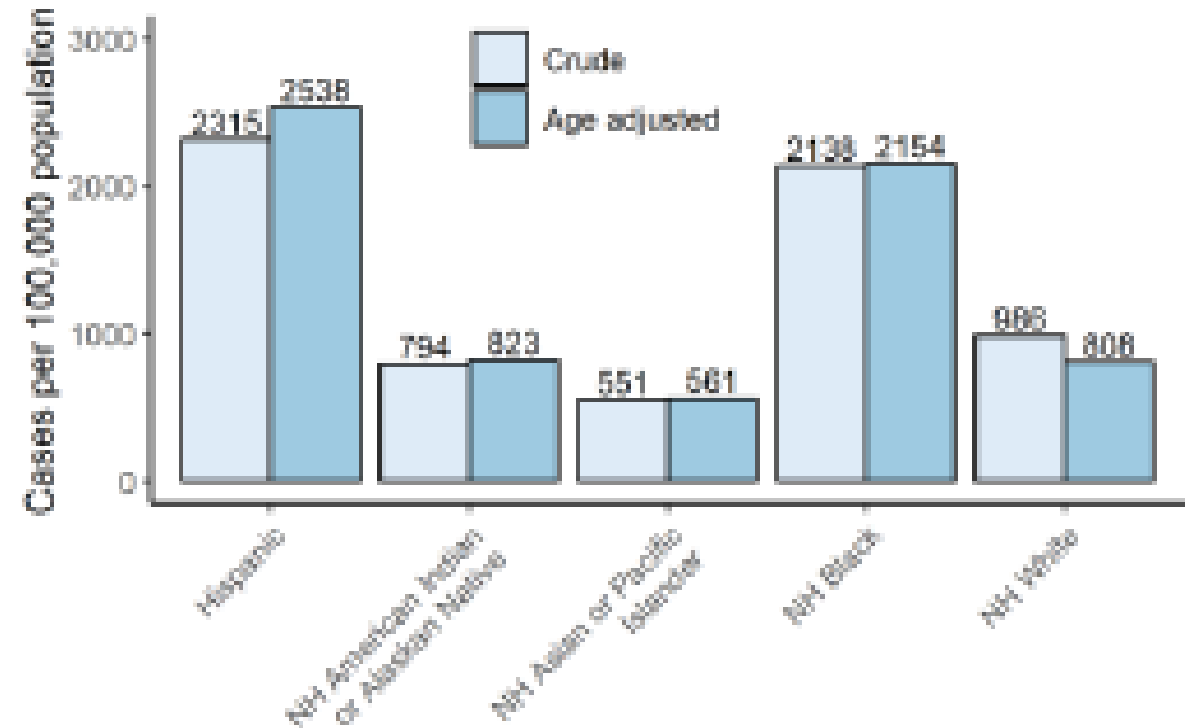
CONNECTICUT

Cumulative Number of COVID-19 Cases by Town



Rate of COVID-19 Cases by Race/Ethnicity, with and without age adjustment

