

# CITY OF JACKSONVILLE SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SWOT ANALYSIS REPORT



PREPARED BY THE  
NORTHEAST FLORIDA  
REGIONAL COUNCIL







# Executive Summary

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Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics indicates that for the first time, drug overdose deaths topped 100,000 individuals in the United States during a 12-month period ending in April 2021. During this period, the nation experienced a 28.5% increase in overdose deaths compared to the previous year and an estimated 100,306 overdose deaths.

In anticipation of the upcoming opioid settlement dollars, the City of Jacksonville wanted to conduct a community-based Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of its framework to address Substance Use Disorders (SUDs). To accomplish this task, the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), at the direction of Jacksonville City Council's Special Committee on Opioid Epidemic, Vaping & Mental Health, facilitated a community SWOT meeting around SUDs to identify how the City and its community partners are addressing this issue and where there are gaps in service and areas for improvement.

Conducted on November 17, 2022, NEFRC staff provided partners with relevant data on the impacts of SUDs and conducted a SWOT analysis across the three key focus areas of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support. This report contains participant comments received during the SWOT analysis from all three focus areas. Participants provided a valuable understanding of the City's efforts to address this epidemic. Ultimately, the meeting highlighted a few efforts that can be strengthened, including expanding prevention programs across Duval County youth and adolescents, hiring and retaining additional qualified Peer Specialists, and expanding the concepts of "warm-handoffs" from treatment-based programs to recovery-oriented ones.

Lastly, this reports details current actions being taken by Jacksonville City Council to prepare for the arrival of opioid litigation monies and the areas of focus the City should prioritize to save the most lives while doing so in a manner that is efficient and cost-effective.

# The Impact of Substance Use Disorder

Provisional Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics indicates that for the first time, drug overdose deaths topped 100,000 individuals in the United States during a 12-month period ending in April 2021. During this period, the nation experienced a 28.5% increase in overdose deaths than the year prior, and of the estimated 100,306 overdose deaths, 75,673 were attributed to opioids, an increase of 34.9% from the year prior. Additionally, deaths from substances such as methamphetamine and cocaine have also increased.

Local data indicates that the City of Jacksonville has not been spared from these national trends. Data from the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department (JFRD) shows 3,013 suspected Opioid-Related Overdose Patients in 2022, an increase of 1,033% compared to 2014, as seen below. However, data from 2022 indicates a 14% decrease in suspected Opioid-Related Overdose Patients compared to 2021. While this decrease may include many factors, the significant decrease is highly encouraging.

# of Suspected Opioid-Related (O-R) Overdose (OD) Patients									
Month/Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	15	16	39	170	115	259	238	248	251
Feb	16	33	91	200	143	195	282	203	239
Mar	13	17	118	164	235	244	276	276	242
Apr	29	28	106	145	170	207	319	303	259
May	23	16	97	136	230	227	369	342	240
Jun	27	18	72	224	187	225	351	330	291
Jul	23	27	99	179	205	213	321	328	238
Aug	29	36	124	210	139	219	323	316	280
Sep	29	56	140	151	165	248	247	305	281
Oct	21	47	209	183	184	250	298	293	241
Nov	18	34	229	205	152	243	220	265	221
Dec	23	44	189	180	196	262	223	309	230
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>1,513</b>	<b>2,147</b>	<b>2,121</b>	<b>2,792</b>	<b>3,467</b>	<b>3,518</b>	<b>3,013</b>
<b>% Change</b>		<b>+40%</b>	<b>+307%</b>	<b>+42%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>+32%</b>	<b>+24%</b>	<b>+1%</b>	<b>-14%</b>

Figure 1: Total JFRD Patients

Suspected Opioid-Related Overdose equals the following type of incidents: naloxone administered and nature of call at the scene is "ingestion/poisoning/OD," OR naloxone administered, and the clinical impression is "opioid-related," OR overdose reported with the following substances: "Fentanyl, Carfentanil or Heroin," OR overdose reported with naloxone administration; A 911 call received as overdose and/or naloxone administration does not necessarily confirm an overdose, opioid use, or opioid misuse.

