

## Franklin/Williamson ROSC Council (FWRC)

### FY25 Community Needs Assessment



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#### Gaps Across the Continuum

The community needs assessments for Franklin and Williamson counties identified several barriers for individuals with substance use disorders, mental health challenges, and homelessness in various stages of recovery. In both, Franklin and Williamson counties, all areas of the continuum of care—health promotion, prevention, intervention/harm reduction, treatment, and recovery—are impacted by negative, macro-level factors such as limited economic opportunity and limited, or nonexistent, infrastructure. Additionally, perspectives on substance use within this county are heavily influenced by stigma and individuals lacking the understanding of SUD, mental health challenges, and homelessness. Also, the unawareness of resources is seen across the board through community partners, community members, people with lived experience, and those seeking recovery. This combination of socio-economic disadvantages, stigmatization, and unawareness results in barriers, not only for individuals seeking care but also for families and communities who are impacted by substance use. The gaps that were identified in our communities through information collected using community surveys, meeting with individuals seeking or living in recovery, monthly ROSC Council meetings and SWOT analysis for the community needs assessment suggest that these gaps within these counties play an extensive role creating barriers affecting all areas of the continuum of care.

The following is an analysis of the gaps that were identified in our communities through information collected using community surveys, meeting with individuals seeking or living in recovery, monthly ROSC Council meetings and SWOT analysis.

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1. **Transportation**- Currently there are two, limited, public transportation systems serving Franklin/ Williamson County. With the limits placed on the public transportation systems, it isn't efficient for those seeking to achieve or maintain recovery.
  - A. Individuals are limited to getting to the necessary appointments, meetings, and employment services that are available that are needed for them to achieve or maintain their recovery.
  - B. The lack of transportation in the area creates a lack of food security by not allowing individuals needing those services to be able to access them.
  
2. **Housing**- The lack of housing options for individuals seeking to achieve or maintain recovery poses significant challenges in their drive for recovery.
  - A. The amount of housing support is inadequate to the amount of housing needs in our communities.
  - B. The requirements and affordability for housing support are unobtainable for those who are currently experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, substance use disorder, or previous felony convictions.
  
3. **Food Security**- The lack of current and active food pantries in the communities causes a shortage of individuals to be able to feed their families adequately and consistently.
  - A. The lack of transportation also plays an important role in creating hardships for individuals who need rides to get to the current and active pantries. Those individuals unable to get there do NOT get served.
  - B. The requirements and forms often asked to be shown as proof of certain eligibility also creates a barrier to those needing services. Some individuals do not have a way to obtain the information needed and without proof are turned around without services.

4. **Follow-Up Treatment Services**- The lack of follow-up care for individuals re-entering into the community creates a barrier for those wishing to maintain their recovery.
  - A. Upon completion of a treatment program individuals are left on their own to continue to navigate their own recovery.
  - B. Without proper follow-up care individuals are unaware of the resources available in their communities and have limited sources to reach out to for guidance and direction.
  - C. Individuals unable to receive proper follow-up care are not supported in creating the balanced lifestyle needed in order or to live a recovery driven life.
  
5. **Residential Treatment Services**- Currently there aren't any inpatient treatment facilities located in Franklin/Williamson Counties.
  - A. The surrounding areas that do have inpatient treatment facilities have a lack of beds available for immediate treatment.
  - B. Without immediate treatment options available, among other gaps listed, individuals are resorted to continuing their unhealthy lifestyles driven by mental health issues and/or substance use disorder.
  
6. **Stigma**- Stigma towards substance use disorder, homelessness, mental health, and previous felony charges prevents individuals from receiving the recovery opportunities needed to establish and grow in the community.
  - A. Stigma creates several gaps causing an individual's barrier from receiving the recovery opportunities needed to live a healthy and productive life.
  - B. These gaps keep the individuals from important steps needed in their recovery such as, but not limited to housing, employment, community acceptance, and support.
  - C. Stigma is preventing individuals from living a balanced lifestyle which is a crucial part for them to achieve and maintain their recovery.

