



DMHAS Women's REACH Program

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Today's objectives are to:

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1

Discuss the Women's REACH program and how to connect women to these services

2

Discuss the REACH Navigator's role in supporting women to develop a Plan of Safe Care/Family Care Plan

3

Discuss the unique role of persons with lived experience in supporting women, birthing persons, and families in recovery

4

Discuss the unique role of the Family Recovery Navigator to support LGBTQIA+ parents, single fathers, and families in recovery



Defined by Cambridge

Dictionary as: a strong lack of respect for a person or group of persons or a bad opinion of them because they have done something society does not approve of



Clouds our lens of seeing a person clearly as a multifaceted individual and often putting them into a box of only a single characteristic

Understanding Stigma

Consequences of Stigma:

*Source: American Addiction Centers

- ▶ Mental Health/Trauma – chronic exposure to prejudice, avoidance, rejection, judgement, and discrimination
 - ▶ Low self-esteem, feelings of hopelessness, fear, depression, anxiety, increased substance use
- ▶ Internalizing stigma -- Feelings of shame and guilt which decrease the likelihood of seeking treatment or having access to harm reduction strategies and resources
- ▶ Decreases chance of seeking treatment which leads to increased economic, social, and medical costs
- ▶ Distrust of community/medical/police/criminal justice providers
- ▶ Health disparities
- ▶ Legal and/or Child protective involvement

Peer Recovery Support Services

- ▶ Delivered by peer recovery coaches, and are one form of peer support
- ▶ Non-clinical assistance to support long-term recovery from substance use disorders
- ▶ Can support or be an alternative to clinical treatment for substance use disorders
- ▶ Help people in recovery build *recovery capital* – the internal and external resources necessary to begin and maintain recovery (Best & Laudet, 2010; Cloud and Granfield, 2008)

Women's REACH Program

Recovery

- Multiple pathways to support healthy lives

Engagement

- Meeting women in their community
- No wrong door to enter services

Access

- Making connections for community-based resources
- facilitating warm handoffs to treatment

Coaching

- Using shared experiences to encourage, support, advocate & provide a listening ear

Healing

- Modeling that recovery is possible and accessible

Structure of the REACH Program

- ▶ Implemented March 1, 2019
- ▶ Services delivered by 5 DMHAS contracted agencies. Each program provides the following;
 - ▶ 3 full time Recovery Navigators
 - ▶ Community based outreach and engagement to women with priority access to those who are pregnant & parenting
 - ▶ Case Management & Recovery Coaching
 - ▶ Development of collaborative relationships within their communities with medical and behavioral health providers, hospitals, DCF, police, recovery resources, etc.
 - ▶ Participation in community meetings and taskforces

Women's Recovery Navigators

- ▶ All 15 Women's Recovery Navigators:
 - ▶ Are women in personal recovery who are open to sharing their story to support others
 - ▶ Have completed Recovery Coach Training
 - ▶ Receive weekly supervision from their respective agency
 - ▶ Participate in a monthly DMHAS facilitated learning collaborative and ongoing DMHAS funded trainings:
 - ▶ Topics to include reproductive health, One Key Question, Circle of Security, Motivational Interviewing, Narcan & Risk Reduction Strategies, Housing/Homeless Services, Intimate Partner Violence, LGBTQIA+, etc.
 - ▶ Open to and knowledgeable about diverse pathways to recovery, community resources, and women's health issues
 - ▶ Embrace the notion that one size does not fit all

REACH

Enhancement

- ▶ In 2021, DMHAS utilized SAMHSA funding to support the addition of a Family Recovery Navigator to each of the 5 REACH teams.
- ▶ The Family Recovery Navigator uses their history of lived experience to assist the REACH team and expand the scope of services to support parenting caregivers impacted by substance use:
 - ▶ Partners of REACH clients
 - ▶ Single parent fathers, LGBTQIA+ parents, and primary caregiving relatives
- ▶ The Family Recovery Navigator provides holistic services through connection to treatment, recovery coaching, and case management.
- ▶ Perinatal Support Specialty Services provided to all eligible REACH clients.