Current data from JFRD shows that Suspected Opioid-Related Overdoses were the highest in zip codes 32210, 32218, and 32244 from January 2022 – December 2022. However, if compared against 2021 data from the same January-December timeframe, not only have all top 10 zip codes seen a decrease in patients, but all 37 zip codes JFRD responded to have also seen a decrease in trends (see *Figure 2 below*). In rare instances, JFRD will assist in calls outside of the City's 34 zip codes.

Suspected Opioid-Related (O-R) Overdose (OD) Patients by Incident Zip Code January 2022 - December 2022			
Top 10 Zip Codes	Count	% of O-R OD	Count Trend (Compared to Jan 2021 - Dec 2021)
32210	310	10%	Decrease
32218	296	10%	Decrease
32244	223	7%	Decrease
32254	174	6%	Decrease
32209	160	5%	Decrease
32246	146	5%	Decrease
32211	140	5%	Decrease
32207	134	4%	Decrease
32208	131	4%	Decrease
32216	118	4%	Decrease
<b>TOTAL (Top 10)</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>Decrease</b>
<b>TOTAL (Other 27 Zips)</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>Decrease</b>
<b>TOTAL (All 37 Zips)</b>	<b>3,013</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Decrease</b>

Figure 2: Total Patients per Zip Code

Additionally, most overdose patients are white males. While male patients have made up the majority of patients over the past five years, the percentage of patients among black individuals has steadily increased since 2018, as seen in *Figures 3 & 4*.

% of Suspected Opioid-Related (O-R) Overdose (OD) Patients									
Gender/Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Male</b>	53%	55%	64%	62%	61%	64%	66%	68%	66%
<b>Female</b>	47%	45%	36%	38%	39%	36%	34%	32%	34%

Figure 3: Patients by Gender

% of Suspected Opioid-Related (O-R) Overdose (OD) Patients									
Race/Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Black or African American	8%	8%	10%	9%	10%	11%	14%	17%	20%
Hispanic or Latino	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%
Other/Unknown	2%	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%
White	88%	87%	86%	84%	82%	82%	79%	76%	73%

Figure 4: Patients by Race

Duval County also trends above the state and national average for Drug Overdose Annual Age-Adjusted Death Rate per 100,000 persons. The data in Figure 5 is provided by the Florida Department of Health’s Overdose Data 2 Action program. These deaths are reviewed by the Medical Examiner (ME) and then compared against the nation, the state, and surrounding counties. In 2020, Northeast Florida suffered 779 drug overdose deaths, and 86% were opioid-related. It should be noted this data set lags in time due to the time it takes to be confirmed by the ME.

