

Surry 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.

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

Annual Settlement Update

The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR), an arm of Surry County Government implemented the following strategies for Fiscal Year 2023-2024: Collaborative Strategic Planning, Employment, Early Intervention, and Post-Overdose Response Team. Community Assessment and Planning Activities based on the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) resulted in the delivery of evidence-based services and programming to the citizens of Surry County. The implementation of these strategies directly resulted in active services provided to the citizens of Surry County and leveraged external funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Center for Disease Control (CDC), and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). The results of our comprehensive multiyear assessment were reviewed during the Surry County Opioid Settlement Annual Meeting on July 19, 2023, while SCOSAR and its partners published Surry County's Strategic Plan for a Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC) and begin full implementation during the program year. The Surry County Plan is based on over two years of research and planning centered on the development of a ROSC to include: Healthcare access and availability, Employment that supports retention and competitive salaries, Housing, Transportation, and Education including educational pathways. Program implementation activities and data analysis indicated the need for formal outcomes planning resulting in the adoption of Results Based Accountability (RBA) with conversations occurring in Spring 2024 for full implementation in late Fall 2024. These services, delivered by county staff and community partners, include the valued voices of those with lived experience and our community.

Strategy Spotlights

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 5: Employment-related Services

Progress Narrative

The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR) accessed strategy 5, Employment funding, to implement Recovery Friendly Workplace and Recovery to Work programming. The SCOSAR Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) program supports the health, wellness and safety of local employers by providing education about substance use disorder, prevention, addiction and creating opportunities that support the journey of recovery. The SCOSAR Recovery to Work Program prepares individuals by helping them develop valuable skills or trades needed to gain employment, begin working, and increase job retention. SCOSAR employees a Recovery Friendly Workplace advisor who is a community advocate that works as an intermediary between the recovery community

and the business community and interacts directly with individuals in recovery. SCOSAR's Recovery Friendly Workplace programming includes three phases. These activities include orientation to address business needs and interest, creation of a formal letter of intent, and implementation of actual supportive services. Recovery to Work programming is then directed to community members in need of a second chance at employment and job training. Services include the delivery of soft skills training, resume and job application classes, job coaching, and actual job placement based on the individual's unique needs and experiences. The combination of appropriate job placement, while ensuring employers are well supported during and after initial job placement, is paramount to the success of SCOSAR Programming. Cooperative program partners include Surry Community College, the NCWorks - Surry, Surry County Economic Development Partnership, and the Piedmont Triad Workforce Development Board.

"The Recovery to Work Program is a vital necessity for this community. While in my addiction I did not know of these resources, when I came out of jail and addiction, I became familiar with them. This program has been extremely helpful to me. When I got convicted and became a felon it created a lot of barriers. I got connected with program staff who have wonderful and been my safe haven. They believed in me and got me back into college and are great listeners who provide the best advice. Surry Community College has helped me with all the quarks that I have had getting back into college and answering all my questions. Every time I call them, they always help me in some type of way. If it was not for the Recovery to Work Program, I would not have made it this far. I have been sober for 2 years and 4 months. I have a full-time Job, I am a full-time student, I have attained my peer support specialist certification, and I am working to become a recovery coach. This program has definitely helped me cross some barriers that I could not have on my own. But more than that the people that work for this program give you hope and stability. They work hard to help anyone and everyone achieve."

❖ **Exhibit A, Strategy 6: Early Intervention**

Success Narrative

Leadership at SCOSAR was invited by a team at UNC-Chapel Hill to apply to participate in a pilot study called Strengthening Systems for North Carolina Children (SYNC). SYNC targets communities with elevated rates of risk factors for adverse childhood events (ACEs) (driven largely by substance use), and trains interested community members to understand how systems and structures influence ACEs. More than two dozen people from concerned agencies across the county came together for these workshops. The collaboration unveiled common themes and local risk factors. Distilling the evidence and feedback provided by the group resulted in causal loop diagrams, used to highlight points of impact that could interrupt the intergenerational cycles of trauma - the precursor of ACEs. This same SYNC Group was then invited to choose a small multidisciplinary team to engage in further training led by UNC and Injury-Free NC, called the Collaborative Learning Institute (CLI). Through CLI training, this 3-member team engaged in a lengthy process of brainstorming, prioritizing and strategic planning. In the end they prioritized risk factors, social isolation, and the lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills. To counter these, a protective factor was also brought to light: increased positive childhood experiences. All these factors are aligned with the reduction and prevention of substance use with youth. Following CLI, and instead of fighting ACEs, on February 23, 2024 the group PaCEs was born to help ensure Positive Childhood Experiences (PaCEs).

