



HARM REDUCTION AND TREATMENT INTEGRATION MEETING

Reaching the 95%

SAPC | Substance Abuse
Prevention and Control



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

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Substance Abuse Prevention and Control

County of Los Angeles, Dept of Public Health

February 5, 2026

About SAPC

- The Department of Public Health's Bureau of Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH-SAPC) oversees the most diverse and comprehensive continuum of SUD services in California.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICE HELPLINE
24/7 **1.844.804.7500**

CENS
Client Engagement
and Navigation Services

COREcenter
Connecting to Opportunities for Recovery and Engagement

- SAPC is committed to innovative, equitable, and quality-focused substance use **prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services.**

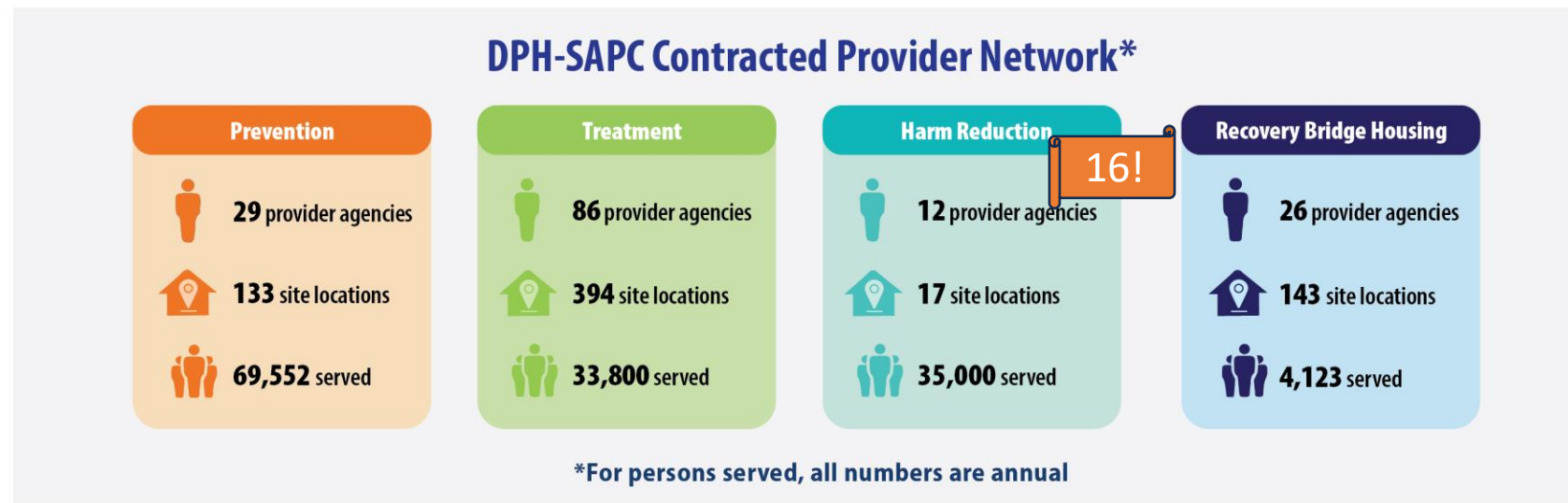
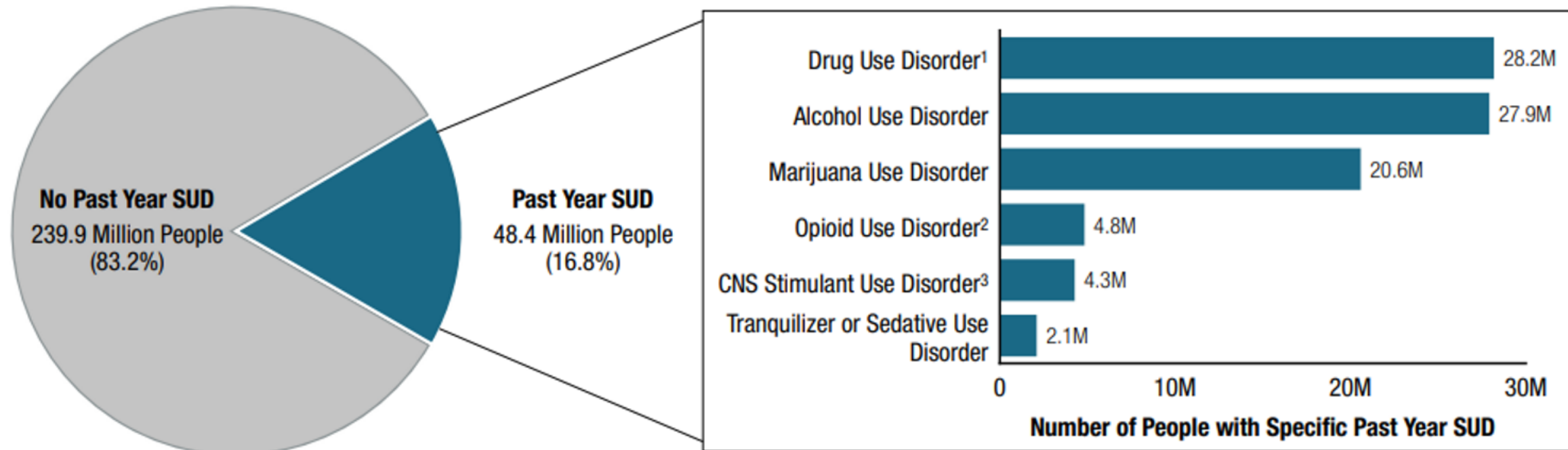


Figure 35. Past Year Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Among People Aged 12 or Older; 2024



CNS = central nervous system.

