Opioid Settlement Review

Presented by

Victoria Reichard, LCSW

Behavioral Health Manager

Health & Human Services – Public Health

National Opioid Settlements



More than **$50 billion** in settlements have been finalized with pharmaceuticals and distributors as of 2024.

North Carolina's current share is over **$1.4 billion** & Buncombe's current share is over **$30 million** from 2022 through 2038**.**

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between North Carolina and Local Governments outlines how the money will be divided between the state, counties, and municipalities and how this money can be used.

MOA Opioid Remediation Strategies

Funds may support programs or services listed below that serve persons with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or any co-occurring Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or mental health condition.

1. Collaborative strategic planning	5. Employment-related services	9. Syringe Service Program
2. Evidence-based addiction treatment	6. Early intervention	10. Criminal justice diversion programs
3. Recovery support services	7. Naloxone distribution	11. Addiction treatment for incarcerated persons
4. Recovery housing support	8. Post-overdose response teams	12. Reentry Programs

FY24-FY26 Recommendations: A Dual Approach

Prioritize life-saving and harm-reducing measures today

Fatal Overdose Emergency Response

- Collaborative goal setting, objective identification, & prioritization
- Real-time information sharing
- Streamlined & consistent messaging

MAT Expansion

- Expand access to MAT in high impact areas
- Streamline data across County MAT programs

Acute Response Resources

- Fund **Recovery Support Services** to address Social Determinants of Health
- Fund **Naloxone Distribution** & Community Education

Invest in prevention and longer-term planning to address root causes of substance use

Early Intervention

- Invest in youth voice and leadership
- Education & awareness-raising
- Community-based resources (e.g. youth peer support programs)

Employment-Related Services

- Holistic care models support job readiness in treatment/shelter settings
- Employer collaboration to promote hiring & recovery-friendly workplaces

Recovery Housing

- Support housing providers in meeting best-practice quality benchmarks
- Create opportunities to expand evidence-based housing options

FY25 Budgeted Services

Cost Center	Positions/Programs	Budget	Expended
Strategy and Innovation	Behavioral Health and Justice Analyst	$139,583	$44,085
Behavioral Health	Behavioral Health Manager	$153,433	$143,347
	Social Determinants of Health Funds (SDoH)	$224,900	$156,514
	Education Materials/Advertising	$30,000	$9,851
	Medical Substance Use Professional	$78,000	$19,343
Emergency Services - Paramedicine	Post Overdose Response Team (PORT)	$1,846,649	$1,695,605
Public Health	Harm Reduction Coordinator	$125,955	$112,869
	Syringe Service Program	$141,300	$137,598
	Community Naloxone Distribution	$75,000	$49,991
Justice Services	Community Re-entry Team & Prison Re-entry SDoH	$383,000	$281,202
Office of Equity & Human Rights	Inclusive Connection and Healing Coordinator	$116,932	$108,349
	Total	$3,314,752	$2,758,754

Behavioral Health Manager

The Behavioral Health Manager's mission is to coordinate behavioral health resources and information across County services to provide a holistic, coordinated, and accessible continuum of care to all Buncombe County community members.

