Harm Reduction 101
Learning Objectives

At the end of the session, participants will...

Understand the History and Principles of Harm Reduction

Learn about the dangers of fentanyl and xylazine in the drug supply

Explore the Future of Harm Reduction
Everyday Harm Reduction

**HELMETS**
Wearing a helmet or other protective gear when riding a bike or other outdoor recreation activities.

**SEATBELTS**
Buckling in when in a car, bus, or airplane.

**SUNSCREEN**
Wearing sunscreen reduces the chance of sunburn or skin damage.

**MASKS**
Wearing masks around others to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.
Continuum of Substance Use

non-use/abstinence  experimental use  regular use  problematic use  chaotic use
recreational use  misuse  

90% of people who use drugs do not meet the criteria for a substance use disorder.

Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change

These stages do not happen in a linear order; the process is often cyclical. Some stages may be missed, or the individuals might go back to an earlier stage before progressing again.
What are opioids?

Natural or synthetic substances that act on the brain

What are opioids used for?

- Opioids are used to treat persistent or severe pain
- Often prescribed following surgery, injury, or cancers
- Can be used illicitly

Why are opioids a risk?

- They are extremely addictive substances
- Taking too many can stop a person's breathing, lead to death
**FENTANYL**

- Most commonly mixed into heroin but is found in other drugs (cocaine, meth and counterfeit pills)

- Usually added into the drug supply before it reaches street dealers

- You cannot overdose simply by touching powdered fentanyl. This is a common MYTH.

80-100 times more potent than morphine

30-50 times more potent than heroin
Medical Fentanyl
• Safety precautions in place
• Has less side effects than other opioids
• Nasal route available for certain circumstances
• Preferred opioid pain medication

VS

Street Fentanyl
• No safety precautions
• Often contain concentrated doses
• Often contaminated with other substances
HOW MUCH FENTANYL CAN BE LETHAL?
2012 – 2023* OVERDOSE DEATHS
ERIE COUNTY

2016: 7% OD deaths tox neg for opioids
2022*: 19% OD deaths tox neg for opioids

The 145 cases in 2023 includes both 51 confirmed and 94 probable opioid related deaths

SOURCE: ERIE COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINERS OFFICE, *CASES REPORTED THRU 4/28/2023
Xylazine...what is it?

- Also known as "Tranq"
- Developed in 1962 by Bayer pharmaceuticals as an antihypertensive
  - Trials stopped in humans due to hypotension and CNS depression
- FDA approved for veterinary use
- It is a sedative/tranquilizer
  - Lowers level of consciousness, blood pressure, respiration
Xylazine... why is it important?

- May prolong the effects of fentanyl (desired and undesired)
- **Does not respond to naloxone**
  - Fentanyl/Xylazine combined overdose
- Skin wounds

(U) Figure 2. Number of Xylazine-Positive Overdose Deaths by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>Percent Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>1,281</td>
<td>103%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>1,423</td>
<td>1,127%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>516%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>750%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEA
Skin Wounds

Graphic photos on next slide!
Skin Wounds
1 Xylazine... why is it important?

- Early incidence in 2006 in Philadelphia/Camden
- Increased fatal OD involving Xylazine from 2015-2020 in PA
- Becoming more prevalent in New York
  - 2022- 13 of the 298 OD deaths in Erie County contained Xylazine

Xylazine... why is it important?
## The History of Harm Reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Social Movements</th>
<th>Black Panthers, The Young Lords, ACT UP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syringe Exchange Programs</td>
<td>1985: SEP's opened in UK and Amsterdam</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1988: First SEP in NYC &amp; Seattle</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Safe Consumption Sites</td>
<td>1989: Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, and Australia open 1st safe consumption sites</td>
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<td>2022: OnPoint NYC</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Naloxone</td>
<td>2000: 1st naloxone distribution program opens in Chicago &amp; MA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2006: NYS Legalized Narcan for non-medical persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Good Samaritan Laws</td>
<td>2007: New Mexico becomes 1st state to pass 911 Good Samaritan law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2011: NYS passes Good Sam Law</td>
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HARM REDUCTION

Principles

- Participant Centered Services
- Participant Involvement
- Participant Autonomy
- Pragmatism and Realism
- Culturally Informed
- Health and Dignity
Current Harm Reduction Strategies

- Use Slow
- Use Less
- Use Together
- Test your Supply
- Methadone
- Buprenorphine
- Low Threshold Programs
- EMS/Pharmacy Access

Safer Drug Use

- Understand Risk
- Know the Signs
- Good Samaritan Laws
- Narcan Training and Distribution

Overdose Prevention

- Fentanyl Test Strips
- Sterile Works
- Community Support
- Linkage and Referrals

Medication for Opioid Use Disorder

Syringe Exchange Programs

Safer Drug Use

Current Harm Reduction Strategies
Xylazine test strips

Fentanyl test strips

Naloxone

Current Harm Reduction Strategies
What is MOUD?

Medication for Opioid Use Disorder

Naltrexone  Buprenorphine  Methadone
Harm Reduction Vending Machines

15 Vending Machines will be placed across NYS

Vending machines will contain:

• Fentanyl test strips
• Xylazine test strips
• Naloxone
Why isn’t everyone on MOUD?

Barriers

Stigma

Access to Rx

Others
Person-Centered Language

- A person is a person first, and behavior is something that can change—terms like “drug addict” or “user” imply someone is “something” instead of someone
- Stigma is a barrier to care and we want people to feel comfortable when accessing services
- People are more than their drug use and harm reduction is a holistic approach
- language guide
Safe Consumption Sites

SCS are designated sites where people can use drugs under the safety and supervision of trained personnel.

The Future of Harm Reduction

Safer Supply

Providing prescribed medications as a safer alternative to the illicit drug supply to people who are at high risk of overdose.
Syringe exchange programs reduce HIV transmission and increase users’ access to other medical and social support services.

Safe injection facilities have increased enrollment in detox treatment and have not been shown to increase social disorder in the community.

Housing First programs reduce costs of medical/social care and have been shown to improve clinical outcomes for individuals living with HIV/AIDS.
What can you do to reduce stigma?

• Are you using "first person" language?
• Are you mixing up substance use and substance use disorder?
• Are you using sensational or fear-based language?
• Are you using technical language with a single, clear meaning instead of common terms or words with inconsistent definitions?
• Are you unintentionally perpetuating drug-related moral panic?

What can you do?

1. Get trained and carry naloxone

2. Order test strips HERE!

3. Learn about MATTERS Referral Network
Resources

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Je3YADbep9w (on-point and Rx opioids for OUD in Vancouver)


- https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2017/08/02/language-of-addiction
Any questions? Reach us at

info@mattersnetwork.org
or (765) 628-8377