



Minority AIDS Support Services, Inc., (MASS) located in the Eastern Shore region of Virginia provides HIV/STI education, testing and case management services.

FILLING CRITICAL GAPS IN SERVICE IN VIRGINIA

MASS used overdose indicators to better understand how to support people impacted by the criminal-legal system.

Their findings led them to design and implement a new initiative that supports community members after jail or prison.

USING OMM INDICATORS TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO CARE

COLLECTING DATA TO UNCOVER KEY GAPS IN SERVICES

MASS aimed to better understand the experiences of people recently released from jail or prison in the area. As part of their data collection, they used a three-pronged approach:



Contacted administrators at area jails to ask about their protocols for using **medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)**

By speaking with jail administrators, they learned,

- Jails are not required to provide MOUD to non-pregnant individuals
- Only three of the six jails surveyed provide MOUD to people who were legally prescribed it upon arrival
- The other three sites prohibit MOUD entirely except by pregnant opioid-dependent individuals



Convened focus groups with both English and Spanish-speaking clients

Key outcomes from the focus group emphasized the importance of educating people who use drugs (PWUD) about the risk of overdose death after incarceration, having naloxone on hand and connecting them to resources to reduce the chances of using alone.

Taken together, these findings point to a striking need for more timely and tailored services and support for recently released individuals.



www.overdosemeasuresmatter.org



[Developed a point-in-time survey \(PiTS\) to conduct with MASS clients](#)—those recently released from jail or prison and who sought harm reduction services during a one-month period. In this survey, they collected data on the following indicators:

- [Post-incarceration naloxone access](#)
- [Percent of care-seeking people who use drugs \(PWUD\) who reported that supplementary program provided supports increased their access to care](#)
- [Percent of state prisons and/or local jails that offer all forms of Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)-approved medications for opioid use disorder](#)



A key finding from the PiTS was that 62% of MASS clients were released from jail or prison within the previous year, but only one third had access to naloxone within a month of release.

Why is this finding important?

[National data](#) suggests that individuals who are recently released from jail or prison are at a higher risk for overdose as they have a reduced tolerance for their drug of choice. Peer-reviewed studies estimate the risk of death due to overdose in the first two weeks after release is 50 to 129 times that experienced in the general population.

Note: The indicators MASS piloted are approximate but not exact matches to the linked OMM indicators



SUPPORTING THRIVING AFTER RE-ENTRY

Staff from MASS applied their recently acquired knowledge to design a new initiative: Surviving Reentry. Here's how it works:

- Local jails distribute bus passes and referral cards to people at the time of release
- Anyone who brings the referral card to a MASS office receives a \$20 gift card and naloxone
- The cards list a suite of helpful services offered with no requirement for participation as a precondition to receive the incentive



Through these efforts, they gained deeper insight into community needs and strengthened trust with clients.



NOT JUST SURVIVING. LIVING.

“There was a time when my life felt broken...Recovery changed that. It gave me strength to hold a job, run a household, and be the mother my children (and even other people's children) can depend on...I no longer just take. I give. I no longer just survive. I live.”

–MASS Participant

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