

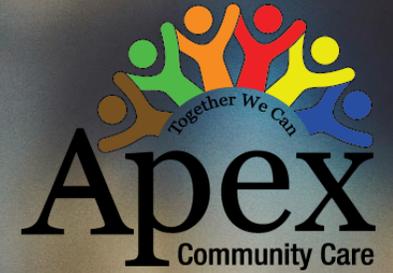
Harm Reduction Centers

Opioid Settlement Advisory
Council
11/19/24

- **Justin Mehl:** Opioid Services Coordinator -DMHAS
- **Ciara Beattie:** Director of Prevention and Harm Reduction-APEX
- **Carol Jones:** Director of Harm Reduction- Alliance For Living (AFL)
- **Mark Jenkins:** CEO and Founder CT-HRA



O
P
E
N





**Purpose
and
benefits**

1

Low barrier access for individuals at risk for overdose



2

Reduce unintentional overdose fatalities



3

Reduce disease transmission and provide wound care



4

Increase access to treatment and recovery support Providers



5

Distribute Naloxone and harm reduction supplies



Connecticut Core Report



Priority 1
Access to MOUD

- Increase availability in harm reduction services
- Increase Linkage to wraparound support options and transportation

Priority 2
Reduce Overdose Risk

- Increased linkage to Naloxone, drug testing and SSP
- Create HRC's that provide ancillary support
- Reduce solitary opioid use

Priority 4 Increase workforce & Community Understanding

- Increase the harm reduction workforce in CT
- Increase public-facing educational efforts regarding OUD and high potency synthetic opioids

Priority 5
Tertiary prevention

- Expand access to Naloxone, syringe service, and other harm reduction services

Priority 7
Address Social Determinants of Health

- Ensure at risk individuals have access to wraparound services including transportation, and housing

Data across All Sites

10.1.2023-10.1.2024

Total Visits	4284
Unique Individuals	1395

Variable	Alliance for Living N = 213 ¹	APEX Community Care N = 96 ¹	Connecticut Harm Reduction Alliance N = 2,208 ¹
Dispensed_Syringes	7,510.0	27,897.0	372,814.0
Returned_Syringes	11,405.0	26,248.0	342,118.0
Xylazine Testing Strips	10.0	240.0	10.0
Fentanyl Test Strips	228.0	215.0	586.0
Dispensed_Material Safe Use Kits	273.0	296.0	4,888.0

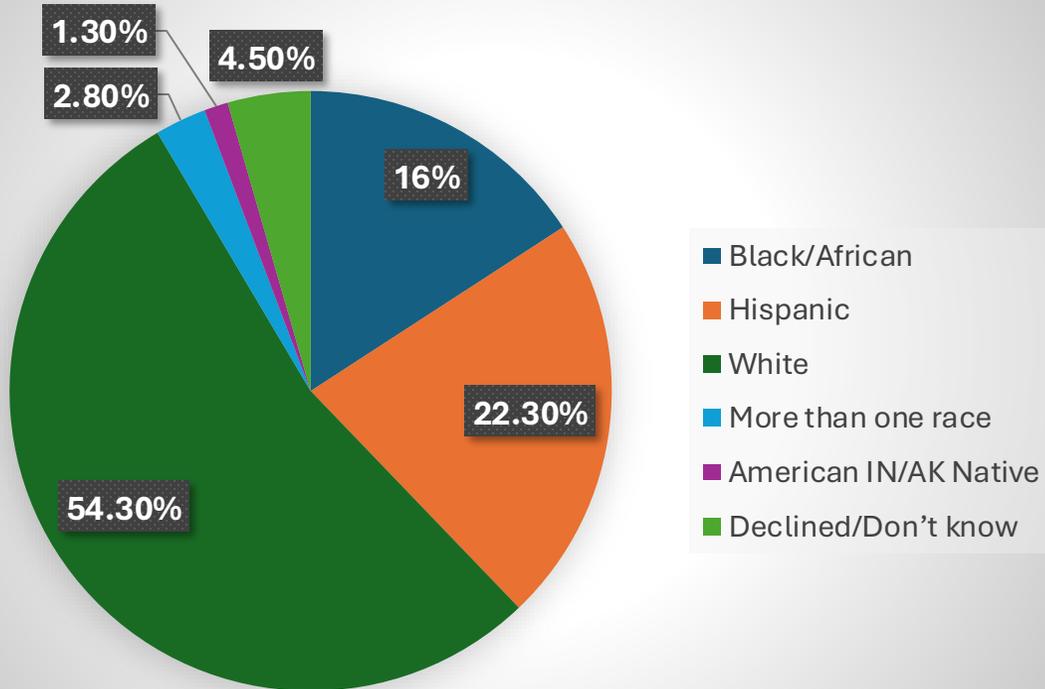
¹ Sum

**Naloxone
Kits
Distributed:
1039**



Demographic Data

Table 2. Clients Demographics by HRC, (October 1st, 2023 to October 1st, 2024)



