

# Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force

Wednesday, April 17, 2024, 12pm

Virtual Meeting

Co-Chairs:

Rev. Robyn Anderson, MS, LPC, LMFT, LADC  
Executive Director, Ministerial Health Fellowship

Kevin Elak, RS/REHS, CP-FS, Director of Health, City of  
Middletown Department of Health



## Member Organizations

- Alliance for Living Program
- BHcare
- CCAR
- Chatham Health District
- City of Middletown
- City of Middletown Department of Health
- City of Middletown Fire Department
- City of Middletown Police Department
- Carelon Behavioral Health
- Community Foundation of Middlesex County
- Community Health Center (CHC)
- Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH)
- CT Harm Reduction Coalition
- DCF Region 3 (Norwich, Willimantic, Middletown)
- Department of Children and Families
- DMHAS (Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services)
- Durham Middlefield Local Wellness Coalition / DMYFS
- Gilead Community Services
- Hunter's Ambulance Service
- Middlesex Community College
- Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce
- Middlesex Health
- Middlesex YMCA
- Middletown Harm Reduction Initiative (MHRI)
- Middletown Public School System
- Middletown Substance Abuse Prevention Council
- Ministerial Health Fellowship
- Overdose Response Strategy | New England HIDTA
- River Valley Services, DMHAS
- Root Center for Advanced Recovery
- Rushford
- St. Vincent de Paul Middletown
- Street Fire Ministries
- The Connection
- The Village for Families & Children
- Town of Cromwell Department of Health
- Town of Cromwell Police Department

# Agenda

- Welcome New Members
- Data Updates
- Member Spotlight:
  - Weldon Russell, Director, Recovery Employment Program (REP), Coordinator, Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council (MCSAAC), Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce
- New Business
- Workgroup / Committee Updates
- Standing Agenda Items
- Member Announcements



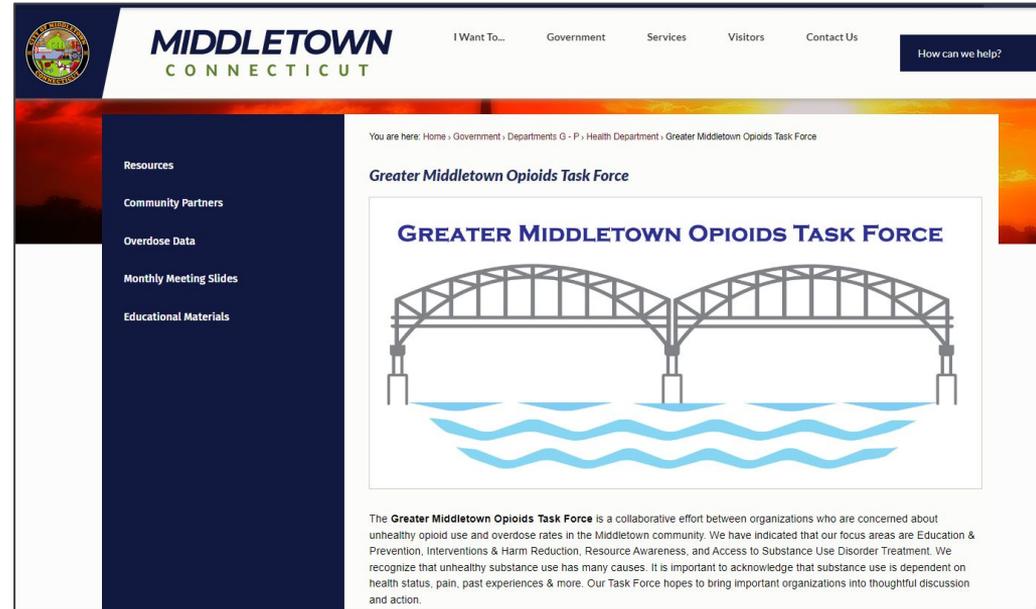
# Mission & Vision Statement

- **Mission:** To engage the Greater Middletown community in working together to promote opioid awareness, education, prevention, harm reduction and access to treatment thereby reducing opioid-related overdoses and deaths and building a healthy, safe and drug-free community.
- **Vision:** A community working together to prevent opioid use and to help people experiencing opioid use challenges.