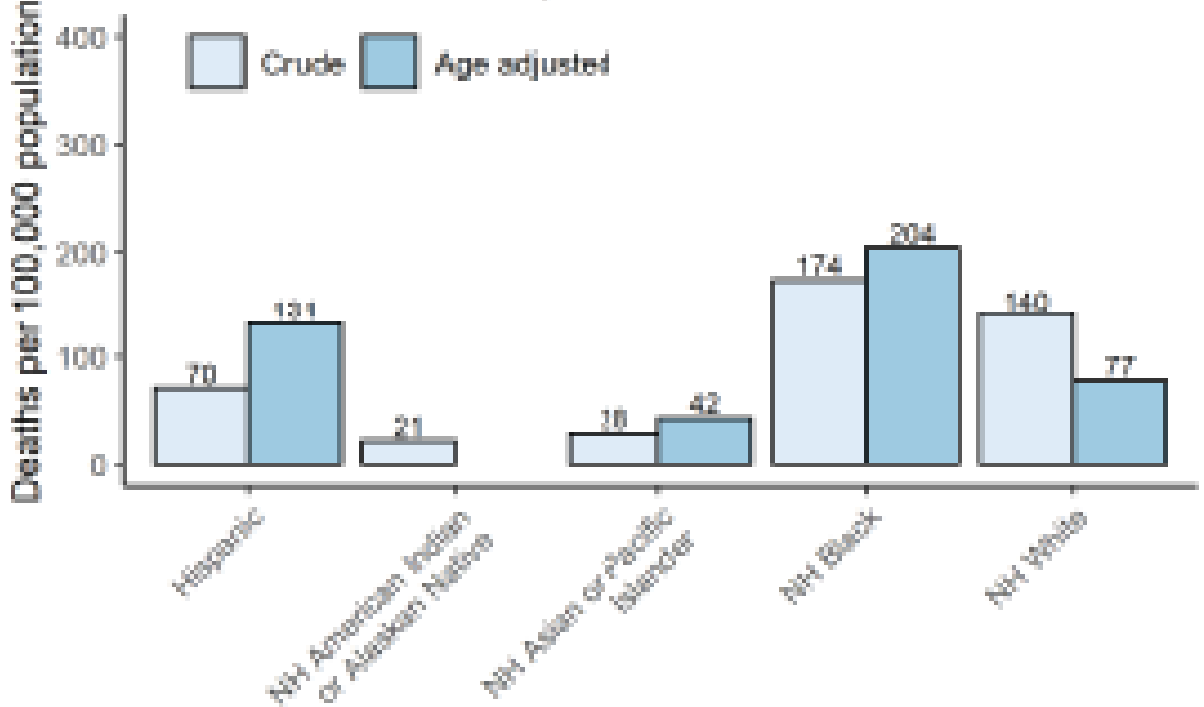
As of 10/28/2020 at 8:30pm



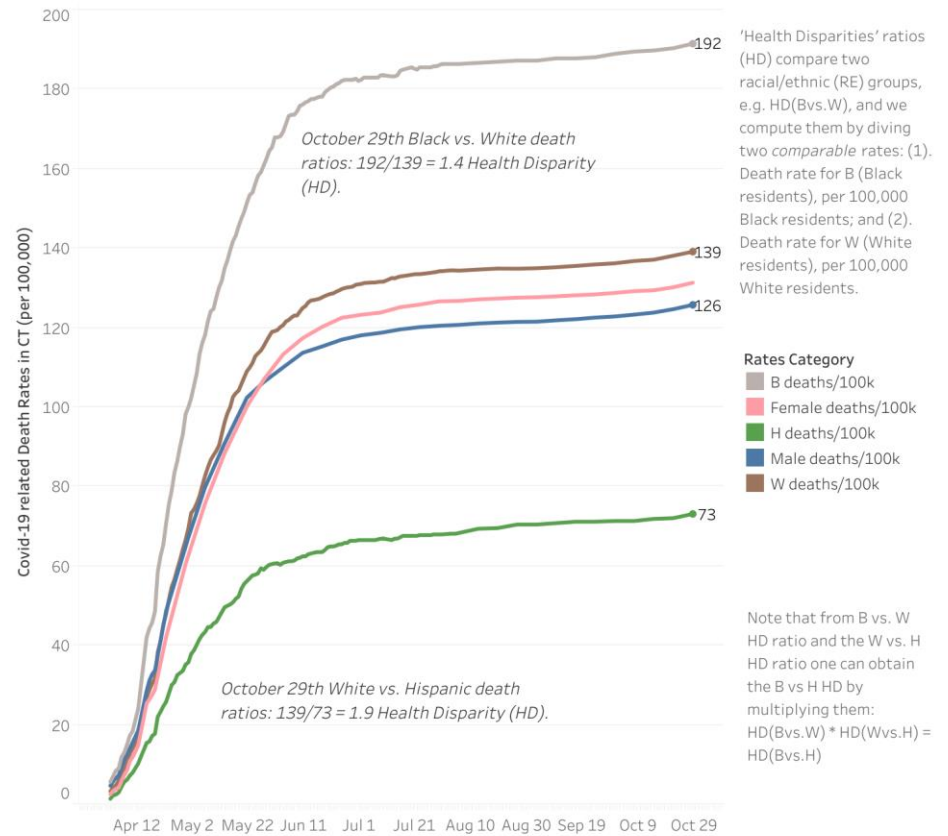
COVID-19 DEATHS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY - CT