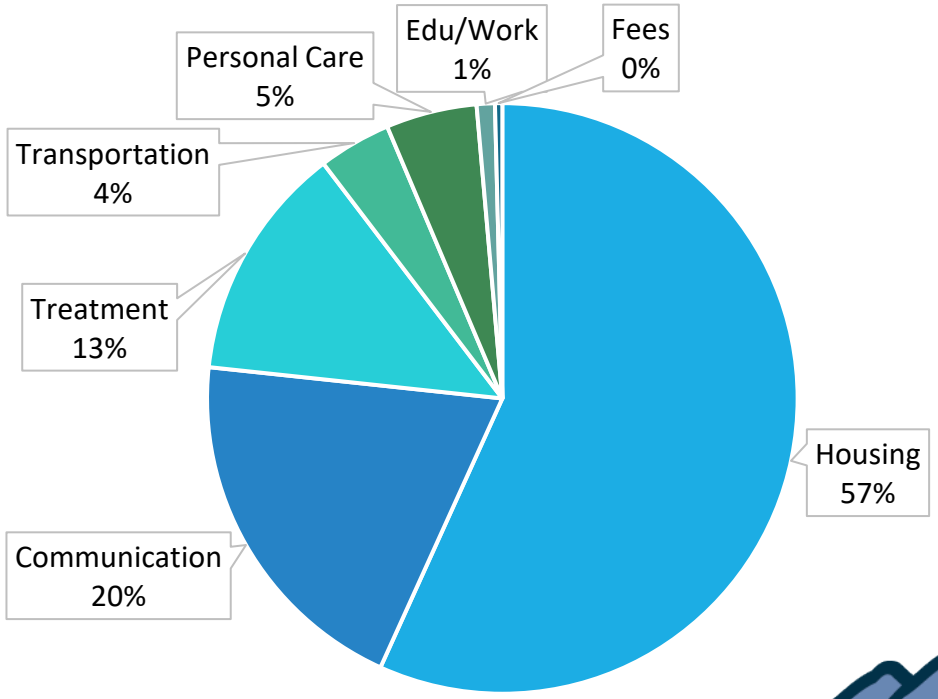
- MAT Expansion
  - Supported efforts around the Telehealth Pilot for MOUD and exploring sustainability options.
- Recovery Support
  - Exploring ways to coordinate between departments around shared expenses, i.e. drug testing, training, and supplies, etc.
  - Assisting in discussions around sustainability efforts.
  - Supported Dogwood Grant for Inclusive Healing Space
- Naloxone Distribution
  - Assisting in identify community events to expand distribution of resources.
  - Assisting with Spike Alert revitalization
- Early Intervention
  - ACS Student Health Advisory Council
  - Partnership for Substance Free Youth
  - Buncombe Children's Collaborative & Systems of Care Grant for Suicide Prevention & Youth Voice/Led Efforts
- Employment-Related Services
  - Advocacy around Recovery Friendly Workplaces
- Recovery Housing
  - CDBG-RHP Grant for $3.5 million to expand Transformation Village and dedicate 32 units to women and mothers in recovery
