

West Virginia Drug Epidemic Response Plan

This document is a draft framework for a comprehensive substance abuse response plan for West Virginia in 2019. It is part of an effort to collect some of the most ambitious ideas from around the state (and country), as we call on state government to take bold action. We are asking lawmakers to pledge to support this list of initiatives and policy goals as a *starting point* for further action.

- 1. Rapid expansion of treatment facilities, including expanded MAT and supportive housing models, with the goal of reducing wait time to less than 24 hours.**
- 2. Creating “centers of excellence” within state technical colleges, colleges, and universities for training social workers, nurses, doctors, community health workers, etc.**
- 3. Develop a system for certifying, cataloguing and supporting recovery houses**
- 4. Partner with local hospitals and law enforcement agencies to launch Crisis Stabilization Units¹, LEAD, and QRT programs in all population centers, and experiment with other efforts to decriminalize substance abuse.**
- 5. Reform public education curriculum to guarantee substance abuse prevention and mental health resources in every school, every grade, every class.**
- 6. Meet the national standard of guaranteeing at least 1 social worker available for every 250 public school students in schools.**
- 7. Recruit, train, and empower 100,000 volunteers, churches, community groups and businesses for prevention, recovery, re-entry and emergency response.²**
- 8. A campaign to place all 6500 foster children - including legislation to insure that kinship families receive equal support and treatment as foster families.**
- 9. Establishment of an Opioid Jobs Program that combines work and substance abuse recovery in a variety of industries (agriculture, infrastructure, etc.).**
- 10. Implementation of the Vermont Hub-and-Spoke Model statewide - to create reliable, consistent, rural systems of treatment, prevention, mental health services, and crisis response.**
- 11. Expansion of expungement laws, so that sufferers of substance use disorder are not continuously punished (housing, jobs, food stamps) even after they have served their time.**
- 12. Pursuing lawsuits, taxes, fees and other efforts to force the drug companies who have profited from our pain to fund the initiatives described above.**

We are interested in feedback. This document was compiled in conversation with community leaders, elected officials, and other allies. To submit other ideas, thoughts, comments, or criticisms; or to offer your support, please e-mail stephen@ourfuturewv.org or swilliams@cityofhuntington.com.

¹<https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/need-help/crisis-services/mental-health-crisis-services/crisis-stabilization-units--csu-.html>

² Programs like this:

<https://boston.cbslocal.com/2016/12/21/gloucester-police-angel-program-helped-400-drug-addicts/>