

LOUISIANA LINKAGE TO TREATMENT AND HARM REDUCTION PROGRAM

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
STD/HIV/HEPATITIS PROGRAM (SHHP)**

Mary Clare Scurria, Linkage to Treatment Coordinator Lead
Mary Beth Campbell, Harm Reduction Supervisor

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Overview

- ▶ Linkage to Treatment
 - ▶ HCV and Treatment
 - ▶ Linkage to Treatment Program
 - ▶ Data
- ▶ Harm Reduction and Syringe Service Programs (SSPs)
 - ▶ What is Harm Reduction and SSPs?
 - ▶ The SSP Landscape in Louisiana
 - ▶ Louisiana State Opioid Response (LaSOR) 3.0

What is HCV?

- ▶ Inflammation of the liver caused by hepatitis viruses- can also be caused by other infections, toxic substances, and autoimmune diseases
- ▶ Most commonly transmitted by sharing syringes and works; requires blood to blood contact for transmission
- ▶ Other transmission modes
- ▶ 80% of those with acute infection will develop chronic infection
 - ▶ 5-20% with chronic infection will develop cirrhosis and 1-5% will die from cirrhosis or liver cancer
 - ▶ HIV, HBV, alcohol use, and steatosis can accelerate disease progression

HCV Elimination Plan

- ▶ There is no vaccine for HCV but there is an effective cure- Epclusa
- ▶ Estimated 39,000 persons with HCV in Louisiana on Medicaid or in the Department of Corrections
- ▶ 5-year plan (2019-2024) for the elimination of HCV (started engaging clients in March 2020)
- ▶ Goal of treating 10,000 persons/year starting 2020
- ▶ Subscription model provides unlimited access to generic Epclusa
- ▶ Expand the HCV provider network

Linkage to Treatment Program

- ▶ To provide meaningful resources for testing and treatment
- ▶ Field questions related to connecting people to testing and treatment
- ▶ Offer harm reduction and substance use resources to people experiencing substance use
- ▶ To link and retain Medicaid recipients who have been identified by our surveillance system as not having completed treatment or who have been previously denied treatment and have either a positive RNA or antibody test with no record of treatment

Linkage to Treatment Coordinator Roles

- ▶ Contact and link to medical treatment
- ▶ Complete assessments and SBIRT
- ▶ Accept referrals
- ▶ Other services needed
- ▶ Make and attend appointments
- ▶ Relationships with providers
- ▶ Link to SUT

Program Challenges

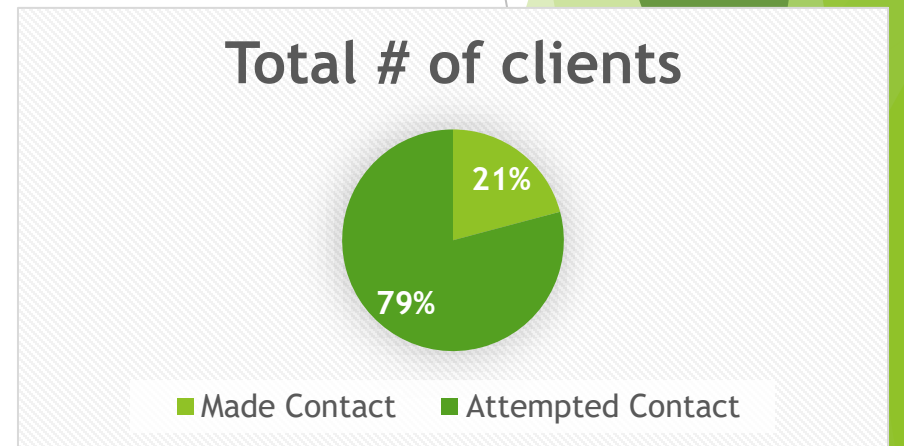
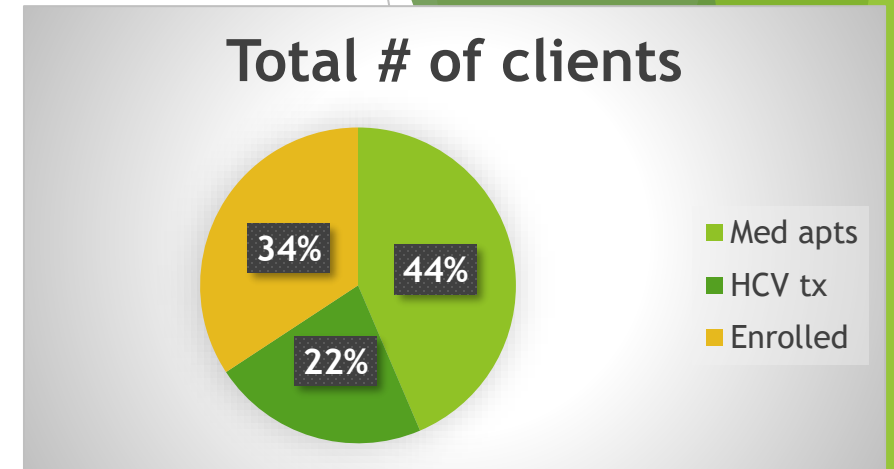
- ▶ Providers
- ▶ Stigma/Stigmatizing Language
- ▶ Access to Care
- ▶ Substance use/stigma around this

