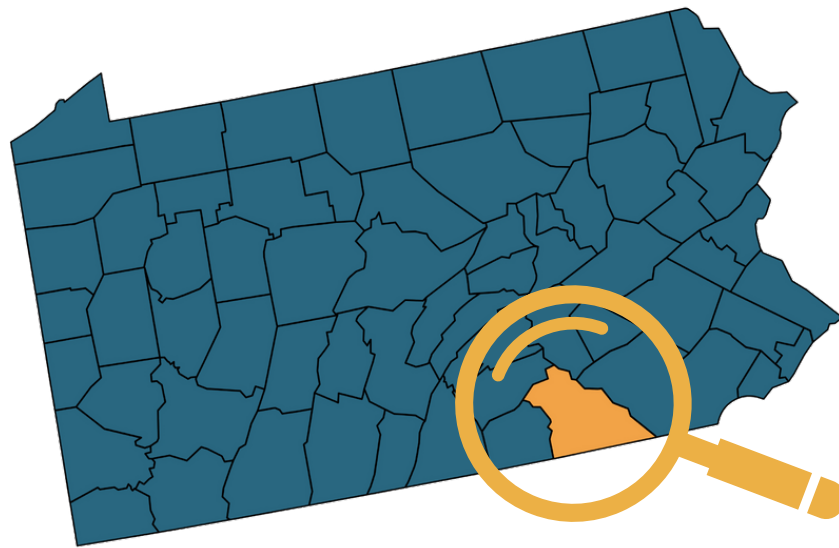


A GLIMPSE INTO THE 2022 COSSUP PROJECT: PHASES I & II

YORK COUNTY, PA



*Saving lives through our pillars of:
Collaboration, Access, Reducing Stigma, Education, Equity, & Support*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

York County, located in the heart of south-central Pennsylvania, is one of five sites part of the 2022 COSSUP Project. COSSUP provides financial and technical assistance to states and other units of government to develop, implement, or expand comprehensive efforts to identify, respond to, treat, and support those impacted by illicit opioids, stimulants, and other substances. This includes an emphasis on promoting racial equity and implementing public health harm reduction strategies to reduce overdoses among probation and reentry populations in Pennsylvania and, ultimately, saving lives. From January to June 2023, JSP conducted a comprehensive needs assessment within the York community to identify its assets and gaps in the public health and criminal legal systems in an effort to build a comprehensive community-driven plan for the COSSUP funds.

In conducting this assessment, JSP carefully planned an inclusive approach, providing a platform for directly impacted individuals to articulate their experiences firsthand. Local subject matter experts were hired to provide expertise and assist the JSP team in gathering and capturing the voices of the community members who are often left out of decision-making processes. Stakeholders from various spheres, including those who work in the system, criminal legal system-involved people with SUD/OD and their loved ones, community-based service providers, and community members in general, were invited to contribute their insights. Forty-five (45) individuals from these groups took part in the needs assessment process in York County. However, there was a noticeable disparity in the participation rates of Black and Brown individuals compared to their white counterparts, echoing broader systemic issues seen in the criminal legal system. Recognizing this discrepancy, following the on-site visits, we conducted ten (10) structured interviews with Black and Brown individuals who have experienced substance use disorder (SUD), including opioid use disorder (OUD), to ensure their voices were included.

The culmination of the needs assessment phase yielded a set of well-thought-out recommendations tailored specifically for York County to use its COSSUP funding effectively and in a meaningful and sustainable way. These recommendations, addressing critical areas such as collaboration, access to resources and treatment, stigma reduction, education, equity, and support, were instrumental in shaping the tactical planning phase of the project and can be found on the preceding pages.

Inspired by the identified gaps and overarching principles, the project was renamed COSSUP CAREES, symbolizing a commitment to comprehensive care and equitable solutions. The pillars of collaboration, access, stigma reduction, education, equity, and support form the cornerstone of COSSUP CAREES, interwoven to create a holistic framework for action. Looking ahead, the JSP team aims to navigate these pillars through intentionally collaborative, multi-disciplinary approaches. By recognizing the interconnectedness of these elements and addressing both barriers and solutions, COSSUP CAREES endeavors to effect meaningful change and save lives within York County.

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE USE IN YORK COUNTY

Pennsylvania's overdose death rate ranks among the highest in the nation. York County, Pennsylvania, has not escaped the devastation caused by the opioid epidemic.

118

Reported accidental drug overdose deaths in York County in 2022.

18%

of overdose deaths in 2022 were experienced by Black individuals, despite comprising only 5% of the York County population.

79%

of drug overdose cases listed fentanyl as the primary drug.

58%

Of 2021 New Commit Drug Screened Admissions in the York County Department of Corrections reported Opioid Use.

87%

Of 2021 New Court Admissions in York County had a Diagnosed Substance Use Problem.

45%

Of 2021 New Court Admissions in York County reported Opioid use in the last year.

Data obtained from:

OverdoseFreePA. 2022 York County Death Data.
<https://www.overdosefreepa.org/know-the-facts/view-overdose-death-data/>

Open Data Pennsylvania. Inmate Admissions with Substance Use Year 2016 - Current Quarterly County Corrections.
https://data.pa.gov/Opioid-Related/Inmate-Admissions-with-Substance-Use-Year-2016-Cur/bvin-4fk2/about_data

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE JSP TEAM

It is important to understand that not every recommendation we make can be implemented. However, based on our findings, we have compiled the top recommendations to consider. It is up to each county to determine what is realistic to achieve with the COSSUP funds.

- ★ Hire, fund, or expand culturally responsive peer support and certified recovery specialists in York County in the following places: jail, probation, hospitals, and medical and behavioral health providers.
- ★ Hire a County Wellness Coordinator who can oversee Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging initiatives, as well as Trauma-informed training for county and community agencies.
- ★ Consider funding Friends & Neighbors of Pennsylvania, Inc. to help increase the number of street outreach team members and expand access to resources. This company can be leveraged as an entity that can work with non-traditional partners to help provide regular “pop-up” services to reach people outside of the City of York. This approach can address geographic equity.
- ★ Explore options to provide transportation so people can obtain treatment where pop-ups are not available and when they must travel to obtain services. Consider partnering with Danny’s Ride, a local non-profit that provides free rides to recovery services for people living with substance use disorder.
- ★ Expand Harm Reduction approaches to include access to naloxone (Narcan), medication-assisted treatment (MAT), xylazine and fentanyl testing strips, and drug lock boxes throughout York County, specifically in communities of color and rural areas. Utilize the PA Overdose Prevention Program to request a supply of naloxone and/or testing strips for yourself or your organization.
- ★ Collect and share stories of recovery to reduce stigma via creative storytelling mediums, including the COSSUP CAREES community of practice.

YORK COUNTY, PA

COSSUP STRATEGIES

1

Strategy #1

Complete crisis SIM mapping with the assistance of Justice Systems Partners.

2

Strategy #2

Provide funding to mentoring agency Bro2Go, which provides mentoring services to individuals who have interacted with the criminal legal system.

3

Strategy #3

Hire a Resiliency Coordinator position to coordinate trauma-informed care services and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts countywide.

5

Strategy #5

Provide funding for the hiring of a street team outreach team member to engage with homeless individuals with substance use disorder and divert individuals to treatment, services, and house them if possible.

4

Strategy #4

Hire two Certified Recovery Specialists to build relationships and engage with individuals incarcerated at York County Prison to bridge the gap upon their release from incarceration.

