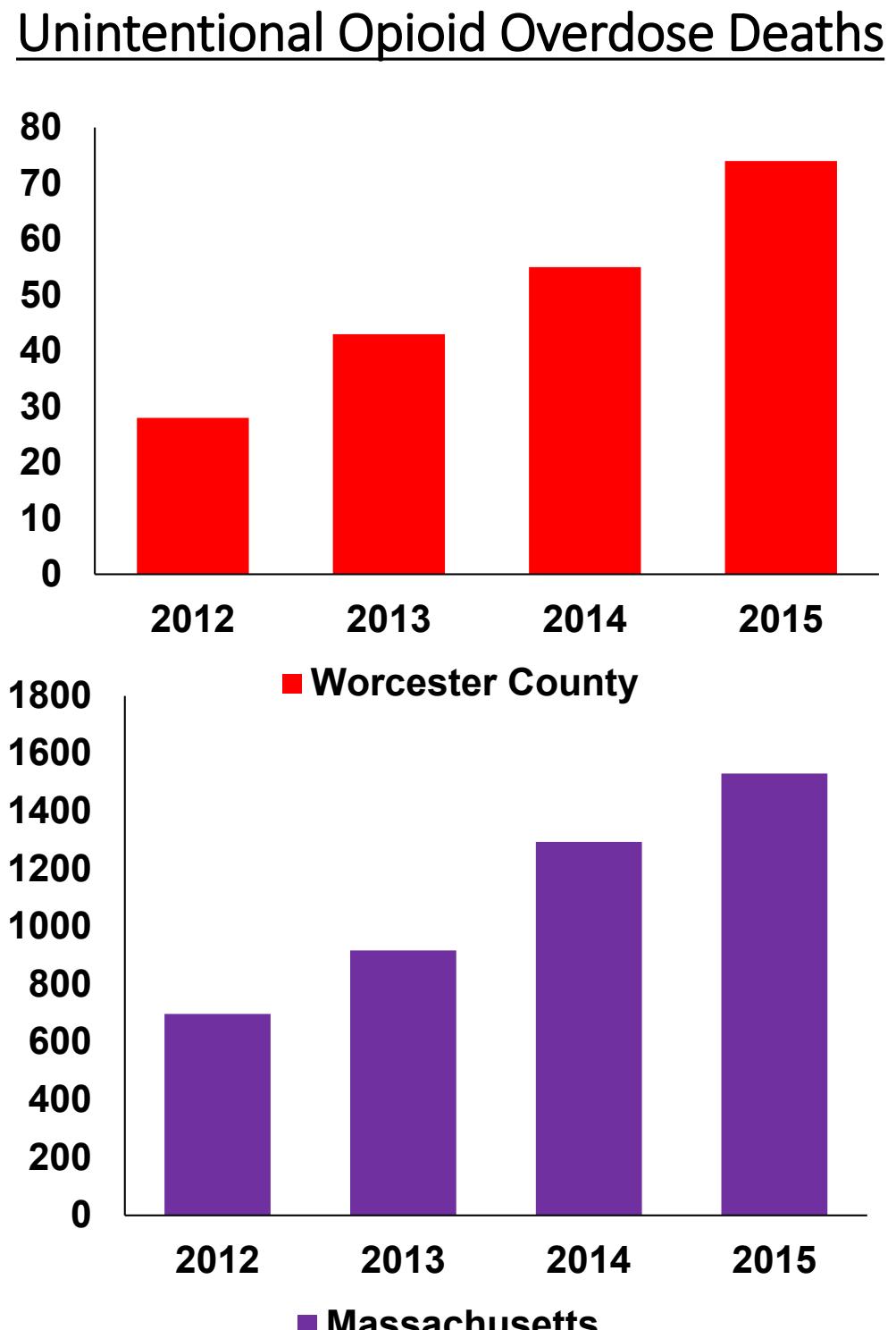


Identifying Barriers to Recovery in the Worcester Community

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Opioid Crisis



Population Health Clerkship

Description

During the course of our field work component, we toured and engaged with over 25 agencies, public and private, around the broader Worcester Community that provide services related to the opioid crisis, and more broadly related to substance use disorder.