Rate of COVID-19-Associated Deaths by Race/Ethnicity, with and without age adjustment*

As of 10/28/2020 at 8:30pm



Death rates (per 100,000 residents) by gender and race/ethnicity (RE)

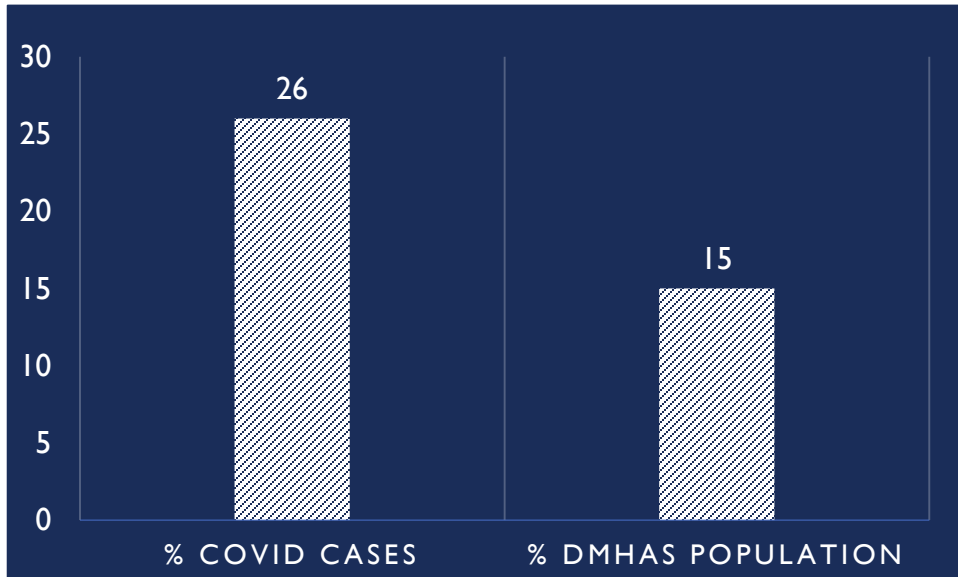


Source: <https://health.uconn.edu/health-disparities/health-equity-covid19/>

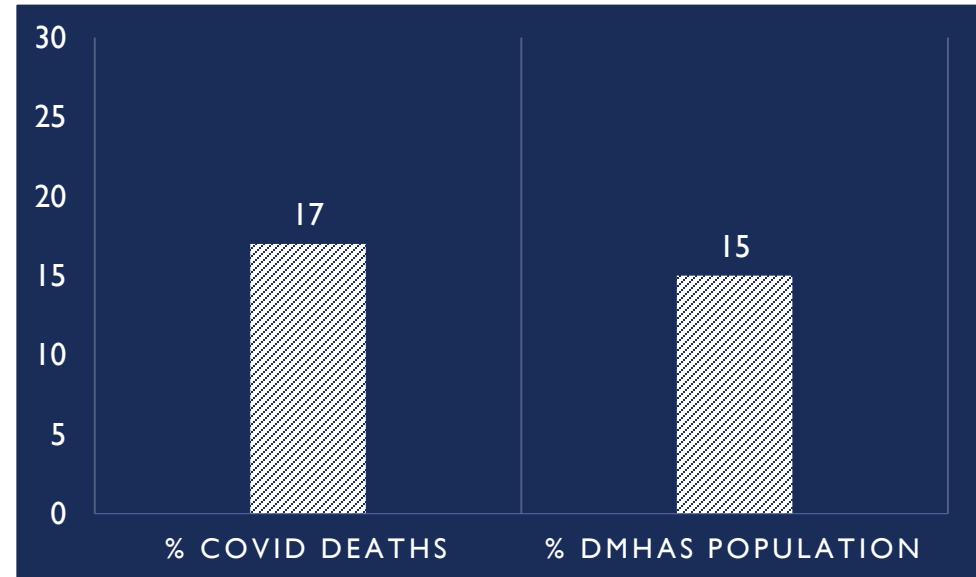