Progress and Success Narratives for All Funded Strategies

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 1: Collaborative Strategic Planning

Progress Narrative

Strategy 1 supports the administrative structure of the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery and provides for strategic planning activities. Founded in 2018, the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR) is dedicated to building a continuum of care that eliminates impediments for residents who seek treatment and recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). Funded by the Surry County government and multiple grants, SCOSAR's mission is to reduce the impact of substance use on residents, agencies, organizations, and businesses. SCOSAR is managed based on the belief that evidence-based practices and data-driven approaches can help drive positive local policy and community change. Since its inception and under the guidance of the Surry County Board of Commissioners, SCOSAR has been committed to listening to community feedback, conducting research and data analysis, and recommending evidenced informed practices to our region. At its heart is the idea that a full spectrum approach requiring dedicated work on substance use prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery will result in the greatest positive impact on the health of our citizens.

The office administers multiple federal, state and local funding sources in efforts to support the development and implementation of recovery support services focusing on transportation, a post-overdose response team, prevention and early intervention services and recovery to work/recovery friendly workplace efforts. Significant effort is directed at the provision of training and technical assistance to other county departments, local agencies and non-profit groups.

Success Narrative

The Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR) and the Piedmont Triad Workforce Development Board (PTRWDB) received two Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) INSPIRE Grants to develop the recovery to work ecosystem in Surry County. PTRWDB and SCOSAR conducted a 12-month research-based needs assessment and planning process that addressed the National Academy of Medicine's continuum of care for substance use response efforts (prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery). The needs assessment process included the collection of local survey and interview data and review of national, state, and local quantitative data that were used to better identify, prioritize, and connect evidence-based practices to interventions that are likely to positively affect the substance use epidemic in Surry County using the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) planning model. The INSPIRE grants address the seven priorities of the INSPIRE Initiative that relate to workforce reentry and economic impacts that included enhancing the following recovery assets: training and job placement, community linkages, educational supports, workplace recovery toolbox materials, community participation, enhancements of the county's needs assessment process and alignment of data to the North Carolina Opioid Dashboard 2.0. The ultimate goal of the project was to encourage the community to build a complete Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC). A ROSC is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that is person-centered and builds on the strengths and resiliencies of individuals, families, and communities to achieve abstinence and improved health, wellness, and quality of life for those with or at risk of alcohol and drug problems.

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 12: Reentry Programs

Progress Narrative

The Surry County reentry program was initially implemented during the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The program was designed to connect incarcerated and recent probation/parolees to care in the community

to reduce recidivism. Thirty-one individuals suffering from opioid use disorder were served with primary recovery support services being offered, in addition to connection to treatment and other nonprofits and community agencies. This program effort experienced significant challenges including staff turnover and program design modifications. As reentry programs are among the most difficult to implement requiring a high level of funding and subject matter expertise this strategy will be placed on hold during the fiscal year 2024/2025. In the coming months, a more complete needs assessment and planning process will take place in cooperation with community stakeholders to ensure program/service needs and readiness are aligned.

Success Narrative

A client was released from the North Carolina Prison System in April 2024 and contacted program staff 5 days later seeking job opportunities and next steps in being successful while returning home. Staff met with the client to review initial paperwork and review employment and other needs and long-term goals. Staff assisted the client in the completion of a resume and applications; client had no clothing due to being recently released from prison and staff assisted them in obtaining clothing. Program staff reached out to a local business about possible employment opportunities and soon interviewed the client 11 days post-release. Staff provided transportation to the interview and the client was offered a job on the spot and started work shortly after. Due to her employment, the client was able to obtain a car and is still employed at the same location and is an exceptional staffer.

❖ Exhibit A, Strategy 3: Recovery Support Services

Progress Narrative

The purpose of the Surry County Substance Abuse Recovery Transportation Program - popularly referred to as Ride the Road to Recovery (RRR) - is to provide no-cost non-emergency transportation service for Surry County residents seeking connection to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment and recovery services who lack access to personal, private, or public transportation. RRR will transport clients meeting this criterion to substance use disorder treatment providers, court appearances, probation meetings, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings, Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities (TASC) meetings, and scheduled non-emergency medical appointments. RRR operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM excluding county holidays. Transportation services for eligible clients is available throughout Surry County. RRR is a demand response service that provides door-to-door pickup and delivery transportation. RRR vehicles do not follow a fixed route and travel throughout Surry County in accordance with the client's specific requests. Routes for RRR vehicle operators are designed two business days before the scheduled pickup by RRR staff to match the limited number of RRR vehicles and operators. Therefore, clients are required to make reservations for services at least two business days prior to actual service date to provide RRR staff sufficient time to match client's requests with available transportation assets. RRR services are an integral part of the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (SCOSAR). SCOSAR clients from the post-overdose response teams as well as the Recovery to Work Program, in addition to community agencies and substance use service providers all benefit.