# For New Members

- Website:  
<https://www.middletownct.gov/1336/Greater-Middletown-Opioids-Task-Force>
- Includes resources and educational material



The screenshot shows the website for the Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force. At the top left is the Middletown Connecticut seal. The header features the text "MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT" and navigation links: "I Want To...", "Government", "Services", "Visitors", and "Contact Us". A dark blue button on the right says "How can we help?". Below the header is a breadcrumb trail: "You are here: Home > Government > Departments G - P > Health Department > Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force". The main content area has a dark blue sidebar with links: "Resources", "Community Partners", "Overdose Data", "Monthly Meeting Slides", and "Educational Materials". The main content area displays the title "Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force" above a logo of a bridge over water. Below the logo is a paragraph of text: "The **Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force** is a collaborative effort between organizations who are concerned about unhealthy opioid use and overdose rates in the Middletown community. We have indicated that our focus areas are Education & Prevention, Interventions & Harm Reduction, Resource Awareness, and Access to Substance Use Disorder Treatment. We recognize that unhealthy substance use has many causes. It is important to acknowledge that substance use is dependent on health status, pain, past experiences & more. Our Task Force hopes to bring important organizations into thoughtful discussion and action."



# Opioid Overdoses Nonfatal and Fatal

January 1 – April 16, 2024

Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown and Portland

# Opioid Overdoses Nonfatal and Fatal

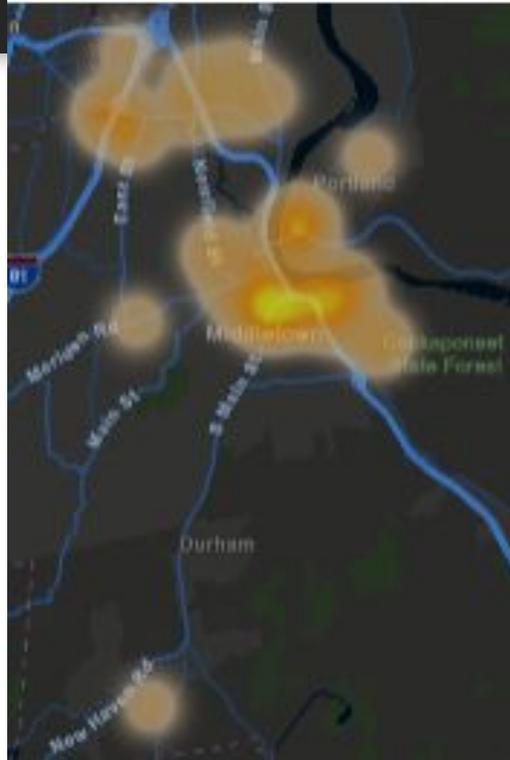


<b>Total Suspected Overdoses</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Fatal Overdoses</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Naloxone Administered</b>	<b>24</b>

1.1.24 – 4.16.24

Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown and Portland

# Opioid Overdoses Heatmap Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown and Portland 1.1.24 – 4.16.24



<https://www.odmap.org:4443/>

# Fatal and Non-Fatal Overdoses by Suspected Drug



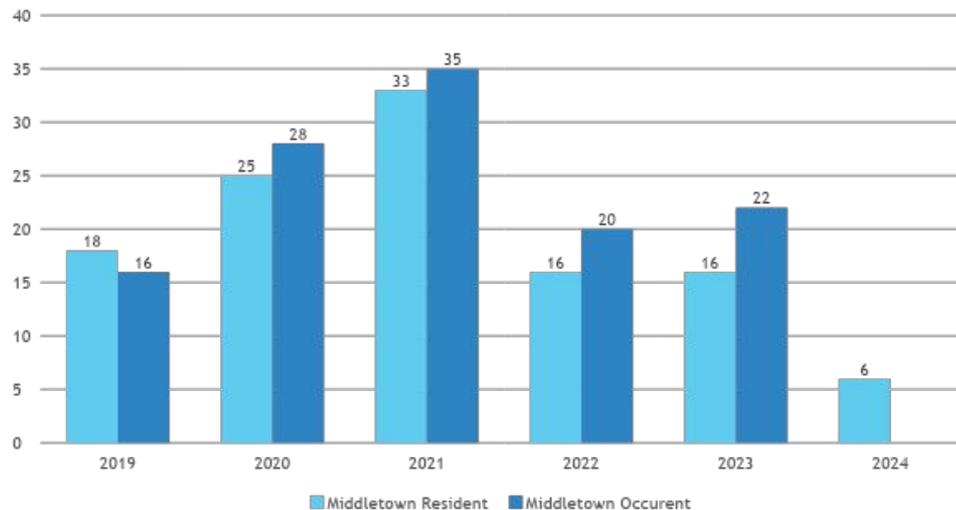
Suspected Drug	
Fentanyl	10
Prescription Drugs	1
Heroin	2
Other / Unknown Opioid	10
Other / Alcohol	1
PCP	1