  - Justice Services JUST Home Grant

Social Determinants Of Health Funds

Assist County employees and partnering agencies to provide bridge and gap funding to address social determinants of health needs for people with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or any co-occurring substance use disorder (SUD) or mental health condition that are engaged in a Buncombe County program. These funds would help people with OUD or any co-occurring SUD or mental health condition in accessing addiction treatment, recovery support, harm reduction services, primary healthcare, or other services or supports they need to improve their health or well-being.

Categories of Support (as of April 2025):

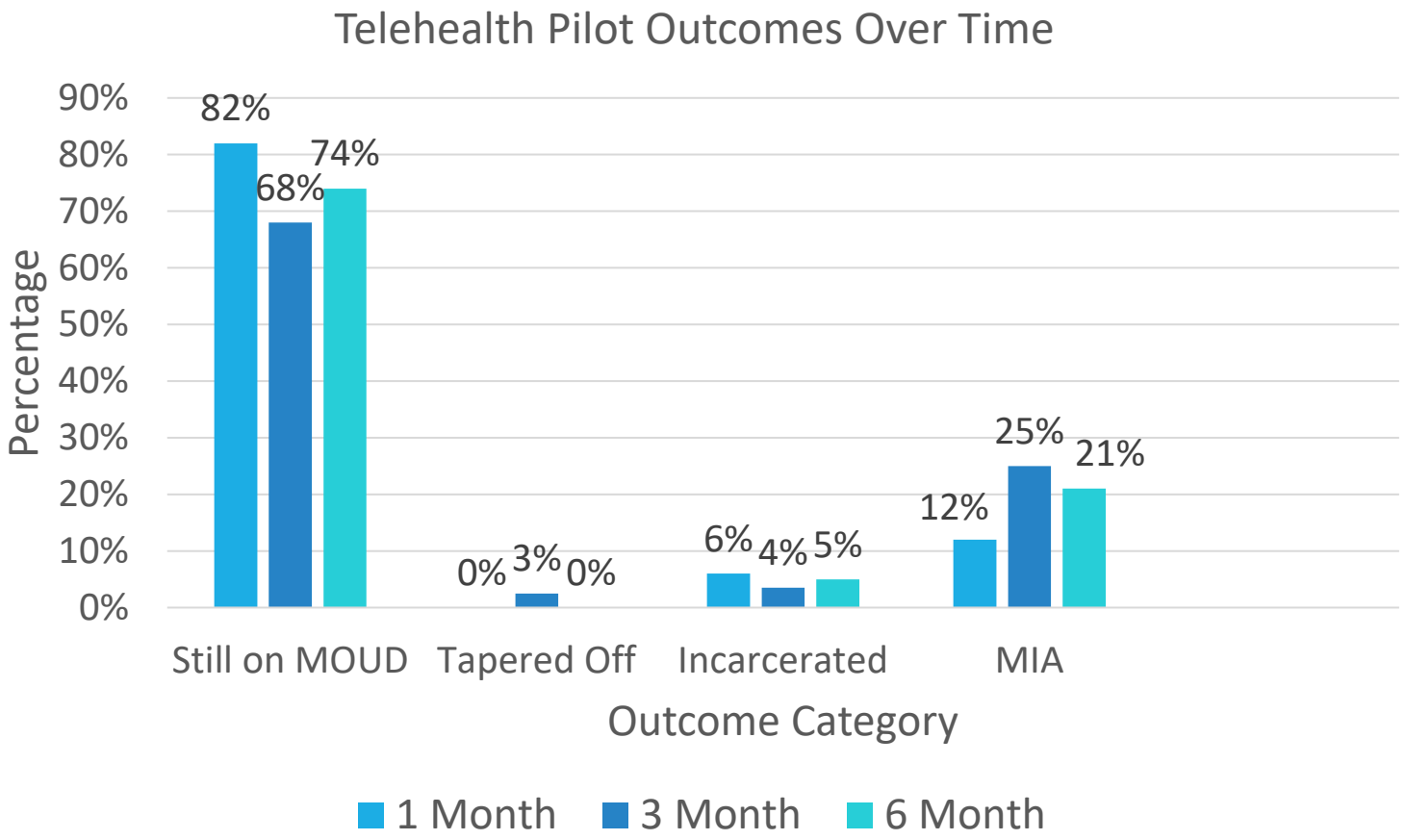
- $202,546 has been directed towards addressing SDoH
  - 57% Housing/Recovery Housing
  - 20% Communication Resources
  - 14% Treatment/Medications
  - 4% Transportation
  - 4% Personal Care
  - 1% Education/Work
  - <1% Court/Document Fees

