

FROM THE WAR ON DRUGS TO HARM REDUCTION: IMAGINING A JUST OVERDOSE CRISIS RESPONSE

Expert Recommendations for the Use of Opioid Settlement Funds for Policy Makers and Advocates

PRIORITIZING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS AND PEOPLE WITH OPIOID DEPENDENCE

1

Set up a bulk purchasing fund to procure overdose reversal medication (naloxone) and Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) at lower prices

2

Increase community-based distribution of overdose reversal medication (naloxone) to reach people at risk of overdose

3

Increase community-based distribution of safer use supplies and low-threshold services to reduce the risk of death, overdose, and other harms associated with opioid use

4

Expand access to evidence-based and non-coercive Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) and other treatment programs for opioid use disorder

5

Provide naloxone training, MAT, and related care for individuals who are arrested, detained, incarcerated, or post-incarcerated

6

Expand Medicaid to ensure access to quality health care and increase funding for other health and social services tailored for people who use drugs or are at risk of overdose

PREVENTING OPIOID USE AND ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL DRIVERS OF OPIOID USE AND DEPENDENCE

7

Create a national campaign to address stigma and misconceptions around drug use and treatment both in the general public and among clinicians

8

Monitor the pharmaceutical opioid supply while promoting evidence-based and compassionate pain management for individuals, including people who use drugs

9

Divest from punitive and carceral approaches to addressing drug use and reform the criminal legal system and corollary systems

10

Invest in community development programs and remove abstinence-only conditions that further punish drug use

11

Allocate funds to create a non-profit foundation that coordinates a national-level response and serves as a non-governmental watchdog

“The need for an equitable and structural response to the overdose crisis is more urgent and critical than ever.”