<https://www.odmap.org:4443/>

# Data for Middletown Unintentional Overdose Deaths 2019 - 2024 (as of 4-4-24)

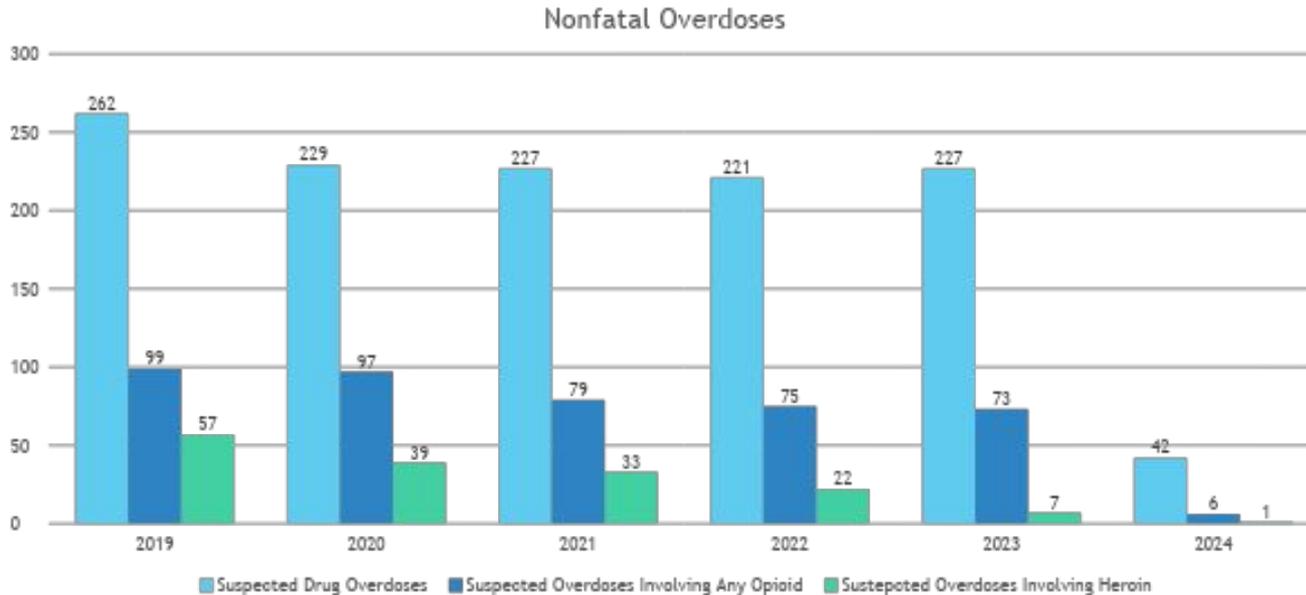


Middletown Unintentional Overdose Deaths



Source: Office of the CT Chief Medical Examiner

# Non-Fatal Drug Overdoses, 2019 - 2024 Middletown



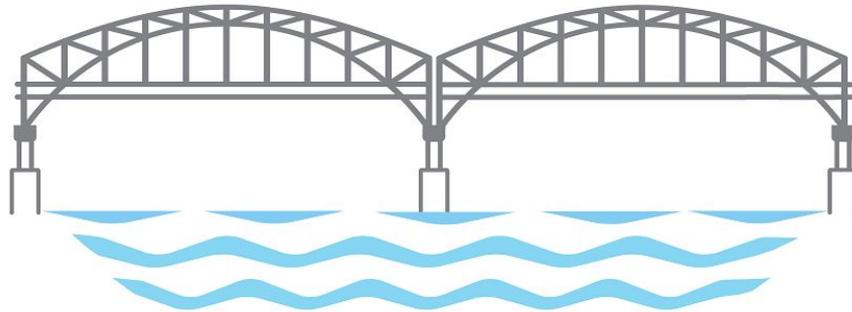
<https://www.odmap.org:4443/>



Updates

# Updated Task Force Logo

**GREATER MIDDLETOWN OPIOIDS TASK FORCE**





# Member Spotlight

## Member Spotlight

**Weldon Russell**

**Director, Recovery Employment Program (REP)**

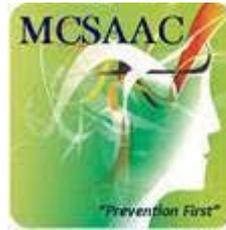
**Coordinator, Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council (MCSAAC)**

Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce

393 Main Street, Middletown, CT

860-347-6924 ext 239

[weldon@middlesexchamber.com](mailto:weldon@middlesexchamber.com)





