



## Maryland SOS Regional Town Hall Series Impact Statement: Anne Arundel County

Takeaways from our Town Hall held at  
Arundel Christian Church in Glen Burnie

*November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

PREVENTION • TREATMENT • RECOVERY



Before it's **too late.**

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### THE OPIOID OPERATIONAL COMMAND CENTER

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The fifth installment of the Maryland Stop Overdose Strategy (Maryland SOS) regional town hall was held at the Arundel Christian Church on Tuesday, November 30th, 2021. This session was focused on engaging community members from Anne Arundel County.

To begin this event, Opioid Operational Command Center (OCC) Executive Director Robin Rickard provided an update on recent overdose trends in Maryland. She also provided information on the Opioid Restitution Fund and the potential uses of funds that the state will receive from legal settlements with prescription opioid manufacturers and distributors.

Next in the program, we heard from Sandy O'Neill, Director of Behavioral Health at the Anne Arundel County Department of Health. Director O'Neill provided an update on local overdose trends and the efforts that the Anne Arundel County Health Department is undertaking to address the opioid crisis.

Following our presentations, we began the public comment portion of the event. We heard from a wide range of individuals, such as representatives from community-based organizations, local treatment providers, individuals in recovery, advocacy groups, and the faith-based community. These passionate individuals talked about their experiences and their ideas for addressing the opioid and overdose crisis. The issues addressed by community members included:

- The continued need for close collaboration between state and local partners, including with emergency management agencies
- Increasing resources for individuals with co-occurring disorders
- Expanding prevention efforts in schools and youth centers
- Expanding support for people in recovery, recovery residences, and recovery support services
- Expanding insurance coverage for people in treatment, including Medicaid participants
- Identifying sustainable funding sources for providers and addressing budget COVID-19-related budget shortfalls
- Providing additional support for peer programs, including increases in compensation for peer recovery specialists and workforce development opportunities
- Increasing financial support for harm reduction services
- Including more people in recovery in the policymaking process
- Increasing public awareness campaigns to reduce stigma surrounding people who use drugs
- Increasing direct financial support for community-based organizations
- The possibility of implementing overdose prevention sites and decriminalizing paraphernalia

The OCC would like to thank everyone who participated in this session and for their shared dedication to helping those who are struggling with the disease of addiction. The feedback that we received will be

used to help inform Maryland’s strategy for addressing the opioid crisis through our Inter-Agency Opioid Coordination Plan, which is updated annually. We would also like to thank our hosts at the Arundel Christian Church and Serenity Sistas for their assistance in organizing this event.