

November 25, 2019  
Maine CDC Update

## **Progress responding to opioid overdoses and related infections**

The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention thanks stakeholders from throughout the state for contributing to the “Vulnerability Assessment for Opioid Overdoses and Bloodborne Infections Associated with Non-Sterile Injection Drug Use in Maine.” The document is a moment-in-time evaluation that provides important information to guide Maine’s ongoing efforts to reduce opioid overdoses and needle-borne infections, such as how to target resources to areas of greatest potential need.

Progress has been made since stakeholders worked to create the assessment, which presents community-level input on areas of need identified between February and June of 2019. The State’s Opioid Response is ongoing and multifaceted, and several changes have occurred since the assessment was completed:

- Somerset County Jail now offers medication-assisted treatment to inmates, and Washington County Jail is initiating a similar program.
- Maine has increased the number of waived prescribers for medication-assisted treatment. The state now has more than 900, including the highest percentage of nurse practitioners of any state in the nation.
- The specialty court section of the veterans’ court and co-occurring court in Kennebec County also accepts participants from other counties when referred.
- Maine CDC staff presented an overview of the assessment to the Department of Health and Human Services Opioid Coordinating Council.
- Maine CDC staff and stakeholders have collaborated to build capacity for current Syringe Service Programs and open new locations in the most potentially vulnerable areas.
- Stakeholders in potentially vulnerable areas have worked with Maine CDC staff to promote HIV and hepatitis testing, vaccination and linkage to care in those regions.