Service Project

Goal: To generate a community-specific resource infographic that consolidates information related to available resources and gaps in care or substance abuse

Progress: Prototype of the infographic was generated (pictured here)

Outcome: Share with community partners via survey and generate feedback to modify graphic for maximal utility

Housing Services

Worcester Housing Authority, SMOC and the Worcester Triage Center

Services Provided:
 WHA offers public housing & Better Life Program to connect those living in public housing w/ case manager
 SMOC connects individuals to housing in Worcester County & substance abuse program
 Worcester Triage Center is a 25-bed emergency shelter

Identified Service Gap:
 Housing First model is beneficial to those in recovery (Padgett, et al., 2006)
 Due to discrimination of legal history, mental health history & substance abuse history, Housing First model not being upheld

Action Plan

Aforementioned groups must work with private landlords to expand housing options for those with less-than-perfect housing applications.
 Uphold Housing First model in Addiction Therapy
 Expand emergency shelter services to meet needs of the community

Community Support

CENTRO

Services Provided:
 Substance Abuse Education
 Community events
 "Boredom leads to Addiction"
 Rotating Cultural events
 Recovery Mentorship

Identified Service Gap:
 40% of CENTRO's clients are now non-Latino. While CENTRO does provide services for some groups outside of the Americas, there are still some population groups where services are still lacking. CENTRO has a history of being primarily a Puerto Rican support group, potentially alienating other population groups that may seek help on recovery.

Action Plan

Provide services for non-Latino populations and engage further with other non-Latino communities. Worcester, for example, has a large Vietnamese population that CENTRO can get involved with to increase the resources they have for helping Southeast Asian immigrants.

Education

Rockdale Recovery High School, Motivating Youth Recovery

Services Provided:
 Rockdale Recovery High School: Rigorous curriculum, Recovery language, & Dual enrollment opportunities w/ Quinsigamond Community College

Identified Service Gap:
 Of the 16 students currently at Rockdale High School, which serves the Greater Worcester Area, only 2 students are from the Worcester Public School System

Action Plan

Refer patients to resources provided at Rockdale High School and MYR and propose outreach plan to school administrators at Rockdale.

Substance Use Disorder: Treatment and Recovery Resources

Clinical Treatment

UMass Memorial Health, Spectrum, Adcare, Community Health Link

Services Provided:

Inpatient Detox
 Short Term Stabilization
 Motivating Youth Recovery
 Outpatient Mental Health Behavioral Health
 Substance Abuse Urgent Care
 Homeless Outreach and Advocacy (HOAP)
 Buprenorphine Management
 Methadone Clinic

Identified Service Gap

There is a lack of "Long-Term Chronic Disease Management" following Detox and/or residential Programs. Many individuals have expressed that after acute services, primary care physicians are not equipped to handle substance use disorders.

Action Plan

Select a peer-reviewed curriculum to implement throughout the UMMS Care System that allows PCPs who have patients who need substance abuse care to continue to be up-to-date on the latest treatment and provide "best practices" long term care and management.

Behavioral and Mental Health

Services Provided:

- AISS(Referral): Outreach while incarcerated, after release includes behavioral counseling as well as job and housing services
- Correctional facility: behavioral services offered in some institutions with the proper diagnosis
- Reyes House: post-incarceration housing, counseling

Identified Service Gap

By failing to reach out to individuals with mental health issues, their conditions often worsen. This often results in: Homelessness / loss of sanitary environment / no PCP contact
 Drug use (self medication) / Jail
 Non-mental health related medical problems / frequent ER visits / high cost to community

Action Plan

1. Expand Worcester PD capacity to help/refer mental health cases; move away from simply arresting.
2. Youth services listed are under-capacity. Encourage referrals!
3. Build safe, clean housing for highest-risk individuals

Reflections & Recommendations



Treatment of Substance Use Disorders is complex and requires collaboration, compassion and understanding. Awareness of each individual patient's needs is the first step toward recovery.

We recommend that all students and physicians in the UMass System receive continuing education about substance abuse in the Worcester community.

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