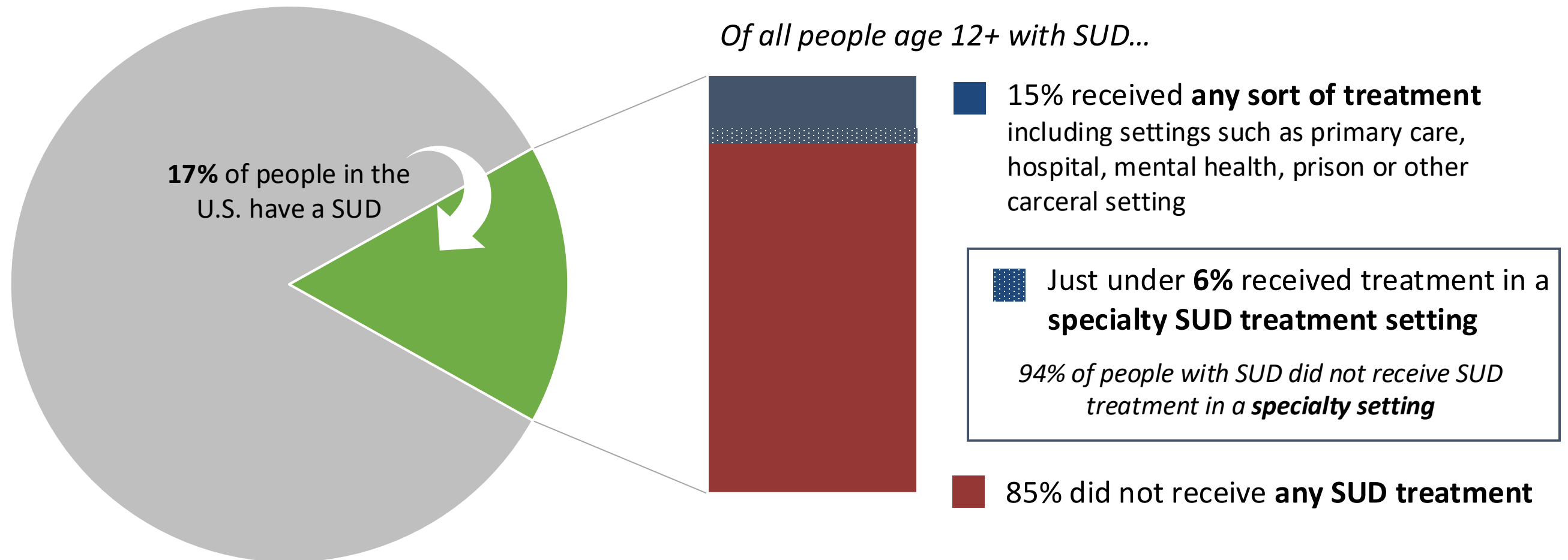
Note: The estimated numbers of people with SUDs are not mutually exclusive because people could have use disorders for more than one substance.

¹ Includes data from all past year users of marijuana, cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, methamphetamine, or prescription psychotherapeutic drugs (i.e., pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives). See footnote 2 for more information about opioid use disorder.

² Includes data from all past year users of heroin or prescription opioids. Respondents were not included if they used only nonopioid pain relievers and did not use heroin in the past year.

³ Includes data from all past year users of cocaine, methamphetamine, or prescription stimulants.

