

# **FY25 Community Needs/Resource Assessment: Madison/St. Clair County**

ROSC / Lead Agency: Metro East Recovery Council (MERC) / Chestnut Health Systems



# Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

Demographics.....4

Survey Results from MERC community survey and county IPLANs.....5

Available Resources: Community Asset/Resource Map.....7

Gaps Analysis and Identified Areas to Strengthen.....7

Community Readiness to support the ROSC.....9

Technical Assistance Priorities for Expanding ROSC in the Community.....14

References, Resources, and additional information.....15

Appendix A ROSC Community Survey Results.....16

Appendix B FY25 Gap Analysis.....29

## Introduction

The following includes information regarding Madison and St. Clair counties in Illinois. Portions of these counties are part of the St. Louis Metro East and are among the most populated IL counties south of Chicago and its surrounding counties. The ongoing Opioid Epidemic has greatly impacted these counties with most recent reports showing an opioid fatality rate per 100,000 capita in Madison County of 27.4 and 22.7 in St. Clair County, which ranks them amongst the highest in the state (IL Department of Public Health's Overdose Report). While these numbers show a decrease in overdose deaths, which mirrors national and statewide trends, this continues to be an alarming number of preventable deaths. It should be noted that these decreases are not seen in underserved areas or in communities of color at the same rate as other areas (state and nationwide). MERC recently conducted a community survey (based on ten core questions SUPR presented) and has also worked to compile information from Madison and St. Clair County's 2021-2026 IPLAN, the St. Clair County Health Improvement Plan, and the St. Clair County Health Department 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to identify: local strengths and resources that provide support to those seeking and those who are in early recovery, and to identify opportunities for growth and strengthening of resources. Both Madison and St. Clair County have identified Substance Use among their top priorities to address in the coming years due to the ongoing impact of substance abuse and ultimately the continued high number of overdose deaths.

MERC will work in collaboration with county health departments, local behavioral health providers, established coalitions, various community harm reductionists, State Opioid Response funded programs, Opioid Settlement funded programs, local RCO, and the identified ROSC community sectors, both to complement identified areas of strength and help cultivate identified areas of need.

The purpose of this Community Needs/Resource assessment is to highlight current resources and evaluate the community's ability to identify and access them, evaluate opportunities to increase public awareness of established resources, and identify gaps in resources/services that the ROSC can help identify stakeholders and providers to address.

## Madison and St. Clair County Demographics

<i>census.gov</i>	<b>Madison</b>	<b>St. Clair</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	262,752	251,018
Male	48.50%	48.40%
Female	51.50%	51.60%
<b>Population by Age</b>		
under 5 years	4.90%	5.30%
5-18 years	21%	22.70%
19-64 years	55%	54%
65 years and older	19.10%	18%
<b>Population by Race</b>		
White alone	86.30%	64.40%
Black Alone	9.70%	30.60%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	0.40%	0.40%
Asian Alone	1.10%	1.60%
Hispanic or Latino	4.40%	5.20%
Two or more	2.50%	2.90%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$74,800	\$70,178
<b>Persons in Poverty, percent</b>	11.10%	13.40%

## **MERC community survey, focus groups, and county IPLAN results**

### ROSC FY25 Community Survey

Over the past several months, Community Health Specialists from MERC and other council members have collected information from residents of St. Clair and Madison County. SUPR provided the ROSC with a template including ten questions and allowed each ROSC to propose additional questions before giving the final approval to conduct the survey. MERC used Survey Monkey to conduct this survey and worked to disseminate it digitally by sharing a QR code and a link to the survey. A digital flyer was also created, presented at council meetings, and shared with MERC's email distribution list (who were also asked to share). The QR code was also printed on flyers that were left in many agencies and businesses so people could take or scan to take the survey. Business card sized flyers were also distributed throughout the service area. MERC also worked to engage underrepresented communities in this survey and went to underserved areas and collaborated with several local food pantries to meet people and ask them to fill out physical copies of the survey. This community survey consisted of the following questions:

1. *People who use drugs deserve respect*
2. *People with a mental illness deserve respect*
3. *Medication Assisted Recovery-MAR (which is the use of medications to treat substance use disorders e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) is an effective treatment for substance use disorders*
4. *It is difficult to find healthcare providers who offer Medication Assisted Recovery-MAR (which is the use of medications to treat substance use disorders e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) in my community.*
5. *Harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs reduce the risk of drug use*
6. *It is difficult to find harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs in my community*
7. *It is difficult to find mental health and substance use treatment services in my community*
8. *We should increase government funding on treatment options for mental health and substance use disorders*
9. *Everyone in my community can get help for mental health regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status*
10. *Everyone in my community can get help for substance use regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status*
11. *I know where to start if someone I know/love is seeking help for SUD or mental health barriers*
12. *I know where to go for youth substance use services in or close to my county*
13. *I feel comfortable/confident asking for these services for myself*

MERC received 248 responses from this survey. This data is being used to inform the recovery council in the areas of awareness of and access to treatment, stigma related to accessing treatment and attitudes about those in need of and/or engaging in services. Efforts were made to collect data from a variety of communities and individuals within Madison and St. Clair County. It was encouraging to see that around 76% of responders reported feeling that people who use substances deserve respect and around 86%

reported people with a mental illness deserve respect, however this still indicates a significant amount of stigma is present in the community. The data shows a range of awareness about available treatment services with around 53% of participants reporting they know where to find mental health and substance use services. However, only around 20% reported knowing where to find MAR services and 30% reported knowing where to find harm reduction services like Narcan and Syringe service programs. This data indicates a gap in education about available services. This data also shows a variety of responses in regard to the availability of mental health and substance use services for everyone regardless of income, insurance status, race, etc. with around 42% agreeing that mental health services are available to all and 38% agreeing that substance use services are available to all. This indicates a gap in available services to the community at large. While around 57% of participants reported knowing where to start if they or someone they love is seeking help for substance use or mental health concerns, MERC would like to see progress made with the nearly 30% that reported not knowing how to start.

For specific data from each of the 13 areas listed above, refer to appendix A.

#### Basic Info from HSHS 2024 Madison County Needs Assessment

HSHS conducted a community health needs assessment with the intention of identifying and prioritizing community health needs in Madison County. While doing so, they reviewed several different sources of data and also developed and circulated a community survey to obtain first-hand information about health areas of concern from 85 community stakeholders. They saw six initial areas of need identified: Affordable Housing, Chronic conditions, Mental/behavioral health, Oral health, Substance use disorder, and transportation. They worked these areas through a process that included a forced ranking exercise and the also solicited input from community members. After this process, HSHS approved the recommended priorities and they were adopted by their board of directors as the community health needs assessment priorities: 1. Mental/behavioral health. 2. Chronic Conditions. 3. Substance use disorders. The top three areas of concern gleaned from this process demonstrate the level of effort needed by the ROSC to provide support and build capacity for recovery support services.

