



Build a Safety Plan

Discharge Planning

Personal information
 Name:
 Address:
 Phone Number:
 Local EMS Phone number:

Emergency support person
 Name:
 Address:
 Phone Number:

Local Syringe Service Program (SSP)/Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND):

Find a program near you:
 (mass.gov/info-details/harm-reduction-program-locator)

Name:
 Address:

Test Dose

Is there a Narcan kit at your house?

Do you carry it with you?

When do you expect your spotter to call 911/community first responders?:

Support network

Who are the community responders who can get to you before 911?

Name:
 Phone Number:

Name:
 Phone Number:

Peer Recovery Support Centers

Massachusetts Peer Recovery Support Centers (PRSC) are free, peer-led spaces that offer support to individuals in recovery and their loved ones. Grounded in the values of Recovery and Multiple Pathways, these welcoming centers foster hope, empowerment, and connection through peer-driven programming based on national best practices.

Find a PRSC near you (mass.gov/info-details/peer-recovery-support-centers).

Local Peer Recovery Support Center: _____

Address: _____

Virtual spotting

SafeSpot provides virtual spotting services to people who use drugs to prevent overdose. An individual using drugs alone calls the line, uses the substance, and stays in verbal communication with the operator until both the caller and the operator have decided that they are safe to disconnect. The free, 24/7 hotline is operated by a team with lived and living experience with overdose.

Connect with SafeSpot by phone at 800-972-0590 or online (safe-spot.me).



What do you need to feel safe and supported?:

Possible triggers:

Planning for crisis

What are some warning signs that a crisis may be developing or that you may want to start using? These might be thoughts, images, mood, situation, behavior, or something else?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are coping strategies that can help take your mind off your problems without contacting another person? These might include a relaxation technique, physical activity, or something else?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

988 Lifeline
Mental Health Support 24/7



988 offers 24/7 judgment-free support for mental health, substance use, and more. **Text, call, or chat 988.**

Drug information

What are you using?: more than typical less than typical about the same

How are you using?: injecting snorting booty bumping smoking

Are your drugs from a: new batch new source

Notes:

Safety Plan Implementation Guide

Discharge Planning

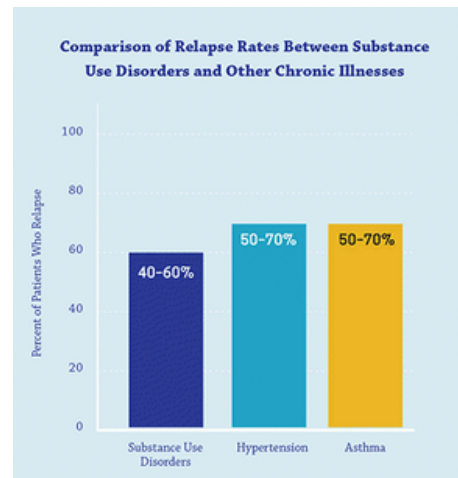
Purpose of the Safety Plan:

Empower individuals to stay safer while respecting their autonomy

This document helps patients and clients prepare for the chance that they use substances during or after treatment. Its purpose is to reduce harm, promote safety, and offer nonjudgmental support.

This should be done early in the patient's treatment period, as the patient may leave against medical advice and not complete discharge planning.

It serves as a quick, practical guide for times of crisis or potential use. A program staff shares this document with the client to remind them that using again does not mean treatment failed; recovery takes time, and returning to use can be a common part of a recovery journey.



After not using for a while, the body's tolerance goes down, which makes the risk of overdose higher. The same dose that once felt manageable can now be life-threatening.

People may use substances whether support is offered or not. Ignoring this reality only adds risk. By providing these tools for safer use you can prevent harm and save lives.