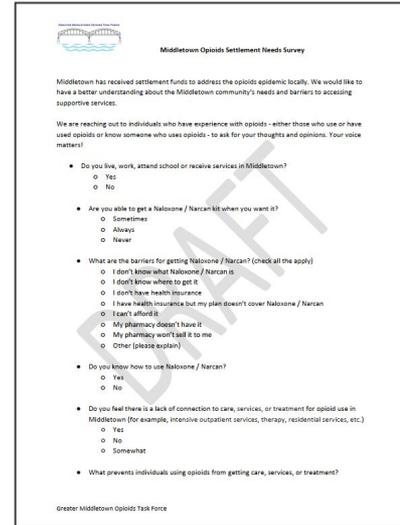
# Workgroup / Committee Updates

# Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds Ad Hoc Committee

- **Purpose:** To develop a comprehensive plan for use of the City of Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds through a collaborative and transparent approach with input from those with lived experience.

## Report out:

- Surveys to capture community voice re: how settlement funds should be used (survey for individuals who have experience with opioids - either those who use opioids, are in recovery or know someone who uses opioids)
  - Final draft - need to add confidentiality / consent statement
  - In process of translating survey into Spanish
  - Roll-out plan has been developed. Expected roll-out: early May



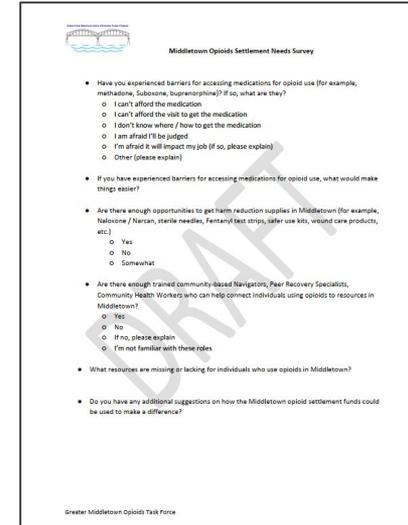
**Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey**

Middletown has received settlement funds to address the opioids epidemic locally. We would like to have a better understanding about the Middletown community's needs and barriers to accessing supportive services.

We are reaching out to individuals who have experience with opioids - either those who use or have used opioids or know someone who uses opioids - to ask for your thoughts and opinions. Your voice matters!

- Do you live, work, attend school or receive services in Middletown?
  - Yes
  - No
- Are you able to get a Naloxone / Narcan kit when you want it?
  - Sometimes
  - Always
  - Never
- What are the barriers for getting Naloxone / Narcan? (check all that apply)
  - I don't know what Naloxone / Narcan is
  - I don't know where to get it
  - I don't have health insurance
  - I have health insurance but my plan doesn't cover Naloxone / Narcan
  - I can't afford it
  - My pharmacy doesn't have it
  - My pharmacy won't sell it to me
  - Other (please explain)
- Do you know how to use Naloxone / Narcan?
  - Yes
  - No
- Do you feel there is a lack of connection to care, services, or treatment for opioid use in Middletown (for example, intensive outpatient services, therapy, residential services, etc.)
  - Yes
  - No
  - Somewhat
- What prevents individuals using opioids from getting care, services, or treatment?

Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force



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- Have you experienced barriers for accessing medications for opioid use (for example, methadone, Suboxone, buprenorphine)? If so, what are they?
  - I can't afford the medication
  - I can't afford the visit to get the medication
  - I don't know where / how to get the medication
  - I am afraid I'll be judged
  - I'm afraid it will impact my job (if so, please explain)
  - Other (please explain)
- If you have experienced barriers for accessing medications for opioid use, what would make things easier?
- Are there enough opportunities to get harm reduction supplies in Middletown (for example, Naloxone / Narcan, sterile needles, fentanyl test strips, safer use kits, wound care products, etc.)
  - Yes
  - No
  - Somewhat
- Are there enough trained community-based Navigators, Peer Recovery Specialists, Community Health Workers who can help connect individuals using opioids to resources in Middletown?
  - Yes
  - No
  - If no, please explain
  - I'm not familiar with these roles
- What resources are missing or lacking for individuals who use opioids in Middletown?
- Do you have any additional suggestions on how the Middletown opioid settlement funds could be used to make a difference?

Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force

Please contact Catherine Rees if you would like join this ad hoc committee ([catherine.rees@midhosp.org](mailto:catherine.rees@midhosp.org))



# Workgroup Updates - Intervention / Harm Reduction

- **Purpose:** To develop and implement opiate use harm reduction strategies and interventions through stakeholder collaboration with input from those with lived experience.
- **Meeting Schedule:** 4th Tuesday of the month @ 10am (Zoom)
- **Report out:**
  - Leave Behind Kits
  - “911 & Narcan” Campaign
  - Narcan Training

Please contact Catherine Rees if you would like join this workgroup  
([catherine.rees@midhosp.org](mailto:catherine.rees@midhosp.org))



# Standing Agenda Items

## Standing Agenda Items

- Legislative / Policy Updates
- Governor Prevention Council Grant - Deactivation Pouches - any updates?
- Other updates





# Member Announcements

# Announcements - Happening on April 17th

Join Us for  
Integrated Healing  
**FACILITATOR**  
OVERVIEW TRAINING  
Free Meal | Certificate

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17<sup>th</sup> 2024  
9:00AM-1:00 PM  
Cross Street AME Zion Church  
440 West St, Middletown, CT 06457

**REGISTER**

**Earn Continuing Education Credits**  
The IHF Training has been approved for 3.5 Continuing Education Units by the Connecticut Certification Board.

**A Holistic Approach**  
Integrated Healing Facilitators view people holistically, as whole people living complex lives and who may be facing a variety of struggles.

**The IHF approach is built around 5 considerations:**  
1. Impact of Trauma  
2. Impact of Systemic Oppression  
3. Science & Research  
4. Harm Reduction Principles  
5. Best Practices for Support

**NEW LIFE II RECOVERY COMMUNITY CENTER**  
117 West Main Street New Britain, CT 06051  
Newlife2.org

**Knowledge IS POWER**

In Partnership with   <https://newlife2.org> [sou@newlife2.org](mailto:sou@newlife2.org)

**EMPOWERING PARENTS PRESENTATION**

WEDNESDAY  
**APRIL 17TH**  
AT 7PM  
VIA ZOOM

Stay informed about current substance trends affecting CT's young people!

Join us for this free online Zoom

**For More Information & to Register Email**  
kathryn.glendon@hhchealth.org

- Discover ways to support your teenager during high-risk times like prom, graduation, and summer.
- Exploring the effects of substance misuse on young people and ways to address it.
- Learn about CT's social host laws and what it means for your household.
- Learn ways to empower yourself and your teen to make positive choices.

 **MSAPC**

**35 Years** THE GOVERNOR'S **Prevention Partnership**



# Announcements

CT State Northwestern wishes to invite you to our event on May 2<sup>nd</sup> regarding the deflection model for Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction.

- The event is open to **ANYONE** interested in this topic
- **May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 from 10am to 2pm.** in the Founders Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Park Place, Winsted CT, 06098
- To Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/connecticut-police-deflection-summit-tickets-870991146967>

In collaboration, CT State Community College Northwestern and McCall Behavioral Health Network are proud to host retired East Bridgewater Mass. Police Chief Scott Allen from Operation 2 Save Lives and QRT National in a facilitated discussion on deflection models for law enforcement, helping at risk populations access much needed and lifesaving resources. Conversation will revolve around a collaborative response to addiction, breaking down silos and opening doors of communication. Participants of the workshop leaving with a path forward to begin building partnerships and implementing a deflection initiative in their community.

Local experts will review the current overdose crisis faced by our communities and the root causes of addiction and mental health, which are driving the need for innovation and new ways of addressing the crisis. Scott will engage the audience in discussion on the theory and emerging pathways of deflection as a strategy for connecting with vulnerable persons and families and deflecting at-risk populations away from the criminal justice system and emergency departments while connecting people to treatment, resources, and support.

The audience will also have the opportunity to hear from and network with leadership currently participating in the deflection model Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery (CLEAR) in Connecticut. This will include a panel of law enforcement partners from around the state and a facilitated discussion with the attendees.



## Any Member Announcements?



# Work Status / Tracking

# Completed Work

Completed 2022	Completed 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Formation of Task Force (January 2022)</li><li>● Member Prioritization Survey (April)</li><li>● Formation of 4 Workgroups (Access to Treatment; Education &amp; Prevention; Intervention / Harm Reduction; Resource Awareness)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Flier for Narcan Leave Behind Kits (April 2023)</li><li>● Narcan Leave Behind Kits partnership with South Fire District, Middletown (April 2023)</li><li>● Xylazine Informational piece (May 2023)</li><li>● Harm Reduction Training by Mark Jenkins, Executive Director, CT Harm Reduction Coalition at Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church (8.16.23)</li><li>● Harm Reduction RV - Village Expanded Recovery Vehicle (VERV) (Launched 9.6.23; Ribbon Cutting 10.25.23)</li><li>● Resource Guide (9.30.23)</li></ul>



# Completed Work

## Completed 2024

- Formation of Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds Ad Hoc Committee



## Next Meeting

- Wednesday, May 15, 2024, 12pm, Zoom

