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# **HIV: Now + Next**

**September 21–25**



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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

# The Changing Landscape of Harm Reduction Outreach

Introduction: Billy Golden | Moderator: Zoey Peach  
Presenter: Tasha Turner-Bicknell, DNP

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# The Changing Landscape of Harm Reduction Outreach

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Tasha Turner-Bicknell, DNP, RN

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# Objectives:

- Define harm reduction
- Identify the intersection of drug use and infectious disease
- Identify populations at-risk for HIV and HCV in rural areas
- Identify potential barriers to care in rural communities
- Identify strategies for building partnerships
- Identify outreach strategies for rural communities

# Polling questions...perceptions of rural health

- Substance abuse is more common in rural or urban areas?
- True or False - Rural communities have more resources for health and social services compared to urban communities.
- True or False - In rural areas people who use drugs are less likely to inject to drugs.
- True or False – Nonurban counties in the Southeastern United States have a higher HIV prevalence than most large US cities.



# Harm Reduction



A set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use

- A movement for social justice
- Respect for the human rights of people who use drugs
- Non-judgemental
- Does not ignore the danger associated with illicit drug use

(National Harm Reduction Coalition, 2020)



# Drug use in rural America

Opioid use in rural areas:

- Decreased economic opportunity
- Increased poverty
- Overprescribing opioids in 1990s
- 2010 to 2016 -heroin-related deaths increased 400%
- 2015 and 2016 - synthetic opioid death rate doubled
- PWUD more likely to inject drugs



Photo credit: Housing Assistance Council ruralhome.org (National Institute on Drug Abuse. 2020, Lister et al., 2019, Schafer et al., 2017)

# Intersection of drug use & infectious disease

## High risk behaviors

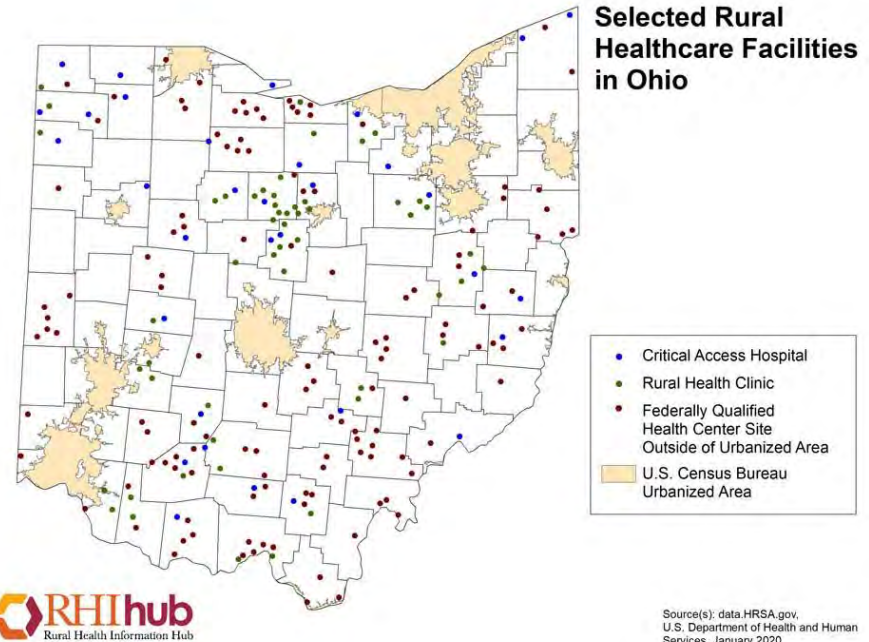
- High risk injection behavior
  - Syringe sharing
  - Syringe reuse
  - Syringe-mediated drug splitting
  - Sharing injection materials (cookers, cottons, water etc.)
- High risk sexual behavior
  - Intimate partner violence
  - Sex work

## Infectious disease

- HIV
- Hepatitis (A, HBV & HCV)
- Endocarditis
- Skin/soft tissue infection
- Bone and joint infection
- Increased rates of STIs

# Rural communities at risk...

- Decreased health services
  - Primary care
  - Mental health
  - MAT
- Interrelated web of causation
- HIV in rural areas
  - Less access to HIV testing
  - Later diagnosis
  - Later initiation of drug therapy
  - Increased HIV mortality
  - Experience increased stigma
  - Challenges to access care



(Schafer et al., 2017)

# Who is at-risk

Have we underestimated substance use in rural communities?