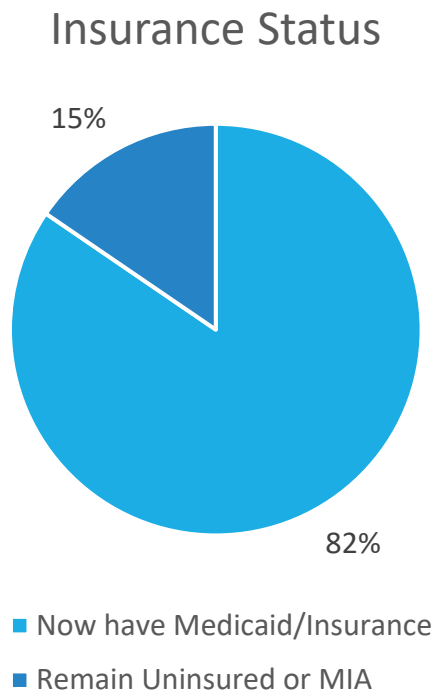


Low-Barrier Telehealth Pilot for MOUD

In partnership with EMS Community Paramedicine, a low barrier telehealth buprenorphine access pilot was implemented to support uninsured high-risk patients such as individuals leaving incarceration. Each patient received peer services from EMS PORT, including assistance with signing up for Medicaid, retrieval of medications from local a pharmacy, support with paying for meds, and use of devices for telehealth visits with the Consultant provider.

During the storm, a protocol for "emergency bupe prescriptions" was developed and implemented. About **28** prescriptions were written in the two weeks after the hurricane, with tremendous efforts and coordination between Consultant, PORT team, and Americare Pharmacy.





Fell Out of Care #s

With Medicaid/Insurance
2/27 at 1mo
4/27 at 3mo

Remain Uninsured/MIA
3/5 at 1mo
5/5 at 3mo

Post Overdose Response Team

Provides outreach and follow-up to individuals who experienced an overdose within 24-72 hours of the incident. Staffed with Community Paramedics, Peer Support Specialists and Licensed Clinicians. The goal is to prevent future overdose events by connecting the individual and immediate family and friends with prevention tools, warm handoffs to social services, and evidence-based treatment and recovery services, including administering buprenorphine.