COVID-19 DMHAS SYSTEM

Black/African-Americans are over-represented in DMHAS COVID cases AND deaths:

- Black/African-Americans are 26% of DMHAS client COVID cases, but 15% of DMHAS population



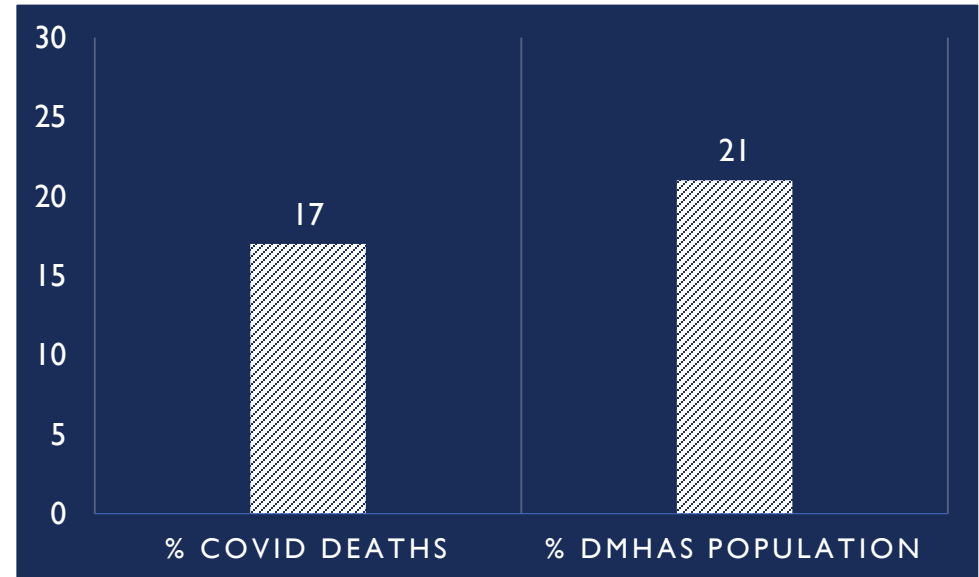
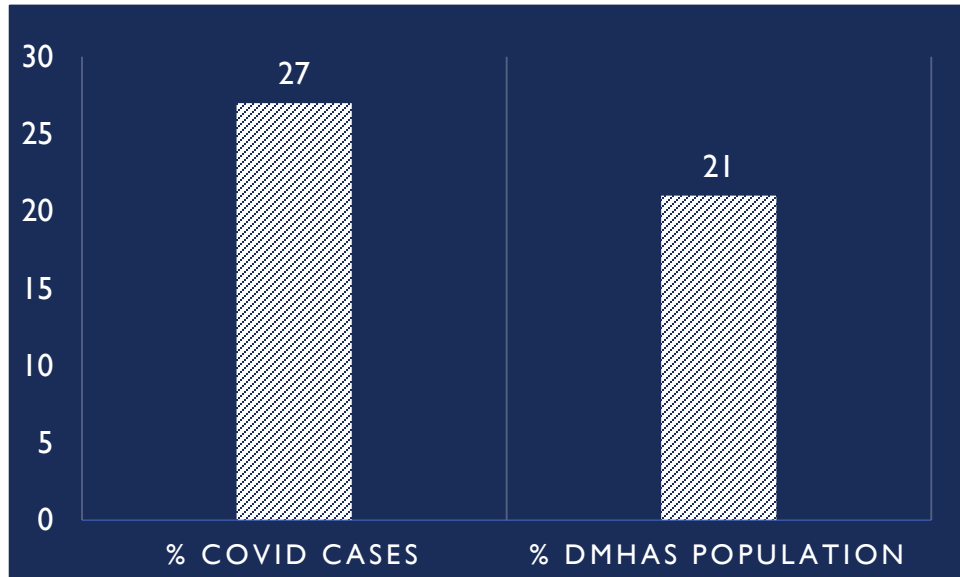
- Black/African-Americans are 17% of DMHAS client COVID deaths, but 15% of DMHAS population