Birth Support, Education & Beyond

- ▶ In 2021, DMHAS utilized SAMHSA funding to provide perinatal support/doula services to pregnant and postpartum REACH clients
- ▶ Empowers positive birth experiences for clients engaged in the REACH Program
- ▶ Connection of expectant birthing persons to Perinatal Support Specialists that provide doula support throughout pregnancy, labor, and birth
- ▶ In-home postpartum doula and perinatal support services provided in the initial postpartum period

BSEB Client Services

comprehensive prenatal, maternal & childbirth education on infant & maternal care

bonding & attachment support

breastfeeding/chest feeding
bottle feeding support

maternal and fetal growth & development

healthy nutrition in pregnancy and postpartum

prenatal exercise and wellbeing education

preparation for labor & birth

developing CAPTA Plans of Safe Care/Family Care Plan

preparing for hospital policies and protocols

home safety, postpartum & newborn care

skill building around assessing for illness

continuous Labor Doula Support during active labor & birth

Plan of Safe Care/Family Care Plan

- ▶ In line with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Recovery Navigators will support pregnant women/birthing persons and their health care providers in the development of a Plan of Safe Care/Family Care Plan.
 - ▶ Through their relationship with the woman/birthing person, education on CAPTA is provided to dispel myths and allow time for questions and processing.
 - ▶ REACH Navigator can be a constant as mom/birthing person moves through various providers and can readily access plan at time of delivery.
 - ▶ Navigators support the development of comprehensive plans which address physical health, behavioral health, infant health and development, and parenting/family support.

A Look at some REACH Data...

- ▶ From March 1, 2019-May 2022
 - ▶ Over 1,600 individuals have been enrolled in the program
 - ▶ Extensive community outreach has been done statewide including to:
 - ▶ Behavioral Health Providers
 - ▶ Hospitals
 - ▶ Social Support & Community Resource Agencies
 - ▶ Medical Offices including FQHCs
 - ▶ DCF Offices
 - ▶ Police Departments

Recovery is possible...

- ▶ “In February 2022, I began to work with a client who was actively using heroin, unemployed, and had an unstable living arrangement. Since this client engaged in REACH, she has been connected to MAT treatment, obtained employment, meets with me consistently for scheduled appointments, and seeks recovery peer support when she is feeling stressed or navigating some of life’s challenges. This client has continued to identify goals for recovery and continues to work to make changes to ways in which she responds and manages her reactions, ultimately gaining skills to support long term recovery.”
– Recovery Navigator

Healing is possible...

- ▶ “I began working with a client who had been referred by staff from the overflow shelter as the client was homeless and pregnant. The client began meeting with me, and I was able to connect her to a family shelter, WIC, and pregnancy/infant support services. With the use of REACH funding, I was able to provide her with some basic needs, including baby supplies, a stroller, and breast pump. The client also worked with me to establish a Plan of Safe Care and has since delivered her baby with minimal DCF contact. She and the baby are healthy, and she continues to obtain support through REACH as she navigates motherhood in recovery. “ – Recovery Navigator

Coaching is possible...

- ▶ “I began working with a father that had recently lost his wife and the mother of his son. He had been struggling with substance use for much of his son’s life and recently completed an inpatient treatment program. Through his work with the REACH program, he was able to identify ways of connecting with his son. He was also able to obtain employment, work on budgeting to gain financial stability, and obtain survivor benefits for his son. He has consistently engaged in REACH, and has met a variety of goals. He continues to be active with his recovery, attends recovery groups, and meets with me regularly for additional support.” – Family Recovery Navigator

Providers

Chemical Abuse Services Agency (CASA), Inc.

Region 1- Serving greater Bridgeport, Norwalk, & Stamford

The Connection, Inc.

Region 2- Serving greater Meriden, Middletown, & New Haven

Advanced Behavioral Health (ABH)

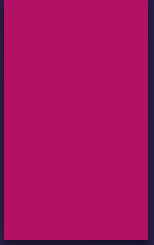
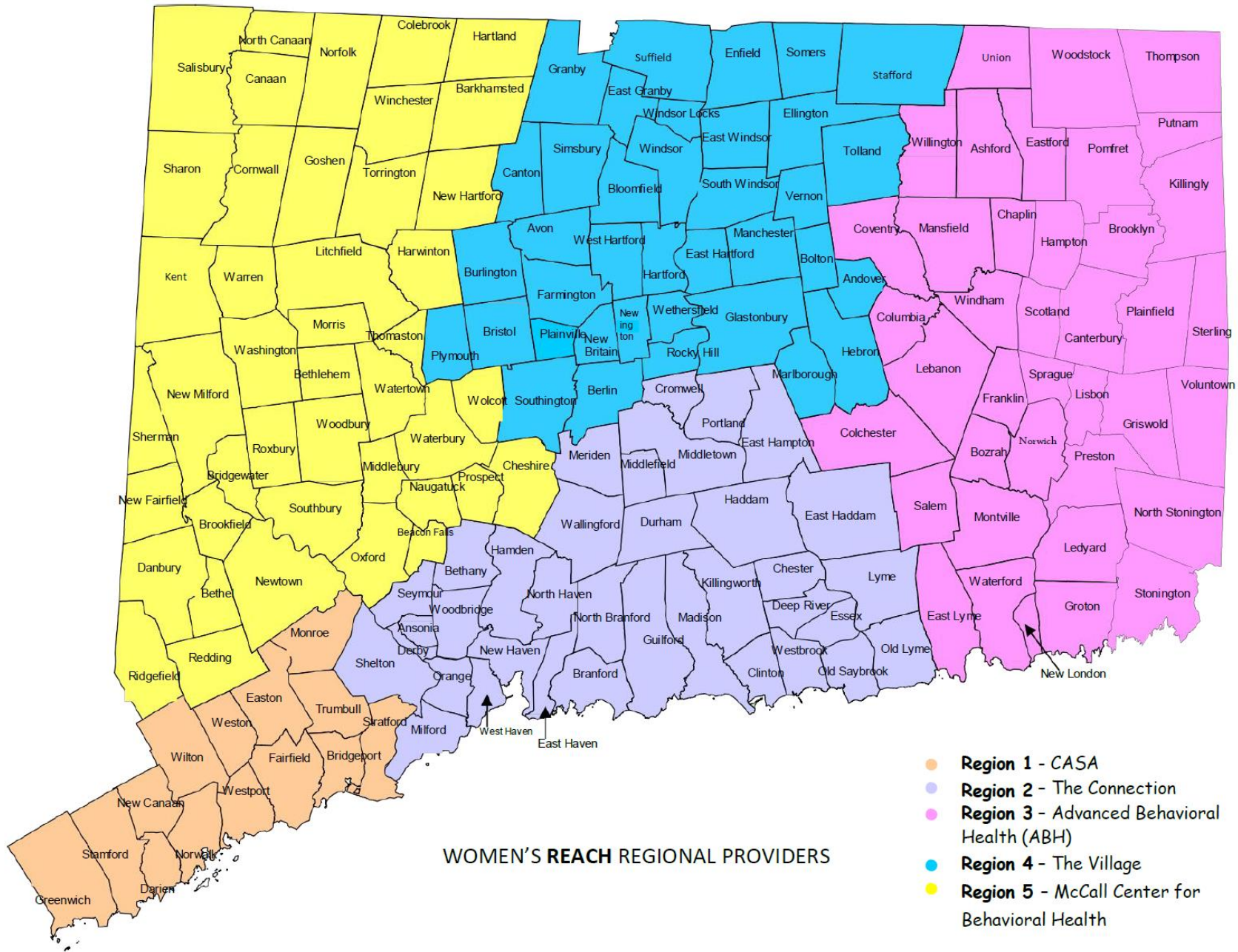
Region 3- Serving greater New London, Norwich, & Windham

The Village for Families & Children

Region 4- Servings Bristol, Hartford, Manchester, & New Britain

McCall Center for Behavioral Health

Region 5- Serving Danbury, Torrington & Waterbury



For Additional Information

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<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Women/Womens-REACH-Program>



Questions &
Comments ?

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