Data Collection

- ▶ Phone call/in person activities
- ▶ Referrals
- ▶ Enrollment activities
- ▶ Services provided
- ▶ Linkage to Hepatitis C
- ▶ Linkage to substance use treatment

Program Impact

- ▶ Since inception (March 2020):
 - Total number of attempted contacts to clients- 3,972
 - Total number of clients contacted- 1,064
 - Harm Reduction Services have been provided to 869 clients
 - 444 clients have been linked to Medical Services
 - 349 clients have been enrolled
 - 226 clients have been linked to HCV treatment



HCV Elimination Plan Impact in the State

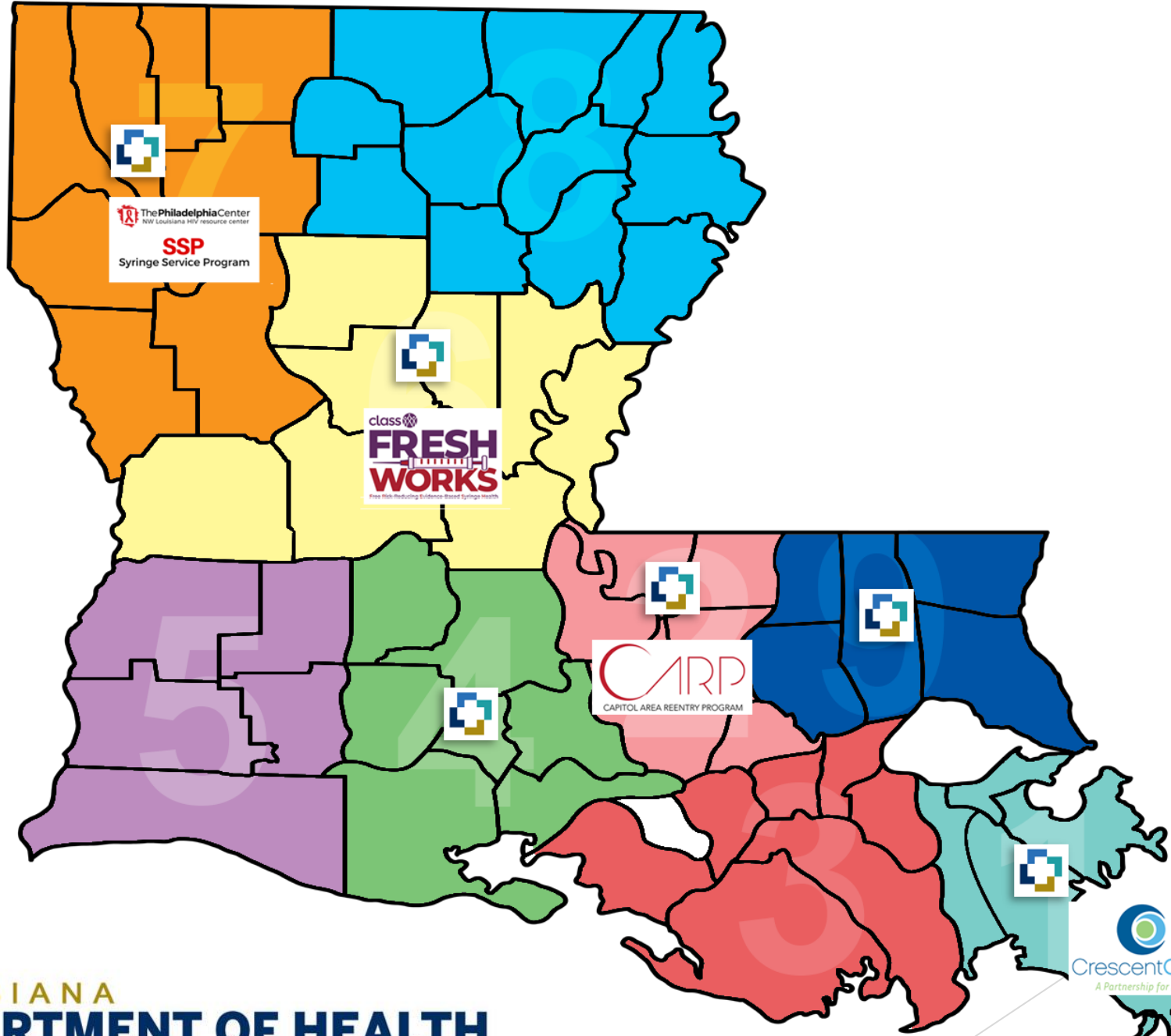
- ▶ 11,687 persons have accessed treatment for Hepatitis C.
 - This includes 10,115 persons on Medicaid and 1,572 persons who are incarcerated.
- ▶ Since July 15, 2019 for persons on Medicaid:
 - 10,115 persons accessed treatment for HCV
 - Of those, 9,943 persons have started treatment for HCV through Medicaid for the first time
 - 8,666 persons who have accessed treatment have completed it
 - 7,020 persons have accessed treatment because of Medicaid Expansion
 - 675 providers have written prescriptions for DAAs for the first time

Success Stories

- ▶ 34 y/o male
 - ▶ Just starting to get his life back together
 - ▶ Wanted HCV treatment
 - ▶ Saw Doctor- various reasons- didn't get medication for 3 months
 - ▶ Completed treatment and cured HCV
- ▶ 39 y/o female
 - ▶ In an abusive marriage
 - ▶ Drinking alcohol
 - ▶ Recently in the hospital
 - ▶ Got into HCV treatment, in to see a counselor, PCP, in program to get her daughter back

LTC's Around the State

- ▶ Region 1 (New Orleans)
 - ▶ 1 LTC Lead- supervises 1, 2, & 9
 - ▶ 1 LTC
- ▶ Region 2 (Baton Rouge)
 - ▶ 1 LTC
- ▶ Regions 4 & 5 (Lafayette and Lake Charles)
 - ▶ 1 LTC housed in Lafayette but covers both regions
- ▶ Region 6 (Alexandria)
 - ▶ 1 LTC Lead- supervises 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8
- ▶ Regions 7 & 8 (Shreveport and Monroe)
 - ▶ 1 LTC housed in Shreveport
- ▶ Region 9 (Northshore)
 - ▶ 1 LTC



What is harm reduction?

“Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.” -

[National Harm Reduction Coalition](#)

What are Syringe Service Programs (SSPs)?