COVID-19 DMHAS SYSTEM

Hispanic/Latinx are over-represented in DMHAS COVID cases (not deaths):

- Hispanics/Latinx are 27% of DMHAS client COVID cases, but 21% of DMHAS population
- Hispanics/Latinx are 17% of DMHAS client COVID deaths, but 21% of DMHAS population



DMHAS

110595 episodes of care since
April/2020

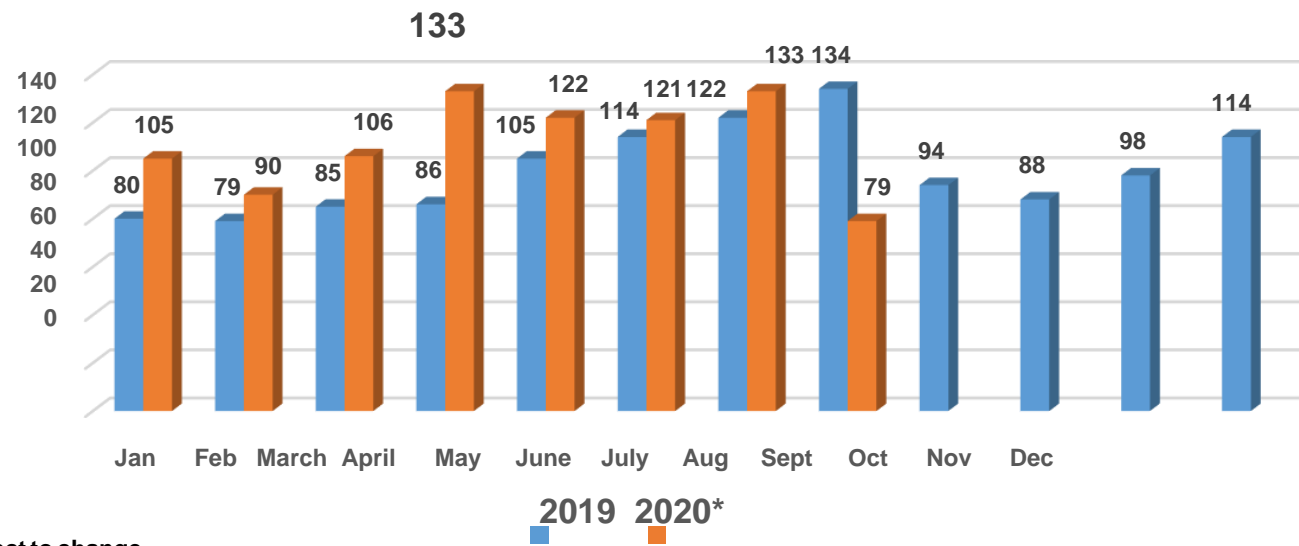
Telehealth

Incident Command Structure

Interagency cooperation

OPIOID CRISIS

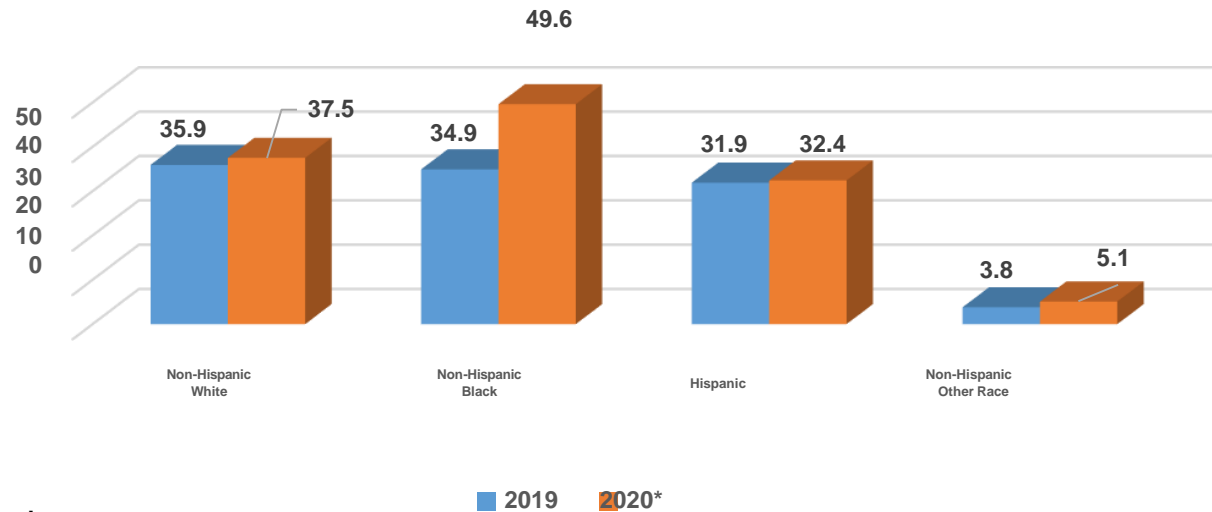
Number of Drug Overdose Deaths, by Month, Connecticut, 2019 – August 2020*



*Data subject to change

OPIOID CRISIS

Drug Overdose Mortality Rates, by Race/Ethnicity, Connecticut, 2019 – June 2020* (Rate/100,000 race/ethnicity-specific population)



- In 2020, the drug overdose mortality rate substantially increased in the non-Hispanic Black population compared to the previous year

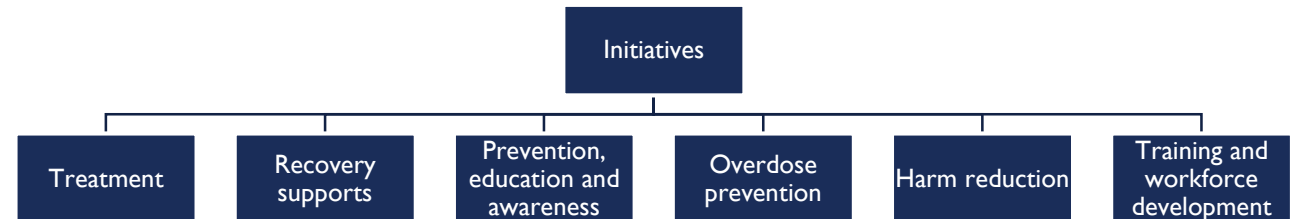
*Data subject to change

OPIOID CRISIS

YOU CAN HAVE A
**LIFE WITH
OPIOID USE
DISORDER.**

TREATMENT INFO
1.800.563.4086
www.liveloud.org

dmHAS **LIVE
LOUD**





MOBILE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT)

- Staffed by a nurse or physician and a peer recovery support counselor
- Immediate access to the peer counselor, a Narcan overdose reversal kit and other harm reduction supplies, referral to a treatment center, as well as transportation to a pharmacy if needed to fill the prescription.
- The service is free and does not require proof of insurance
- **Bridges** (Milford and West Haven)
- **Greater Hartford Harm Reduction Coalition** (Hartford)
- **Liberation Programs** (Bridgeport):
- **McCall Center** (Torrington)



MOBILE
CRISIS
SUPPORTS

211 ACTION
Line

Increase in
Mobile Crisis
calls

Let's Talk

A Virtual Community Conversation
That You Don't Want to Miss!

Save the Date!