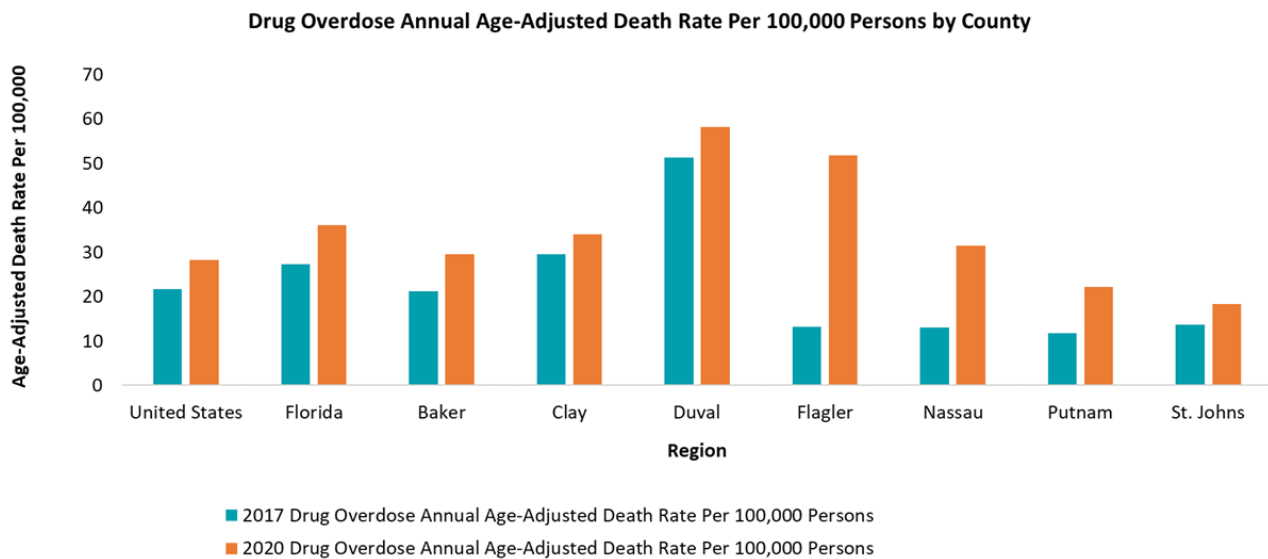


Figure 5: Drug Overdose Deaths per 100,000

According to the Department of Health, age-adjusting rates is a way to make fairer comparisons between groups with different age distributions. For example, a county having a higher percentage of elderly people may have a higher rate of death or hospitalization than a county with a younger population. The same distortion can happen when comparing races, genders, or even time periods. Age adjustment can make the different groups more comparable.



# SWOT: Prevention

Prevention activities work to educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of substance use disorders.

The following comments were received during the community SWOT analysis meeting. These comments are not ranked in priority.

<b><u>Strengths</u></b>	<b><u>Weaknesses</u></b>	<b><u>Opportunities</u></b>	<b><u>Threats</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awareness through local media</li><li>• Opioid provider education (doctors and pharmacist)</li><li>• Community based initiatives</li><li>• Strong connection with the business community</li><li>• Data tracking by JFRD</li><li>• Participants in DEA Drug Take Back Day</li><li>• Safe disposal education and resource supplier</li><li>• JSO and District Attorney Programs and convictions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gap in educational programs to specific communities</li><li>• DCPS programs are currently in a handful of schools</li><li>• Increase public messaging about Narcan training opportunities</li><li>• Cohesive communication on prevention programs</li><li>• Collaboration of partners</li><li>• Increase emphasis on emotional connection messaging</li><li>• Improve on United Way partnership for Full-Service Schools</li><li>• Work with providers to co-prescribe Naloxone with opioids</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase focus on Dentistry field</li><li>• New public messaging themes</li><li>• More engagement with those in Recovery</li><li>• Teacher education</li><li>• Work with uniformed services and SUD programs (i.e., military, LEO &amp; Fire)</li><li>• Parental education</li><li>• Increased focus on LGBTQIA+ Community</li><li>• Expanding public messaging to match tobacco initiatives</li><li>• Engagement with the faith-based community</li><li>• Expansion of Harm Reduction initiatives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stigma</li><li>• Increasing presence of Fentanyl</li><li>• Increasing vulnerability of adolescence forming ACEs</li><li>• Social media-based misinformation</li><li>• Street level outreach programs are small and underfunded</li><li>• Co-occurring mental health issues</li><li>• Time consuming process with Local, State and Federal Laws</li><li>• Need for staff</li><li>• Unintended effect of prescribing laws/regs that push chronic pain patients to street drugs. Instead of prescribed opioids</li></ul>

# SWOT: Treatment

Treatment for substance use disorders is designed to help people stop alcohol or drug use and transition into recovery to remain sober and/or drug-free.

The following comments were received during the community SWOT analysis meeting. These comments are not ranked in priority.

