

April 24, 2026

Dear Colleague:

On July 29, 2025, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued a Dear Colleague letter,<sup>1</sup> outlining the Agency's clear shift away from harm reduction and practices that facilitate illicit drug use and are incompatible with Federal laws, consistent with President Trump's Executive Order on Ending Crime and Disorder on America's Streets.<sup>2</sup>

The letter also provided guidance to state agency leadership and to grantees on what supplies and services previously defined under the umbrella of harm reduction could be supported with SAMHSA funding. Since the SAMHSA Dear Colleague letter was issued, other HHS divisions, including the Administration for Children and Families (ACF)<sup>3</sup>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)<sup>4</sup>, and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)<sup>5</sup>, have referenced this letter in their Strategic Priorities and funding-related announcements to ensure consistency in the use of federal funds.

This Dear Colleague letter provides updated guidance for grantees on the supplies and services previously defined under harm reduction that can be supported with SAMHSA funding. In addition, we are including guidance on supplies and services that cannot be supported with SAMHSA funds.

## **Supplies and services that CAN be supported with SAMHSA funding:**

### **Life-Saving Overdose Prevention and Response Services**

- Opioid overdose reversal supplies, including the purchase and distribution of opioid overdose reversal medications (OORMs) such as naloxone and nalmefene
- Medication lock boxes and medication disposal kits
- Overdose reversal education and training services
- Distribution mechanisms (e.g., bags or metal boxes/containers) for OORMs

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dear-colleague-letter-executive-order-ending-crime-disorder-americas-streets-07302025.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/07/ending-crime-and-disorder-on-americas-streets/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://acf.gov/about/acf-vision-mission-values>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/about/cdc/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.hrsa.gov/about/priorities>

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## **Infectious Disease Prevention Services**

- Wound care supplies
- FDA-approved home testing kits for viral hepatitis (i.e., HBV and HCV) and HIV
- Sharps disposal kits
- Navigation services to ensure linkage to HIV and viral hepatitis prevention, testing, treatment, and care services — including antiretroviral therapy for HCV and HIV, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), prevention of mother to child transmission, and partner services
- Referral to hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccinations (to reduce risk of viral hepatitis infection)
- Provision of education on HIV and viral hepatitis prevention, testing, and referral to treatment and care services, including for PrEP
- Education and activities to reduce risk of sexually transmitted infectious diseases, including distributing condoms

## **Other Supplies and Services**

- Nicotine cessation therapies

## **Supplies and Services NOT supported with SAMHSA funding:**

- No HHS funding can be used directly or through subsequent reimbursement of grantees or others to purchase or distribute:
  - Syringes or needles used to inject illicit drugs
  - Pipes or other supplies for safer smoking kits
  - Fentanyl test strips or any other substance test kits, including xylazine and medetomidine test strips, intended for use by people using drugs.<sup>6</sup>
- No HHS funding can be used to support “overdose hotlines” that have a primary function of facilitating illicit drugs use by providing people using drugs a virtual or telephonic companion while they are using drugs.
- No HHS funding can be used to purchase or distribute sterile water, saline, or ascorbic acid (vitamin c) used to facilitate drug use
- No HHS funding can be used to purchase or distribute any other drug paraphernalia or supplies that promote or facilitate drug use not listed as acceptable above.

Addressing the addiction and overdose crisis is a top priority for the Administration, HHS, and SAMHSA. To finally bring an end to this crisis and achieve the Great American Recovery, it is essential that the use of federal funding is aligned to common-sense public health strategies that focus on prevention, treatment, and long-term recovery.

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<sup>6</sup> This prohibition does not apply to law enforcement, emergency medical services, public health officials, or healthcare professionals using drug testing technologies in the regular course of discharging their professional duties, or as specifically authorized by the program statute.

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SAMHSA remains committed to working in partnership with states, territories, tribes, communities, faith-based organizations, and the health sector to save lives, restore families, and help communities thrive.

Thank you for your partnership and collaboration, and we look forward to our continued focused work together.

Sincerely,

/Christopher Carroll/

Christopher Carroll, MSc.  
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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration