

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY JAIL SYSTEM OF CARE

NEWSLETTER, JULY 2021

System of Care Success Stories

As we enter the 4th full month of implementation, we are starting to see some tangible successes from the concerted effort around the System of Care. This month we will share the recovery stories of two individuals.

Ryan has been incarcerated three times and has tried inpatient treatment (two 30-day stints), suboxone purchased on the street, and a methadone program in the past. He has never been able to make significant gains in achieving sobriety. He recently found himself in the county jail and when a judge would not release him without a place to live (parents would not take him back in) a nurse suggested that he would be a good candidate for the newly established SOC.

Within one week of incarceration he entered the SOC and says he is grateful for this life-changing opportunity. He feels that the difference this time is that this program offered him the supports of housing, achieving stability in jail with medication, gave him more social tools to avoid the traps of drug use, and gave him hope.

Throughout his addiction he was always employed and emphasizes that a lot of addicts aren't criminals, "we have manners, values, intelligence...the perils of addiction can affect anyone." In the two months since his release he has quashed all of his outstanding warrants, paid off \$4,000 worth of fines, has money in the bank, owns a vehicle (and a motorcycle) and is days away from getting his driver's license back. While these are significant accomplishments, he is most proud of rebuilding the relationship with his family, "it is better than it has EVER been." He has also found a great support system with peers in his recovery housing and through connections at Coastal Community Action Program.

With three months and a handful of days of sobriety to his name, Ryan looks forward to helping others and giving back as he continues his recovery journey. He is happy with the life he is living now and knows how easy it is to lose everything.

Kevin has been addicted to opiates for 16 years. He has always had a job and has worked in very physically demanding occupations. His drug habit on average was \$80-\$100/day which he supported through working. The viscous cycle of using enough to stay well and continue to be able to work was part of his daily routine.

In his recent ride to jail for his third stint of incarceration, Kevin decided that he was ready to make a change. His past attempts at sobriety have always been to please other people. Although he has never been to a conventional treatment program he had previously tried to quit on his own, even using suboxone purchased on the street. The longest stretch of sobriety that he experienced in the last sixteen years was 28 days.

Within three days of being in the county jail, Kevin was connected to the MAT program. Circumstances surrounding his housing in the jail prevented him from participating in the behavioral health programming, but he shares that the availability of MAT for stabilization and having the re-entry resources (housing and CCAP services) made a huge impact in his ability to maintain sobriety for over 3 months. "If this program did not exist, I would not be sober today. Housing is a very important piece to supporting recovery. Just the ability to take a shower any time I want and have power is something I am very grateful for."

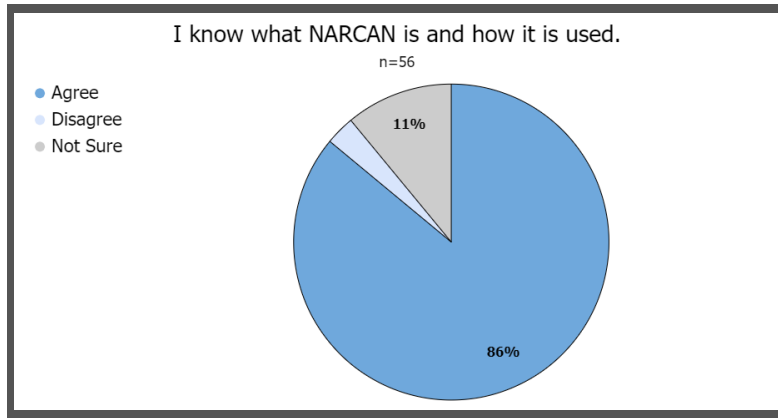
In the first month following his release Kevin got his driver's license reinstated, purchase a vehicle and insurance, and has settled most all of his legal problems. He is resolved to become a functional member of society and aspires to own his own general contracting company within the next year.

Suboxone, used as prescribed, has helped Kevin to feel "normal". His health is improving every day and he generally feels like a new man! "It doesn't matter how deep into addiction people are, they can always change."

In interviewing these two gentlemen, there were striking similarities in their stories. Both fell into addiction through legally prescribed prescription pain medication (one had access to a family members pills) and both described a family history of substance abuse. Although we assume everyone knows about resources in the community to address substance abuse, this is not always the case. When you are hijacked by addiction you're focused on feeding your habit. Period. These successes emphasize that timing and opportunity are critical factors in addressing substance use disorder.

MAT Knowledge and Opinion Survey Results

This survey was conducted with GH County jail and court staff in February of 2021, in this edition we'll highlight the results of the final two questions.

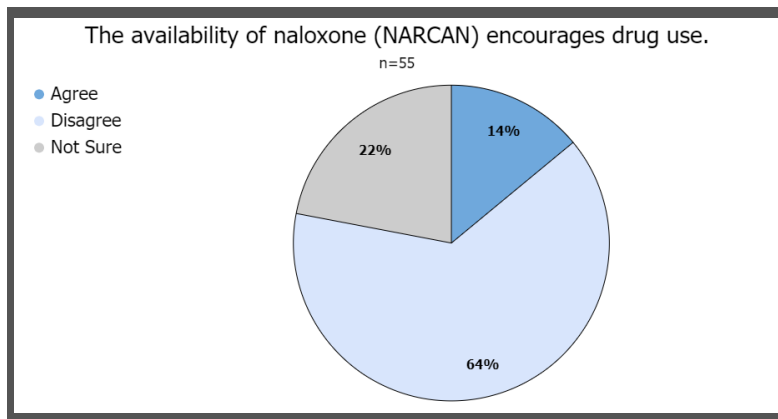


What is NARCAN?

NARCAN is the brand name for the nasal version of Naloxone. Naloxone, first patented in 1961, is a medicine that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose. It is an opioid antagonist. This means that it attaches to opioid receptors and reverses and blocks the effects of other opioids. Naloxone temporarily reverses and opioid overdose and can quickly restore normal breathing to a person if their breathing has slowed or stopped.

Naloxone only works on opioids and has no effect on someone who does not have opioids in their system, and it is not a treatment for opioid use disorder. Examples of opioids include heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, and morphine.

There are three FDA-approved forms of naloxone –injectable, auto-injector and nasal spray. The brand name for the nasal spray is NARCAN. The same drug is in all three forms, just a different route of administration and all are equally effective at reversing an overdose.



The availability and use of naloxone does not encourage or promote drug use. It is a tool used to reverse an overdose and potentially save a life. A life that then has the opportunity to realize recovery from addiction.

Anyone in the State of Washington can legally buy, carry, or use naloxone without a prescription. It is a recommended supply in first aid kits, especially if you have a loved one who uses opioids or is in recovery.

System of Care By the Numbers:

- 53 people accepted into the program
- 42 individuals provided MAT
- 7 individuals accepted into Therapeutic Court
- 10 individuals placed in long-term treatment
- 34 individuals enrolled in re-entry services
 - 17 active, 9 in community, 8 in custody

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To learn more about overdoses and naloxone, visit stopoverdose.org.