#### Basic Info from HSHS 2024 St. Clair County Needs Assessment

In partnership with St. Elizabeth's Hospital, BJC Memorial Hospital, East Side Health District, and the St. Clair County Health Department a community health needs assessment was conducted with the intention of identifying and prioritizing community health needs in St. Clair County. During this process they developed a community advisory council that used a forced ranking exercise to narrow down the number of health focus areas. They also conducted a community survey and received 419 responses that further prioritized needs. This process started with fourteen initial areas of need: Academic achievement, access to behavioral health services, access to healthy lifestyle, access to mental health services, chronic diseases, community safety, food insecurity, housing, maternal and infant health, poverty, sexually transmitted infection, substance use disorder, suicide, and workforce preparedness. After working through their process, HSHS approved the recommended priorities and they were adopted by their board of directors as the community health needs assessment priorities: 1. Mental and behavioral health. 2. Chronic conditions. 3. Healthy lifestyle. The prioritization of mental and behavioral health needs, again reflects the need for the ROSC to provide support and build capacity for recovery support services.

### Responses from Madison County IPLAN (388 Responses from Community Health Assessment Survey)

Madison County residents were asked to report on the most urgent health issues the county is facing, and respondents listed mental health and substance misuse as number one and two on the list (with number three being access to care). These concerns outranked things like cancer, heart disease, obesity, etc. The perception of the county respondents is supported by the overdose trends that continue to surpass state and national averages with the most up-to-date data showing an opioid fatality rate per 100,000 capita of 37.1 (in comparison Cook county is 34.4) The health department took this information into account and the Madison County Board of Health adopted mental health, substance use, and access to care as health priority areas. Chestnut Health Systems (MERC's lead agency) was identified as one of the counties major resources to help address these concerns.

## **Available Resources: Community Asset/Resource Map**

The Community Health Specialist with MERC have recently updated and completed a Community Asset/Resource Map that outlines available social service and other community resources. This list includes the address, phone number, and other relevant info/brief description of services provided. This list includes but is not limited to SUD/MH providers, MAR services, recovery support services, recovery housing locations, and general assets (such as parks, libraries, transportation services, etc.). This service area, considered a part of the St. Louis Metro East, offers a fairly robust list of treatment providers and resources, however there are noted gaps and concerns related to people's ability to connect with needed services at times.

To see the FY 25 Community Asset/Resource Map: <https://www.govst.edu/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=58804>

## **Gap Analysis and Identified Areas to Strengthen**

As noted above from the community survey data, the gap analysis, and identified concerns in the county IPLANs, despite having many services available, there are gaps and areas for improvement in this service area.

### Gaps identified from the ROSC community survey

Stigma and negative perceptions about people how use substances and people who are experiencing mental health concerns can be seen based on reports from participants in the community survey (not deserving respect was reported around 20% in the survey). This sentiment was also recorded during focus group meetings and community interviews. This shows a need for ongoing community education and stigma reduction.

Another identified gap is awareness about available treatment and recovery services as well as how to access these services. In the community survey, 47% of participants reported they did not know how to access mental health and substance abuse services. Additionally, only 20% reported knowing where to access Medication Assisted Recovery Services and 30% reported knowing where to find harm reduction services such as Narcan. These gaps highlight the need to educate/inform the public about available services and how to access them.

A noted gap can be seen in regard to accessibility of mental health and substance use services regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual

orientation, or citizenship with 58% of the community survey participants reporting they do not agree that everyone can access mental health services and 62% reporting they do not agree that everyone can access substance use services. This information provides an opportunity to look closer at the data collected to identify communities within the service area that are underserved and underrepresented.

Based on the community survey, 30% of participants reported they did not know where to start if they or someone they love needs substance use or mental health services. This shows a need for community level education and promotion of services available and how to access them.

#### Gaps identified from the FY25 Gap Analysis

Although there has been work happening in regard to stigma-reduction, the above referenced community survey as well as the gap analysis continues to show a prevalence of negative attitudes and perceptions in this service area about those community members who use substances, those with mental health concerns, and the need to seek treatment and recovery support services. This shows a need for ongoing community education and stigma reduction.

Another gap identified was recreational alternatives to substance use. Although there are sober activities available for those who engage in traditional 12-Step meetings/home groups, (such as camping trips, float trips, movie events, BBQs, etc.) these activities are not widely promoted outside of the 12-Step community. The local RCO has worked to establish and promote recovery friendly events (such as the annual Rockin' 4 Recovery) and family friendly recovery events (such as fall pumpkin carving). The ROSC has been able to help support and promote these events, and they have seen some success regarding attendance. There is, however, an opportunity for more regular availability of these types of recreational alternatives to substance use.

As referenced previously in gaps identified from the community survey, the gap analysis also shows a need to educate the public about MAR services, including what they are and where they can be accessed.

While harm reduction services have seen a lot of momentum in some parts of Illinois, Madison and St. Clair County do have many of these services available beyond naloxone training/distribution. Safe Syringe Access was identified in the gap analysis as a service that is not readily available in our service area. The stigma associated with persons who use substances logically carries over to harm reduction services such as safe syringe access, which informs the need to educate/inform the public about why these programs are important.

While transition of care between levels of care has programming in place, there continues to be a gap in this area. For example, there are opportunities to inform first responders about recovery coaches at various agencies that could be connected to people who survive an overdose, there are opportunities to connect SOR warm hand off staff with multiple recovery support services, etc.

To view FY25 Gap Analysis in its entirety, refer to Appendix B



## Community Readiness to Support the ROSC



### Support from the ROSC Council Community Sectors

One way that MERC is evaluating the community's readiness to provide support to the local ROSC is by examining the Membership Report that outlines attendance by the fifteen sectors identified by SUPR and the council meeting participants from said sectors. Engagement from a sector indicates buy in from the participants to the belief that recovery orientated systems of care are worthy of time, energy, and resources to help support those seeking recovery support in the community. In this setting, support can look different from sector to sector and event from participating to participant. One sector may be engaged on a level that support looks like attending council meetings to share and take information back to their peers. Another sector may be engaged on a level where support looks like participating in community events the ROSC is hosting. While another sector may be engaged on a level where physical attendance is challenging but support comes in the form of disseminating information. These sectors are identified as:

1. *Person with Lived Experience*
2. *Recovery Supports*
3. *Faith-Based Groups*
4. *Family/Parents*
5. *Service Providers*
6. *State/Local/Tribal/Government*

7. *Substance Use Treatment Organizations*
8. *Healthcare*
9. *Law Enforcement*
10. *Judicial*
11. *Volunteer/Civic*
12. *Education/School*
13. *Youth-Serving Organizations*
14. *Media*
15. *Business*

Current level of support/opportunities for support from community sectors:

*Person with Lived Experience:* MERC has made efforts to build an Advisory Board of Persons with Lived Experience (PLE) and has been successful in assembling a small group of individuals. During the past year, this Advisory Board has begun meeting monthly with the ROSC Coordinator to help drive planning of outreach events and to review the council's current Strategic Plan. They have provided additional support to the ROSC by networking with other PLEs to share about the work of the ROSC, to invite and encourage them to engage in the council, to invite and encourage them to get involved in the work and activities the ROSC is involved in, and to build a greater presence in the community. This group of PLEs played a role in getting the ROSC's recent community survey distributed to the recovery community as well as to people who use substances. The support MERC has seen from this sector has grown exponentially from previous years, however, there remains room for increased support in this area. Specifically, MERC would like to see increased representation in the council from PLEs. The PLEs would in turn participate in community events such as Overdose Awareness Day, Recovery Month events, ongoing outreach and recovery support events/activities, have a connection to the various service provider's engagement/recovery support staff to help connect people to treatment and recovery support services, and help support stigma reduction campaigns.