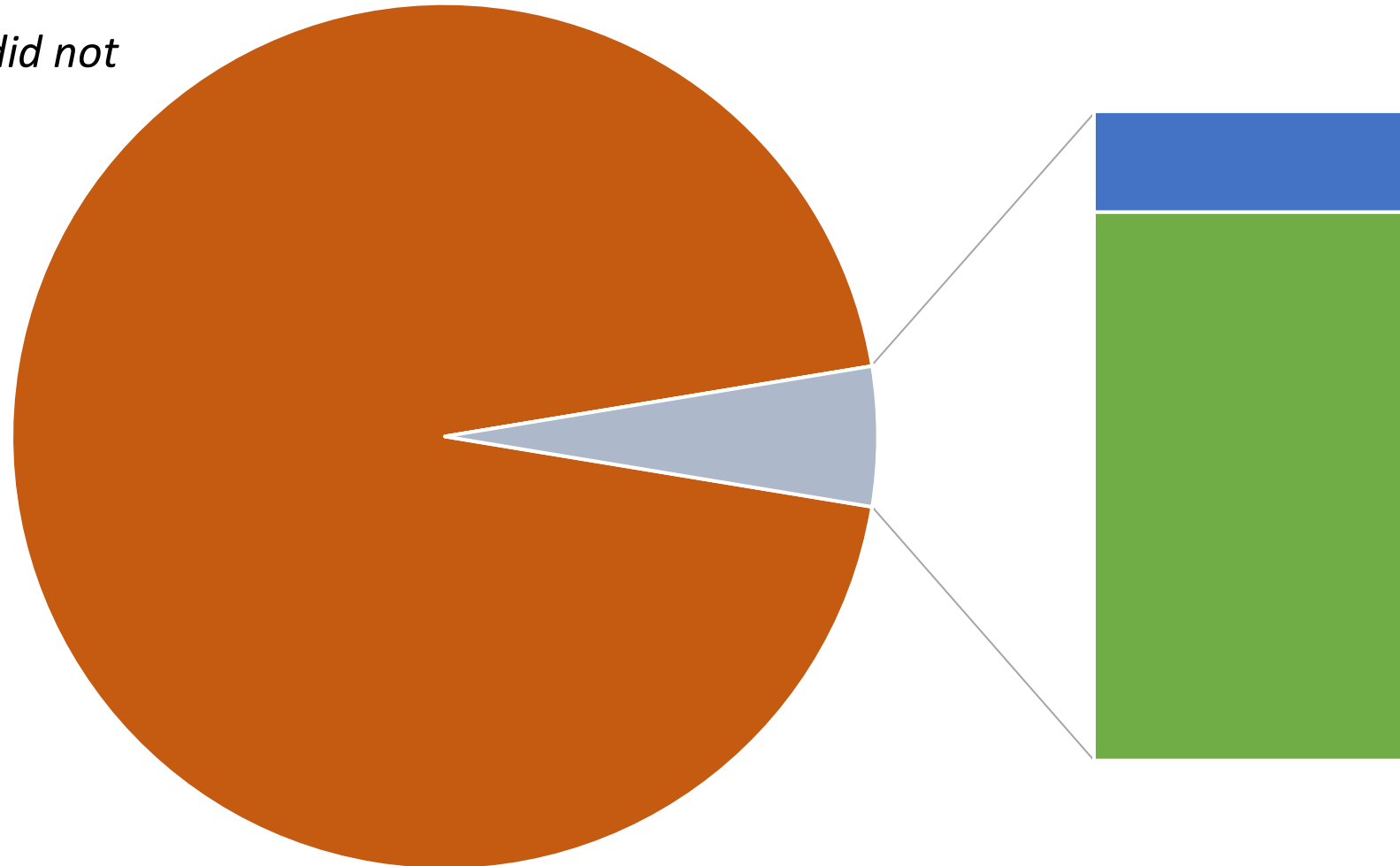
In the SUD treatment field, we offer something few people receive, and even fewer people want, yet we often **establish criteria to access services** as if it's a hot commodity.



The SUD treatment system needs to change its public image to encourage people with SUD to access services

*Of people with SUD that did not
access treatment...*

95% did not seek
treatment and did not
think they needed
treatment



1% thought they should get
treatment and unsuccessfully
sought treatment

4% thought they should get
treatment but did not seek it



**“The opposite of addiction is NOT sobriety;
the opposite of addiction is connection.”**

- Johann Hari, British-Swiss Writer

A Continuum of Substance Use Interventions



Youth Development & Health Promotion

- Programs at school- and community-level

Drug Use Prevention

- Universal, selected, and indicated prevention

Harm Reduction → Currently largely serves people who are using drugs and not yet interested in SUD treatment

- Low threshold services proven to reduce morbidity and mortality, including outreach, overdose prevention (naloxone and fentanyl test strip distribution, etc), syringe exchange, peer services, linkages to SUD treatment and other needed services, etc.

SUD Treatment & Recovery → Currently largely serves people who are ready for abstinence

- Involves a spectrum of settings: opioid treatment programs, outpatient, intensive outpatient, residential, inpatient, withdrawal management, Recovery Services, Recovery Bridge Housing, field-based services, care coordination and navigation, etc.

Surveillance of drug use and its community impact

Harm Reduction Services



**Harm Reduction
Supplies Access**



**Syringe Exchange &
Disposal**



**Naloxone and
Test Strips**



**Medications for
Addiction Treatment**



Drop-In Centers



**Linkage to Ho using
Services**



Pharmacy Access



**Referrals for Needed
Services**

**GOAL: Meeting people
where they are, both
figuratively and literally**

While brick and mortar
locations are needed,
mobile services that go out
to people who are unlikely
to go to brick and mortar
locations are also needed

Stages of Change

Precontemplation

Contemplation

Preparation

Action

**Recovery
Maintenance**

Harm reduction programs

- Initial engagement
- Harm reduction supplies
- Skills development to reduce risks
- Linkage to health care and social services
- Outreach: street teams
- Low-threshold medications for addiction treatment

Recovery is Possible!

- Of those in the U.S. with a history of substance use disorder, 75% are in recovery

Harm Reduction is Essential

- Harm reduction is practiced all across health care settings and services
- In the context of the worst overdose crisis in history, harm reduction reduces mortality risks, increases treatment access and access to other health and social services, and supports recovery

Treatment programs

- Biopsychosocial treatment for substance use (including medication services, individual and group therapy)
- Linkage to other medical and social services
- Crisis care

Aligning Services with Readiness is Essential

- Addiction is chronic and recurrent, and not all people are at the same stage of readiness to change.
- Only focusing on individuals in some stages of change as opposed to ALL stages of change limits service reach and impact → We need the widest service net possible

People who use harm reduction services are...



3X

more likely to reduce or stop
using drugs



5X

more likely to participate in
drug treatment

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, November 14). Syringe services programs (SSPs). U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.
<https://www.cdc.gov/syringe-services-programs/php/index.html>



LA County Departments of Public Health and Health Services campaign to fight stigma and build support for and use of community services.