Paramedic Dispatch/Service Type	Count
Total Unit Responses	4486
Responses After 5pm, Weekends, or Holidays	1917
Total Calls Dispatched as Overdose	972
Confirmed/Probable Opiate Overdoses	565
Release of Information (ROI) for PORT	269
MAT/MOUD - Induction	208
MAT/MOUD - Client Treatment	939

Post Overdose Response Team

FY25 SDoH Snapshot - Key Outcomes (N=38)

Initial Engagement/Impact



Engaged with PORT & Provider

Obtained Medicaid/Insurance

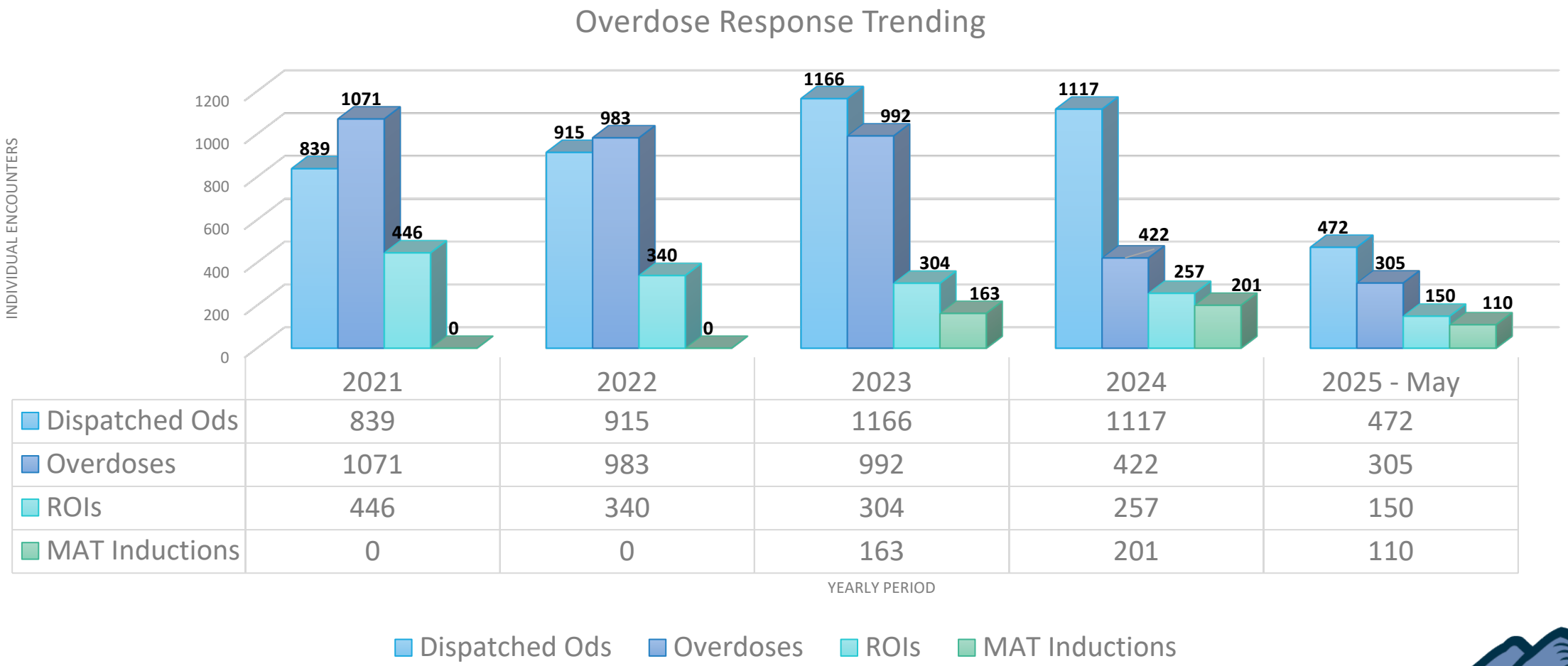
Improved Hope & Motivation

0 Overdoses Since Engagement with PORT

Specific Achievements

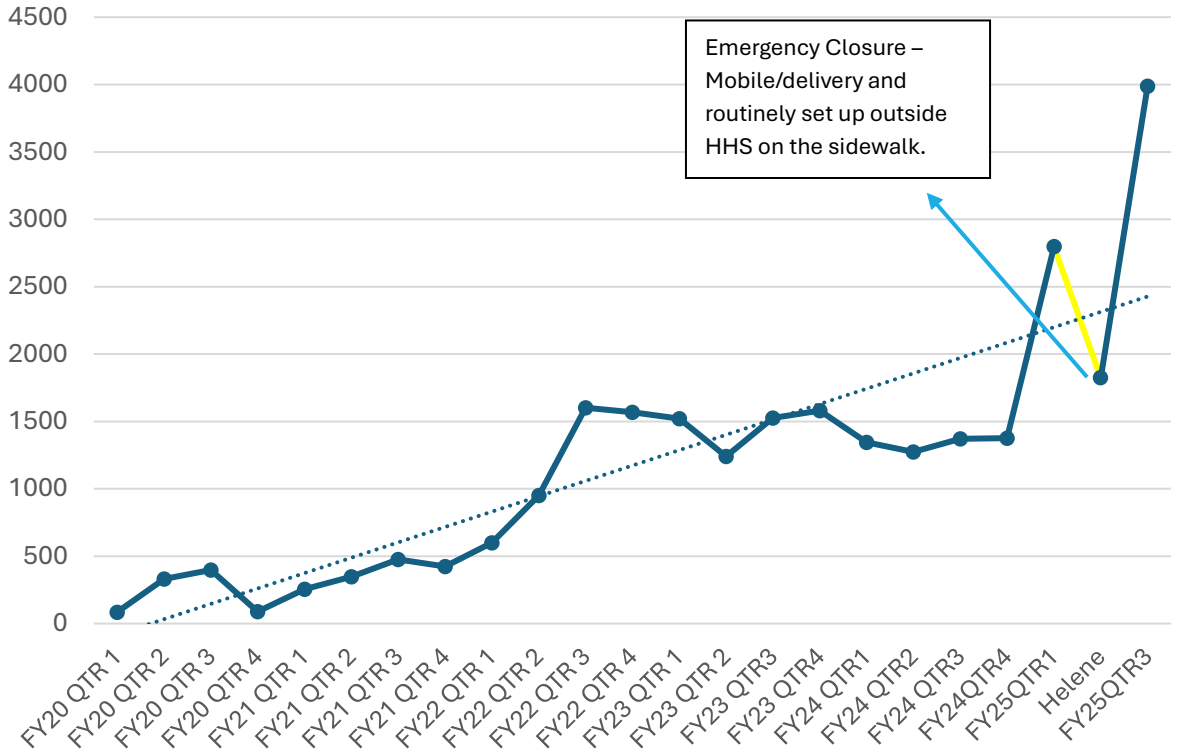
- **8** Began Treatment for Acute Medical Diagnosis
- **7** Dismissed Court Cases
- **2** Regained Child Custody
- **17** Gained Employment
- **15** No Return Incarcerations
- **5** Successfully Navigated & Completed Probation
- **9** No Return Hospitalizations
- **2** Obtained Dentures
- **25** Obtained Housing
- **2** Left Abusive Relationship & Entered Safe Housing
- **6** Restored Family Relationships

