

Ways Congregations can get involved

- Watch your vocabulary and start to use person first language instead words that increase stigma
- Have a conversation with your congregation around the questions raised in the Hospitality for people who use drugs/have a history of drug use document
- Have a Sunday school class around substance use and the impacts on your community
- If your church has a knitting group see if they would be willing to knit bags for naloxone.
- Collect used but clean coffee containers or laundry detergent containers and donate them to local harm reduction organizations for them to safely store used syringes.
- Find out about the different groups working on substance use in your community and see how you can engage with them
- Host a MARA Group at your Church (Mara stands for Medication-Assisted Recovery Anonymous)
- Have your church do a supply drive for Local Harm reduction groups to make syringe exchange kits or wound supply kits
- Subscribe to the NC PDO News Listserv! This is the NC Division of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch's communication channel to share information, news, and happenings related to drug poisoning in NC and in the US. nc-pdo-news@googlegroups.com
- Join the Faith and Harm Reduction working group. For more information <https://www.faithinharmreduction.com/>
- Find and meet with state legislature to talk about getting them involved.
- Get a group to go out together and pick up trash and needles in your community
- Donate to local needle exchanges or harm reduction nonprofits (See List on Next PG)
- Volunteer at needle exchanges
- Let your church be used as a meeting space for other groups (such as peer support) other than NA/AA Or use your church transportation to get people to those meetings
- Get trained and carry Naloxone with you the overdose reversal drug
- Keep Naloxone in easy to reach locations at your church
- Do a prescription pill drive where members bring in all their old prescription pills to be turned in
- Install a box for people to safely turn in needles
- Join an Overdose Response team which goes and checks in on people after they have overdoses to see if they need anything.
- Start your own needle exchange

About the North Carolina Council of Churches

The Council enables denominations, congregations and people of faith to individually and collectively impact our state on issues such as economic justice and development, human well-being, equality, compassion and peace; following the example and mission of Jesus Christ.

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North Carolina Council of Churches
Strength in Unity, Peace through Justice

Stigma Reducing Language

We can reduce the stigma, and help save lives, just by changing our language. By doing so, we can reverse harmful stereotypes about addiction and improve access to care and support for people affected by this disease.

Words to Avoid	Words to Use
Addict	Person with substance use disorder
Alcoholic	Person with alcoholic use disorder
Drug problem, drug habit	Substance use disorder
Drug abuse	Drug misuse, harmful use
Drug abuser	Person with substance use disorder
Clean	Not actively using, abstinent
Dirty	Actively using
A clean drug screen	Testing negative for
	substance use
A dirty drug screen	Testing positive for substance use
Former/reformed addict/alcoholic	Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery
Opioid replacement, methadone maintenance	Medication assisted therapy