Data source: CT DPH - *e2CTPrevention*, Oct. 2023 to Oct. 2024

Age Group	Alliance For Living	Apex	CT-HRA
<20	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
20-29	21 (10%)	5 (5.2%)	111 (5.0%)
30-39	66 (31%)	43 (45%)	670 (30%)
40-49	52 (25%)	20 (21%)	652 (30%)
50-59	48 (23%)	19 (20%)	493 (22%)
60+	22 (10%)	9 (9.4%)	282 (13%)
Gender			
Female	60 (29%)	39 (41%)	693 (31%)
Genderqueer or gender fluid	2 (1.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (<0.1%)
Male	111 (53%)	57 (59%)	1,488 (67%)
Not Asked	35 (17%)	0 (0%)	11 (0.5%)
Other gender category/identity	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prefer not to disclose	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	7 (0.3%)
Questioning or unsure	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (0.1%)
Transgender - FTM	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (<0.1%)
Transgender - MTF	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (0.2%)

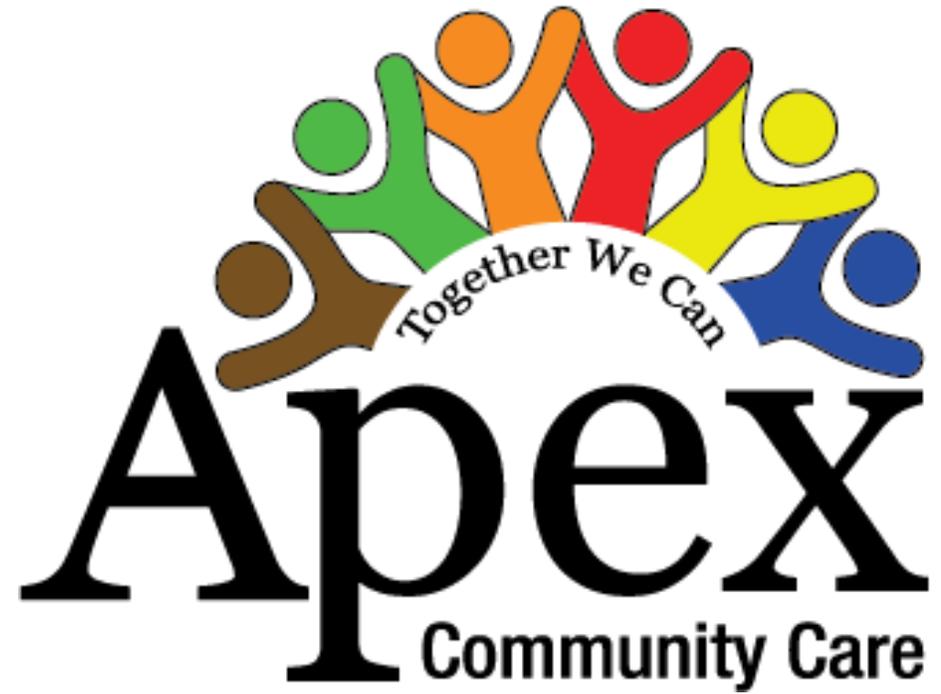
Connections to Care and Medical Support

Withdrawal Management	59
MOUD Inductions	83
Testing (HIV-Hep C)	128
Wound Care	265
Mental Health	63



Apex Community Care

Waterbury Harm
Reduction Drop In Center



Waterbury Harm Reduction Center

- We are located at 2154 East Main street, Waterbury CT
- Our hours are 11:00am-7:00pm Monday through Friday
- We are a low barrier drop-in center. ALL are welcome. No appointment necessary for any of our services offered within the center.