*Recovery Supports:* This sector regularly demonstrates support by engaging with the ROSC. One area this can be seen is the relationship between MERC and the local RCO, Amare. Amare has regular representation at the monthly council meetings, has staff who serve on MERC's subcommittees, and the ROSC and RCO regularly collaborate to support of each other's work and community outreach. An area of opportunity for further collaboration would be for MERC's Advisory Board to network with Amare's recovery coaches to increase awareness of RCO services/functions so they can help connect people to services. An opportunity for growth in this community sector is improving relationships with Recovery Supportive Housing. Service providers that have supportive housing and companies like Oxford House Inc. will attend meetings when invited to share about their programming, however MERC would like to see an ongoing investment from these entities that allow for their leadership, staff, and/or benefactors to engage in the ROSC. As noted in the PLE section in the aforesaid, there is also opportunity for growth in the area of Recovery Support staff employed by the various service providers (and other organizations) to engage with MERC's Advisory Board in an effort to build/strengthen this network of people who can link people to tx/recovery services, grow awareness within the community, and support stigma reduction campaigns.

*Faith-Based Groups:* MERC received support from the Center for Community Engagement's Illinois Faith and Recovery Collaborative. This group has networked with many of the churches and communities of

faith in MERC's service area. Support comes from this group in the form of regular attendance at monthly council meetings. This group has also supported community events MERC has led or been a part of during the past year. During the past year there has been some traction with some local churches who have invited MERC to participate in community events they host. MERC has also helped make connections with local churches who have allowed council members to be present at food pantry days to solicit people to fill out the ROSC Community Survey. Increased support from the Faith-Based community sector's local pastors and Ministerial Alliances would be greatly welcomed and presents an opportunity for MERC to focus on, in an effort to tap into their resources that may be available to the recovery community and also connect those they reach with available recovery support services.

*Family/Parents:* This community sector represents an area where there is opportunity for engagement. In the past, MERC had regular representation from Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL) who provide support meetings to parents and other family members who have a loved one dealing with substance use. Reconnecting with PAL could bring renewed support from this sector. MERC would also like to see increased support from Family/Parents willing to share their experience and expertise and can engage in council meetings, contribute to workgroups, and assist in the development of the council's strategic plan. Support from this group would also help efforts to bring awareness to the community, reduce stigma, and also evaluate strengths and gaps in resources.

*Service Providers:* MERC has on-going relationships with our several local service providers, and we continue to take opportunities to grow and strengthen these relationships. The Harm Reduction sub section, specifically the local Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) team, of this sector show ongoing support to MERC by engaging in monthly council meetings, attending community events hosted or shared by MERC, and disseminating resource information provided by MERC. MERC does see support from Employment Programs in the form of monthly council meeting attendance, but there are for sure opportunities for further support in the form of increased participation in community events to share information about employment available to those new to recovery. Service Providers who have programing for the unhoused and programing for violence prevention also represent opportunities for increased support. These programs work with a vulnerable population that, if engaged with MERC, could bring valuable perspectives and voices to the ROSC.

*State/Local/Tribal Government:* An area of support from this sector comes from both the St. Clair and Madison County 708 Mental Health Boards. These groups have traditionally attended monthly council meetings, shared information about community events MERC is involved in, shared resource information provided by MERC, and sponsored community meetings/trainings that are in alignment with the work of the ROSC. These 708 Boards also provide some funding to local treatment and recovery support providers and encourage those they fund to engage with the ROSC. Opportunities for improved support can be found in relationships or lack of relationships with other local, county, and state officials. MERC has representatives that certainly support behavioral health and recovery support services and having their representation in MERC would go a long way in bringing additional awareness and support to the ROSC.

*Substance Use Treatment Organizations:* MERC has had ongoing support from it's lead agency who provides a range of substance use treatment ranging from outpatient to residential (including crisis residential and withdrawal management). In the past year, this support has grown substantially from other local providers including Gateway Foundation, Centerstone, and Illinois Recovery Center, all of

which offer strong substance use treatment services. Support from these organizations has looked like regular attendance at meetings, increased collaboration with MERC to discuss ways to help people access services, and increased discussion about how to connect those leaving residential treatment to local recovery supports. An opportunity for additional support echoes the previous call to increase communication with MERC's Advisory Board and PLEs to build a network of recovery coaches and support staff who can be available to quickly be connected to anyone seeking services, no matter what organization they work for.

*Healthcare:* MERC sees support from this sector in the form of engagement from some local hospitals who have representation at monthly council meetings where they share health initiatives they are working on (typically in relation to opioid use and its related health impact), share resources provided by MERC, and they also have contributed at times to community events MERC is involved with. There are opportunities for more of the local hospital systems to join the council to promote their programs and initiatives related to health and wellness, as substance use/mental health/and suicide are routinely identified as areas of concern in hospital needs assessments. MERC also regularly sees representation from the St. Clair and Madison County Health Departments at the monthly council meetings.

*Law Enforcement:* The community sector of Law Enforcement in this service area varies in their involvement and support of the ROSC. Local and County departments do not typically have representation at monthly council meetings or at community-based events. They are, however, responsive and will accept resource information and connect with the OEND regularly. The council has seen regular meeting representation from Illinois State Police who have been willing to promote the work MERC is doing and has also shared events and initiatives the ISP is involved with to help engage the recovery community. MERC continues to grow and strengthen this share of our membership roster; we are looking at ways to create greater opportunities for support. Increasing support from law enforcement would result in the opportunity for the recovery community and service providers to collaborate with law enforcement and help reshape perceptions and stigma directed at both law enforcement and people who use substances.

*Judicial:* This community sector sees engagement and support from the St. Clair County probation department whose representative attends most monthly council meetings and serves on MERC's re-entry subcommittee. Beyond this, however, there is much opportunity for engagement and support from the Judicial sector. MERC's lead agency, Chestnut Health Systems, has a robust Drug Court program and engagement on some level with MERC could result in PLEs becoming involved with the ROSC. This could lead to support at community level events and strategic planning as noted in some of the aforesaid areas.

*Volunteer/Civic:* St. Clair and Madison Counties both have local coalitions (St. Clair County Drug Prevention Alliance and the Partnership for Drug Free Communities) that share some of the same values as the ROSC. These coalitions have several members who are also on the ROSC council and work to support MERC by attending monthly meetings, making connections with shared stakeholders, disseminating resource information, and collaborating on community outreach initiatives. While these coalitions tend to see ups and downs in their own meeting attendance and engagement, MERC also able to help some of their efforts. An opportunity of increased support could come in the form of engagement with additional clubs and groups that may be interested in helping support those in the recovery community. Making these connections could result in finding people/groups that can provide

financial assistance to someone entering recovery housing or similar types of support. It can also bring awareness to more people in the community which in turn would contribute to efforts to reduce stigma.

