



FISCAL YEAR 2023 (July through December 2022)
Report to the Governor, Legislature, and Attorney General

Rhode Island Statewide Opioid Abatement Account
January 3, 2023

Background:

In accordance with [Title 42-7.2-10. Appropriations and disbursements](#),” there is hereby created within the general fund of the state and housed within the budget of the office of health and human services a restricted receipt account entitled "Rhode Island Statewide Opioid Abatement Account" for the purpose of receiving and expending monies from settlement agreements with opioid manufacturers, pharmaceutical distributors, pharmacies, or their affiliates, as well as monies resulting from bankruptcy proceedings of the same entities. The executive office of health and human services shall deposit any revenues from such sources that are designated for opioid abatement purposes into the restricted receipt account. Funds from this account shall only to be used for forward-looking opioid abatement efforts as defined and limited any settlement agreements, state-city and town agreements, or court orders pertaining to the use of such funds.”

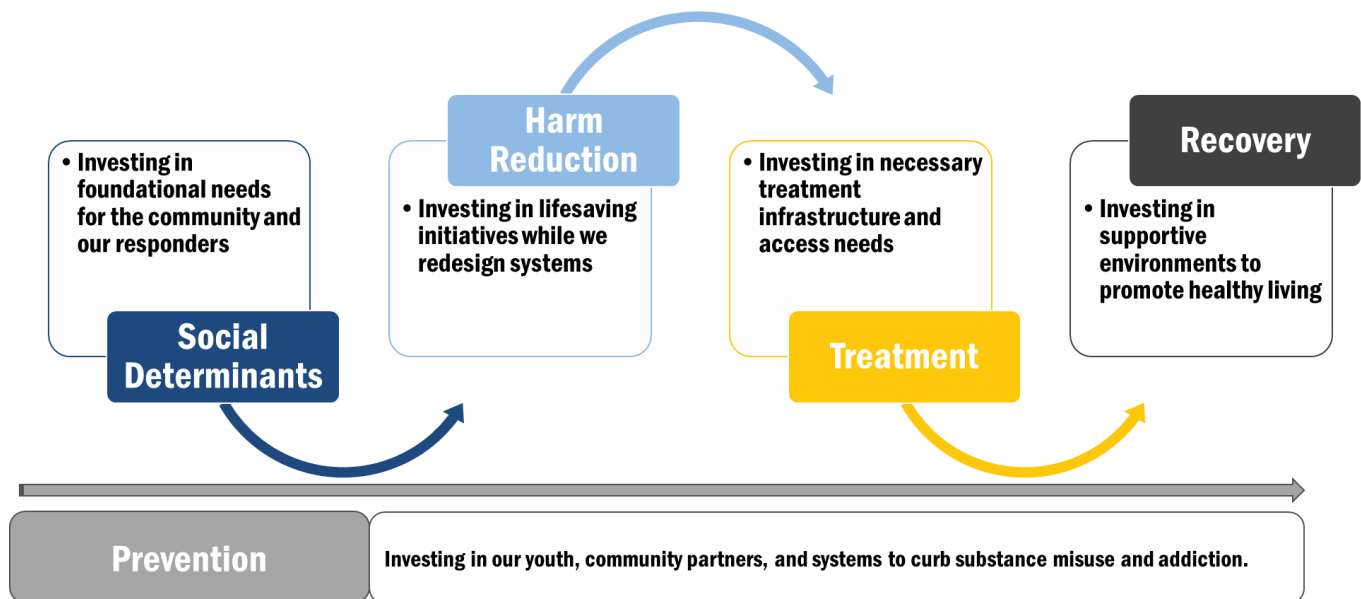
Decision-Making Framework:

This is the required report from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) on the expenditures that were funded using these monies in the Account’s first year. Recommendations for funding allocation were prioritized using our three core values at EOHHS: (1) Voice—listening to our community and providers, (2) Choice—making sure our systems are designed with options, and (3) Equity—infusing a focus on our most-impacted populations throughout our interventions, including prioritizing interventions that support black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities. Decision-making principles for the funding allocations centered around the following key frameworks—John’s Hopkins Guiding Principles and a Supportive Continuum of Care for Overdose Clients:

John’s Hopkins Guiding Principles

Spend money to save lives.	It may be tempting to use the dollars to fill holes in existing budgets rather than expand needed programs, but the Committee should use the funds to add to rather than replace existing spending.
Use evidence to guide spending.	At this point in the overdose epidemic, researchers, clinicians, and community partners have built a substantial body of evidence demonstrating what works and what does not. States and localities should use this information to make funding decisions.
Invest in youth prevention.	Support children, youth, and families by making long-term investments in effective programs and strategies for community change.
Focus on racial equity.	This process should be guided by public health leaders with the active engagement of people and families with lived experience, clinicians, as well as other
Develop a fair and transparent process for funding recommendations.	This process should be guided by public health leaders with the active engagement of people and families with lived experience, clinicians, as well as other key groups.
Consider future sustainability in all recommendations.	Although there may be some on-time funding recommendations, the Committee should consider the financial sustainability of all investments and try to plan for investments that can be sustained long-term.