Rewriting
LA County's Story



We're Making LA Stronger Together.

LA County is tackling the overdose crisis.



We All Belong in LA.
LA Belongs to All of Us.



ByLAForLA.org



:30

"I want us to get to a place where when we see someone having a tough moment, we recognize their humanity is as valuable and irreplaceable as our own."

Dr. Ricky, *Los Angeles*

Public Health Professor, USC



resources to achieve that.



Harm Reduction Approach is Patient Centered

Assessment

- What does the patient want? Why now?
- Does the patient have immediate needs?
- Multidimensional assessment aligned with patient readiness?

Service Planning

- Identify most important to determine treatment priorities
- Patient invited to choose tangible goals for each priority
- What specific services are needed?

Level of Care Placement

- What “dose” or intensity of these services is needed?
- Where can these services be provided, in the least intensive and most appropriate LOC?
- What is the progress of the plan and the patient’s desired outcomes?

Better Blending Treatment & Harm Reduction

We know recovery is a continuum, but the separation and programmatic divide between treatment and harm reduction services is often wide and needs to be addressed to better match the continuum of SUD services with client experience.

Better integrating treatment and harm reduction services within agencies is both a cultural and operational issue, with the cultural issue being the more challenging to address.

- Achieving this goal will require addressing this from both angles and will require agency-level interventions on top of what SAPC focuses on given that agencies have different cultures and agency leadership know their culture best.

Ingredients for culture change at the agency-level

1. Knowing what we're dealing with – Opening the door for discussions to explore staff thoughts/feelings around this topic (e.g., individual/supervision/staff meetings, office hours, etc.) --> **ESSENTIAL FOCUS!**
2. Leadership making the end goal clear – Aligning the agency and staff
3. Evaluating progress – How do we know when treatment and harm reduction service are more integrated?
4. Adjusting approaches as needed – Our evaluations will allow us to modify our interventions to more effectively achieve this integration

Problematic Conceptualization

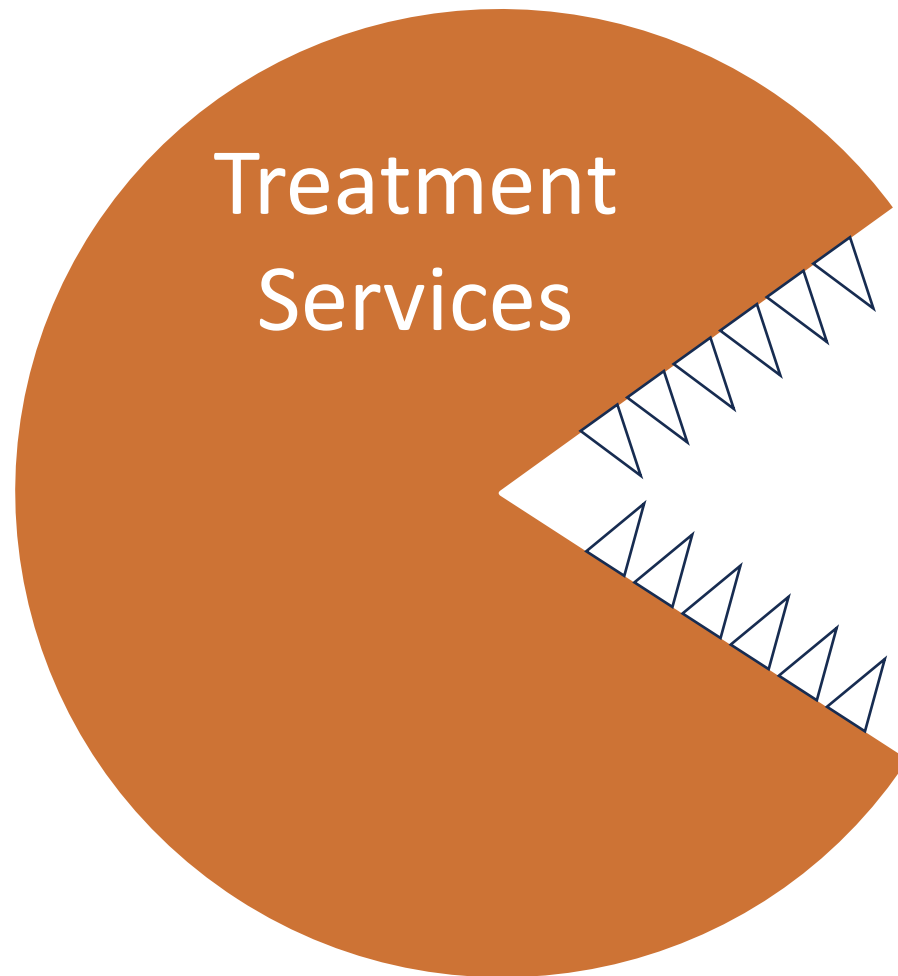


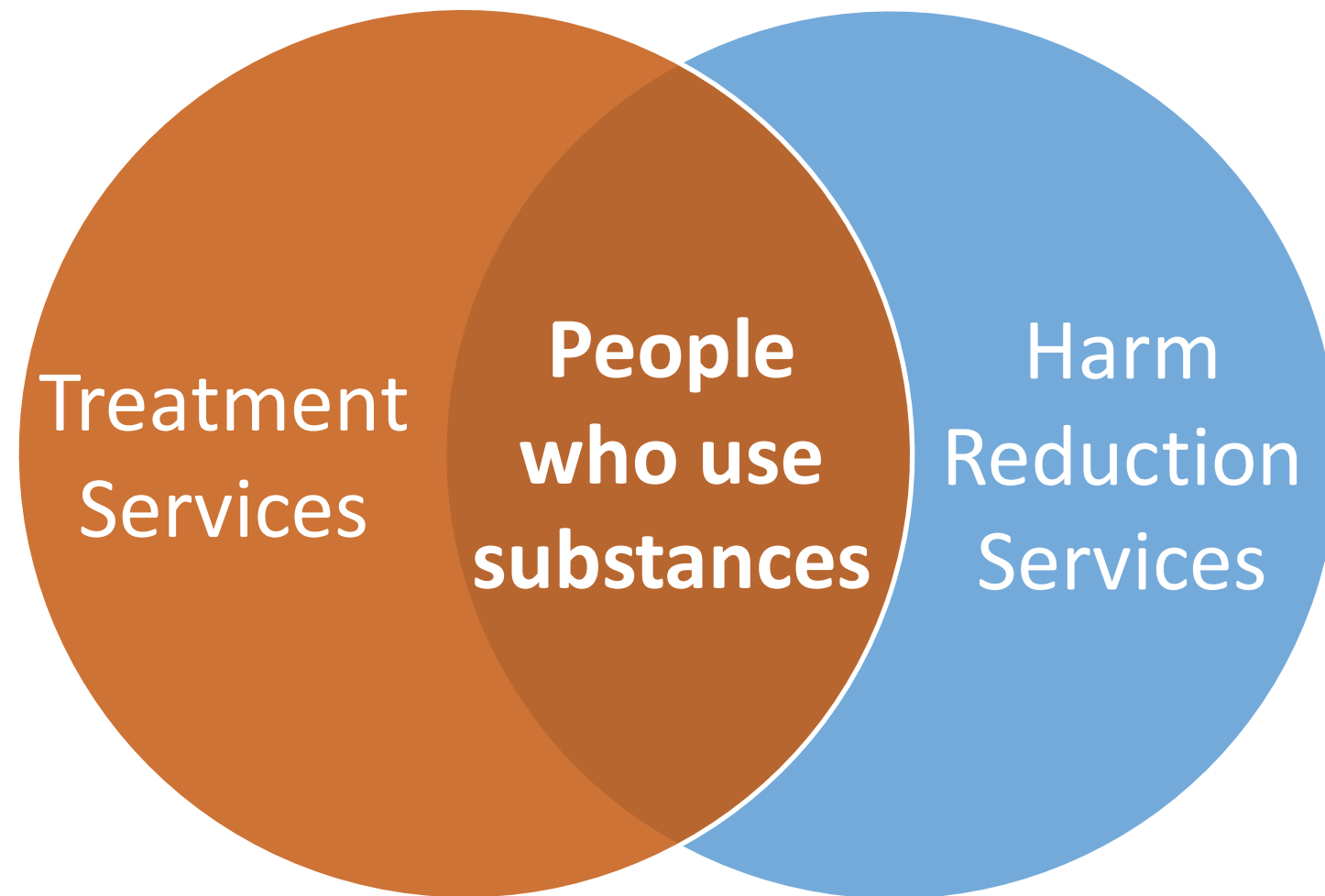
Treatment
Services



Harm Reduction
Services

Problematic Conceptualization





***SAMHSA* ADVISORY**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

DECEMBER 2023

ADVISORY: LOW BARRIER MODELS OF CARE FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Principles and Components of Low Barrier Models of Care

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250125082906/https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/spark/low-barrier-models-care-substance-use-disorders>

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250124042408/https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-low-barrier-models-of-care-pep23-02-00-005.pdf>

SAMHSA Principles of Low Barrier Models of Care

- Person-centered care
- Harm reduction and meeting the person where they are
- Flexibility in service provision
- Provision of comprehensive services
- Culturally responsive and inclusive care
- Recognize the impact of trauma

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250125082906/https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/spark/low-barrier-models-care-substance-use-disorders>

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250124042408/https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-low-barrier-models-of-care-pep23-02-00-005.pdf>

SAMHSA Components of Low Barrier Models of Care

- Available and accessible
- Flexible
- Responsive to patient needs
- Collaborative with community-based organizations
- Engaged in learning and quality improvement

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250125082906/https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/spark/low-barrier-models-care-substance-use-disorders>

<http://web.archive.org/web/20250124042408/https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-low-barrier-models-of-care-pep23-02-00-005.pdf>

**SUD
Treatment**

Medical
Hospital

Primary Care
Clinic

Addiction
Medication
(MAT) Services

Mental Health
Clinic

Housing
Service

Addiction Treatment
including Addiction
Medications

Medical Hospital
offering Addiction Tx

Primary Care Clinic
providing Addiction Tx

Mental Health Clinic
providing Addiction Tx

Housing / Social Service
linking people to
Addiction Tx

Barrier Level	Requirements and Approach ^{35,36,37,38,39,40}	Requirements and Approach (medication only)	Availability ^{41,42,43,44,45}
High Barrier Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for current or previous engagement with specific services. • Visit frequency based on a rigid, pre-determined schedule. • Treatment discontinuation due to ongoing substance abuse. • Treatment goals imposed. • Abstinence as the primary goal for all clients, all the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more visits before medication. • Clinic initiation required. • Limited medication formulation options. • Uniform maximum dosage. • Induction required to restart medication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment only available at specialty SUD programs. • Non-integrated or limited-service offerings. • One or more day wait to initiate treatment, appointment required. • Traditional hours of operation. • Services only available in-person.