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
6:00PM - 8:00PM

Healing Strategies: Public Health Crisis, COVID-19, & Racism

Conversation Starter:

Dr. Wisdom Powell

Director, UConn Health Disparities Institute

Drumming by Leonard Epps

Teacher & Administrator, Hartford Public Schools

Register on Eventbrite:

www.letstalkhealingstrategies.eventbrite.com

In Partnership with various faith-based, academic, and community organizations, the Office of the Governor, and the Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), and Children and Families (DCF)



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

- The Commissioners of DMHAS and DCF, in addition to community, academic, and faith-based organizations came together to host a virtual community conversation.
- Community conversations were organized to initiate discourse regarding current events related to COVID-19, racism, and building community wellness.

LISTENING AND
BUILDING
RELATIONSHIPS

- New Haven hair stylists and barbers receiving training to support mental health needs
- BH Care + City of New Haven
- Addressing stigma in communities of color
- Increasing fellowship and community



Imani
means
“Faith”
in
Swahili

- Developed in collaboration with people with lived experience and the community. It provides recovery and wellness education, mutual support and coaching to people who are using opioids and other substances. The intervention incorporates spirituality, the 8 dimensions of wellness and the Citizens 5Rs, to focus not only on recovery from substance use but overall wellness and connection to community.
- Imani aims to engage persons of Black/African American and/or Latinos(x); all are welcome. Imani facilitators/coaches are people with lived experiences and church members. Serves New Britain, New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury and Hartford.
- Imani consists of group based mutual support and recovery/education (meets weekly for 2 hours) with wrap around coaching provided to the participants by the two facilitators/coaches. The sessions take place over 12 weeks followed by an additional 10 weeks of mutual support and wraparound coaching.
- During COVID-19, it has gone virtually. Important that people remain connected.

WARM LINES

Community
Warmline

Reach Out
Greater New
Haven

CT Behavioral
Health
Partnership Warm
Line

JoinRiseBe

R.E.A.C.H.

Common Thread

Soundview

Guiding Path



Embrace Hope and Expect Change

It is human to feel a wide range of emotions now. These are very difficult times.

Some of us are going through challenging circumstances, such as the loss of a loved one, unemployment, isolation or the need to return to work in the face of uncertainty.

Many of us are experiencing changes in sleep patterns and appetite, having difficulty concentrating, and having increased levels of concern for ourselves and others.

We will react to our specific circumstances in different ways. There is no "right" way, no recipe for how to go through challenging situations. The important message is that there is no shame in the feelings we are experiencing or in reaching out for support.

Here are some things we can do:

- **Stay socially connected.** Staying in touch with family and friends is important. We can find support and support others by talking about our feelings and experiences and, listening to what others have to say.
- **Help others, if you can.** Find creative ways to help others can be a powerful way to give back to our communities. By staying home and safe, we are protecting ourselves and others in the community.
- **Find a routine that works for you.** Having some structure in our days can be helpful, such as waking up at the same time every day, separating job tasks from personal time, eating at regular intervals and exercising. Taking breaks is important.
- **Find support.** Talk about your worries. These are difficult times for everyone, you may find that many others are going through similar experiences. Sharing can help us build connections and support each other.
- **Ask for help.** Seeking help is important when the emotional distress or worry are such that we feel unable to cope with daily life, relationships, work, caregiving or other responsibilities, think about hurting ourselves or someone else, or have other extreme or unusual experiences that are distressing. In that case, it is important to seek immediate help.

To access a variety of resources and services, turn over the page (or scroll down)

To seek immediate help or for more information, call **211**.

Talk It Out Line | 1-833-258-5011
talkitoutct.com

For parents and caregivers who need someone to listen, to understand or to talk about your feelings. Sponsored by the State of CT.

#CTSafeConnect | 1-888-744-2900
ctsafeconnect.com

Offers confidential, safe, free & voluntary information, options and support 24/7 for people experiencing intimate partner violence.

