

Connection to Care (C2C)

January 2020 - August 2021

Executive Summary





Connection to Care

Connection to Care (C2C) is an inter-agency collaboration intended to provide crisis response and overdose prevention services to individuals at risk of overdose in the Roanoke Valley. The program concept emerged from the Roanoke Valley Collective Response to the Opioid and Addiction Crisis.

A key component of the pilot program is to support peer recovery specialists in partnering community organizations, to provide a connection to care for individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs) who are at high risk of overdose and who are homeless, housing insecure, and who may benefit from referral to harm reduction and treatment services.

C2C Program Elements



Peer Recovery Specialists trained to use their lived experience with recovery can help individuals with SUDs to access services through the HOPE Initiative and Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition (VHRC)



Full Backpacks (Housing Insecure) and **Drawstring Backpacks** (Housing Secure) for Individuals with SUDs Containing Personal Care Items and Referral Information to Access Treatment Services



Referral Cards & Other Resources to Access Harm Reduction Services, Naloxone, HIV/HCV Testing, Peer Recovery Specialists, and SUD Treatment Supports

REVIVE!

Outreach & Education, such as Drive-Thru/Walk-Thru REVIVE! Training and Narcan Distribution in the Community, and outreach to EMS and emergency department (ED) staff



Ongoing Partnership Building with public health, service and treatment providers, law enforcement, first responders, people in active substance use and their families, to continually monitor needs with the goal of improving individual and community well-being



C2C Contact

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VIRGINIA TECH.

C2C Program Outcomes

Outcome data are based in part on records and estimates from participating community partners, particularly the HOPE Initiative, the Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition (VHRC), and the Council for Community Services Drop-In Center. The following figures represent cumulative data collected over the course of the program (2020-2021).



967

Total number of heavy duty backpacks
distributed to partner organizations



556

Total number of lite drawstrings bags
distributed to partner organizations



335

Total number of boxes of NARCAN
distributed via the backpacks



4

Total number of spin-off pilot projects
(EMS-HOPE, WVARJ-BRBH, REVIVE! Drive Thrus,
REVIVE! Train the Trainer Events)



Total REFERRALS



329

CLINICAL



160

REACTIVE

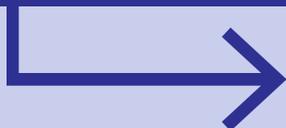


546

PROACTIVE

3,254

Total number of successful consumer contacts



613

Total number of consumers
accessing some level of SUD/ODU
treatment & services



C2C Full Backpack Assessment Results

Participating C2C organizations who distributed backpacks to housing insecure individuals with SUDs completed a brief assessment for each backpack (see Appendix), to better understand the needs of backpack recipients. Select results from that assessment (N=355) are summarized below.



Backpack Recipient Characteristics

36

Median Reported Age

60%

Male

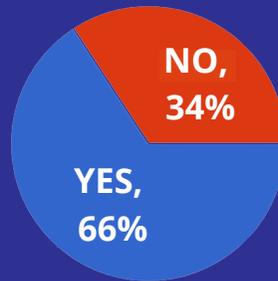
26%

Staying in a place not meant for habitation

43%

At risk of future overdose

Physical or Mental Medical Conditions?

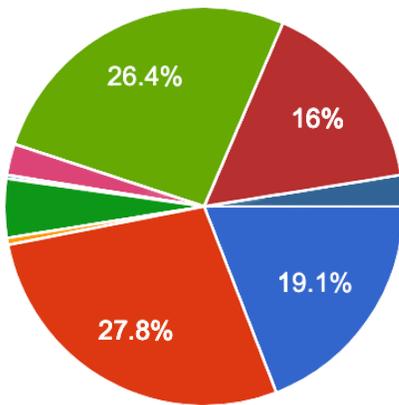


Of those who said YES:

