



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Mental Health,
Developmental Disabilities and
Substance Use Services

Expanding Access, Reducing Stigma

MOUD Conference

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September 2025

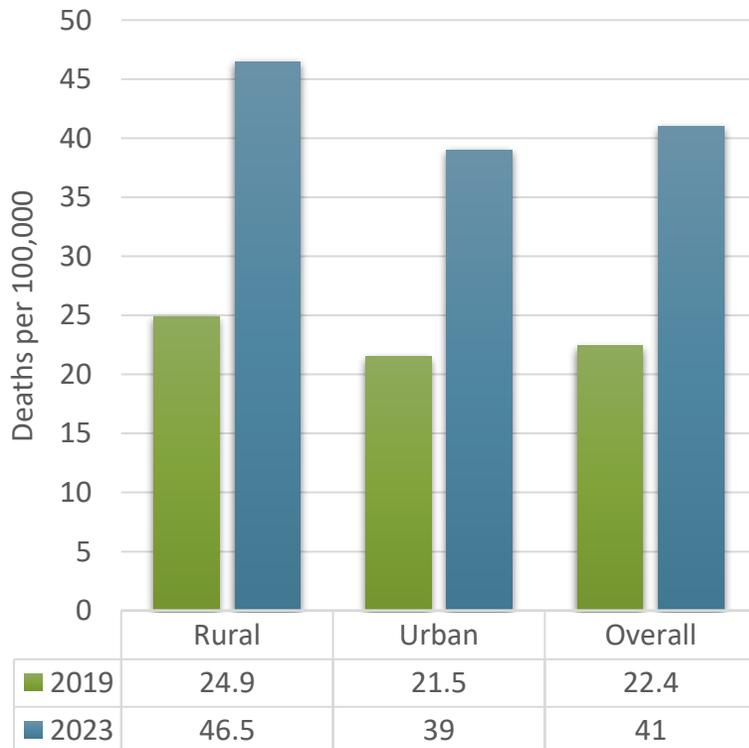
Statewide OUD Trends

2024 Estimates

Estimated 27.7 drug overdose deaths per 100,000.

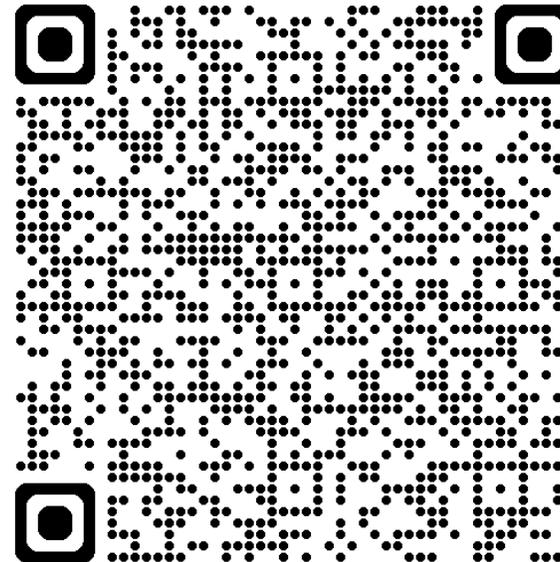
Rural death still expected to outnumber urban.

NC Drug Overdose Deaths



Bottom line:

At least 8 North Carolinians lose their life to drug overdose Every. Single. Day.



NC Overdose Epidemic Data

Defining the Gaps

2022

In an article by Clarissa Donnelly-DeRoven (2022):

- 14 counties without buprenorphine prescriber.
- Urban areas have 75% of the access to buprenorphine.
- 52 counties without methadone access.
- Only 45% of rural areas have access to methadone.

2025

Internal DMH:

- 11 counties without buprenorphine prescriber.
- Urban areas have 63% of the access to buprenorphine.
- 48 counties without access to methadone.
- Urban areas still have a majority access to methadone.

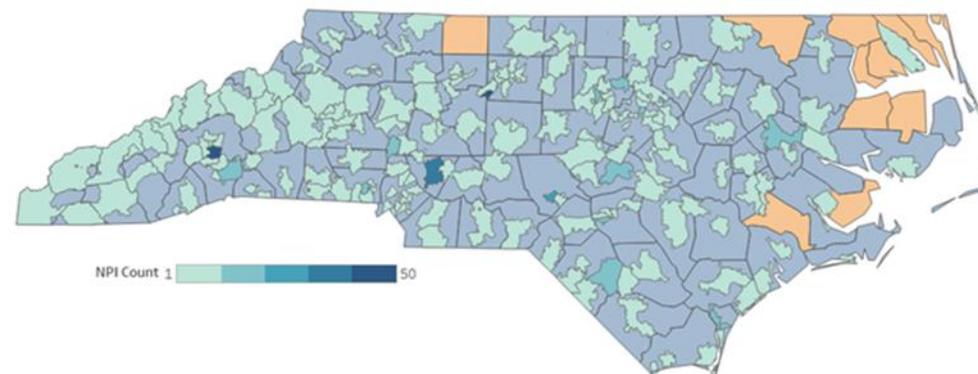
Office-Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) provide prescriptions to buprenorphine in an office-based setting but unable to prescribe methadone for OUD.