*Education/Schools:* MERC does see support from this sector from local colleges and universities, specifically Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Southwestern Illinois College (Granite City campus), and Lewis and Clark Community College. While these schools do not traditionally attend monthly council meetings, they do share information about collegiate events that are aligned with the work of MERC and have invited the ROSC to participate in on campus events such as resource fairs and campaigns to bring awareness to behavioral health concerns impacting their student body. These colleges have also been willing to share resources provided by MERC. While this level of collaboration is effective, there are opportunities for increased levels of support from this sector. These colleges and universities have representatives that certainly support behavioral health and recovery support services and having their representation and voice included in MERC would go a long way in bringing additional awareness and support to the ROSC and the goals of reducing stigma and linking people to recovery support services.

*Media:* There is currently no representation from the media sector in MERC. This is an opportunity for growth and MERC is seeking input from council members who may be able to help address the lack of a media presence. Once we establish a connection with the media sector, we must give accurate information that it intended to reduce stigma and provide information about available treatment and recovery support services and how to access them. Working with the media will provide opportunities to use inclusive and supportive language in an effort combat stereotypes and address stigma associated with those experiencing mental health issues and those who are experiencing problems related to their substance use. Having a media presence with MERC would also allow the ROSC to highlight the work of all of it's members and community stakeholders that are working to connect the community with the services and resources they have available.

*Business:* There is currently no representation from local businesses or any of the Chamber Of Commerce in St. Clair or Madison County at the monthly ROSC council meetings. However, this sector does show some support in the way of allowing MERC to place flyers that share resources and information about community activities and "yard signs" in support of upcoming events (such as Overdose Awareness Day as well as promoting MERC). This indicates that increased representation from this sector is possible with further exploration and efforts to initiate more direct engagement from businesses. Their presence and value to the community provide an opportunity to bring awareness to the community driven initiatives MERC is promoting.

#### *Support/opportunities for support from the community at large*

As noted above, most community sectors in both St. Clair and Madison County demonstrate support for the ROSC and the efforts MERC is doing educate the community and grow capacity for recovery support services. There are also areas for further collaboration and increased support from each community sector. Growing representation from each sector in the ROSC council would in turn grow the support from the stakeholders and the impact the ROSC could have on this service area. Another opportunity for support from the community comes in the form of increasing volunteers to help with community outreach events. This includes council members and others who are willing to invest time and energy into planning, promoting, and performing outreach. Support from the community at large would look like increased attendance at events MERC is hosting or promoting such as Overdose Awareness events,

Recovery Month events, etc. The more the community engages in these activities, attention to the efforts of the ROSC will grow. This in turn will promote treatment and recovery support services, promote overdose prevention education and other harm reduction services, and will help extinguish the stigma associated with needing or seeking treatment and/or recovery support services.

## **Technical Assistance Priorities for Expanding ROSC in the Community**

An identified area of focus for technical assistance is for MERC to build awareness of available treatment and recovery support services in St. Clair and Madison County. This can include campaigns to educate the community and highlight the types of services that are available, where they are available, and how they can be accessed.

Although related to the above-mentioned, Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) services will be a dedicated technical assistance area of focus for MERC. The past year has seen the expansion of warm hand-off programs within BJC's Hospital system which has made these services easier to access for individuals wanting to start MAR and provides more opportunities to hand these patients off to the providers they will continue their services with.

Another identified area of focus for technical assistance to expand the ROSC will be in regard to collaboration with media outlets (press releases) and developing a greater social media presence to share information, highlight recovery stories, promote recovery support services, and engage with the public. This will also include grass roots type outreach such as passing out and hanging flyers/resource information in public spaces that allow it. These efforts will promote the ROSC and its initiatives including building capacity for recovery support services and reducing stigma.

MERC will also focus on empowering active council members to recruit additional members based on their professional and personal networks. This will bring more voices to the ROSC and ideally will address some of the gaps outlined in the level of current engagement from the various community sectors.

## References, resources and additional information

[Madison County IPLAN -FINAL 6.30.22 \(003\) \(003\).pdf \(revize.com\)](#)

[SCCHD IPLAN 2021 2026.pdf \(scchealthdept.com\)](#)

[SCCHD Strategic Plan 2021 2026.pdf \(st-clair.il.us\)](#)

[St. Clair County Community Health Improvement Plan \(st-clair.il.us\)](#)

[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Madison County, Illinois](#)

[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Illinois; St. Clair County, Illinois](#)

Illinois Department of Public Health: Statewide Semiannual Overdose Report

HSHS Madison County Needs Assessment: [CHNA report SJH DY 2024 FINAL.pdf](#)

HSHS St. Clair Needs Assessment: [CHNA report SEO DY 2024 FINAL.pdf](#)

Naloxone/NARCAN training and distribution: [SR-NARCAN@chestnut.org](mailto:SR-NARCAN@chestnut.org)

Community Asset/Resource Map: <https://www.govst.edu/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=58804>

ROSC Council: Metro East Recovery Council [Recovery Coaching Network at GSU](#)

MERC contact: Mark Knott [maknott@chestnut.org](mailto:maknott@chestnut.org)

MERC contact: Angella Holloway [aholloway@chestnut.org](mailto:aholloway@chestnut.org)

RCO: Amare [Recovery Support Services Home - Amare, NFP addiction](#)

Coalitions: Partnership for Drug-Free Communities [Home - Partnership for Drug-Free Communities](#)

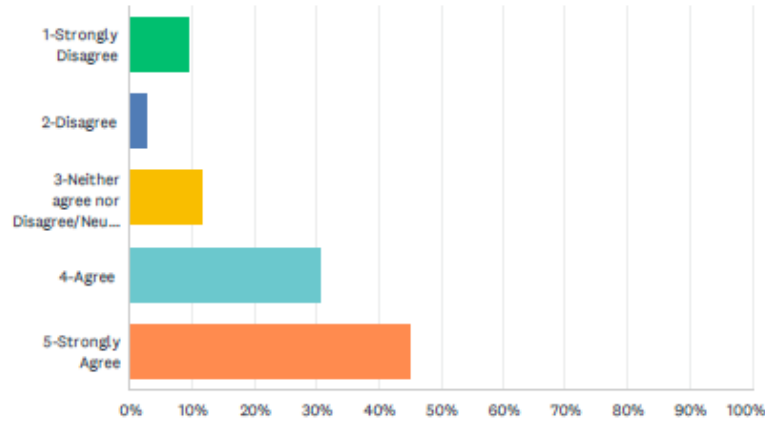
St. Clair County Drug Prevention Alliance [hcreasy@hoyleton.org](mailto:hcreasy@hoyleton.org)

Appendix A

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q1 People who use drugs deserve respect.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