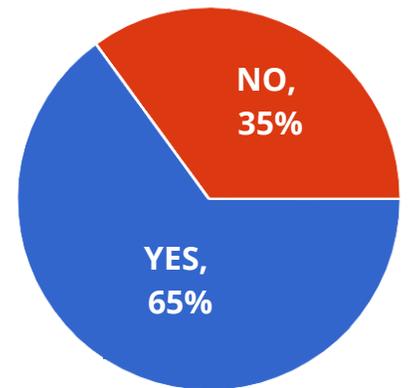
51% Have Anxiety

51% Have Depression

C2C Partner Backpack Distributions

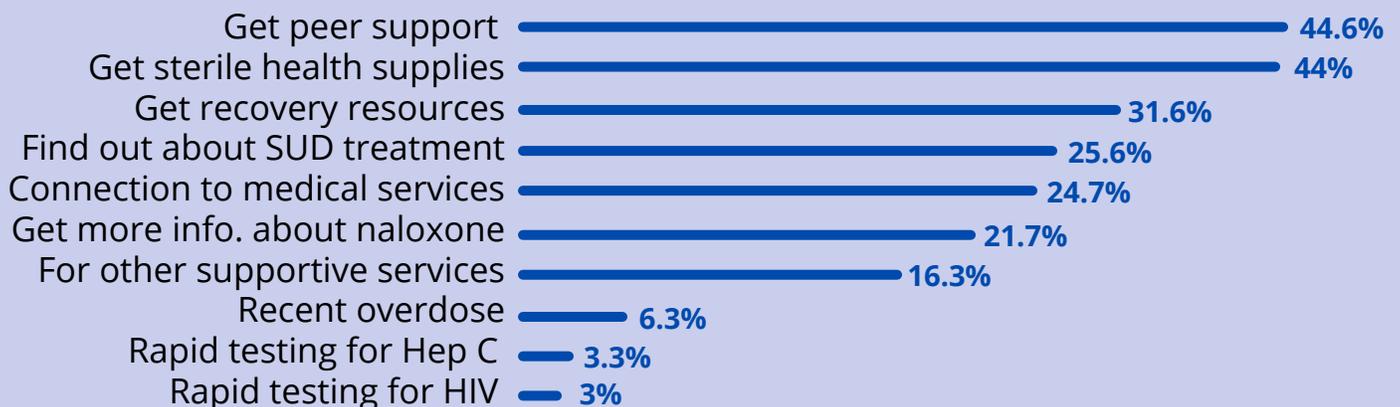


- HOPE
- VHRC
- Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Clinic
- Carilion ED
- Carilion OBOT
- Carilion Rehab
- Carilion St. Albans
- Western VA Regional Jail
- CCS Drop-In Center
- Other



Naloxone included?

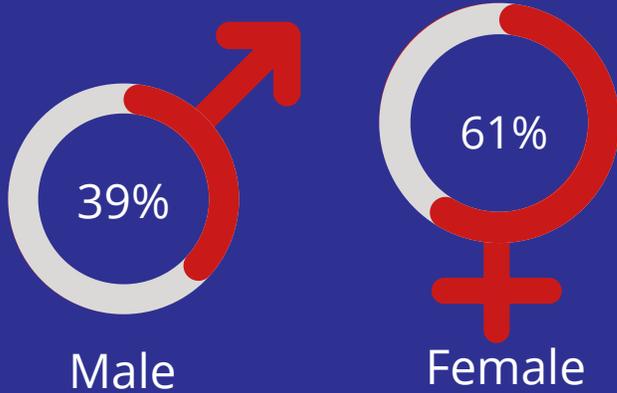
What reason(s) best captures why backpack recipients visited C2C partners?



C2C Backpack User Survey Results

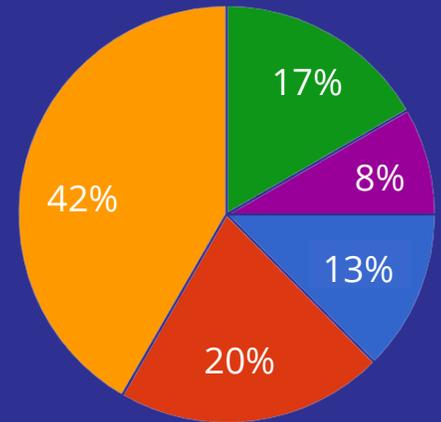
From Cohort 3 onward, each individual who received a backpack also received a survey to rank the usefulness of the backpack and items included in it. Participants who returned this survey to a participating community partner received a \$5 gift card to McDonald's or Sheets. Results from that assessment (**N=32**) are summarized below.

Identifies as:



Age Range:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 65+



Percentage of respondents who found the backpack and included items **Extremely Useful:**



Backpack	Mobile Phone Bank	Naloxone	Business Card Referrals	Blanket	Water Bottle	Hygiene Kit
83%	87%	83%	70%	84%	69%	81%

Backpack users who indicated a need for referral to additional services:



C2C Project Recommendations

In addition to the stakeholder survey described above, the C2C project team interviewed key stakeholders (n=14) involved with the C2C initiative to gain deeper insight into ongoing program logistics, challenges and opportunities. Based on analysis of the stakeholder interviews, the following recommendations were made and have been pursued to continue to strengthen the C2C program.

#1 Naloxone

The C2C program successfully increased its ability to provide the nasal form of naloxone in the backpacks by becoming a comprehensive harm reduction program. Inclusion of naloxone in the backpacks was determined to be up to the distributing partner organizations based on their policies and procedures.