Goals

Engage in a supportive conversation

- Build trust through non-judgmental listening
- Ask open-ended questions about goals, needs, and safety
- Validate the person's experiences and autonomy

Identify support systems and resources

- Community and personal supports
- Helplines for use and crisis support
- SSP, OEND for harm reduction
- PRSC sites for recovery support

Create a personalized safety plan, including:

- Reducing risk
- Overdose response plan (who to call, where naloxone is kept)
- Warning signs
- Coping strategies (grounding, calming tools, distractions)

Review and update regularly

- Revisit the plan during life changes including in health, housing, or substance use
- Celebrate successes and adjust as needed

Safety Plan Sample Script

Discharge Planning

Site Staff: Hey (Client's Name), thanks for being here today with me. I wanted to check in and, if you're open to it, work on a safety plan together. This isn't about judging you or expecting you to be perfect—it's about helping you stay safe now and when you go home.

This isn't about thinking something will go wrong, and it's not about pressure, it's about making sure you stay as safe as possible, even if life gets hard. Does that sound okay?

Client: (Responds)

Site Staff: Cool. So you've been doing the work here and making progress. But we also know people hit bumps. And if that ever happens, we don't want it to be the end of the road. The whole idea here is: you stay alive and you stay supported. That's what matters. You aren't alone in this.

Client: (Responds)

Site Staff: Let's start by looking at the resources that are nearby where you live. Let's find the closest [syringe service program](#) or [overdose education and naloxone distribution program](#) (mass.gov/info-details/harm-reduction-program-locator) and [Peer Recovery Support Center](#) (mass.gov/info-details/peer-recovery-support-centers) where you can find support in your recovery journey. (Note: explain the site type if the client does not know what one is.)

Client: (Help client find closest sites)

Site Staff: Great. Now, say it does get to the point where you're thinking seriously about using. Again—no judgment here, just planning ahead.

If that happened, do you think you'd be alone? That's when things can get dangerous. Could you let someone know ahead of time? Or check in with someone afterward?

Do you know how to use Narcan? We have some for you to take with you when you leave our program. Other safe products like fentanyl strips to test your drugs are available at the SSP you wrote down.

Client: (Responds)

Site Staff: Okay, what about people who are your support system? Who's really there for you? It could be someone here, a friend, someone from group, a family member, or a helpline that will listen when you need to talk. If you needed help, who would you call or text first?

Client: (Shares support system)

Safety Plan Sample Script

Discharge Planning

Site Staff: Alright, I'll jot those down if you want, or we can just talk through them. And one last piece—worst-case scenario. If something did happen—overdose, bad reaction, something you can't control—what's your emergency plan? Want to add 911 to a favorite contact on your phone? Set up location sharing with someone you trust? You can also use the SafeSpot virtual spotting helpline if you don't have anyone around.

Client: (Shares plan)

Site Staff: Right. So let's think it through a bit. When stuff gets hard—what kind of things tend to push you toward using alcohol or drugs? Like, are there specific people? Boredom? Stress? Feeling like no one gets it? Just brainstorming here—there's no wrong answer.

Client: (Shares)

Site Staff: Are there warning signs you notice that mean a crisis is coming or that you might want to start using drugs or alcohol?

Client: (Shares)

Site Staff: Makes sense. A lot of people I've worked with say similar things. So, knowing those things can trip you up, what could help you hit pause when they come up? Or at least slow things down so you've got options? It could be anything—calling someone, walking around the block, writing how you feel in your phone, keeping busy, listening to music, or watching TV. It doesn't have to be fancy.

Client: (Responds)

Site Staff: None of this means you're planning to use. It just means you care about making it through and getting another shot if things ever get off track.

Client: (Responds)

Site Staff: Finally, if you decide to use read about what puts you at higher risk for overdose. Your tolerance has probably changed. I appreciate you talking to me about this. Honestly, this kind of planning can be the difference between a setback and a crisis. Before we wrap up, anything else you want to add? Or anything that feels off about this?

Client: (Final thoughts)

Site Staff: Alright. Thanks for trusting me with this. You're doing more than you think just by talking this stuff out. Let's keep checking in as you get closer to discharge, and we can tweak things if you want. You can hold onto this this plan.