7. **Education on SUD, Mental Health, Homelessness and Resource Information**- The lack of education individuals have on understanding substance use disorder, mental health challenges and homelessness create a barrier for individuals seeking recovery or being able to find the resources available to seek help.
- A. The community members that lack knowledge of the above-mentioned problems in our community or the resources available to those seeking recovery creates a barrier in access to care for those seeking services and those willing to help.
  - B. Individuals cannot get help that they do not know exists.
  - C. Individuals cannot help others when they are unaware of the resources that exist.
  - D. The lack of understanding SUD, mental health challenges and homelessness creates stigma in our communities because of the judgement occurring against those struggling by other community members.

### **Community Readiness to Support ROSC**

As of this assessment, the professional and lived experience recovery communities have demonstrated enthusiasm and willingness to participate with the Franklin/Williamson ROSC council efforts, presently being headed by lead agency, Take Action Today. The council is continuously seeking to bring new stakeholders to the table in order to ensure that a wide array of roles and perspectives is represented.

Community readiness is also deemed positive due to the following:

- Strong turnout at ROSC Council meetings.
- Growth of several sectors as ROSC Council Members.
- Good representation from lived experience communities.
- High level of willingness by SUD treatment organizations, local businesses, and recovery service providers to participate in council meetings and events to provide information on community resources.

Included in this Community Needs Assessment on the following page, is the SWOT Analysis conducted of Franklin and Williamson Counties that were identified in our communities through information collected using community surveys, meeting with

individuals seeking or living in recovery, community members, and monthly ROSC Council meetings. We will use this SWOT Analysis to continue to address weaknesses and threats and continue to build on the strengths and opportunities in our communities as we build and maintain FWRC.

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## **SWOT ANALYSIS**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FWRC ROSC Council</li> <li>• Take Action Today Resource Centers in Franklin and Williamson Counties.</li> <li>• Lighthouse shelter in Marion</li> <li>• Knight Shield in West Frankfort</li> <li>• Gateway in Carbondale and Fellowship House in Anna will take Franklin/ Williamson County residents for treatment.</li> <li>• Centerstone treatment in Williamson and Franklin Counties.</li> <li>• Land of Lincoln Legal services.</li> <li>• Christopher Rural Health Mental/Behavioral Health Services.</li> <li>• TAT Warming Center located in Benton.</li> <li>• Community agencies are partnering and sharing resource information through FWRC.</li> <li>• ROE 21 McKinney Vento supporting our homeless youth population.</li> <li>• Local businesses partnering with us to "Pop-up" and hand out resource information.</li> <li>• Male Oxford Home in Williamson County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of public transportation.</li> <li>• Lack of employment opportunities for felons, or those with criminal history.</li> <li>• Lack of homeless shelter, or housing opportunities.</li> <li>• Lack of active food pantries or transportation to get to food pantries.</li> <li>• Lack of mental health services.</li> <li>• Lack of support groups or knowledge of them.</li> <li>• No inpatient substance-use treatment or mental health treatment in Franklin or Williamson County.</li> <li>• Lack of transitional housing for those re-entering society from treatment.</li> <li>• Lack of adolescent mental health and substance use services.</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge of resources in the community.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to build partnerships and collaborations in the communities through FWRC.</li> <li>• Get the community involved with recovery events and happenings in the area.</li> <li>• Participate in community events to spread awareness of FWRC.</li> <li>• Use social media pages to share resources in our communities.</li> <li>• Recognize successful recovery stories and have them shared during meetings and events.</li> <li>• Service/Volunteer opportunities through FWRC and TAT for the recovery community.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of recovery groups and bring new ones into the communities through TAT.</li> <li>• Plan upcoming 'Family Fun" and "Recovery Fun" nights in the communities to bring awareness, educate the community, reduce stigma, and offer PLE's healthy connections.</li> <li>• Create PLE subcommittee to get them more involved in the community and FWRC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities have several abandoned houses that people are staying in and create danger for those neighbors.</li> <li>• Cars and homes are being broken into because people are stealing from others to meet their needs.</li> <li>• The lack of understanding SUD, mental health challenges and homelessness creates stigma in our communities.</li> <li>• Residents are uneducated on recovery and resources available to help those in their communities.</li> <li>• Absent parents or parents struggling with addiction, so more grandparents are having to care for children.</li> <li>• Stigma around substance use and mental health are keeping our communities closed off to the fact that "Recovery is possible".</li> <li>• Lack of follow-up care for those re-entering just puts them right back out to the same environment they left giving them a lesser chance of long-term recovery.</li> </ul>