Our Services

- Harm Reduction Supplies
- Syringe Exchange
- Safe place
- Clothing Closet
- Narcan supply and training
- Sexual health needs
- Recovery Support
- Case Management
- Linkage to Medicated Assisted Treatment
- Testing Strips

- Community Outreach
- Free Food
- Referrals
- Center events for the community
- Rapid Housing
- Free Testing





Meet The Team

Our staff brings a diverse range of knowledge, education, and personal lived experiences to our center. We are committed to a client-focused approach, ensuring that we consistently address each client's unique needs.

We have a dedicated team of Community Outreach Workers, trained Peer Recovery Coaches, Harm Reduction Specialists, and Case Managers, all prepared to provide comprehensive support.





Working with the community

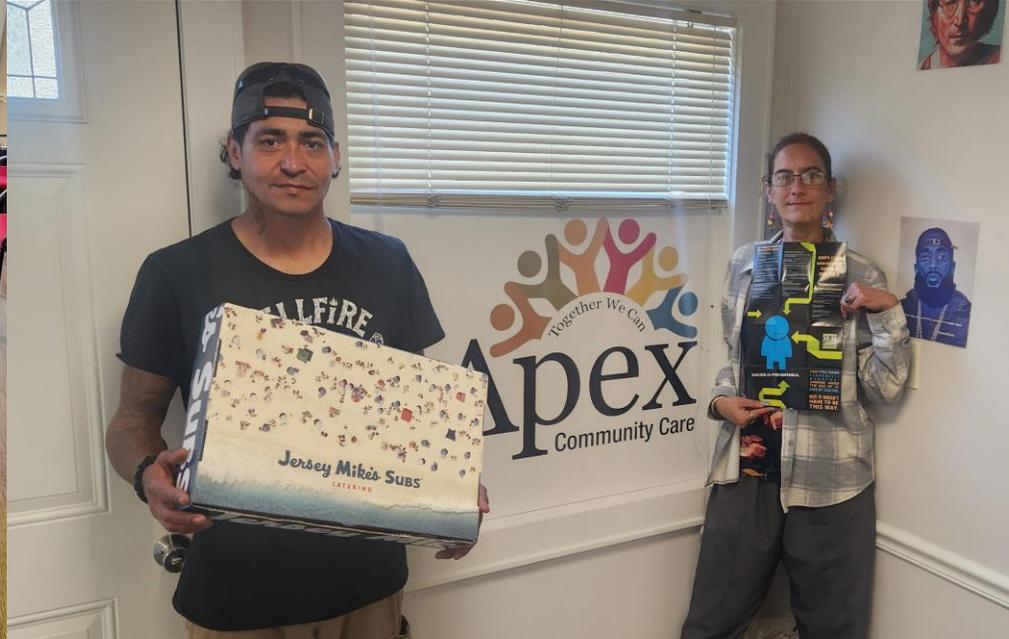
At Apex we strive to work with all local agencies and organizations to give our clients the best wrap around care they deserve.

Some local places we work with are Waterbury Hospital, CHD, Waterbury Health Department, barbershops, local liquor stores, YAS-DMHAS, Western CT Mental Health Network, inMOTION mobile van, Starbucks and more.

We prominently display their information and regularly offer in-person training sessions during staff meetings to ensure everyone is well-informed and equipped to support our clients effectively.

Community Events

Each month, we host a range of community events designed to foster connections and deepen awareness of available services. These gatherings are invaluable for engaging with the community and encouraging participation. Our team has organized significant events like Know Your Community Day, Sausage and Stigma, Reflection of Hope, Art and Crafts Night, Game Night, Suicide Prevention and Subs and many others. Each event serves as an opportunity to bring people together and promote a sense of belonging.



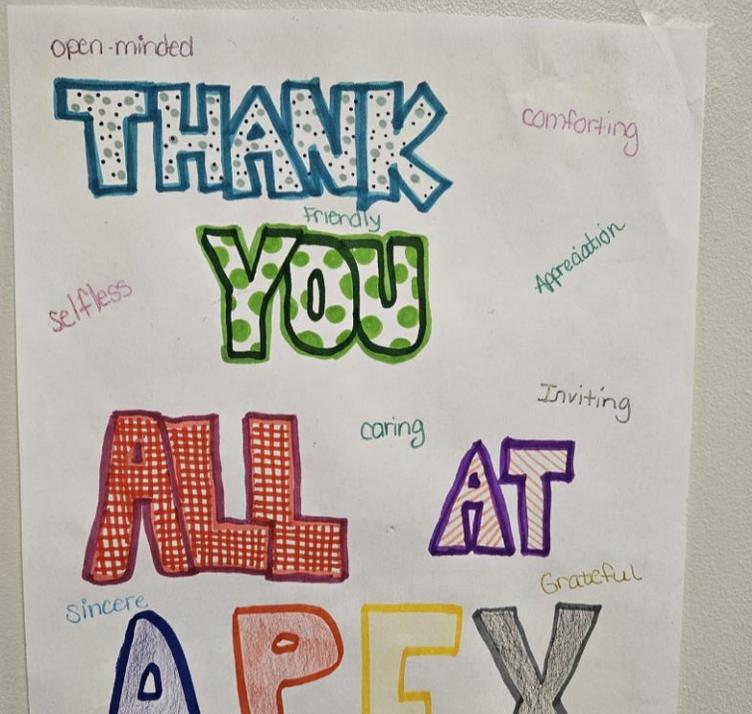


What do our participants think?

“I love the peace and quiet this center provide. Staff is amazing”

“All the staff get me and what I am facing in the community. I appreciate the patience in understanding my currant situation.”

“Everyone is kind, friendly and helpful. Apex makes it easy to get supplies. In use, Needle Exchange was helpful. In recovery, the support here is abundant. Each person has helped me and taken time to check in on me and my recovery”



Harm Reduction Center

ALLIANCE FOR LIVING

Alliance for Living
154 Broad Street
New London, CT, 06320

October 15, 2024



ABOUT ALLIANCE FOR LIVING

WHO WE ARE

- Formed in 1998, Alliance for Living is a non-profit organization serving New London County.
- We are at the forefront of implementing evidence-based, client centered care to address public health with a special focus on HIV, homelessness, and the overdose epidemic.
- In 2016, we partnered with LedgeLight Health District to form New London County Cares, a program that provides a coordinated response to the overdose epidemic in our community through education, overdose prevention, harm reduction, peer navigation, and mobile treatment services.
- In 2024, we opened our harm reduction center, with the goal of providing people at risk of overdose a safe space to experience belonging and community.

WHAT WE DO

- Across our agency, we also provide the following services (and more):
 - medical & housing case management
 - food pantry & meal services
 - transportation & financial assistance
 - drug user health & syringe services programming
 - rapid HIV/HCV testing, care coordination, & prevention services
 - HIV treatment adherence & medical nutritional therapy



HARM REDUCTION CENTER- WHAT WE DO

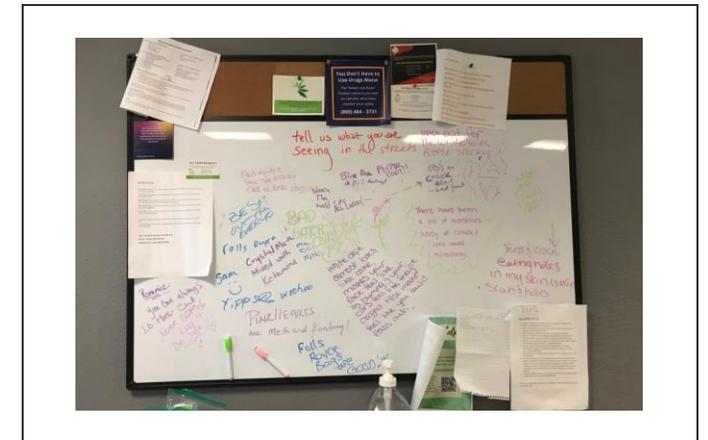
Our Harm Reduction Center (HRC) serves as a place of support, respite, and community space for anyone in New London County who is at risk of overdose.

OUR SETUP

- We opened with the vision of a community center in mind, and set our space up with couches, an entertainment center, clothing and shoe racks full of donations for participants to choose from, access to charging stations and Wi-Fi, dining tables, and an ever-revolving supply of coffee, cold drinks, snacks, and hot meals.
- Sharing a space with our Syringe Services Program (SSP), many existing SSP clients have sought out the additional services that the HRC has to offer.

OUR SERVICES

- Participants in our HRC can access the following services (and more):
 - educational materials, local resources, & community information
 - transportation to and from medical and social services appointments
 - emergency shelter services upon exit from the carceral setting
 - linkages to prevention services, dental care, medical care, and more



(Above) The community white board in our harm reduction center where participants can share information about the drug supply and their experiences.



HARM REDUCTION CENTER- OUR STAFF & PARTNERSHIPS

OUR STAFF

- Our harm reduction staff is multi-talented and diverse, all with different backgrounds, areas of expertise, and varying levels of lived experience. They are brought together by a unique passion for supporting and uplifting those at risk of overdose.
- Our staff is always available to talk, support, and listen to anyone who comes in our doors, free of judgment or stigma.
- Additionally, our staff nurse Eileen Holdridge has assisted many of our participants who do not feel comfortable accessing local emergency rooms with wound assessment, care, and treatment.



OUR PARTNERSHIPS

- Dr. George Walker: Dr. Walker is our on-site mental health clinician, who has lived experience and is in our harm reduction center twice a week.
- Community Health Center (CHC): CHC provides on-site medical care and addiction medicine at our agency every week, a service many of our participants have accessed and feel comfortable and safe using.



HARM REDUCTION CENTER - OUR IMPACT

STIGMA-FREE CARE:

- When they are at the HRC, many participants have remarked that the center has allowed for them to finally experience safety and a sense of belonging, as well as to know that no one is judging them or their use.
- One participant even stated *“I wish my family was as accepting of me as all of you. I feel like I matter here.”*

LIFE-SAVING INTERVENTION:

- We educate all of our participants about the signs of overdose, strategies to avoid it, and how to respond in the case that it does occur.
- We ensure that all of our participants have access to a plentiful source of naloxone.
- Our staff nurse Eileen has even accompanied a participant who needed urgent medical attention to a local hospital, and stayed by her side, supporting and advocating for her until she received the care that she needed.

*The fact that individuals trust us, feel welcomed and supported, and continue to access our services is a true testament to the importance of these centers, and why **harm reduction works**.*





New Haven Harm Reduction Resource Center



Connecticut Harm Reduction Alliance (CTHRA)

“Standing in the Gap”

“OUR HOUSE IS
ON FIRE AND
YOU WANT US
TO
REARRANGE OUR
FURNITURE”

-SISTER IMANI
WOODS



“when the love of
power
is replaced by
the power of love
the world will
know peace.”

-attributed to
Jimi hendrix

Our Mission

Sex Workers and Allies Network (SWAN) programs – is **dedicated to promoting the dignity and wellbeing of individuals and communities impacted by drug use, homelessness, and sex work**. Through advocacy, training and service, CTHRA aims to ensure the availability, adequacy, accessibility, and acceptability of services and resources that remediate the adverse consequences of illicit substance use.



Our Services

- Shelter/housing referrals
- Educate on substance use/abuse/Opioid Use Disorders
- Provide treatment referrals/transportation
- Syringe exchange
- Condoms/safe sex kits/lubricants
 - Specialty condoms “Magnum”, Rough Ryder, Non-lubricated Flavors
- Safe crack use kits/ supplies
- Wound care Kits and safe injection techniques/supplies
- HIV/HCV screenings
- Narcan/Naloxone
- Peer Support Groups
- Overdose prevention training
- Assistance obtaining Identification
- Syringe Outreach Response Team (SORT)



How Does CTHRA Utilize Harm Reduction Practices In Public Engagement?

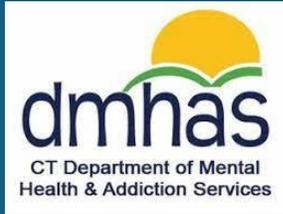
Understanding the importance of direct outreach and engagement, CTHRA tailors its harm reduction services to reach as many potential participants as possible. Our engagement strategy includes:

- **Static Walk-In Locations:** 555 Columbus Avenue, New Haven SWAN walk-in service location. This site which features Safe Syringe Programs is open from Mon thru Friday 8 am-8pm five days a week.
- **Mobile Outreach:** Our mobile outreach is one of our primary forms of engagement. Whether on foot or vehicle, our ambassadors when equipped with our “Mobile Rover” are able deliver services anywhere they are needed. This form of engagement now features our “Mobile 1” mobile engagement center.
- **Tabling, Testing and Training:** CTHRA Ambassadors frequent many community events to present information, provide health screenings and OEND trainings on location as well as within local workplaces, government agencies and institutions



Contacts

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services



DMHAS Contacts:

Director of Opioid Services
Luiza Barnat MS, MBS, LMFT
Luiza.Barnat@ct.gov

Opioid Services Coordinator
Justin Mehl LCSW
justin.mehl@ct.gov