Post Overdose Response Team

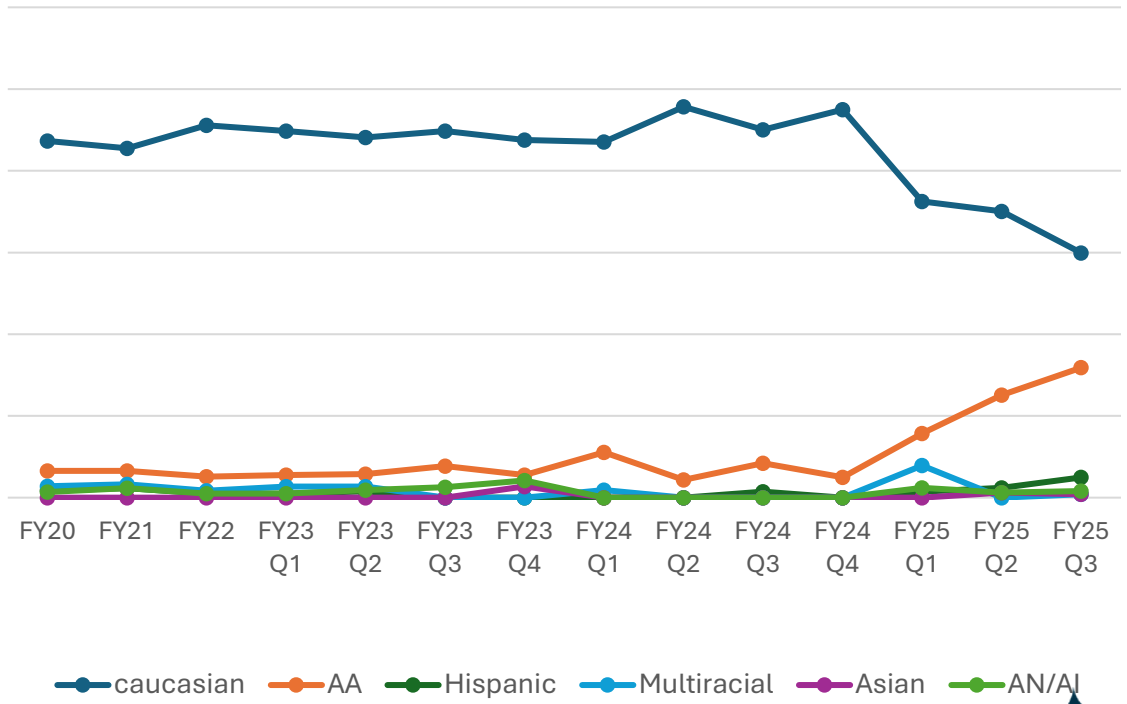


Harm Reduction Program

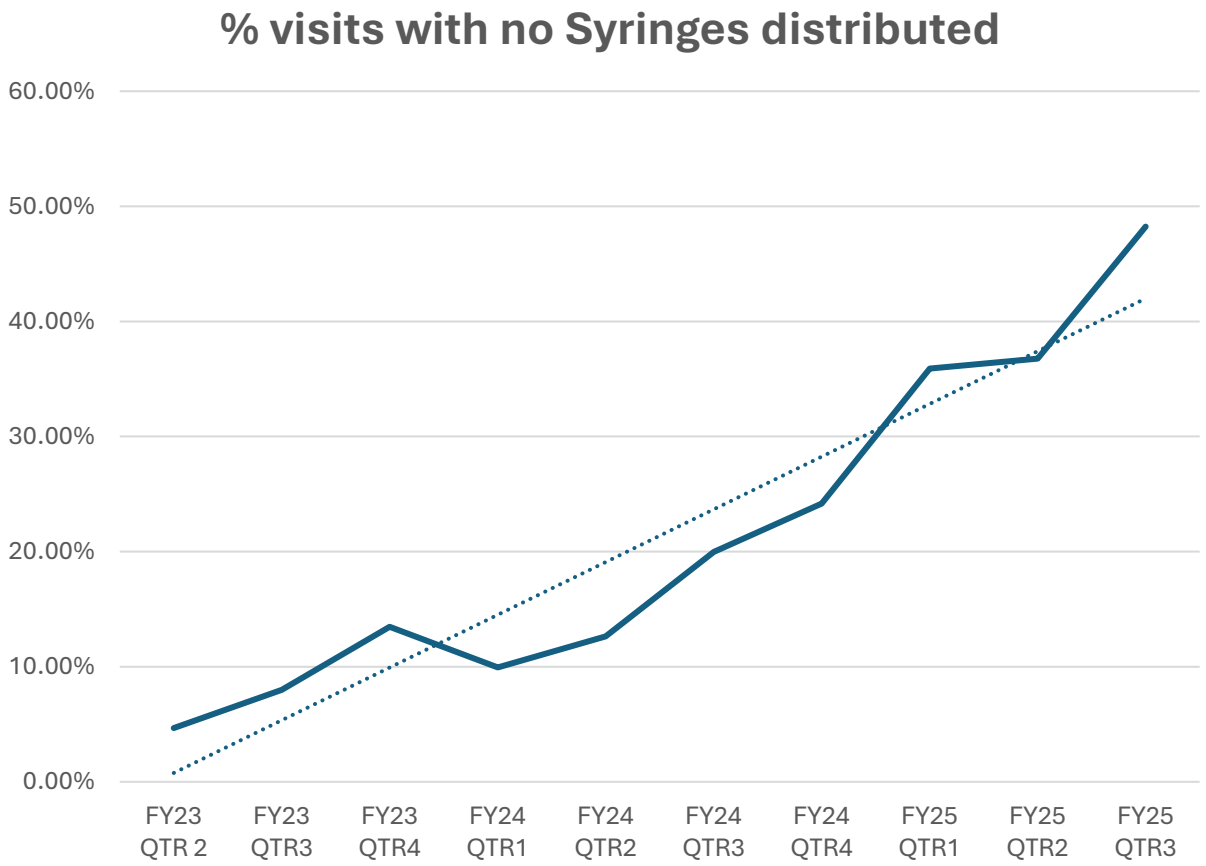
Participant Engagement



Demographic Shift over time



Harm Reduction Program



Improved access to safe syringe disposal



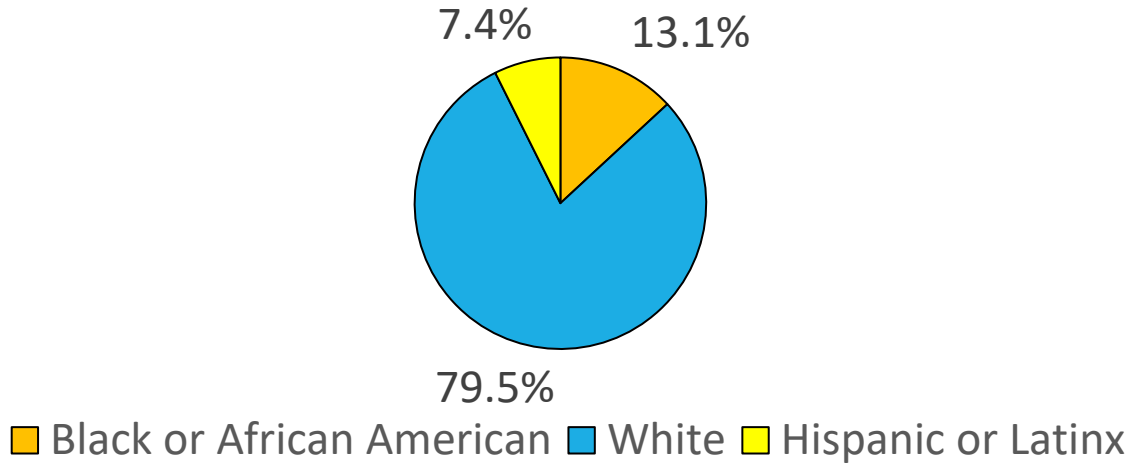
Community Re-entry Program

Assists those recently released from incarceration at the Buncombe County Detention Facility (BCDF), providing community linkage to care and support for up to 12 months (post-incarceration), for individuals with severe and persistent mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders.

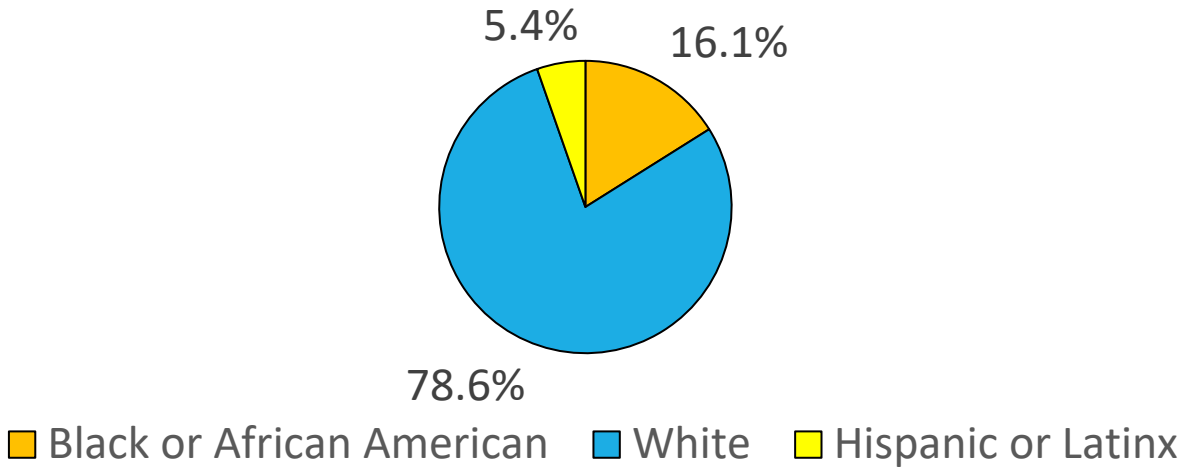
Reporting Highlights:

- *122 enrolled in program*
  - *82% (100) were in mental health and/or substance use disorder treatment*
  - *88.5% (108) in specialty care appts. (basic needs, transportation, cell phones, etc.)*
  - *25% (31) provided & maintained post-release housing*
  - *92% (112) did not experience re-arrest during reporting period*
    - *8% Recidivism Rate*

Enrollees By Race



Enrollees Not Experiencing Re-Arrest By Race



Inclusive Connection & Healing Coordinator

Support and coordinate the development, implementation, and evaluation of a program and services that support the needs of the underrepresented communities ensuring alignment with organizational strategies and goals by modeling, teaching and implementing inclusive approaches to community connection, healing and outreach.

