

Housing Works secures more funding for opioid-treatment initiative

Brooklyn-based Housing Works has secured additional funding for a new program designed to improve the adherence to medications during opioid-use-disorder treatment for people at risk of overdose.

Housing Works is a nonprofit that provides health care and other support for tens of thousands of homeless individuals and those living with HIV/AIDS. The Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts recently awarded the nonprofit \$600,000. Now the New York Community Trust has added an additional \$150,000 to the haul.

Though plans for the program predate the pandemic, Covid-19 has become the driving force of the work. The combined funds will help Housing Works conduct additional analyses that are important to sustaining the program long term, the trio of partners said. They'll also support efforts to maintain access to medication for opioid-use disorder during the pandemic and to learn from recent changes in care.

One important aspect of the work will include identifying best practices in a new age of care, said Kenneth Shatzkes, senior program officer of the Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts. That includes telehealth and virtual engagement with patients who may not have access to cellphones or other technology.

"This is a vulnerable population in the city with multiple epidemics happening now at the same time," Shatzkes said. "It's important that we provide ways for them to access the care they need easily and readily during this time period while also making sure we are learning what those best practices are and planning for the future."

In March Matthew Bernardo, president of Housing Works, said in a statement provided to *Crain's* that the nonprofit [planned to expand](#) its evidence-based behavioral health interventions and social supports to the communities most affected by the opioid crisis. "And we will use our place at the table to advocate for the sustainability of these strategies, particularly in light of New York state's current Medicaid redesign," he added.