- Syringe Service Programs (SSPs) are one of the pillars of harm reduction work
 - Provide participants with sterile injection supplies (i.e., syringes, cookers, cottons, sterile water) to prevent HIV and Hepatitis C transmission, as well as bacterial infections
 - Provide access to wound care services
 - Provide access to naloxone and fentanyl test strips, to prevent overdoses
 - Provide education and access to medical and social services in a stigma-free environment
 - Differ from “needle exchanges” in that there is no requirement to exchange used syringes for new supplies - reduces barriers to services

The SSP Landscape in Louisiana

- SSPs were legalized in Louisiana in 2017
 - Must be approved by local ordinance
- SSPs are currently legal in Regions 1, 2, 6, & 7
- SHHP/LaSOP currently funds 4 SSPs in LA
 - CrescentCare/NOSAP - New Orleans
 - Capital Area Re-entry Program (CARP) - Baton Rouge
 - The Philadelphia Center - Shreveport
 - CLASS - Alexandria
 - Other SSPs are active in LA but are not funded by SHHP/LaSOP

Crescent Care/NOSAP

- New Orleans Syringe Access Program (NOSAP) located within CrescentCare, which is a Wellness Center
 - SSP participants have access to HIV, HCV, and STI testing, as well as wound care, medical assisted treatment (MAT), and other services
- NOSAP serves 3,152 unique clients
 - 5,016 naloxone doses distributed in 2022 (to date)
 - 1,868 overdose reversals reported 2022 (to date)
 - 1,311,780 sterile syringes distributed in 2022 (to date)



Capitol Area Re-entry Program (CARP)

- CARP is currently not affiliated with a Wellness Center but does provide HIV, HCV, and STI testing
- In addition to the on-site SSP, CARP offers delivery throughout the Greater Baton Rouge Area
 - They are presently the only SSP in that region
- CARP serves 1,013 unique clients
 - 3,783 naloxone doses distributed in 2022 (to date)
 - 44 overdose reversals reported in 2022 (to date)
 - 3,492 sterile syringes distributed in 2022 (to date)

CARP

CAPITOL AREA REENTRY PROGRAM

The Philadelphia Center

- The Philadelphia Center is associated with a Wellness Center, offering linkage to HIV, HCV, and STI testing and other medical and social services
 - Work with LTC to refer participants to HCV testing and treatment
- The Philadelphia Center is the only SSP in Region 7
- The Philadelphia Center serves 351 unique clients
 - 495 naloxone doses distributed in 2022 (to date)
 - 133,210 sterile syringes distributed in 2022 (to date)



Central Louisiana AIDS Support Services (CLASS)

- CLASS is associated with a Wellness Center, offering linkage to HIV, HCV, and STI testing and other medical and social services
 - Work with LTC to refer participants to HCV testing and treatment
- The Philadelphia Center is the only SSP in Region 6
- CLASS serves 242 unique clients
 - 164 overdoses reported in 2022 (to date)
 - 721 naloxone doses distributed in 2022 (to date)
 - 68,019 sterile syringes distributed in 2022 (to date)



Louisiana State Opioid Response (LaSOR) 3.0

- In partnership with the Office of Behavioral Health, we are funded to expand harm reduction programs in LA
 - In 2.0 of this grant, funding provided for all 4 SSPs, naloxone, and other harm reduction work
 - LaSOR 3.0
 - Continuation of SSP program, expanding to include 2 new SSPs
 - Development and launch of a harm reduction supply portal
 - Implementation of harm reduction vending machine program

Statewide Harm reduction supply portal

- SSPs, statewide institutions (e.g., law enforcement, fire departments, EMS), and community-based orgs will be able to order naloxone and fentanyl test strips via this portal
- Portal will also include access to data, trainings, and other relevant information
- Soft launch anticipated for October 1st, 2022

Harm reduction vending machine program

- Expected to launch in 2023
- Six vending machines, containing overdose response materials (naloxone, fentanyl test strips, pamphlets) will be placed throughout the state

Questions?

- **Mary Clare Scurria, Linkage to Treatment Coordinator Lead**
 - MaryClare.Scurria@la.gov
- **Mary Beth Campbell, Harm Reduction Supervisor**
 - Mary.Campbell2@la.gov

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- **Our Linkage to Treatment Coordinators**
- **Our SSPs**
- **All of the harm reduction advocates in Louisiana**