FY 2025 Events

- July 13, 2024 – Opioids in the Black Community: Permission to Breath
- August 28, 2024 – Opioids in the Latine Community: Community Health Workers Info Session
- August 31, 2024 – Overdose Awareness Day
- Helene Recovery – Coordinating Mental Health support for First Responders at Rescue Shelters and Distribution Centers
- Inclusive Healing Space Dogwood Grant – Implementation Facilitation

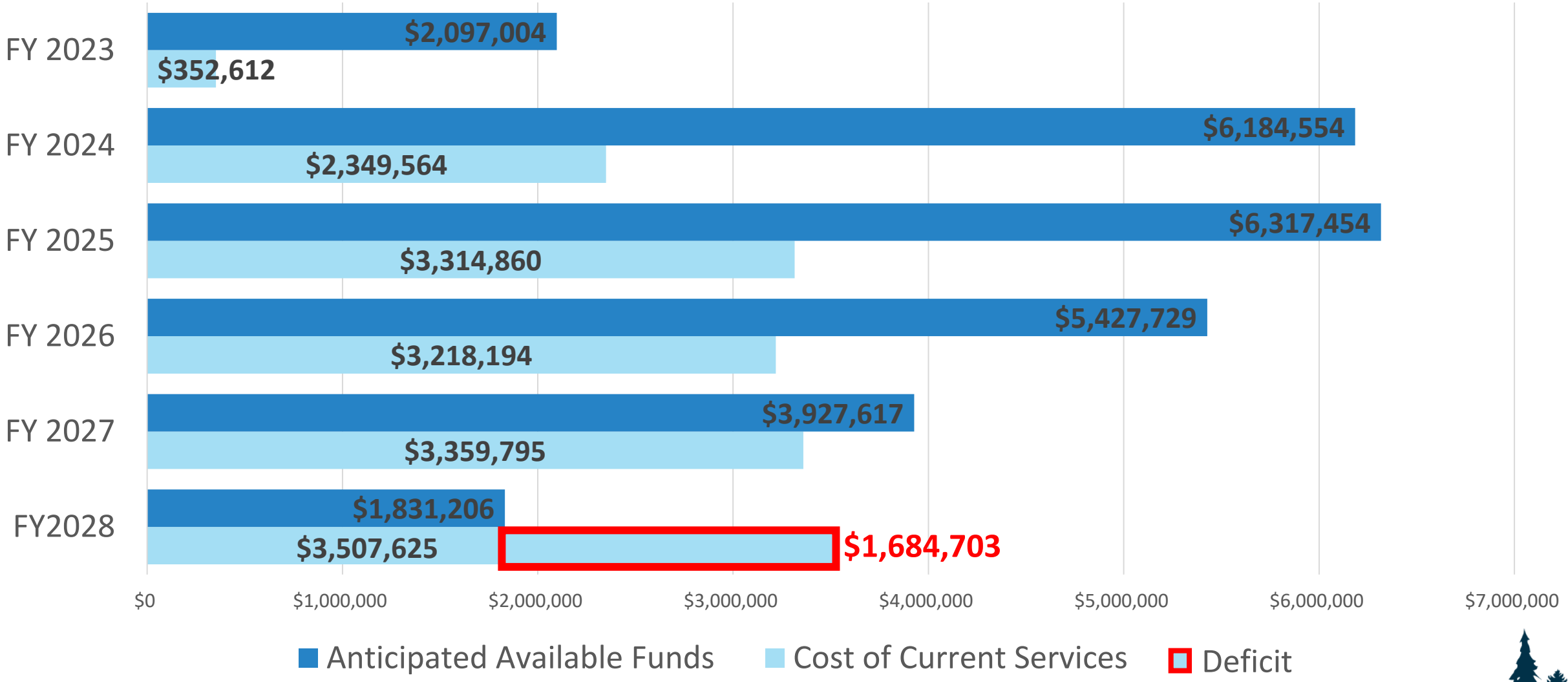
Upcoming Events

- Women – Mother's Grieving Children of Opioid Overdose/Death: A Series
- Youth Opioid Event – 3 Part Series
- Community Church Conversations – Mini Sessions
- LGBTQIA+ Opioid Community Conversations
- Southside Healing Space: Where Every Journey Finds Its Strength soft opening pending

FY26 Recommended Budget

Cost Center	Positions/Programs	Amount
Behavioral Health	Behavioral Health Manager	$157,598
	Social Determinants of Health Funds	$217,300
	Education Materials/Advertising	$30,000
Emergency Services	Community Paramedicine Post Overdose Response Team	$1,850,496
Public Health	Harm Reduction Coordinator	$128,550
	Harm Reduction Program	$256,205
	Community Naloxone Distribution	$75,000
Justice Services	Community Re-entry Team	$365,408
	Prison Re-entry Social Determinants of Health Funds	$15,000
Office of Equity & Human Rights	Inclusive Connection and Healing Coordinator	$122,637
	Total	$3,225,794

Opioid Settlement Funds: Allocations for Currently-Funded Services



Questions & Input

Feel free to reach out with any additional questions or input in how we are utilizing Opioid Settlement funds by emailing:

Victoria.Reichard@buncombenc.gov