

Post-Fatality Support in Response to the Opioid Epidemic

March 23, 2022



Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Support After a Death by Overdose



- Project launched in 2019
- Funded by the Department of Public Health
- Develops and implements peer support programs that serve:
 - Bereaved people in MA communities
 - Frontline Service Providers
 - People In or Seeking Recovery
- Provides training, technical assistance, and information
 - SADOD website & newsletter
 - Peer grief support groups
 - Peer Grief Ally Program: One-on-one peer support
 - Longtime relationships with service providers statewide
- First state conference for people bereaved by substance use
 - October 2022



Post-Fatality Support Saves Lives —————

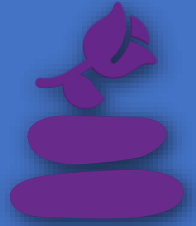
Post-fatality support is a vital component of responding to the opioid epidemic.

Strengthening post-fatality support in Massachusetts would:

- Improve the outcomes of “OUD prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery” programs.
- “Mitigate the impacts of the opioid epidemic” on families, communities, and local and state government.
- Save lives.

** Quotes from the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council Statute*

330,000 Grieving People (2011–2021) —



Bereaved people in MA communities:

- 2011–2020 = **15,688 deaths**
- 21 people per fatality = "**Very high degree of closeness**" to the deceased
- **329,448** people affected in the past decade

2021 – 2030?

Frontline Service Providers

- **130** agencies deliver treatment at 500 sites.
- **2,000** licenses–certifications specializing in addictions
- **10,000+** mental-health-related licenses–certifications for professionals who encounter substance abuse in the course of their work

People In or Seeking Recovery

- **2015 = 275,000** people in MA with OUD (**4.6% of population >age 11**)



Lack of Post-Fatality Support

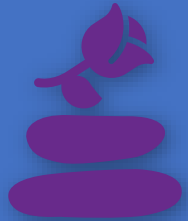


- Leaves bereaved people alone to face a sudden and stigmatized death.
Leaves Frontline Service Providers with insufficient resources to offer families in the wake of a client's death.
- Damages Frontline Service Providers' health and causes burnout and turnover.
Decreases program effectiveness for People In or Seeking Recovery.
- Damages the health of People In or Seeking Recovery's and makes it extra-difficult for them to be in recovery.
Results in more lives lost.



Statewide & Systematic Peer-Based Post-Fatality Support.

Goal: Workforce Development



Peer Grief Support Groups

- 38 in MA (20 virtual monthly)
- SADOD provides Training, Tech Assist
- Special group start-ups
- Partnership with TSWR



One-on-One Peer Grief Allies

- Completed successful pilot with LTC
- 13 volunteers
- Second training under way
- Expanding beyond pilot
- People served mostly newly bereaved



Peer Support for Peer Helpers

- Network of 25 PGHs
- Twice-monthly Peer Support for Peer Helpers
- Monthly facilitator in-service-style trainings
- PGHs originated HTM, PGAP, & 1st conference



PEER HELPER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Massachusetts Is Leading the Way

"Finally, we've taken bold action to tackle the opioid crisis, and have shown the rest of the nation the way forward. Working together, we nearly tripled state spending on prevention and treatment, and what was a public policy catastrophe now offers hope for families."

Governor Baker – Twitter · January 21, 2020

SADOD offers hope to families through *post-fatality support*

- Integrated statewide approach
- Strong Partnerships
- Peer-led program design
- Piloting programs
- Training volunteers
- Creating community
- Building Infrastructure

