Memorandum

To: Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee (OSAC)
From: Vermont Syringe Service Programs
HIV/HCV Resource Center (H2RC)
AIDS Project of Southern Vermont (APSVT)
Vermont CARES
Date: November 16, 2026
Re: FY28 Opioid Settlement Funding for Vermont's Syringe Service Programs

Vermont's three Syringe Service Programs share a commitment to preventing overdose deaths, reducing the spread of infectious diseases, and supporting the health, safety, and dignity of people who use drugs across our state.

Our programs provide essential, community-based harm reduction services, often reaching people who face significant barriers to accessing traditional healthcare and other services. We know the importance of meeting people where they are and building relationships based on trust, dignity, and respect.

In FY28, we are requesting:

1. **Continued and increased investment in our programs – $1,000,000 total request**
2. **Improvement in timeliness of getting appropriated funds to the SSPs.**

<u>The Importance of Vermont's SSPs</u>

Together, our programs are an important part of Vermont's overdose prevention and public health response. These services save lives… and help people stay connected to care and build relationships with providers they trust.

SSP services include syringe access and safe disposal, naloxone distribution, overdose prevention education, drug checking, HIV and hepatitis C testing, mobile outreach, peer support, and connections to healthcare, treatment and other vital resources.

The data and feedback from Vermont CARES from 11-16/25 to 11/15/26 demonstrates the lifesaving and community collaborative impact of this public health program.

- UI participants served: 1,589
- Naloxone distributed: 8,272 doses
- Overdose reversals reported: 91
- Number of overall interactions: 5,740
- Drug testing data: 55 samples
- HIV testing data: 163 tests
- New and sustained partnerships
    - CVOEO, Wells River Congregational Church, 302 CARES, Little Rivers Community Health, Groton Public Library, Central VT Prevention Coalition, People's Health and Wellness, Turning Point Recovery Centers (Rutland, Addison, Central VT, Franklin County), Kingdom Recovery Center, Northern Vermont

Recovery Center, University of VT Medical School, BAART, Washington County Mental Health Center

From Vermont CARES participants, shared with permission:

"Like most, I just don't want to die...I appreciate all that you do for people like me"

" I help people with wound care. Reduced shared syringes - because people have access to new stuff and they don't have to resort to whatever they can at the time."

FY28 Funding Needs

We ask OSAC to continue recommending the allocation of opioid settlement funds to Vermont's three Syringe Service Programs, consistent with the Legislature's intended investment in these essential services.

We are also asking for an increase in FY28 funding to reflect the actual cost of sustaining and strengthening our programs. This request is based on ongoing needs related to staffing, essential supplies, mobile health services, drug checking, infectious disease prevention, and outreach.

Although we recognize that OSAC's role is advisory and that contracting and disbursement involve other parts of state government, we hope the committee will advocate for a process that allows those dollars to reach programs in a more timely manner to enable hiring staff, purchasing supplies, and maintaining services without unnecessary interruptions.

The harm caused by delayed funding is not theoretical. It shows up in vacant positions, reduced outreach, limited supplies, and missed opportunities to prevent overdose and disease. Our programs cannot deliver the full benefit of the state's investment when the resources intended to support that work are unavailable. When programs cannot hire staff, maintain adequate supplies, or provide consistent access to services, the consequences are felt directly in our communities.

Moving Forward Together

Vermont has made important commitments to overdose prevention and harm reduction through its investment of opioid settlement dollars. Our three organizations want to ensure those investments translate into real, accessible, lifesaving services for people across the state.

We are proud of the work our teams do every day, often under challenging circumstances, and of the trust our programs have built within the communities we serve.

We ask OSAC to continue standing with Vermont's Syringe Service Programs by recommending the funding necessary to sustain this work and by helping ensure that those dollars reach providers in time to make the difference they are intended to make.