Jakubowski, A., Fox, A. (2020). Defining Low-threshold Buprenorphine Treatment. J Addict Med. 2020 Mar/Apr;14(2):95-98. Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7075734>

Barrier Level	Requirements and Approach ^{35,36,37,38,39,40}	Requirements and Approach (medication only)	Availability ^{41,42,43,44,45}
Low Barrier Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No service engagement conditions or preconditions. • Visit frequency based on clinical stability. • Ongoing substance use does not automatically result in treatment discontinuation. • Client's individual recovery goals prioritized. • Reduction in substance use and engaging in less risky substance use as acceptable goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication at first visit. • Home initiation permitted. • Various medication formulations offered. • Individualized medication dosage. • Rapid re-initiation of medication after short-term disruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment available in non-specialty SUD settings. • Other clinical and non-clinical services incorporated into SUD treatment settings. • Same-day treatment availability, no appointment required. • Extended hours of operation. • Telehealth and in-person services available.



Engagement and Retention of Nonabstinent Patients in Substance Use Treatment

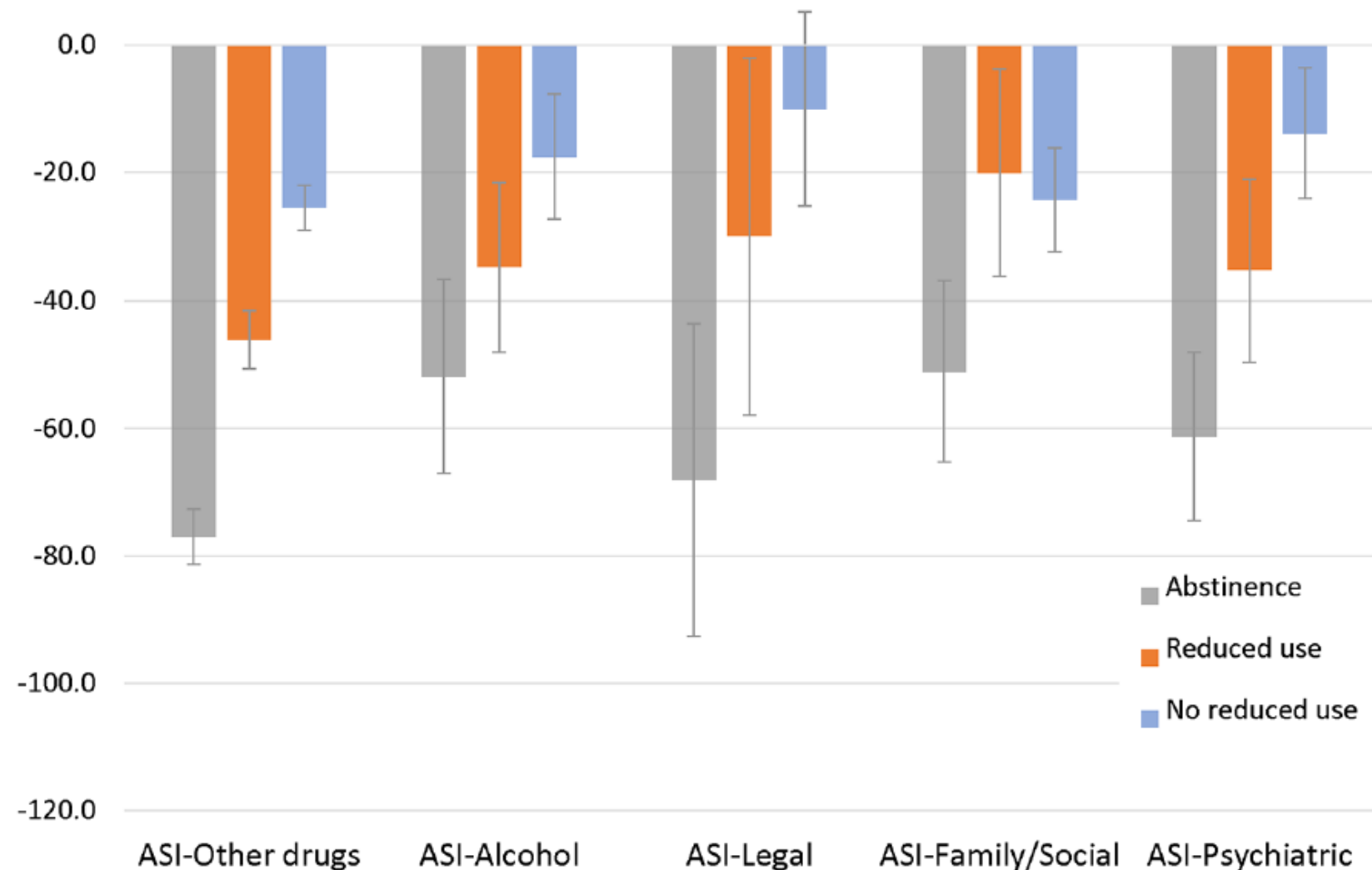
Clinical Consideration for Addiction Treatment Providers

Summary of Recommended Strategies

1. Cultivate patient trust by creating a welcoming, nonjudgmental, and trauma-sensitive environment.
2. Do not require abstinence as a condition of treatment initiation or retention.
3. Optimize clinical interventions to promote patient engagement and retention.
4. Only administratively discharge patients from treatment as a last resort.
5. Seek to re-engage individuals who disengage from care.
6. Build connections to people with SUD who are not currently seeking treatment.
7. Cultivate staff acceptance and support.
8. Prioritize retention of front-line staff.
9. Align program policies and procedures with the commitment to improve engagement and retention of all patients, including nonabstinent patients.
10. Measure progress and strive for continuous improvement of engagement and retention.

