

# Rockingham County Impact Report Narratives for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Each local government that receives opioid settlement funds is asked to share an Annual Settlement Update describing how they have made use of settlement funds during each fiscal year. For each strategy funded, local governments also share additional narratives to describe their progress and successes (success information is optional for some local governments). Across all funded strategies, each local government selects one progress narrative and one success narrative to spotlight each fiscal year.

Rockingham County provided the following narrative information for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (July 2023 through June 2024):

## Annual Settlement Update

Rockingham County has made significant progress in figuring out the best ways to use our allocation of opioid settlement funds. This fiscal year, we were excited to continue funding a position within the county that is dedicated to creating a strategic vision for how the county can best use these funds. We are also excited that funds were used to create the county's first MOUD/MAT clinic that is housed in our Division of Public Health. We began hiring staff for this clinic in April and started serving clients in early July 2024. This service has been much needed in our county, and we look forward to reporting more on the effects this clinic has on our community. In the coming year, we will also be supporting a Syringe Exchange Program and the operating costs for a BHUC clinic in the county. Additionally, we are planning on releasing a RFA this fall in an effort to start spending the remaining funds we have received. Our group, Rockingham Recovers, continues to be a place where the county can solicit feedback from the community and organizations doing harm reduction work. This group will have a central role in crafting the RFA and members of its executive committee will be tasked with reviewing applications and making recommendations to the board.

## Strategy Spotlights

### ❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 1: Collaborative Strategic Planning

#### Progress Narrative

The previous facilitator for the Opioid Task Force, along with our local public health director, helped collaborate with local organizations to establish a behavioral health urgent care line. This initiative aimed to alleviate pressure on local emergency services and provide more direct care for behavioral health and substance use disorders. The facilitator left the role before the facility renovations were completed, but the position was filled again in late October 2023. Since then, the new facilitator has continued the task force's efforts, including rebranding it as Rockingham County Recovers and launching a dedicated website to promote various strategies and trainings. The workgroup now meets monthly at a new location and virtual options are available. The expanded listserv includes a diverse range of agencies and community members. We have also placed advertisements in a local journal to increase outreach. Accomplishments include hosting regular meetings with 20-30 attendees, forming an executive committee for evaluating proposals, and establishing a \$100,000 grant program for community development and opioid programming. Though only one proposal for \$27,000 was viable before the fiscal year end, the grant process will continue in the next fiscal year. Additionally, a

community resource guide and the Lock Your Meds campaign have been launched to enhance public safety and awareness. The behavioral health urgent care began operations in April 2024, providing effective crisis services and referrals. Upcoming initiatives include new behavioral health roles and various supportive programs. We are planning to release an RFA for multiple opioid strategies in fiscal year 2024/2025.

#### ❖ **Exhibit A, Strategy 1: Collaborative Strategic Planning**

##### **Success Narrative**

Identifying a single individual who has benefited most from our strategy is challenging, but a presentation I gave to the Weary Warriors support group at a local church stands out. This group comprises family members dealing with addiction, either mourning a loss, supporting someone in recovery, or coping with ongoing addiction. I reflect on a particular attendee, a father who lost a son to an overdose and has another child struggling with addiction. Rockingham County Recovers, and perhaps my presentation, might offer him a way to express his grief and anger or channel his desire to prevent future tragedies. It may provide him with a platform to learn, contribute to community outreach, and connect with others who share his concerns. The presence of Rockingham County Recovers could reassure him that efforts are being made to provide early intervention, harm reduction, and comprehensive support services. Although this father does not often speak at meetings, his changed demeanor from anger and bitterness to hopefulness and gratitude reflects a positive impact. Despite initial apprehensions about how he might react, he warmly appreciated the effort, calling it a blessing. This acknowledgment was profoundly rewarding and represents the kind of success I strive for in this role. Such feedback highlights the meaningful difference we are making in the community, reinforcing the importance of our work.

### **Progress and Success Narratives for All Funded Strategies**

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##### **Progress Narrative**

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### **❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 2: Evidence-Based Addiction Treatment**

#### **Progress Narrative**

In late fiscal year 2023-2024, the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners approved funding for the creation of an MOUD/MAT clinic housed within the Rockingham County Division of Public Health. This program was aimed at equipping the staff with training, tools, and resources to save lives and mitigate lifelong harms from drug misuse. Beginning in April of 2024, settlement funds were spent on training focused on opioid use and treatment. The program aims to improve the health of the community by increasing knowledge and resources of quality of public health and primary care personnel who can address the substance abuse needs within the county. The MOUD Clinic that is being funded using opioid settlement funds is slated to start seeing patients in early July. We look forward to reporting on the success of this program in our next report.

#### **Success Narrative**

Currently, the MOUD clinic is not operational so there are no individual stories that can be reported. The clinic is slated to start seeing patients in early July 2024. In fiscal year 2024/2025 we look forward to sharing the success of the program.