Opioid Treatment Programs (OTP) are the only providers who can administer and prescribe methadone.

OBOT Providers by Zip Code

Counties: All

Counties in Orange do not have a known OBOT provider in the county

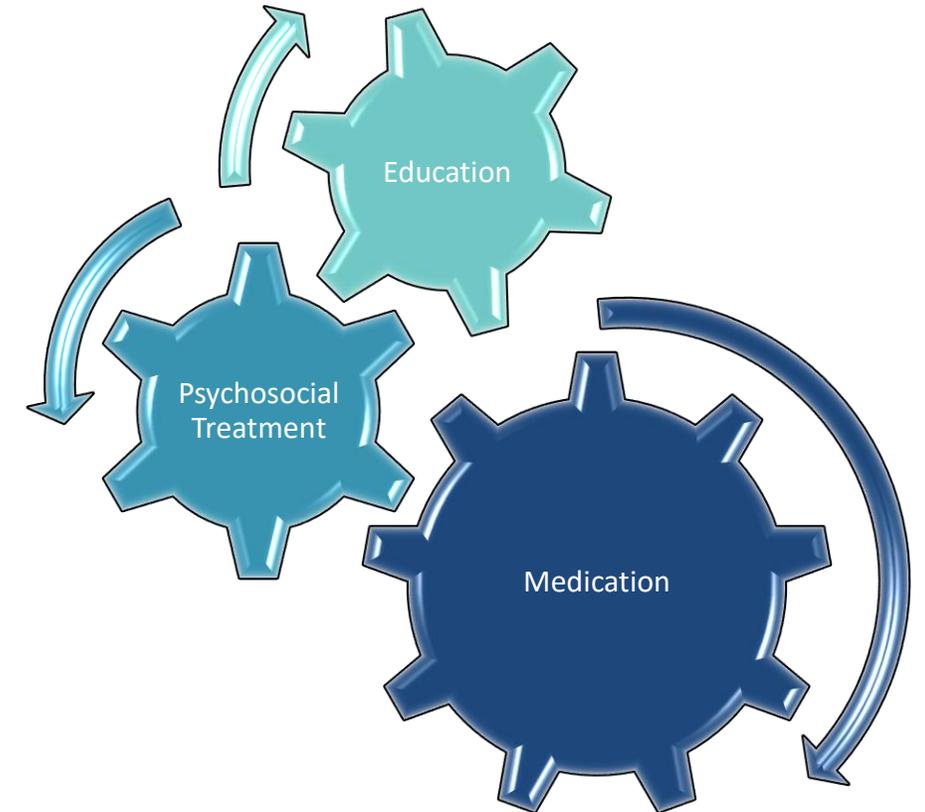


MOUD is the Gold Standard

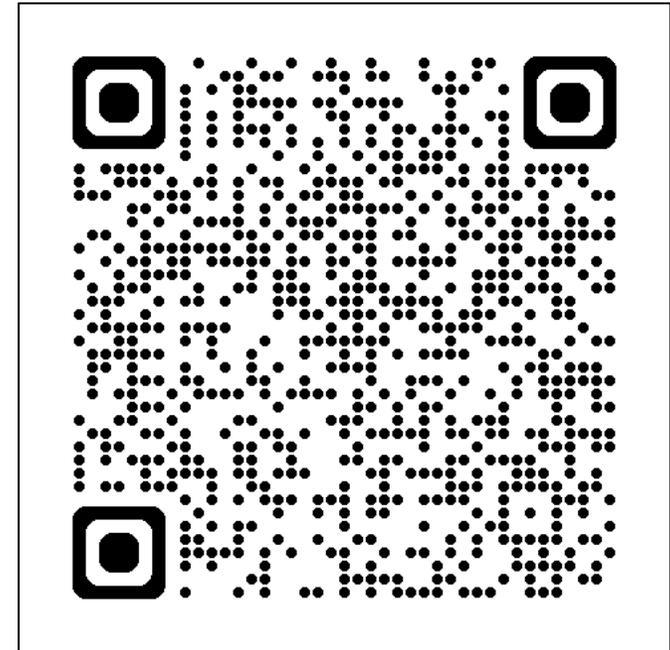
First and foremost, remember OUD is a treatable, chronic illness!