CHR's HERO Hotline | 1-888-217-HERO
chrhealth.org/2020/04/27/chr-launches-hero-hotline-888-217-hero

Daily (10am-8pm) statewide hotline for anyone who is struggling with acute stress during coronavirus. Professional assessment and referral especially designed for frontline health-care providers, family members/friends of frontline workers, anyone grieving the loss of a loved one or struggling during coronavirus.

DMHAS warm line listing
portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Advocacy/Warm-Lines

Warm lines are telephone support services staffed by people who have experience/expertise with mutual support.

LGBT National Help Center & Talkline
1-888-843-4564 | lgbthotline.org

Provides free, confidential peer support, information and resources to the LGBTQ+ community.

Trans Life Line | 1-877-565-8860
translifeline.org

Peer support services, hotline and resources for Transgender people of color 10am-4pm EST.

16 directories for the rapists of color:
justdavia.com/blog/directories-for-therapists-of-color

CCAR (CT Community for Addiction Recovery)
1-866-205-9770 | ccar.us

Offers All Recovery and other meetings; of ers Telephone Recovery Support (TRS), a weekly phone "check-in" by trained CCAR volunteers who offer support, encouragement and resources (sign up online—Spanish calls available).

A.U. (Advocacy Unlimited) | 1-860-505-7581
advocacyunlimited.org/

Offers telephone and online support including a young adult and general warm line, Alternatives to Suicide and Hearing Voices groups, as well as a variety of holistic healing and wellness opportunities.

National Problem Gambling Helpline
1-800-522-4700

CT Council on Problem Gambling
1-888-789-7777 or text «CTGAMB» to 53342

N.A.M.I.-CT (National Alliance on Mental Illness- CT chapter) | 860-882-0236
namict.org

Offers support and education programs for families, young adults and Veterans as well as opioid support groups.

Tri-Circle, Inc. | (203) 631-1743
trircleinc.com | info@trircleinc.com

Offers Hope & Support groups & Hope After Loss groups for parents/caregivers & others concerned about a loved one's substance misuse or addiction or who have lost a loved one to the same.

Volunteers in Psychotherapy
ctvip.org



New England (HHS Region 1)

MHTTC Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- FREE community support and outreach services in Connecticut in response to the unprecedented public health crisis, COVID-19. This program is made possible through grant funding provided by FEMA.

PEER & FAMILY RESOURCES



Peer support organizations transitioned to online and other digital supports and offerings

- Advocacy
Unlimited: www.advocacyunlimited.org
(860) 505-7581
- Artreach: www.artreachheals.org (860)
887-1907
- CCAR: www.ccar.us/ (866) 205-9770
- NAMI-CT: www.namict.org (860) 882-
0236

PROTECTING STAFF

CTCARES for Frontline
Workers funding

Support to essential
workers - including state
employees providing
direct care services - to
pay for childcare.

Housing support for
direct care workers -
hotels

90-day supply of PPE in
anticipation of second
wave/surge of covid-19

Testing

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

- Reached out to all facilities about needs during COVID and after George Floyd's murder
- Conversations with staff at multiple facilities, some conversations with clients
- “How are people doing with what is going on the world, about racial unrest”
 - what is working?, what are the challenges?,
 - what are people willing to commit to/do/be accountable for, for change in the facility?
- Train the trainer for 16 people to lead courageous conversations statewide, will train 16 more in 2021

FEMA AWARD

- \$670,000 to the Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to address mental health needs related to the pandemic will fund Connecticut's Crisis Counseling Program
- The funds will target the unique needs of two populations that have been severely impacted by COVID-19, the elderly, and homeless populations

SAMHSA AWARD

- \$2 million in federal funding to the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to address pandemic-related behavioral healthcare needs of specific populations in Connecticut that have been heavily impacted by the pandemic.
- Purchasing telehealth equipment for DMHAS providers and Department of Correction (DOC) healthcare practitioners;
- Enhancing eight DMHAS-funded mobile crisis teams with additional clinicians;
- Providing staffing to a new statewide call center for adult crisis calls at United Way 2-1-1;
- Expanding the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Family Based Recovery (FBR) and services for youth and their families;

THANK YOU!