

# Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 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
- All-In Recovery
- 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 Alliance (CTHRA)
- 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
- Hartford Health Department
- Hunter's Ambulance Service / Hartford Healthcare
- 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, Women's REACH Program
- The Village for Families & Children
- Town of Cromwell Department of Health
- Town of Cromwell Police Department
- Wesleyan University

# Agenda

- Welcome New Members
- Data Review
- Presentation:
  - Kimber King and Stephen Murray, SafeSpot
- Updates
- Workgroup / Committee Updates
- Standing Agenda Items
- Member Announcements



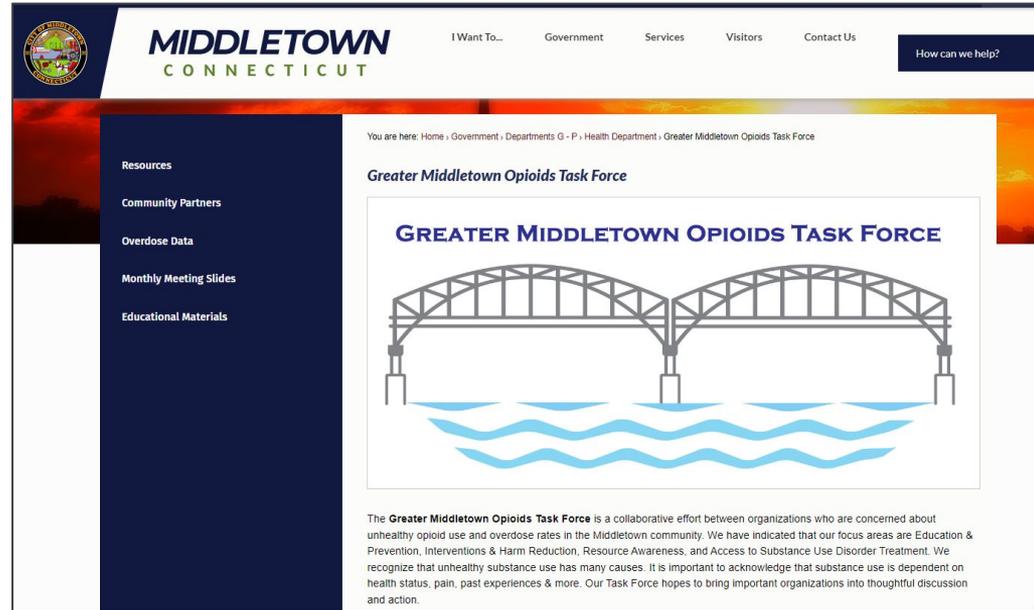
# Mission & Vision Statement

- **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.middletonct.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 includes 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 features the title "Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force" and a logo consisting of a stylized bridge over wavy blue 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."

Resources

Community Partners

Overdose Data

Monthly Meeting Slides

Educational Materials

**GREATER MIDDLETOWN OPIOIDS TASK FORCE**

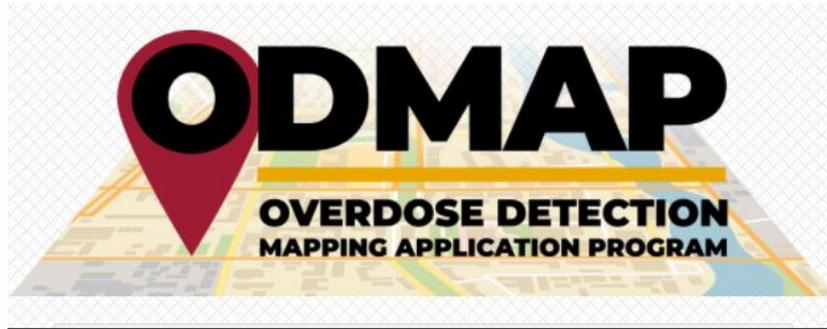
The **Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force** is a collaborative effort between organizations who are concerned about unhealthy opioid use and overdose rates in the Middletown community. We have indicated that our focus areas are Education & Prevention, Interventions & Harm Reduction, Resource Awareness, 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

Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown and Portland



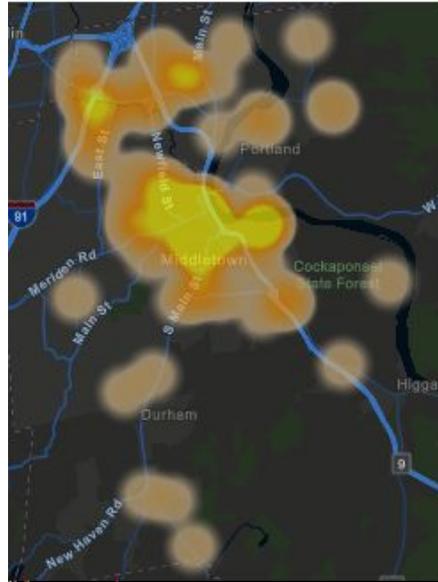
Overdoses from January 1 - November 18, 2025

Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown and  
Portland

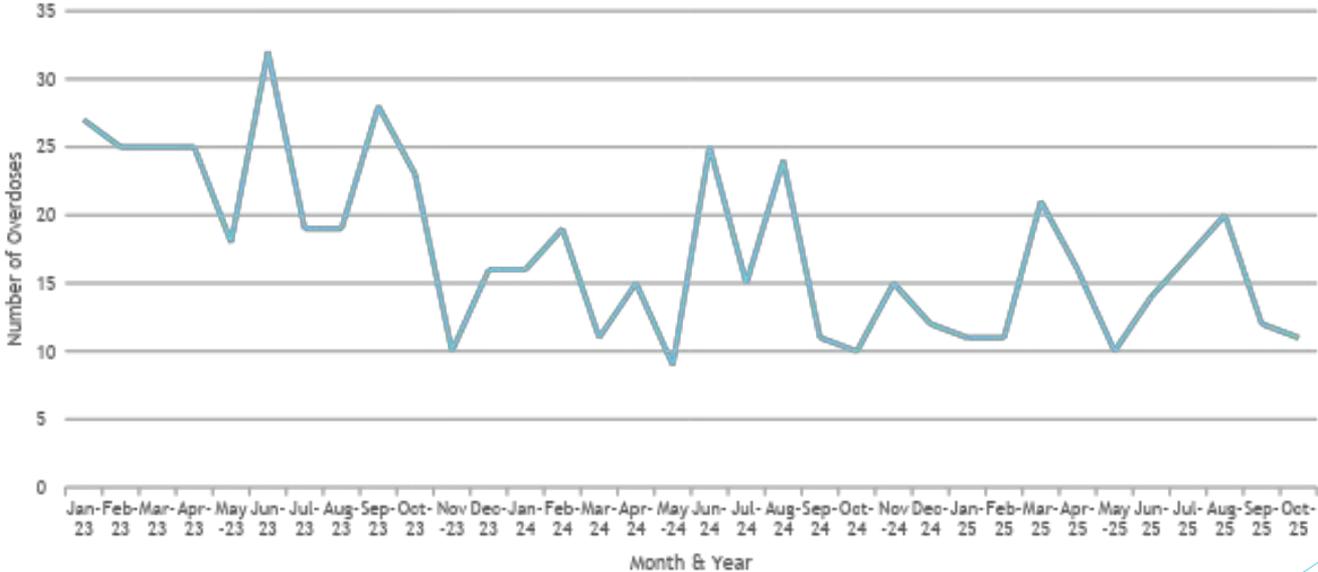
<b>Total Suspected Overdoses</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Fatal Overdoses</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Naloxone Administered</b>	<b>5*</b>

\*Naloxone Administered data not available after 6/30/24

Overdose Heatmap from 1/1/25 - 11/18/25  
Cromwell, Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Portland