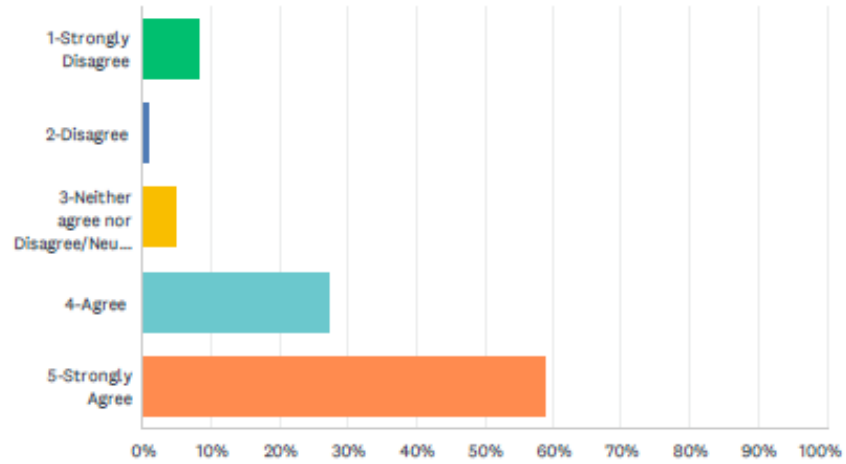


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	9.68%	24
2-Disagree	2.82%	7
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	11.69%	29
4-Agree	30.65%	76
5-Strongly Agree	45.16%	112
TOTAL		248



## Q2 People with a mental illness deserve respect.

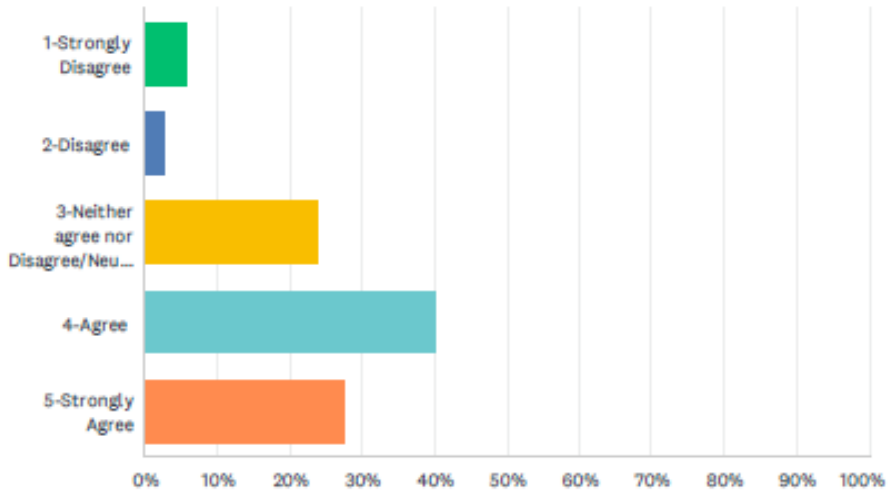
Answered: 246 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	8.13%	20
2-Disagree	0.81%	2
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	4.88%	12
4-Agree	27.24%	67
5-Strongly Agree	58.94%	145
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>246</b>

Q3 Medication Assisted Recovery-MAR (which is the use of medications to treat substance use disorders e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) is an effective treatment for substance use disorders.

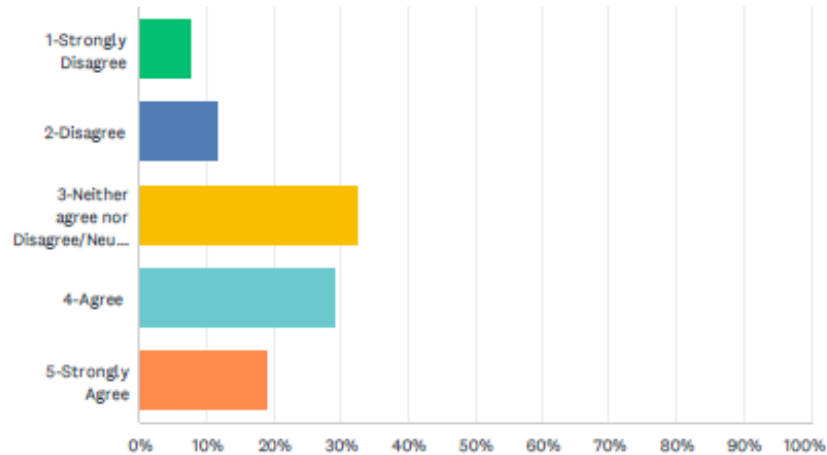
Answered: 247 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	5.67%	14
2-Disagree	2.83%	7
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	23.89%	59
4-Agree	40.08%	99
5-Strongly Agree	27.53%	68
TOTAL		247

Q4 It is difficult to find healthcare providers who offer Medication Assisted Recovery-MAR (which is the use of medications to treat substance use disorders e.g., methadone or buprenorphine to treat opioid use disorder) in my community.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

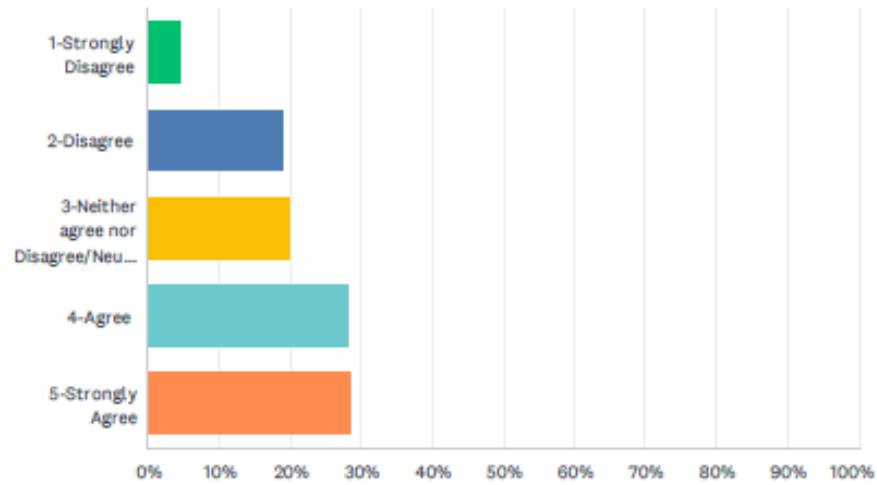


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	7.66%	19
2-Disagree	11.69%	29
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	32.66%	81
4-Agree	29.03%	72
5-Strongly Agree	18.95%	47
TOTAL		248

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q5 Harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs reduce the risks of drug use.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