Success Narrative

Transportation interacts with clients in a unique way. The clients are sitting behind us, speaking to the back of our heads. Those we serve are often going through a stressful time, whether it is court, probation, intensive outpatient at Daymark, Treatment Alternative for Safer Communities or a full multitude of life's problems. As drivers we often do not know the challenges of the day that the clients face or even the outcomes of the appointments we drive them to. Our job as drivers is to greet the

client as they enter our vehicle, then take the cue from them. Clients may be anxious, depressed, angry or be experiencing hundreds of other emotions often at the same time. We never know what to anticipate. For example, one client, a male, in his 50's rode with us to intensive outpatient treatment for 13 weeks, then several weeks of relapse classes afterwards. He would reply to our greetings in the morning, otherwise no response. I usually played the radio very low, but, one morning I heard my favorite song, Alan Jackson, singing "Here in The Real World". My client, sitting in the back seat started singing, loud, beautiful voice all the way to appointment. After that, he started sharing his story with us. Small steps are meaningful.

❖ **Exhibit A, Strategy 5: Employment-related Services**

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❖ **Exhibit A, Strategy 6: Early Intervention**

Progress Narrative

Surry County early intervention efforts encourage early identification and intervention with individuals who may be struggling with substance or behavioral health issues. Early intervention assessment data collected from youth focused on the delivery of mental health and substance use services, perceptions of current services, levels of perceived support and patterns of physical health. Multiple community partners, government agencies and nonprofits have contributed to the delivery of early intervention Services. Programming efforts were focused on the delivery of intervention programming such as Catch My Breath, Media Detective, Girls Circle and Talk They Hear You, evidence-based programs delivered within the school and community setting. Another activity was a summer camp for at risk youth with local community agencies that addressed risk and protective factors for participating youth and served as an excellent method to reduce and delay possible substance use. Additional projects included the faith-base sector along with local parks and recreation resources to deliver curriculum-based and other programming to youth in the community. These partnerships leveraged existing relationships and created new ones to ensure that youth were served by effective, and outcome based early intervention activities. Staff provided trainings to school, public library staff and numerous community agencies ensuring adults better understand how to reduce and delay youth substance use. Extensive work was completed with UNC-Chapel Hill and Injury Free NC during the process.

Success Narrative

Leadership at SCOSAR was invited by a team at UNC-Chapel Hill to apply to participate in a pilot study called Strengthening Systems for North Carolina Children (SYNC). SYNC targets communities with elevated rates of risk factors for adverse childhood events (ACEs) (driven largely by substance use), and trains interested community members to understand how systems and structures influence ACEs. More than two dozen people from concerned agencies across the county came together for these workshops. The collaboration unveiled common themes and local risk factors. Distilling the evidence and feedback provided by the group resulted in causal loop diagrams, used to highlight points of impact that could interrupt the intergenerational cycles of trauma - the precursor of ACEs. This same SYNC Group was then invited to choose a small multidisciplinary team to engage in further training led by UNC and Injury-Free NC, called the Collaborative Learning Institute (CLI). Through CLI training, this 3-member team engaged in a lengthy process of brainstorming, prioritizing and strategic planning. In the end they prioritized risk factors, social isolation, and the lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills. To counter these, a protective factor was also brought to light: increased positive childhood experiences. All these factors are aligned with the reduction and prevention of

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❖ **Exhibit A, Strategy 8: Post-Overdose Response Team**

Progress Narrative

Surry County EMS and the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery are committed to addressing overdoses and reducing social and health disparities by proving that substance use disorder is a condition that medical professionals can and should treat like any other life-threatening condition. EMS and the intervention team, which is staffed with certified peer support specialists with lived experience, constitute the Surry County post-overdose response team. This team provides access to care with a high level of wrap-around services focusing on the immediate need for access to medication for addiction treatment and community-based navigation for ongoing care in the community. The Surry County post-overdose response team assists and provides care to individuals who do not have insurance, may not have phones, and may be homeless, with the goal of decreasing barriers to treatment and recovery by bringing lifesaving interventions. The post-overdose response team includes field-based MAT bridge services, linkages to MAT services after the seven-day period to the Surry County Health and Nutrition Center (SC H&NC), and then subsequent connection to other longer term MAT providers. During this time certified peer support specialists engage with the patient from the initial paramedicine contact in the field and during all transitions to long term MAT providers and provide supportive services such as connection to clinical and psychological counseling, housing, employment, and other needed recovery services. This collaborative effort, in such an innovative community focused concept, can reduce the social harm associated with opioid use in our community.

Success Narrative

“From the time I decided I was positive I needed a change in my life I have had amazing support and guidance. Starting with the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery (PORT), who not only guided me every step of the way to detox but did not just leave me there. Going into recovery when substance abuse and criminal behavior is all you’ve known was and can be a very scary thing. I grew up thinking that everyone would abandon me for the first mistake I made but with the PORT Team this wasn’t true. In the beginning it was overwhelming because I had lost my license and car due to my active addiction, so I really stressed about transportation, but with the assistance of SCOSAR I was introduced to Ride the Road to Recovery who guaranteed transportation. I was introduced to a program called Recovery to Work. Through this program all my worries went away very quickly when it came to my background and what jobs I could and couldn’t get. They guided me through applications based on what type of work I would like to do and even helped me set up a resume, which I had never done before. Within just a short few days, I had an interview and the position was even full-time which I was really excited about.”