#2 Tracking Referral Cards

Recommendations were made to increase tracking of referral cards distributed to each community partner and onto consumers. Due to the multiple distribution points, a comprehensive tracking log could be established to keep track of partners' cards and number of consumers who receive them.

#3 Tracking Backpacks

In order to better understand the usefulness of the C2C backpacks, the project team continues to work on a tracking system. Recommendations included obtaining feedback from consumers of the backpack to track usability of contents and connection to services. A consumer survey and incentive have been included with Cohort 3 of the backpacks distributed.

#4 Reducing Stigma

Recommendations were made to decrease stigma about people with SUDs by increasing education and collaboration among C2C partners. The C2C program has organized Peer Trainings for EMS, community REVIVE! events, and may coordinate a conference in Year 2 to cover topics such as compassion fatigue, harm reduction, relapse, and peer specialists.

#5 Increasing Communication

COVID-19 has decreased the frequency and quality of communication by preventing in-person discussion and contact. The C2C project team has adjusted by providing more frequent virtual check-ins with individual partners, as well as by partners utilizing social media and telehealth to connect virtually with consumers in need of information and services.

#6 Resource Referral Directory

There is a need to consolidate a variety of partner referral directories into a single, accessible, and up-to-date resource directory including all of the region's treatment and recovery services. Additional funding is needed to support the infrastructure and personnel required to create and maintain this directory, and possibly merge it with the existing 2-1-1 directory.

Other opportunities to bolster the program in Year 3 include:

- 1) Commercial production of the backpack prototype
- 2) Increased education and outreach to law enforcement and emergency services

YEAR 3

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APPENDIX



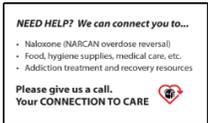
C2C Backpack Guide

Connection to Care (C2C) is an inter-agency collaboration intended to provide crisis response and overdose prevention services to individuals at risk of overdose in the Roanoke Valley. The program concept emerged from the Roanoke Valley Collective Response to the Opioid and Addiction Crisis.

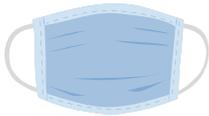
A key component of the pilot program is to provide backpacks with items that help to reduce harm, and to provide a connection to care for individuals who are at high risk of overdose and who are homeless or housing insecure. The backpack includes referral cards to peer recovery specialists who can provide connection to harm reduction and treatment services.



What's in the backpack?



Referral Card for NARCAN & Services



FACE MASK & Hand Sanitizer



TOILETRY & Hygiene Items



BLANKET & Notebook/ Pen



WATER Bottle



Optional: Dose of NALOXONE & Instructions



Optional: SHARPS Container

Who should receive a backpack?

- Those suffering from or who have recently been treated for **Substance Use Disorder (SUD)**
- Those who are **“housing insecure”**
- Those who are **considering, but not ready for, referral to treatment**
- Those who have **experienced an overdose** or who are **at risk of overdose** (based on perceived current substance use, recent overdose, recent detox or treatment outcomes)

C2C Contact

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Please fill out a brief assessment for each backpack distributed.

Care team members distributing backpacks should fill out a brief assessment form for every backpack released. Scanned assessment forms can be returned to mdunkenb@vt.edu.

Preferably, the form can be completed online using the link or QR Code below.



<https://bit.ly/2DVamij>



C2C "Lite" Backpack

Connection to Care (C2C) is an inter-agency collaboration intended to provide crisis response and overdose prevention services to individuals at risk of overdose in the Roanoke Valley. The program concept emerged from the Roanoke Valley Collective Response to the Opioid and Addiction Crisis. **A key component of the pilot program is to provide backpacks with items that help to reduce harm and provide connections to peer recovery navigators and services.** The drawstring backpack is intended for those who have housing and may benefit from referral to harm reduction and treatment services.



What's in the drawstring?

With REFERRAL Contacts Printed on Back



 Your CONNECTION TO CARE
NEED SUPPORT? We can be your Connection to Care. Access to Naloxone, harm reduction services, HIV/HCV testing, and linkages to treatment.
 The Drop-In Center North
2225 Williamson Road, Roanoke, VA
Office: 540-904-7254
Cell: 540-655-0025
 Facebook.com/dropincenterroanoke
In Emergency, call 911 or CONNECT: 540-981-8181



**FACE MASK
& Hand
Sanitizer**



**WATER
Bottle**



**Optional: Dose
of NALOXONE
& Instructions**



**Optional:
SHARPS
Container**

Who should receive a drawstring backpack?

- Those suffering from or who have recently been treated for **Substance Use Disorder (SUD)**
- Those who are **considering, but not ready for, referral to treatment**
- Those who have **experienced an overdose** or who are **at risk of overdose** (based on perceived current substance use, recent overdose, recent detox or treatment outcomes)

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<https://bit.ly/3mxARMG>