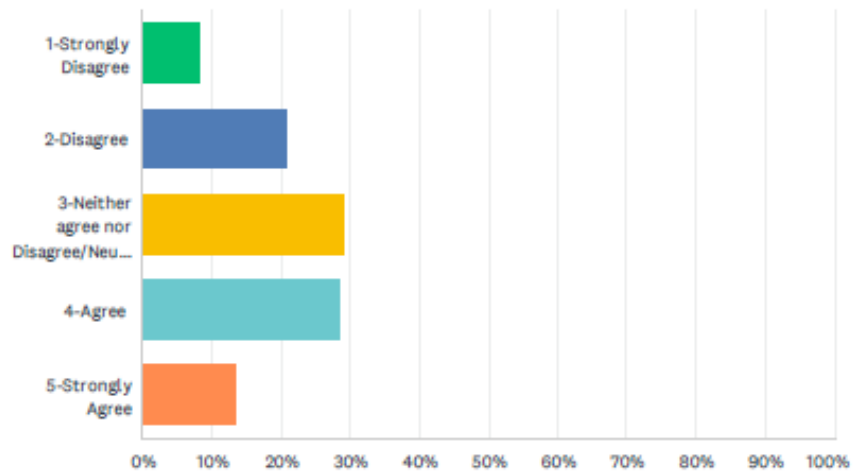


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	4.44%	11
2-Disagree	18.95%	47
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	19.76%	49
4-Agree	28.23%	70
5-Strongly Agree	28.63%	71
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>248</b>

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q6 It is difficult to find harm reduction services like Narcan and syringe service programs in my community.

Answered: 244 Skipped: 4

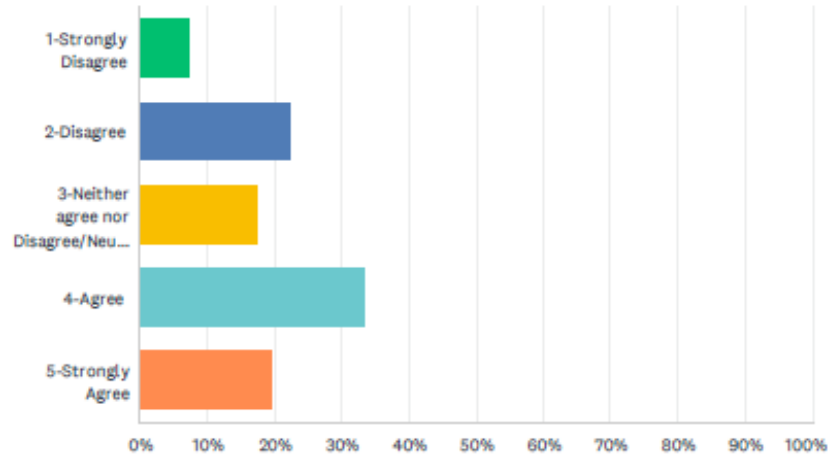


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	8.20%	20
2-Disagree	20.90%	51
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	29.10%	71
4-Agree	28.28%	69
5-Strongly Agree	13.52%	33
TOTAL		244

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q7 It is difficult to find mental health and substance use treatment services in my community.

Answered: 246 Skipped: 2

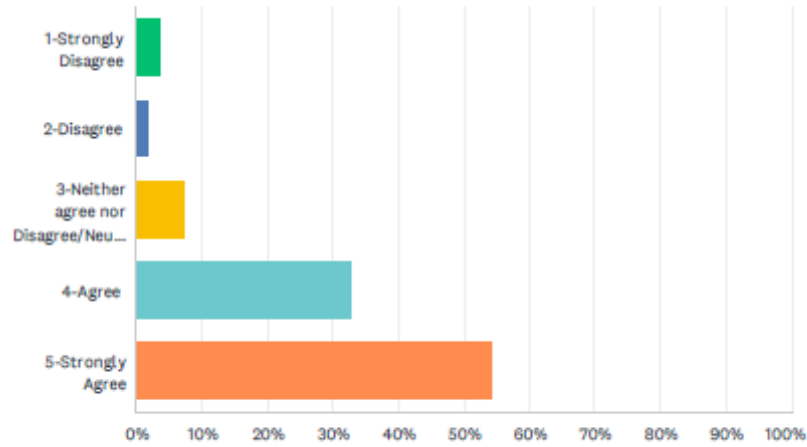


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	7.32%	18
2-Disagree	22.36%	55
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	17.48%	43
4-Agree	33.33%	82
5-Strongly Agree	19.51%	48
TOTAL		246

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q8 We should increase government funding on treatment options for mental health and substance use disorders.

Answered: 247 Skipped: 1

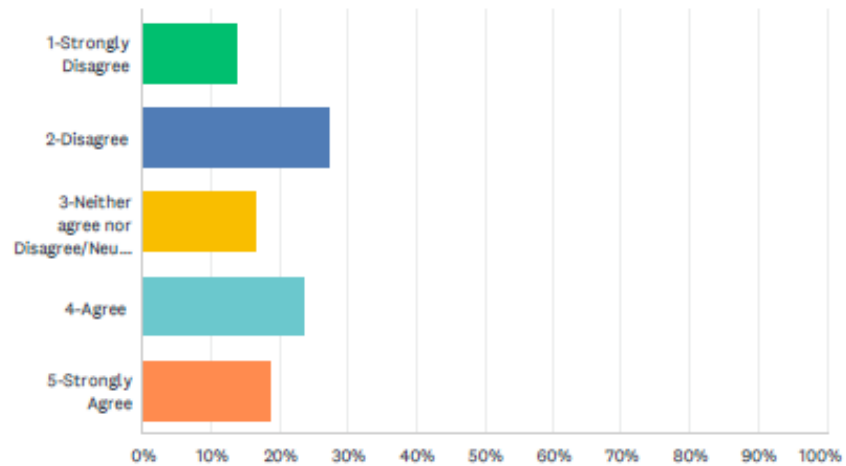


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	3.64%	9
2-Disagree	2.02%	5
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	7.29%	18
4-Agree	32.79%	81
5-Strongly Agree	54.25%	134
TOTAL		247

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q9 Everyone in my community can get help for mental health regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status.

Answered: 246 Skipped: 2



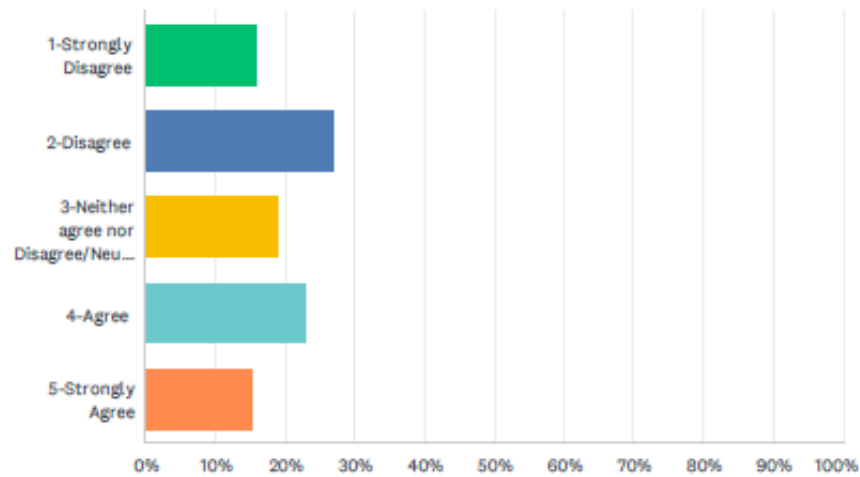
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	13.82%	34
2-Disagree	27.24%	67
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	16.67%	41
4-Agree	23.58%	58
5-Strongly Agree	18.70%	46
TOTAL		246



Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q10 Everyone in my community can get help for substance use regardless of income level, insurance status, race, ethnicity, primary language, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, or citizenship status.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

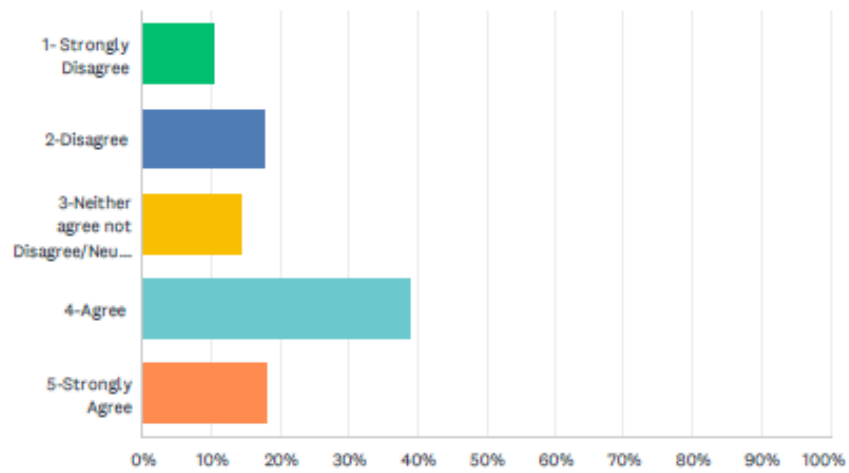


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	15.73%	39
2-Disagree	27.02%	67
3-Neither agree nor Disagree/Neutral	18.95%	47
4-Agree	22.98%	57
5-Strongly Agree	15.32%	38
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>248</b>

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q11 I know where to start if someone I know/love is seeking help for SUD or mental health barriers.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

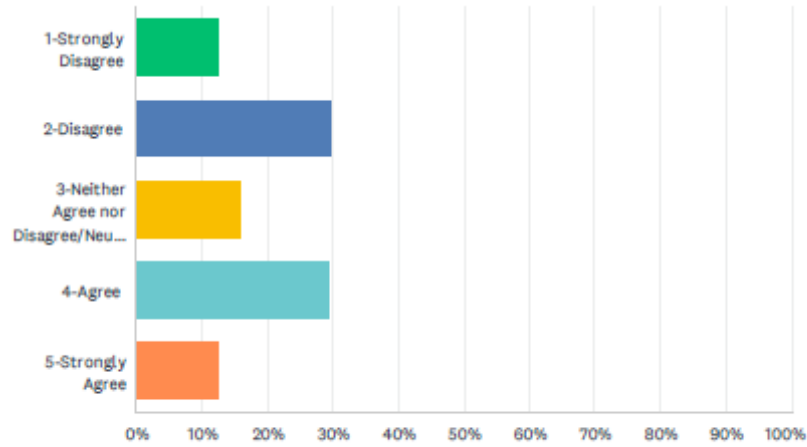


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1- Strongly Disagree	10.48%	26
2-Disagree	17.74%	44
3-Neither agree not Disagree/Neutral	14.52%	36
4-Agree	39.11%	97
5-Strongly Agree	18.15%	45
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>248</b>

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q12 I know where to go for youth substance use services in or close to my county.

Answered: 248 Skipped: 0

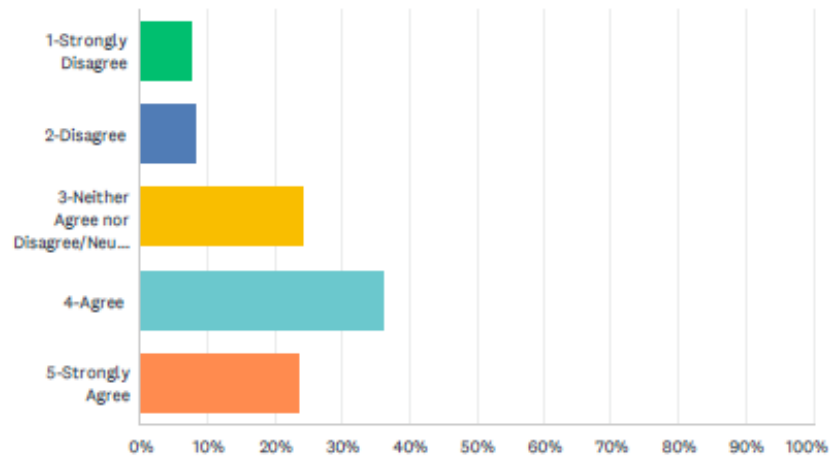


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	12.50%	31
2-Disagree	29.84%	74
3-Neither Agree nor Disagree/Neutral	15.73%	39
4-Agree	29.44%	73
5-Strongly Agree	12.50%	31
TOTAL		248

Madison & St. Clair Counties Community Survey

Q13 I feel comfortable/confident asking for these services for myself.

Answered: 246 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-Strongly Disagree	7.72%	19
2-Disagree	8.13%	20
3-Neither Agree nor Disagree/Neutral	24.39%	60
4-Agree	36.18%	89
5-Strongly Agree	23.58%	58
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>246</b>

Appendix B

FY25 Gap Analysis:

FY25 Gap Analysis		Program or Service Offering History				
Continuum of Care Category	Service or Program	Existing more than 6 months	Existing less than 6 months	Planning Stages	Gap in service	Notes, History, Considerations, and Possibilities
Prevention and Promotion	Anti-stigma efforts				X	Many in the community do not understand addiction as a disease and still see it as a moral failing. MERC has begun presenting Stigma conversations in some of the local libraries and has been making efforts to speak with other councils and agencies to increase anti-stigma efforts. There is still a need for more conversation to be had, need to work on better
	Recreational Alternatives to Substance Use				X	Many residents report a lack of community gathering spaces. We do have several parks available, however alcohol is allowed. There are concerted efforts with our RCO (Amare) to present more sober events including, moving showings, singles events, open conversations on what recovery can look like and the Rockn4Recovery event hosted by Amare annually each September.
	School Based Prevention Services	X				Many school districts in Madison and St. Clair County engage in prevention services through agencies like Chestnut Health Systems and Hoyleton. There is SUPS school curriculum in place in several districts providing evidence-based lessons/alcohol, substance use, tobacco, and vaping prevention campaigns. Several school districts have also formed Youth Advisory Committees.
	Law Enforcement Deflection Programs	X				TASC's program CHOICES is a deflection program aimed at keeping people presenting with mental health or substance use issues out of jail and connected to treatment/support services.
	Community Outreach	X				MERC has actively pursued more community outreach by attending more community functions working with MERC council members in the State Police, County Mental Health Boards and other community stake holders
	Community Education	X				There are now meetings started at the Edwardsville and Alton libraries once a month to have Narcan demonstrations and Stigma conversations. We have expanded from libraries to working with the RCO doing recovery education opportunities via zoom and continue to search for more venues in which to interact with in the community.