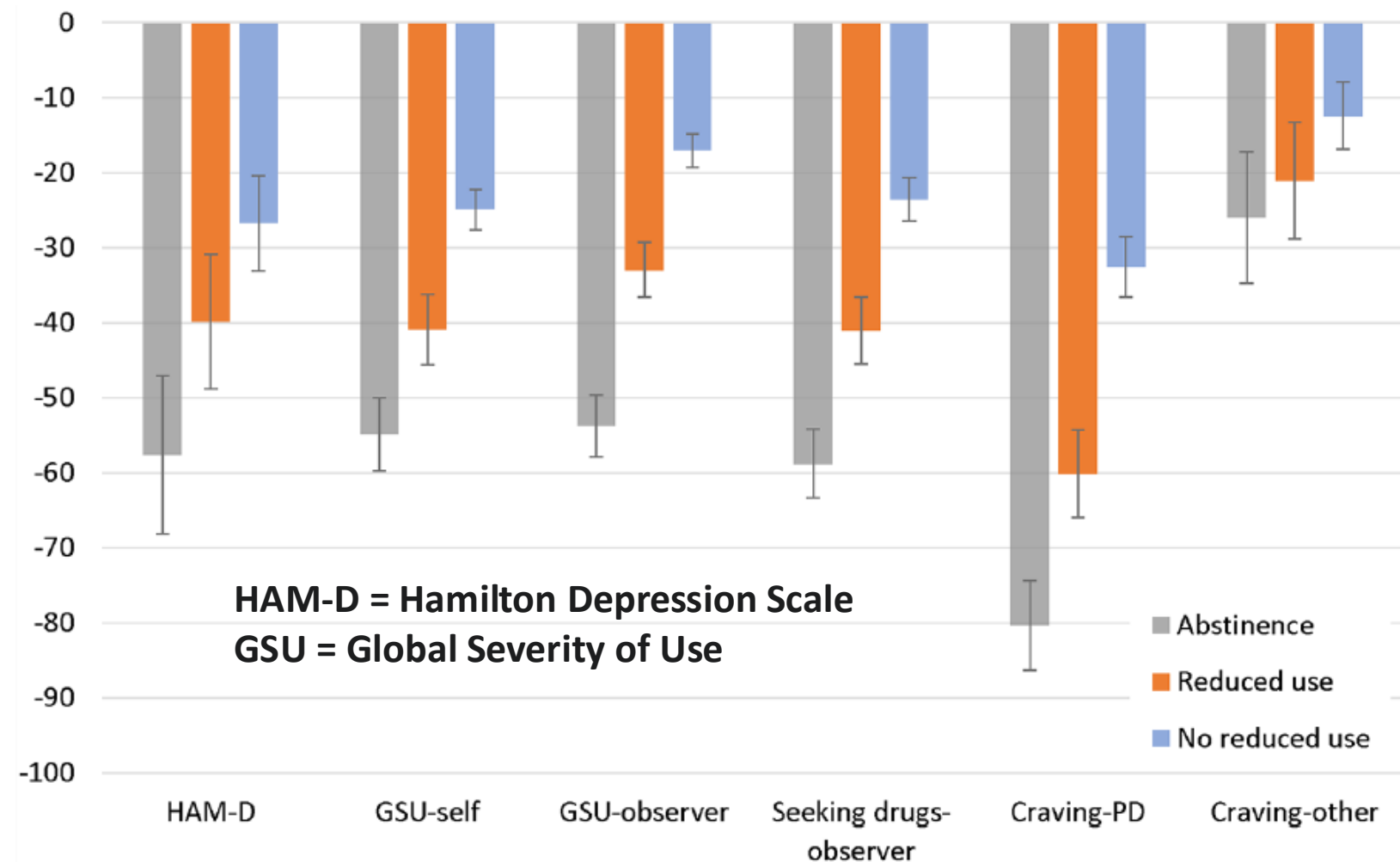
Reduced drug use as an alternative valid outcome in individuals with stimulant use disorders: Findings from 13 multisite randomized clinical trials

Percent Change in Addiction Severity Index (ASI) Composite Score Subscales



Reduced drug use as an alternative valid outcome in individuals with stimulant use disorders: Findings from 13 multisite randomized clinical trials

Percent Change in Other Clinical Measures





Legislative update

AB 1037: The Substance Use Disorder Care Modernization Act

- Expands settings for risk reduction education
- Removes requirement to be abstinent for 24 hours prior to re/admission
- Streamlines SUD residential facility licensing and certification to provide MAT/Addiction Medication
- Recognizes Naloxone as an FDA-approved medication to be available over the counter

AB 309: Hypodermic needles and syringes

- Removes January 1, 2026, sunset of physician and pharmacist ability to provide safe hypodermic needles and syringes to prevent disease spread

Panel discussion

Daniel Cruz, Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Inc.