## **Strengths**

- Project Save Lives
- CORE Collaborative
- Peer Support Groups
- Existing grants that fund initiatives across the city and county
- JSO corrections 'Matrix' Program

## **Weaknesses**

- Wages of peer support specialist
- Expand access to wraparound services (food, affordable housing, and jobs)
- Increased Engagement with local business community
- Treatment of SUD as an illness
- Increased family treatment education
- Increased effort on Health Literacy initiatives

## **Opportunities**

- Additional treatment and detox facilities
- Better coordination, ensuring no duplication of efforts
- Standardization of services
- Increase messaging/ education on MAT
- Focused effort on how to share patient information across organizations efficiently
- Focused effort on pregnant women. Engage with OB/GYNs
- Expand TeleHealth options
- Community wide treatment identification options

## **Threats**

- Staffing
- Stigma
- Current grants ending
- Complexity of grants and reporting
- Treatment options can make treatment for specific populations difficult (i.e., MAT programs and the homeless)
- Gaps in transportation services
- Organizations working in silos
- Legal barriers (i.e., HIPAA laws)

# SWOT: Recovery Support

Recovery Support services assist individuals in their recovery and prevention of relapse in the future. Recovery is a lifelong process, and staying in recovery can be a difficult task.

The following comments were received during the community SWOT analysis meeting. These comments are not ranked in priority.

## **Strengths**

- Bus vouchers offered by Project Save Lives
- Supporting caregivers, tutoring support for Kinship families
- Community Partnerships
- 1-year post incarceration "Matrix" Program follow-up

## **Weaknesses**

- Expand recovery options in Jacksonville
- Increased education and knowledge of available resources
- Expand service hours for individuals trying to access recovery services
- Improve grant access to smaller but effective organizations

## **Opportunities**

- Family recovery support programs
- Legal assistance and navigator programs for individuals looking to be peer support
- Education to employers and HR departments for recovery minded workplaces
- More engagement with affordable housing and food security programs
- Mobile MAT units
- Expansion of women recovery programs
- Expansion of JSO "Matrix" Program to non-Duval residents, while incarcerated in Duval County
- 5 varieties of peers-increase family peer training

## **Threats**

- Stigma
- Economic stressors
- People unaware of available programs
- Lack of warm handoffs
- Challenge of grant recipients and their ability to hire peer specialist with arrest records and/or prior convictions
- Disparity amongst men and women in sober living facilities
- Not a lot of recovery options

# Analysis

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## Prevention

In the City of Jacksonville, several City, State, and community organizations are working diligently in prevention. Everyone understands the importance and the cost savings of preventing substance use disorders. Recently, Project Opioid, the Community Coalition Alliance, LSF, and the High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program have partnered for a massive public messaging campaign via billboards, posters, and top social media platforms (including Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook) to raise awareness of the dangers of Fentanyl and opioids. This campaign generated over 2 million interactions and thousands of website clicks. The City of Jacksonville also participated in the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Drug Take-back Day, where 443 pounds of unused prescription drugs were collected and properly disposed of. Additionally, due to the coordination between the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the State Attorney's Office 4th Judicial Circuit, they were able to have the first homicide trial and conviction due to a drug-related overdose in Duval County.

While there have been many accomplishments over the last year, work is still to be done. The Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department has effectively and efficiently organized routine data reports. Prevention-based organizations should utilize this information to target specific zip codes, demographics, and even specific times of the year when surges of drug overdoses are occurring. Additionally, more work needs to be done with Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) to unify and structure prevention programs across all schools and focus on students with co-occurring mental health issues and those struggling with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Finally, funding and resources must be increased to successful street-level programs that allow small community-based organizations to impact their local community.



## Treatment

The City of Jacksonville continues to be an innovator and a model for surrounding communities and the state in addressing the treatment of opioid and substance dependence. In November 2017, the City of Jacksonville partnered with Gateway Community Services and St. Vincents Medical Center to provide specialized, coordinated, and seamless services to treat drug addiction and substance misuse. Dubbed *Project Save Lives*, once overdose patients are stabilized, they are met by a Peer Specialist housed in the Emergency Department. The Peer Specialist establishes a rapport with the patient and works as part of the multidisciplinary healthcare team to aid in the early recognition and treatment of withdrawal symptoms. The Peer Specialist also offers recovery services as appropriate. *Project Save Lives* has expanded to seven area hospitals, reducing dependence on drugs and alcohol and reducing drug-related deaths.

While the City of Jacksonville has had great success with the thousands of patients that have benefited from *Project Save Lives*, there is more to do. First, there is a need for more qualified Peer Specialists. This deficiency occurs for several reasons, one of the most identifiable being adequate compensation. Wages can be the number one factor in the City's ability to attract and retain qualified Peer Specialists.