Allocating Funding to Support Clients Through the Continuum of Care



Reporting Update:

Prior to the FY23 Budget passing, EOHHS worked with the Governor’s Office to seat the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee (OSAC). We also carried out an intensive process with members and participants in the Governor’s Overdose Task Force to collect proposals for evidence-based or evidence-informed projects which would help meet the state’s goals of mitigating opioid use: preventing overdoses and saving lives. After the FY23 budget took effect in July 2022, EOHHS staff worked with OSAC to develop a set of priorities for funding from the Task Force’s proposals. The OSAC made its recommendation to Acting Secretary Novais on what became 25 separate funding proposals for the first \$20 million available in August. Secretary Novais approved these recommendations in August and directed EOHHS staff to work with agency partners (the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals and the Rhode Island Department of Health) to procure the projects. From August through December, the team accomplished the following:

- Encumbered \$2,700,000 by creating approximately 20 contracts for basic needs, harm reduction, and school-based youth prevention projects. These projects have not had invoices paid yet.
- Obligated \$582,000 in Emergency Set-Aside programming and agency staffing for the Settlement Funds. We have spent \$46,948.82 for settlement staffing.
- Put \$10,050,000 into ten separate procurements for housing capital, opioid treatment services, the state’s Overdose Prevention Center (also known as Harm Reduction Center), community-based youth prevention programs, non-profit capacity building for opioid-focused non-profits, harm reduction technology, construction industry peer supports, and contingency management programs. All these procurements are in process – either in review, as open procurements, or preparing to be posted.
- Started hiring for programs within RIDOH to improve the speed of reporting and to provide support and care for substance exposed newborns. We have spent \$5,404.86 for data-focused staffing.

Rhode Island’s rapid use of the funds was highlighted by the Kaiser Family Foundation [Schools, Sheriffs, and Syringes: State Plans Vary for Spending \\$26B in Opioid Settlement Funds | Kaiser Health News \(khn.org\)](#).

Summary:

Now that procurement processes are underway, we expect to see the amount of spending increase substantially over the next months. We look forward to continuing to update the Governor’s Office and the General Assembly with the team’s progress. Please see the chart below for additional information.

Report: FY23 Opioid Settlement Dollars encumbered, obligated, in procurement, and planned for hiring

Encumbered:			
Program	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent by 12/31/22	Notes
Basic Needs	\$700,000		Allocated to 14 Harm Reduction and Recovery Programs for basic needs materials for people who use drugs, are in treatment, or are in recovery. Materials are being distributed, but the agencies have not yet invoiced or received payments.
Expanding Existing Street Outreach	\$500,000		Additional dollars for current harm reduction street outreach programs for staff support, recruitment, or retention. Agencies are expanding but have not yet invoiced or received payments.
Investment in School and Community-based Mental Health	\$1,500,000		Expanding the number of school-based prevention counselors, through Project Success. The agency is hiring, but has not yet invoiced or received payments.
Sub Total Encumbered	\$2,700,000		
Obligated:			
Program	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent by 12/31/22	Notes
Emergency Response Set-Aside	\$200,000		These dollars are supporting opioid-related services and needs for the 24/7 Cranston Street Armory Warming Station. The vendor has not yet invoiced or received payments.
Emergency Response Set-Aside	\$132,000		These dollars will support the buprenorphine hotline Bridge Program at RI Hospital, which allows people to sign up for this life-saving program over the phone.
Program Administration	\$250,000	\$46,948.82	EOHHS Payroll
Sub Total Obligated	\$582,000		

Procurements in Process:			
Program	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent by 12/31/22	Notes
Housing Capital, Operating, and Supportive Services	\$750,000		This funding will expand recovery housing stock particularly for Levels 3 & 4 Recovery Housing. It also braids \$250,000 of funding from the Department of Housing to provide housing support services for people who use drugs, to help them stay housed.
Expand Street Outreach	\$1,000,000		This procurement will support additional street outreach/harm reduction, with a focus on BIPOC Rhode Islanders. RFP in the process of being posted at Purchasing.
Harm Reduction Centers	\$2,000,000		This procurement will support the Harm Reduction Center approved by the General Assembly. RFP is in the process of being reviewed.
Bricks & Mortar Facility Investments	\$2,000,000		Two separate procurements will support the creation of new opioid treatment facilities for women and men. RFP is open, with a January 16 due date.
Investment in Community-Based Mental Health	\$2,500,000		These dollars will support new community-based opioid-related prevention activities. The state is working with the Rhode Island Foundation to provide grants to community organizations.
Non-Profit Capacity Building	\$750,000		These dollars will support capacity-building investments in nonprofit organizations. The state is working with the Rhode Island Foundation to provide grants to community organizations.
Harm Reduction Technologies	\$250,000		These dollars will support new technologies that will help harm reduction, housing, or social service programs get alerted when people who use drugs need help because of a suspected overdose. Negotiations are in process.
Recovery in Rhode Island's Construction Industry, with a focus on BIPOC Workers	\$500,000		These dollars will support peer outreach and education in Recovery in Rhode Island's Non-Residential Construction Industry, with a focus on BIPOC workers. Negotiations are in process.
Contingency Management	\$300,000		These dollars will support Contingency Management, an evidence-based treatment program for those with Stimulant Use Disorder. Negotiations are in process.
Sub Total Procurements in Process	\$10,050,000		

Hiring			
Program	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent by 12/31/22	Notes
Substance-Exposed Newborn	\$600,000		These dollars will support staff who work with pregnant Rhode Islanders who use drugs, to help them seek treatment and to support them in recovery. Hiring is in process.
Enhanced Surveillance/Data Analysis	\$620,000	\$5,404.86	These dollars will support staff to expand the data surveillance capacity at the RI Department of Health, to speed up data collection and reporting of overdoses and fatalities. Hiring is in process.
Project Evaluation	\$125,000		These dollars will support the hiring of a project evaluator and related vendors, to carry out data collection and help determine the value of these projects.
Sub Total Hiring	\$1,345,000		
Grand Total of Opioid Settlement Projects in Process			
	\$14,677,000	\$52,353.68	