

# Post-Release OUD Overdose Death

## Incarceration is an overdose risk factor.



Tolerance down, cravings more intense

### Other risk factors for overdose:

recency of release, overdose history, service system interactions, mental health disorders, alcohol and other drug use, socio-environmental context.

### MOUD can keep people out of the justice system.

Franklin County, MA  
n=197 incarcerated with OUD (January 2015 – April 2019)  
86% received buprenorphine



Hampton County, MA  
n=272 incarcerated with OUD (January 2015 – April 2019)  
None received medication



Buprenorphine reduced risk of reincarceration by 32%.

## Scope of the Problem

North Carolina 2017-2018 overdose deaths

General population ↓ 10% | Post-Incarceration ↑ 32%

Risk of death post incarceration

50 x higher in two weeks following release

20 x higher within 1 year following release

Fentanyl is the leading cause of opioid overdose death.

## Systematic Review of 43 Studies on Opioid Overdose Prevention

### Impacts accessibility

- community syringe exchange/harm reduction programs
- prison/jail take-home naloxone programs

### Impacts acceptability

- witnessing a drug overdose
- fear of arrest/consequences
- stigma
- knowledge/training on how to intervene
- personal history with overdose

### Impacts feasibility

- linkage between CJS-community services
- confusion/conflicts with beliefs about abstinence
- structural /logistical barriers
- leadership "culture of change"

### Effectiveness

- reduction in overdose fatalities
- carry, use, and/or refill Naloxone
- naloxone uptake and distribution

## TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ A significant barrier to overdose reduction is the tension between a harm-reduction approach that acknowledges the possibility of relapse to opioids following release and the adherence to abstinence-based recovery that pervades the criminal justice system.
- ✓ MOUD and other overdose prevention programs should be offered in prisons and jails.

**Sources:** Evans, E. A., Wilson, D., & Friedmann, P. D. (2022). Recidivism and mortality after in-jail buprenorphine treatment for opioid use disorder. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 231, 109254. Grella, C. E., Ostlie, E., Scott, C. K., Dennis, M. L., Carnevale, J., & Watson, D. P. (2021). A scoping review of factors that influence opioid overdose prevention for justice-involved populations. *Substance abuse treatment, prevention, and policy*, 16(1), 1-39. Ranapurwala, S. I., Figgatt, M. C., Remch, M., Brown, C., Brinkley-Rubinstein, L., Rosen, D. L., ... & Proescholdbell, S. K. (2022). Opioid overdose deaths among formerly incarcerated persons and the general population: North Carolina, 2000–2018. *American Journal of Public Health*, 112(2), 300-303.