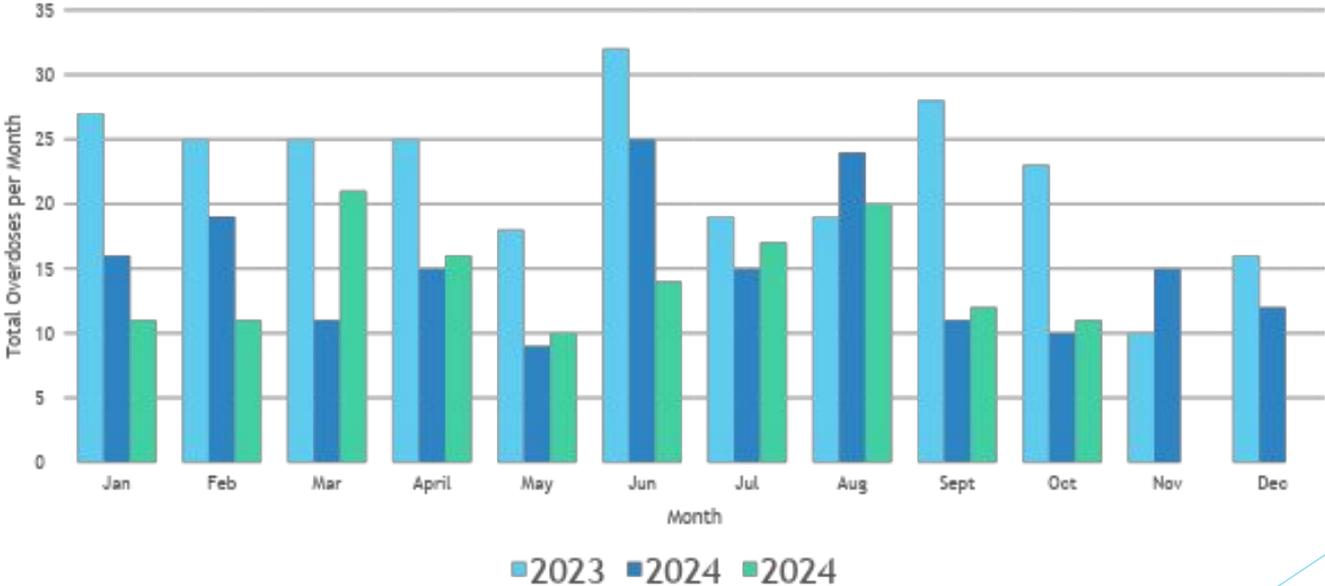


# Suspected Overdoses per Month October 2023 - September 2025



# Suspected Overdoses per Month

## January 1, 2023 - October 