Secondly, telehealth services need to be expanded. Telehealth options are growing rapidly across several medical fields. Mental health and substance-dependence patients could also benefit tremendously from telehealth availability. Telehealth often provides nearly immediate assistance that traditional medical appointments cannot match. Lastly, the City and its partners should increase community education on Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) to reduce its stigma. MAT is an evidence-based solution to opioid and substance dependence that continues to advance and demonstrate its effectiveness. Yet, one of its most significant barriers is negative public opinion.



## Recovery Support

Recovery Support for individuals experiencing opioid and substance dependence is the most challenging area for assistance because recovery is a complex and life-long task. Patients often experience hardships and external stressors that can lead them down the path of returning to the substance they once depended on. The City of Jacksonville provides opportunities to assist those in recovery, including providing transportation vouchers to connect individuals with medical services. In addition to the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office's inmate *Matrix Program*, JSO provides post-incarceration SUD services for up to one year to reduce recidivism. Additionally, the City has many community partners providing family and employer education focused on assisting those in recovery. One example is the *Employer Tool Kit* developed by Drug-Free Duval and Project Opioid. This tool kit recommends best practices and policies to encourage recovery-minded workplaces.

While the City has made great strides in developing recovery services, there is still a need to expand women-specific programs and expand warm-handoffs for patients transitioning from treatment to recovery-based programs. Because fewer women are in need, women-based programs often get overlooked, but it is vital to dedicate funding and resources specifically for women to ensure they receive much-needed treatment options. Another challenging task facing the City and its partners is the unintended consequences of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) when conducting warm handoffs between treatment and recovery services. HIPAA makes sharing patient information between these organizations difficult due to the confidentiality of patient records. As a result, City and community organizations are currently discussing and implementing ways to make sharing patient information easier without violating HIPAA.

The City and community partners are developing a HIPAA-compliant *Patient Information Network* to accomplish this task. This network will allow patient data to flow seamlessly from treatment-based organizations to recovery-focused ones ensuring patients get connected to appropriate services and don't fall through the cracks during the transition. Additionally, the Florida Department of Health-Duval County is developing a resource hub that individuals can use to find information about recovery-focused community services. This one-stop shop will identify and connect individuals with all the treatment and recovery-based organizations throughout the City.

# Conclusion

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As the City of Jacksonville prepares for the arrival of opioid settlement monies, it continues to reaffirm its commitment to addressing substance use disorders. Currently, Jacksonville City Council is preparing local legislation to formulate its path forward over the next two decades as funds are received from the State. The Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department is prepared to be the hub of this coordination. It will be vitally important for the City and its community partners to continually work on making current successful programs more efficient and cost-effective and to continue innovating with evidence-based solutions to address substance use disorder and the often co-occurring mental health component.

A top priority of the City of Jacksonville should be prevention. While it may be difficult to quantify the cost savings provided by prevention, conservative estimates by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) estimate that for every dollar spent on prevention services, there is a cost savings of roughly **18 dollars**. It will also be necessary for the City to stay committed to prevention efforts should overdose patients, drop significantly over the next few years. To have the greatest impact on prevention, the City, its community partners, and Duval County Public Schools should expand their programs to target youth and adolescents.

With a population of nearly 1 million people, the City of Jacksonville has one of the most diverse populations in the State of Florida. For this reason, the City and its partners must stay proactive when addressing substance use disorder and mental health. Individuals will always require treatment and recovery services as SUDs are not entirely preventable. However, focusing on prevention would significantly reduce the number of individuals needing costly and complicated treatment and recovery services. Additionally, individuals will always be in crisis with a population of this size. The City and its partners must expand services to these individuals with crisis hotlines or facilities. Every effort to prevent the initial or relapsed use of substances will save lives. Additionally, the City and its partners must determine program evaluation criteria before implementation. A structured evaluation criterion allows the City to identify which programs have the most impact and to determine where funding and resources can be reallocated to have the most significant impact.