Latonia Mister, Melanin Angels

Maricela Gray, House of Hope



Discussion

- What have been some of the **facilitators/successes** with integrating harm reduction and treatment?
- What are some of the **challenges** agencies have had integrating harm reduction and treatment?
- How do you wish harm reduction and treatment **worked more closely together**?



Additional questions?

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN IN

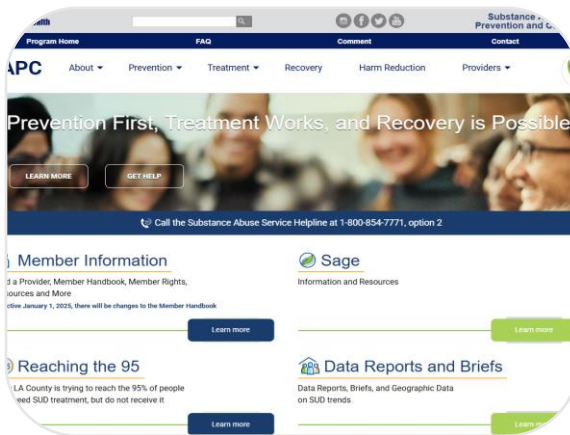
Scan with your phone camera
or use a web browser:

[tinyurl.com/](https://tinyurl.com/HarmReductionIntegrationSignIn)

HarmReductionIntegrationSignIn



Resources



SAPC website

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc>



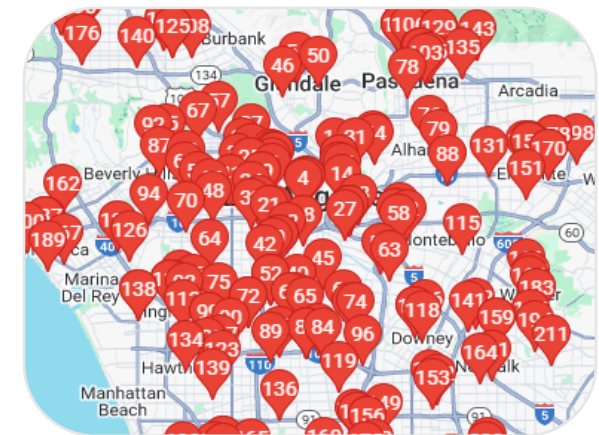
Substance Abuse Services Helpline

(844) 804-7500



RecoverLA.org

Even better on a
mobile device



Service & Bed Availability Tool (SBAT)

<http://SUDHelpLA.org>

Month	Meeting/Training	Details	R95 Enhancement Activity eligibility	
			Harm reduction	R95
March	Due March 31, 2026: R95 Enhancement Activity deliverables			
	Workgroup: Implementation	Topic: Agency-level discussion about how to implement client-centered, low barrier design and how to address new challenges Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2:00pm-3:30pm Location: Belvedere Community Regional Park – Gym, 4914 E. Cesar Chavez Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90022 Registration: https://sapccis.ph.lacounty.gov/registration/registration.aspx?ID=218	No	Yes
	Virtual office hour 3 rd Wednesdays 9:00am-10:00am	Topic: 15-minute R95 overview, followed by open, provider-led discussion about compliant policies and agreements, clinical considerations, etc. Bring questions and hear from other agencies. Add series to calendar: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/calendar/meeting/SAPC-R95-Virtual-Office-Hours.ics	No	No
April	Harm Reduction and Treatment Integration meeting	Topic: Training for treatment staff on how to integrate harm reduction approaches to meet patient needs throughout the recovery journey Date: Thursday, April 9, 1:00pm-3:00pm Location: The California Endowment – Redwood Room 1000 North Alameda St., Los Angeles, CA 90012 Registration: https://sapccis.ph.lacounty.gov/registration/registration.aspx?ID=212	No	No
	Virtual office hour 3 rd Wednesdays 9:00am-10:00am	Topic: 15-minute R95 overview, followed by open, provider-led discussion about compliant policies and agreements, clinical considerations, etc. Bring questions and hear from other agencies. Add series to calendar: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/calendar/meeting/SAPC-R95-Virtual-Office-Hours.ics	No	No

R95 Support for Treatment Agencies

R95 101 Training for Frontline Staff

In-person trainings per agency to address staff questions and concerns about real life application of R95 principles

Request by email or through [Booking](#)

R95 Value-Based Incentive TA

Virtual meeting to discuss specific R95 topics and/or Value-Based Incentive deliverables

Request by email or through [Booking](#)

R95 Consultation Line for Providers

(626) 210-0648

M-F 8:30am-5:00pm, excluding County holidays

R95 Virtual Monthly Office Hour (3rd W, 9:00am)

Monthly Teams meeting with R95 overview and updates with dedicated time for agency questions

SAPC | Substance Abuse
Prevention and Control


Reaching the 95%



✓ SELECT A SERVICE

R95 Value Based Incentive TA ☐

Meeting with R95 staff for treatment provid... [Read more](#)

30 minutes 

R95 101 Training for Frontline Staff (per agency) ☒

On-site trainings for treatment agency fron... [Read more](#)

Free • 1 hour 30 minutes

Booking for **R95 101 Training for Frontline Staff (per agency)**

May 19

 DATE

 TIME

< > May 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2:00 PM



Click to go to the
Booking page

<https://tinyurl.com/R95Booking>



Thank You!