31, 2025

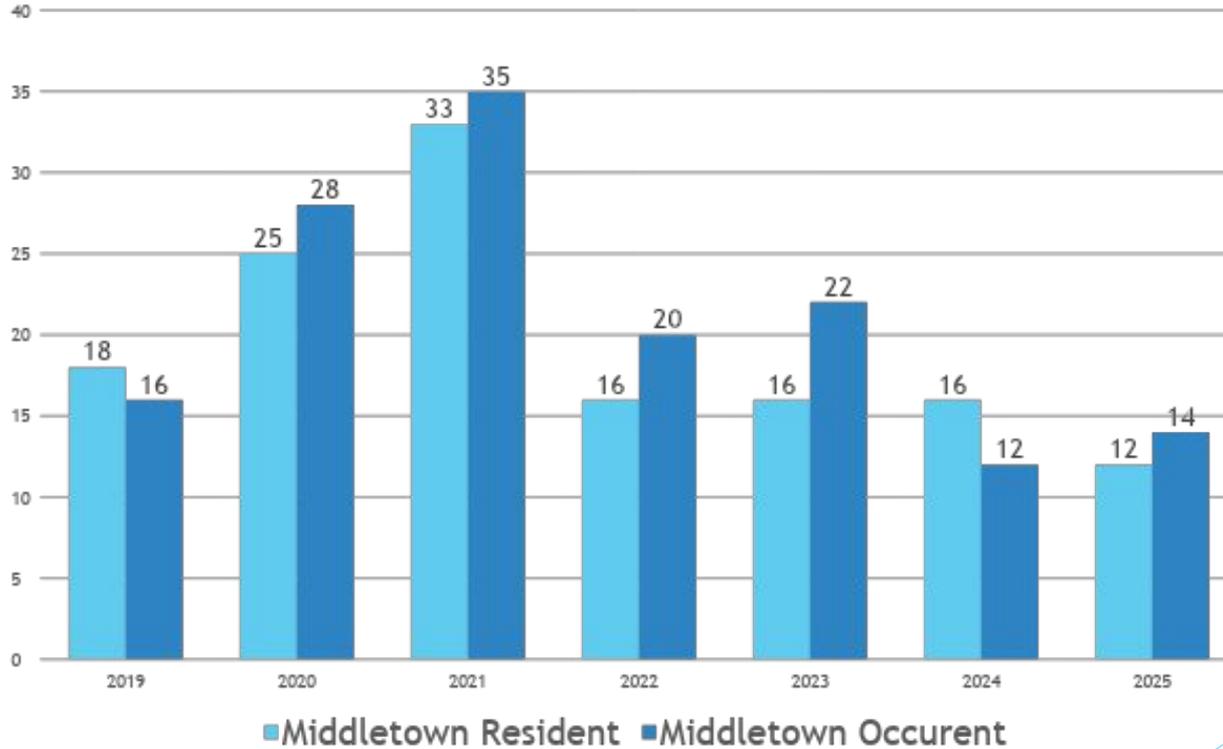


# Middletown Unintentional Overdose Deaths

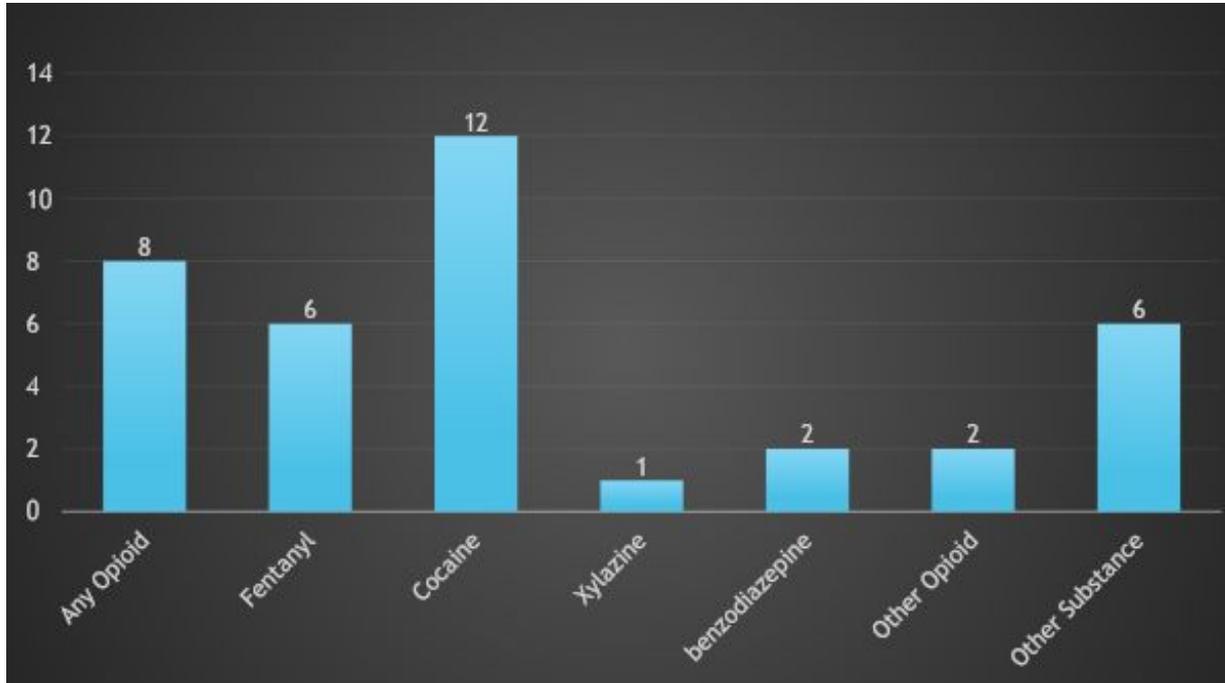
2019 - 2025  
(as of 10-6-25)

Source: Office of the CT Chief Medical  
Examiner

## Middletown Unintentional Overdose Deaths 2019-2025



# 2025 Unintentional Fatal Overdoses 14 Occurrences in Middletown Cause of Death (by substance)





Spotlight

# Presentation

**Kimber King and Stephen Murray**

SafeSpot

<https://safe-spot.me/>



# Workgroup Updates

# Committee / Workgroup Updates

## Harm Reduction / Intervention Workgroup

- Recovery Friendly Community - work continues; no new updates
- Group meets: 4th Tuesday of the month @ 10am, Zoom
- Interested in joining? Email Catherine Rees  
[catherine.rees@midhosp.org](mailto:catherine.rees@midhosp.org)



# Committee / Workgroup Updates

## Recovery Coach / Peer Support Workgroup

- Resource awareness
  - Community service utilization
- 
- Group meets: 3rd Thursday of the month @ 3pm, Zoom
  - Interested in joining? Email Rev. Anderson  
[revrmanderson@gmail.com](mailto:revrmanderson@gmail.com)





# Underway & Standing Agenda Items

# Underway, Considerations & Standing Agenda Items

Planned / Underway	Standing Agenda Items	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No new updates</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CT Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee (OSAC) Updates<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">OSAC Website</a></li><li><a href="#">OSAC Bylaws</a></li></ul></li><li>• Legislative / Policy Updates<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Opioid Prevention Center in Connecticut</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Definition of Task Force geographic area</li><li>• CLEAR-type concept</li></ul>





# Member Announcements

## Any Member Announcements?



## Task Force Member Spotlight



Please contact Catherine Rees at [catherine.rees@midhosp.org](mailto:catherine.rees@midhosp.org)  
if you would like to give a member spotlight



# Annual Dates

## Annual Dates

- SAMSHA's Prevention Day - February 3, 2025
- National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day - April 2025 (date TBD)
- National Prevention Week - May 11-17, 2025
- Overdose Awareness Day - August 31st
- Substance Use Prevention Month - October
- National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day - October 2025 (date TBD)

# Greater Middletown Opioids Task Force

Middletown Opioids Settlement  
Needs Survey  
Presentation for GMOTF Task  
Force Meeting January 21, 2025





# Goals for 2025 Survey Themes

# Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey Results

- Themes:
  - Access / Resource Availability and Awareness
  - Training
  - Collaboration
- Using the results of the Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey to guide the GMOTF areas of focus / goals.



## Survey Theme: Access / Resource Availability and Awareness Themes

### Barriers / Suggestions

#### Access to Care:

- Access to appointments.
- Availability of medications, including pain medication.
- "Good" treatment.
- Not enough beds; long wait times.
- Van hours are limited and Reach Navigators cut down on length of service.
- Uninsured / Cost

#### Navigators / Coaches:

- More community navigators are needed.
- More recovery coaches.
- Funding towards case management and social work and housing navigators.
- Peer support program.
- Outreach and support to individuals hanging out on Main Street.

