

Massachusetts Public Health Officials Award \$2.3 Million for Recovery-Based Reentry Services for Black and Latino Men

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced \$2.3 million in grants awarded to provide recovery-based services for Black and Latino men who are at risk of fatal overdoses upon release from incarceration.

The pilot program will serve Black and Latino men with a history of substance misuse who are incarcerated in Suffolk, Essex, Worcester, and Hampden counties. Local non-profit, community-based organizations will provide culturally-responsive wraparound services and case management pre- and post-release, including individual recovery support from any substance of use.

The award recipients are: Casa Esperanza, Inc. and Fathers' Uplift in Suffolk County, Greater Lawrence Family Health Center in Essex County (in collaboration with the Lynn Community Health Center), Legendary Legacies in Worcester County, and New North Citizens' Council in Hampden County. The organizations are located in areas that have higher rates of fatal opioid overdoses among Black and Latino men and, as part of the award, will provide devoted physical space for programming.

"Studies have shown that incarcerated individuals who participate in reentry programs are less likely to relapse after treatment for substance use," said Health and Human

Services Secretary Marylou Sudders. "This award is part of our ongoing effort to dismantle barriers to substance use treatment services especially in communities of color."

"This grant award underscores our steadfast commitment to health equity, particularly among Black and Latino men in these communities who have higher rates of fatal overdoses," said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. "These targeted programs are culturally responsive and community-driven to meet the needs of these individuals who have some of the highest rates of incarceration and are at greater risk for poor health based on social conditions."

The organizations will work in partnership with county sheriff's departments and provide programming services to eligible men during reentry planning, approximately six months before release.

The grant award will continue until August 2026, with \$460,000 distributed to each program annually. The program is funded through a combination of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) block grant and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Overdose to Action (OD2A) grant.

"This program will be an integral component to Massachusetts' pursuit of racial equity and eliminating racial disparities in health outcomes and overdose prevention," said Deirdre Calvert, Director of DPH's Bureau of Substance Addiction Services. "Providing dedicated services for Black and Latino men will help to support their recovery and re-integration, which will be invaluable in breaking the cycle of substance use and re-incarceration."