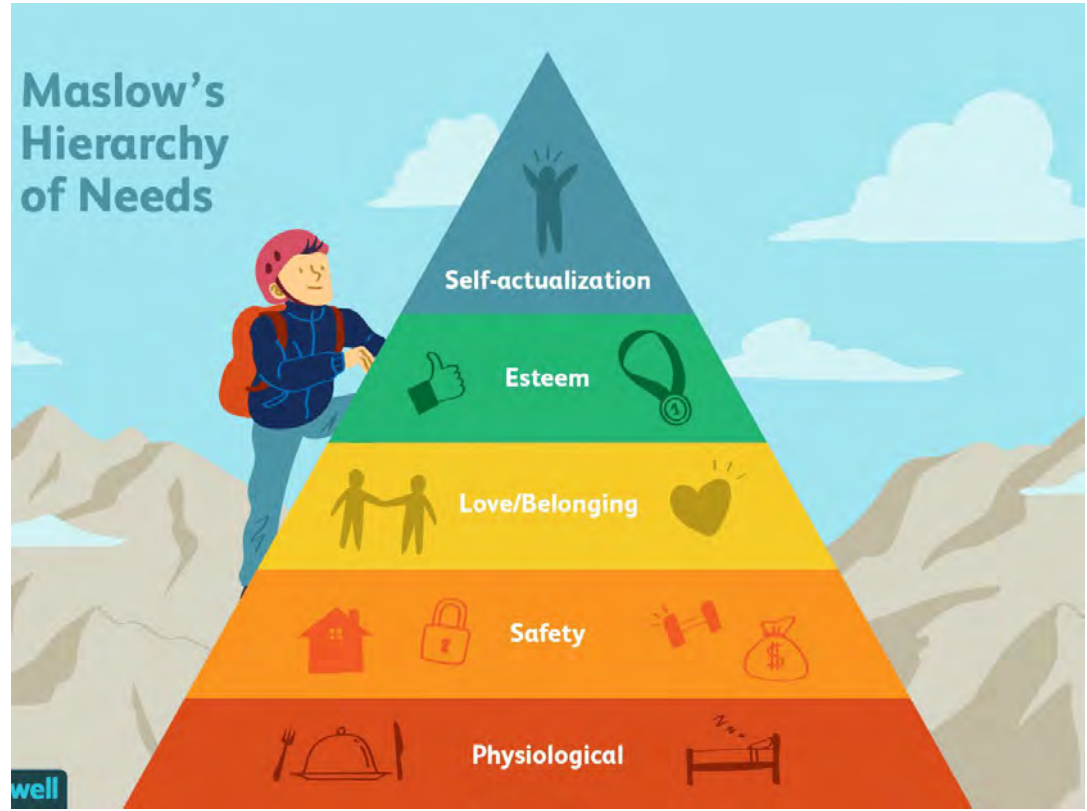
## Education

- Stakeholders
- Families
- Youth



## Barriers to care in rural communities

- Addressing food scarcity
- Housing insecurity
- Intergenerational trauma



# Barriers to care in rural communities

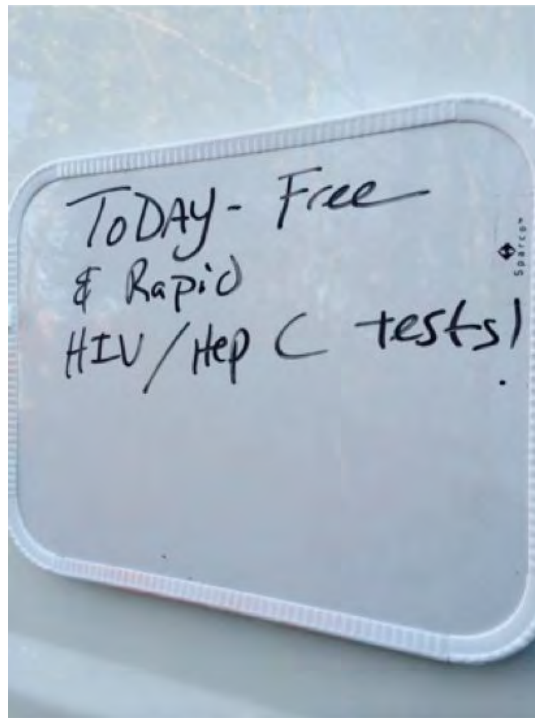
- Criminalization
- Stigma
- Misconceptions related to:
  - Drug use
  - Addiction
  - Treatment
- Provider shortages
- Transportation



# Strategies for building partnerships

## Engage all allies

- Grassroots harm reductionists
- Local medical community
  - Primary care
  - Health department
  - Local hospitals
- Law enforcement
- Corrections
- Faith-based organizations
- Is there a local opioid response group?