#### Social Drivers of Health:

- Transportation:
  - Provide bus passes to social service agencies to distribute in support of wellness needs not covered by NEMT.
  - Free transportation for non-medical needs (to access other services, parks, social activities, shopping).
- Housing:
  - Affordable housing.
  - Homelessness.
- Unmet basic needs (including income; transportation).
- Help individuals who used opiates and are out of work pay bills.

#### Internal motivation:

- Testing for accountability and a gauge on treatment levels.

## Survey Theme: Access / Resource Availability and Awareness Themes

### Barriers / Suggestions

#### Resources:

- Advertising existing resources.
- Limited free resources.
- Free harm reduction.
- Places to hold support meetings.

#### Resource Awareness:

- Awareness of the community of where free products are available
- Unaware of a peer recovery program, if there is one it isn't well advertised but I believe it would be very beneficial.
- Visible care and support; where are the lawn signs or storefront flyers in support of harm reduction around here?

#### Provider Education on Resources:

- Distribution of information to inform care providers of resources for access to harm reduction products at no cost or covered by insurance with no copay for those insured.

#### Programming:

- Create person centered holistic programs.
- Free safe recreation center for day and evening hours.
- Educational programs

#### Personal Feelings:

- Shame / Guilt.
- Loneliness / Lack of healthy socialization.

#### Other:

- Everything a person dealing with substance misuse needs.
- Afraid of being reported.
- Funding to methadone clinics and suboxone for more frequent testing to determine effectiveness of treatment vs. harm reduction model.

## Survey Theme: Training

### Suggestions

#### General:

- Stigma
- Lack of empathy / feeling judged
- Have people care.
- Caring & understanding of the what, where and why's of their mental and physical issues.
- Getting to know the individuals using drugs and the issues leading to drug use.
- They don't take the time to understand what people are going through and why it has happened to them.

#### Community:

- More public awareness trainings.
- Training for how to use Narcan.

#### Providers / Healthcare Organizations:

- More trainings for providers on how to work collaboratively with all providers to fully serve the client.
- Many service providers are not trained properly or don't know of the exact needs of clients.
- More education & classes for all doctors & patients for mental and physical issues.
- Learn individuality. Each patient is different, one program doesn't fit all.

#### Pay Equity:

- Pay people to do the training.

#### Other:

- Confidentiality / Privacy.



## Survey Theme: Collaboration

### Suggestions

- Communication.
- They need more staff and a more cohesive work with the methadone and suboxone providers versus siloed services.



# Work Status / Tracking

# Completed Work

## Completed 2025

- Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey Analysis & Presentation (January 2025)
- Formation of Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds Grant Advisory Committee (February 2025)
- Shared Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey & Presentation of Results with GMOTF members to share with their networks (February 2025)
- City of Middletown Common Council Finance and Government Operations Committee meeting - approved GMOTF Grants Committee recommendations (2.26.25)
- City of Middletown Common Council meeting - approved GMOTF Grants Committee recommendations; (3) GMOTF members spoke in support of the recommendations (3.3.25)
- City of Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds Round 1 grant awards completed (March 2025)
- Pending Completion:
  - Formation of Fentanyl test strip GMOTF branded use instructions (English and Spanish)
  - Fentanyl test strip bags distribution and education
  - Formation of Recovery Support / Peer Support Workgroup



# Completed Work

## Completed 2024

- Formation of Middletown Opioids Settlement Funds Ad Hoc Committee (February 2024)
- Task Force Logo developed (March 2024)
- Development of Narcan How To educational piece in English and Spanish (August 2024)
- Participation in The Governor's Prevention Partnership Overdose Awareness Day Press Conference (8.28.24)
- Leave Behind Kits Project Launch (September 2024)
- Middletown Opioids Settlement Needs Survey - centering voices with lived experience to identify needs to guide distribution of Middletown opioids settlement funds (October 2024)
- Grants application process for Middletown opioids settlement funds (December 2024)
- Leave Behind Kit Distribution (December 2024)



# 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 2022)</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>



## Next Meeting

- Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 12pm, Zoom