FY25 Gap Analysis		Program or Service Offering History				
Continuum of Care Category	Service or Program	Existing more than 6 months	Existing less than 6 months	Planning Stages	Gap in service	Notes, History, Considerations, and Possibilities
Harm Reduction	Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) Services	X				The past year has seen an expansion in available MAR services in MERC's area. Due to the success and demand for the warm hand off program at Alton Memorial Hospital, BJC duplicated this program and started a program at their Shiloh Memorial Hospital. These warm hand off programs link people to providers such as Chestnut Health Systems and Centerstone that are closest to where they live/where they prefer to continue services. There has been interest in St. Clair and Madison County jail to explore warm hand offs for MAR and other services.
	Public Awareness and perception of MAR Services				X	The preliminary community survey results indicate the general public is uninformed about MAR services and where they are available. There is also reports from PLEs that stigma is endured at traditional 12-step groups due to conflicting opinions about someone who is using a medication (or "drug") to be in recovery.
	Naloxone training & Distribution	X				The ROSC has been collaborating with the Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) team to identify more locations to saturate with Narcan. The ONED team has conducted numerous trainings and distributed thousands of doses of Narcan into the community. They have built and provided "Narcan Rescue Kits" to first responders (police, fire departments, ambulance units), all schools, health departments, St. Joseph's Hospital, public libraries, food pantries, and many other entities in Madison and St. Clair County. The past year has also seen the first Narcan vending machines in Madison and St. Clair Counties, as well as several Narcan distribution boxes.
	Safe Syringe Access				X	While there are a small number of entities providing this service, in general this is not available in our area. Although no longer illegal on most levels, many communities and law enforcement agencies do not support this service. Efforts to grow this service would include an emphasis on education and anti-stigma work.

FY25 Gap Analysis		Program or Service Offering History				
Continuum of Care Category	Service or Program	Existing more than 6 months	Existing less than 6 months	Planning Stages	Gap in service	Notes, History, Considerations, and Possibilities
Medical Care	Hospital Withdrawal Management Program	X				The previous year saw a reduction in withdrawal providers with New Vision closing, however within the last year a new program has opened in St. Clair County, Illinois Recovery Center. This program in addition to services at Alton and Shiloh Memorial Hospital, Touchette Hospital, Chestnut Health Systems, and Centerstone, and some additional options. Although there are still availability concerns at times, there is a network of options and recovery support staff are able to work to find open spots as soon as possible.
	Hospital Warm Handoff Program	X				As previously reported, BJC has very active warm hand off programs that help people start and get connected to MAR services. Gateway Foundation also has a SOR warm hand off program that is designed to help people access substance abuse treatment by connecting with people that come through the emergency department at HSHS' Highland Hospital, St. Josephs.
	Stabilization Facility	X				Chestnut Health Systems has a Residential Crisis Stabilization Unit that is in this service location. Gateway Regional Hospital and Touchette Hospital also offer psychiatric stabilization services in this area. Other local providers, such as Centerstone offer these services in other parts of the state. There are also options in nearby St. Louis Missouri, however, managed care funding is often a barrier.
	Transitions of Care Across Continuum of Care	X				Transition of care is an area of concern due to the high rate of people who do not follow through with behavioral health care recommendations when leaving the hospital or doctor's office. There have been efforts made with the above noted warm hand off programs, but many people, including people who survive overdoses are not being connected to treatment or recovery support services. With understanding, you cannot force someone to seek tx services; stronger efforts to connect people to services like those offered by local RCO, Amare, who have recovery engagement staff available to connect with those interested on any level.

FY25 Gap Analysis		Program or Service Offering History				
Continuum of Care Category	Service or Program	Existing more than 6 months	Existing less than 6 months	Planning Stages	Gap in service	Notes, History, Considerations, and Possibilities
Substance Abuse Treatment	Outpatient	X				Madison and St. Clair County have a robust offering of outpatient substance abuse counseling services through organizations such as Chestnut Health Systems, Gateway Foundation, Centerstone , and several smaller agencies.
	Intensive Outpatient	X				Madison and St. Clair County have a robust offering of intensive outpatient substance abuse counseling services through organizations such as Chestnut Health Systems, Gateway Foundation, Centerstone , as well as some smaller agencies.
	Adult Residential	X				Within the last year, Madison and St. Clair County has seen an increase in adult residential tx beds available with Chestnut Health Systems moving residential services from their Granite City campus to their Maryville Campus and increasing to 38 residential beds. Illinois Recovery Center also opened a 32-bed facility. Gateway Foundation offers 45 residential beds. Although this service area has several options for adult residential, faculties do still find themselves full, with people on waiting lists.
	Youth Counseling	X				Although there are several youth serving agencies in this service area, most focus on general counseling for mental health concerns. There are however two providers, Chestnut Health Systems and Centerstone that do offer outpatient substance abuse counseling for youth. The region has seen intensive outpatient and residential services for youth diminish due to several contributing factors.



FY25 Gap Analysis		Program or Service Offering History				
Continuum of Care Category	Service or Program	Existing more than 6 months	Existing less than 6 months	Planning Stages	Gap in service	Notes, History, Considerations, and Possibilities
Recovery Supports	Traditional 12-Step Meetings	X				In Madison and St. Clair County, AA/NA meetings are available daily at multiple times. These meetings take place in a large variety of communities and there are also virtual options. There are meetings available to a variety of people (men only, women only, LGBTQ+, etc.) .
	Other recovery-based community support groups	X				This service area has seen continued availability of other established recovery meetings such as Celebrate Recovery and SMART Recovery (while not as readily available as traditional 12-step). There has also been the addition of new support groups such as Journey into Recovery that is working to build traction.
	Peer Recovery Coaching	X				The peer recovery initiative has been steady in Madison and St. Clair County with agencies working to grow their Recovery Support staff. It is now common for behavioral health providers (like Chestnut Health Systems, Gateway Foundation, Centerstone) to employ Recovery Support staff in several programs. Chestnut also has a MetroLink program that is staffed with recovery support staff that do community-based outreach exclusively. Programs referenced previously such as warm hand offs with BJC and TASC's CHOICES also employ peers (Recovery Support staff) for these rolls. An opportunity exists for these recovery support staff to align in some capacity to improve collaboration and linkage to tx and recovery services.
	ROSC	X				MERC has received funding through SUPR for several years and continues efforts to support current and build capacity for new recovery supports. In the past year MERC supported the efforts of our local RCO and did a lot of work to bring together the major behavioral health providers to open communication about connecting the community to needed services.
	RCO	X				Amare continues to receive RCO funding from SUPR and employes several peer recovery support staff who work to engage and support those looking for tx and recovery support services through a variety of programing and community outreach events.
	Recovery Housing	X				There are several sober living houses in Madison and St. Clair counties. Oxford House inc. has expanded to having 26 locations in this service area and reports they are looking for continued opportunities for growth.