# Outreach strategies

- Explore funding sources to expand your services in rural areas
  - HRSA RCORP grants
  - State-level funding opportunities
- Join community initiatives to address the opioid crisis
  - Many rural communities have consortiums assembled
- Get mobile - get out in the community with grassroots groups
  - Homeless outreach organizations
  - Food pantries



# Outreach strategies

- Network with naloxone distribution
  - Project Dawn sites
  - Harm Reduction Ohio
- Partner with library/churches/community center to host question and answer session
- Leverage social media to identify potential partners



# Who's doing the work now...

Identify grassroots organizations embedded in the community

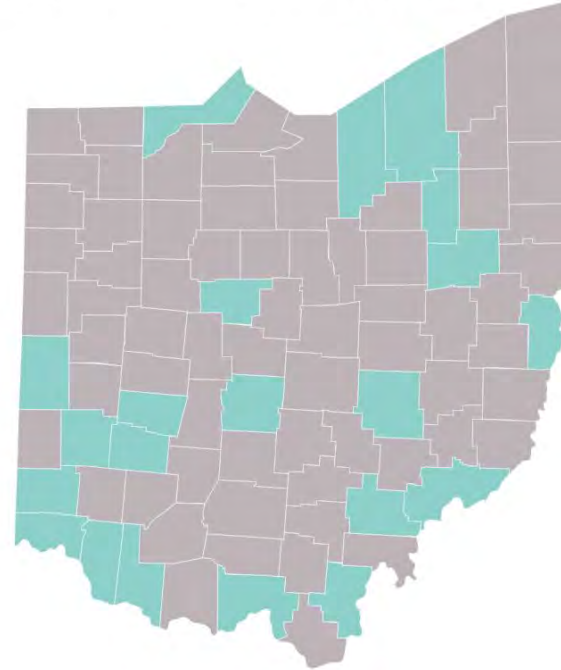
- OhioCAN - Change Addiction Now
- The Ross County Recovery Center
- Newark Homeless Outreach
- Harm Reduction Coalition
- Harm Reduction Ohio



# Harm Reduction in Rural Ohio



## Syringe Exchange Programs in Ohio



■ Does not have program ■ Has program

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[HarmReductionOhio.org](http://HarmReductionOhio.org)

## Harm reduction saves money

For every \$1 spent on harm reducing  
needle & syringe programs, Australia saves \$27



# Polling questions...

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# Resources:

Caracole - <https://www.caracole.org/>

Harm Reduction Coalition - <https://harmreduction.org/>

Harm Reduction Ohio - <https://www.harmreductionohio.org/>

Harm Reduction International - <https://www.hri.global/>

Rural Health Information Hub - <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/>

OhioCAN - <http://www.ohiocanchangeaddictionnow.org/>

Ohio Department of Health-Project Dawn-

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/projectdawn/>

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) is a multi-year initiative supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) -

<https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/rcorp>

Rural Transportation Toolkit -

<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/transportation>



# References:

Australian Department of Public Health. (2017). Fourth national hepatitis C strategy 2014-2017.

Retrieved from <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/ohp-bbvshcpc#2>

Lister, J.J., Weaver, A., Ellis, J.D., Himle, J.A., & Ledgerwood, D. M. (2020) A systematic review of rural-specific barriers to medication treatment for opioid use disorder in the United States, *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 46:3, 273-288, DOI: [10.1080/00952990.2019.1694536](https://doi.org/10.1080/00952990.2019.1694536)

National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2020). Opioid Overdose Crisis. Retrieved from:

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Schafer, K. R., Albrecht, H., Dillingham, R., Hogg, R. S., Jaworsky, D., Kasper, K., Loutfy, M., MacKenzie, L. J., McManus, K. A., Oursler, K. A., Rhodes, S. D., Samji, H., Skinner, S., Sun, C. J., Weissman, S., & Ohl, M. E. (2017). The Continuum of HIV Care in Rural Communities in the United States and Canada: What Is Known and Future Research Directions. *Journal of acquired immune deficiency syndromes* 75(1), 35–44. <https://doi.org/10.1097/QAI.0000000000001329>