

# Adams County Health Department Harm Reduction Program

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Adams County Board of Health  
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# Why Harm Reduction?

- The opioid crisis is fueling a dramatic increase in infectious diseases associated with injection drug use.
- Reports of acute Hepatitis C virus cases rose 3.5-fold from 2010 to 2016.<sup>1</sup>
- The majority of new Hepatitis C infections are due to injection drug use.
- Over 2,500 new HIV infections occur each year among people who inject drugs (PWID).
- Syringe Services Programs reduce HIV and HCV infections and are an effective component of comprehensive community-based prevention and intervention programs that provide additional services.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention



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# Why Harm Reduction?

Scientists, including those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have studied SSPs for more than 30 years and found that comprehensive SSPs benefit communities.



SSPs save lives by lowering the likelihood of deaths from overdoses.



Providing testing, counseling, and sterile injection supplies helps prevent outbreaks of other diseases. For example, SSPs are associated with a 50% decline in the risk of HIV transmission.



Users of SSPs were three times more likely to stop injecting drugs.



Law enforcement benefits from reduced risk of needlesticks, no increase in crime, and the ability to save lives by preventing overdoses.



When two similar cities were compared, the one with an SSP had 86% fewer syringes in places like parks and sidewalks.



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# Services

**Target population:** PWUD in Adams County

**Locations:** All areas of Adams County

**Services:**

1. Education re infection and overdose prevention, with service access & referrals
2. Syringe Access and distribution of safe use kits- Injection, smoking & snorting
3. Education and distribution of Naloxone, Fentanyl & Xylazine Test Strips
4. HIV, Hepatitis C and STI testing, with prevention & risk reduction counseling
5. Distribution of wound care kits, hygiene and period kits
6. Distribution of condoms and sexual education classes
7. Referrals to other health & community resources

Mental health, substance use services, family planning, WIC, & Medicaid



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# Programmatic Funding

- CDPHE- Biomedical Grant  
Jan-Dec 2023- \$154,640
- CDPHE- CHAPP Grant  
FY 23-24- \$57,018
- CDPHE- Ryan White Grant- Early Intervention Services  
April 2023-March 2024- \$91,709
- CDPHE- Lab Testing Credits  
STI testing available at no cost
- CDPHE- Naloxone Bulk Funding  
Naloxone available at no cost
- CDPHE- Fentanyl Test Strips  
Fentanyl Test Strips available at no cost
- Opioid Settlement Funds  
23-24- \$747,661

# Current Service Locations

## Fixed Sites

- Adams County Health Department Commerce City  
Mondays from 9am-4pm
- Adams County Health Department Westminster  
Fridays from 9am-4pm or by appointment Monday-Friday 9am-4pm
- Adams County Western Services Center in Westminster  
By appointment Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

## Outreach

- Wednesdays- Various street outreach locations throughout Adams County
- Every other Thursday at Irving Street Library in Westminster
- Every other Friday at Northglenn Recreation Center
- One-time or recurring events (i.e.: Adams County Pride, Colorado Gay Rodeo, DMV 2 Go, City Block Parties)



# Future Service Locations

## Fixed Sites

- University of Colorado at Anschutz School of Medicine (2024)
- Federal & 84<sup>th</sup> Ave (2024)

## Outreach

- Joint outreach with Adams County Community Safety and Well-Being Homeless Outreach Team
- Outreach partnerships with City of Westminster Homeless Navigators
- Rural Adams County outreach with mobile unit services





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# Harm Reduction Team

## Current

- Harm Reduction & Sexual Health Program Manager
- Harm Reduction Program Associate Manager
- Public Health Nurse
- 4 Harm Reduction Specialists

## Future:

- 2 Additional Harm Reduction Specialists
- Cross-trained Sexual Health Team Members



# Reducing Overdose Deaths

- Safely disposing of medications at medication drop-off sites
- Learning to use & carry naloxone (NARCAN®)
- Advocating for improved access to inclusive treatment options
- Reducing stigma of substance use disorder
- Increasing knowledge, education and the distribution/use of Fentanyl test strips (FTS).



# The Program's Progress

January-June 2023

## Testing Services:

- HIV Tests: 59
- Hep C Tests: 5
- STI Tests: 48

## Narcan Trainings: 10

- Monthly community trainings offered

## Supplies Distribution:

- FTS: 930
- Narcan: 272 (included in all govt building AED kits)
- Syringes:
  - Collected: 155
  - Distributed: 440
- Condoms: 750



# Our Future

- Increase access to Naloxone and overdose prevention information.
- Reduce stigma surrounding substance use disorder and increase referrals to community resources.
- Expand services & use of mobile units to reach rural communities & encampments.
- Partner with existing community agencies & resources.
- Improve understanding of Adams County's unique needs and geography to reduce health inequities.
- Collaborate with epidemiology to reach priority populations, utilizing innovative strategies.
- Increase sustainable funding sources.



# Questions?



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# Thank You!



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