How do we treat OUD? MOUD

- FDA approved medications are important and reduce overdose risk by as much as 50% (Santo et al, 2021). Examples include:
 - Buprenorphine (partial agonist),
 - Methadone (agonist),
 - Naltrexone (receptor blocker)
- But that's not all –
 - Psychosocial treatment in conjunction with medication more often leads to long-term recovery (FSMB, 2024).
 - Education promoting destigmatization and provider knowledge also serves to avoid the deterring of those in need.

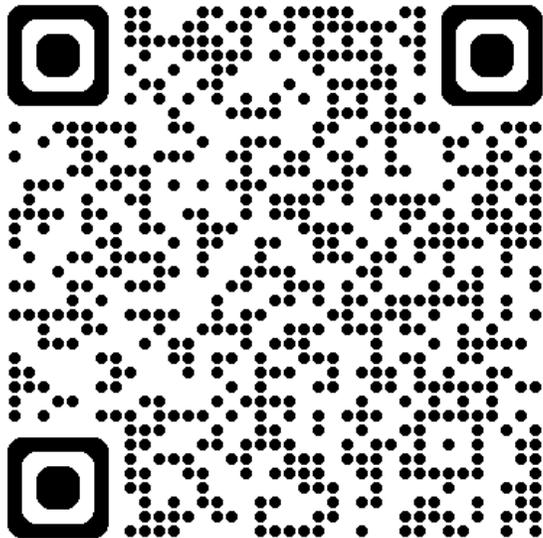


DMHDDSUS Strategic Priorities 2024-2029



DMHDDSUS Strategic Plan

Unshame NC



What is UNSHAME NC?

- ✓ An anti-stigma campaign.
- ✓ Launched in July 2025.
- ✓ Championed by NCDHHS and First Lady Stein.
- ✓ In partnership with Shatterproof.

Why do we need UNSHAME NC?

- 57% of NC residents know someone with OUD.
- Only 34% know how to find quality treatment.
- 35% believe abstinence-only is acceptable treatment.

Goal 3 and MOUD Specific Initiatives

Initiative: MOUD Saturation Plan	Work with Providers to Increase Programs/Counties with MOUD coverage
OBOT Expansion via NC-PAL and FQHC Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NC-PAL: Expert resource for providers with pediatric or perinatal mental health questions: (919)-681-2909• FQHS Partnerships: Medicaid focused FQHCs offering a core set of services.
MOUD in County Jails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOTA initiative to connect individuals in the Justice System with MOUD resources they <u>need</u>.• Currently 47 county jails with a SOTA partnership.
Mobile OTP Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federally approved OTP on wheels.• For questions about requirements, reach out to NCDHHS.





Goal 4: Workforce Development Initiatives

With challenges surrounding the gaps in care, especially for those in rural areas, NC DHHS has been championing the following items:

QP Rule

NC House bill 562 expands what a Qualified Practitioner in behavioral health qualifies with – including AAS in Social and Human Services.

Loan Repayment

\$20 M. appropriated by GA for loan repayment program, will support eligible BH providers.

UNC Partnership

A coalition/initiative on campaigning for recruitment and awareness, providing training and placement, and supporting workforce resiliency.



Goals 1 & 7: Integrated Care – CCBHC & FQHC Models

Integrated care serves to support goals 1 and 7 – ICS is a core goal to access and prevention.

➤ Expanding Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.

➤ Bolster Federally Qualified Health Centers.

➤ Collaborate on OBOT expansion via NC-PAL.

CCBHC Required Services

Crisis
Outpatient MH and SU
Person- and family- centered treatment planning
Community-based MH care for veterans
Peer support and counselor; care coordination
Outpatient primary care screening and monitoring
Psychiatric rehabilitation services
Screening, diagnosis and risk assessment

Budget Bill Impacts

Some good news

SUPTRS and SOR federal grants are **not** expected to change.

What bills impact MOUD?

- 2025 Federal Budget Reconciliation Bill
 - “H.R.1” or “One Big Beautiful Bill”
- NC State Budget Bill

How do the bills impact MOUD?

- Restrictions on who is qualified for Medicaid.
- Cuts in Medicaid dollars.
- NC Medicaid rebase cuts.
- NC Medicaid rate cuts.
- Cuts for uninsured/under insured.

So, what can you do?

Collaborate and Engage

- Use and support our partnered services, like NC-PAL (919)-681-2909
- Use pro-social messaging when recruiting to rural areas.
- See if you can get involved in a mobile OTP program, especially in rural or underserved areas.
- Stay informed via NC DHHS Opioid Action Plan Dashboards.
- Engage with the UNSHAME NC campaign.
- Continue pursuing the great work you already are!



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Questions?

Thank you for attending!

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