



HARM REDUCTION: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical to engaging with those who use substances and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives. It emphasizes kindness and autonomy, while also addressing stigma.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Harm reduction centers on respect and compassion, not coercion and punishment. Total abstinence isn't required for harm reduction services. Key principles include meeting people where they are, encouraging any positive change, and including those with lived experience of addiction as leaders.

EMPOWERING GOALS

Harm reduction lets people with substance use disorders set their own goals. Whether it's abstinence, reducing use, or other positive changes like reconnecting with family, all goals are welcomed. This empowers patients and increases their chances of success.

COMPASSION, NOT COERCION

Harm reduction replaces coercion with compassion. It empowers individuals to make decisions about their health, leading to higher rates of treatment success and lower infection and overdose rates.

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

Harm reduction programs keep drugs and paraphernalia off the streets, reducing crime and saving community resources. They improve lives and contribute to healthier communities overall.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS IN ACTION

BEDFORD, CONCORD, CARLISLE, LINCOLN, SUDBURY, WESTON & WAYLAND

Narcan (Naloxone) is available at these health departments.

RESOURCES

Al-Anon Family Groups of MA

(508) 366-0556 | ma-al-anon-alateen.org

Alcoholics Anonymous

12 Channel St., Boston, MA 02127

(617) 426-9444 | aaboston.org

Emerson Hospital Addiction Services

133 ORNAC, Concord, MA 01742

(978) 287-3520 | emersonhospital.org

Inpatient and outpatient detoxification, rehabilitation and consultations.

McLean Hospital 115 Mill St., Belmont, MA 02478

(800) 333-0338 | mcleanhospital.org

Alcohol and drug abuse treatment center.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information or access to harm reduction services, contact your local health department or check out these organizations:

SAMHSA NATIONAL HELPLINE

Confidential free help, from public health agencies, to find substance use treatment and information.

1-800-662-4357

MASSACHUSETTS OVERDOSE PREVENTION HOTLINE

Staffed 24/7 hotline of harm reductionists with lived or living experience with overdose

(800) 972-0590