

To better understand this complex issue, public data on perceptions and attitudes towards substance use was collected. The results will help inform a strategic planning process for selecting targeted community prevention and response strategies. This report outlines the key findings from this assessment.

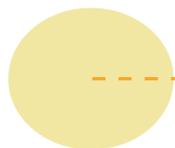
## Stigma

The stigma and shame connected with substance use creates barriers for getting help for individuals and their families. Stigma refers to the mark of disgrace and negative ways in which society views behaviors that are seen as different and less desirable than what is considered the acceptable norm. It occurs when people are shamed, discredited, or treated differently because of a characteristic or condition. Specific stigma in rural communities was cited throughout the assessment. These include lack of anonymity and labels associated family history of substance and recidivism.

# #1

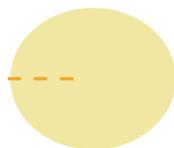
Stigma was the number one reported factor preventing people from seeking mental health and substance use treatment in Oneida County

### Two Principle Types of Stigma\*



#### Public Stigma

is negative judgment related to an individual's condition from community members, family, providers, and friends.



#### Self Stigma

is fear or embarrassment related to seeking out care due to internal beliefs.

# 1 in 14

Americans report experiencing a substance use disorder. Addiction can happen to anyone. There are many factors that contribute to substance use concerns.\*\*

#### Top Factors Cited by Assessment Participants that Contribute to Substance Use Concerns

- Mental Health Disorder
- Depression, Stress, Anxiety
- Lack of Support
- Peer Pressure
- Family Cycle of Addiction
- Past Trauma

### Assessment Participants Reported

#### EVIDENCE

- Stigma around seeking treatment for mental health concerns is strong and can lead to self-medication with substance use.
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of harm reduction strategies including, medication assisted treatment and Naloxone.
- Limited general community and response agency knowledge of what recovery looks like.
- High levels of recidivism lead to compassion fatigue of response agencies.
- Lack of anonymity is prominent in rural communities.
- Varying engagement of recovery community in prevention, intervention and response strategies.

### Recovery is Possible\*\*

Substance use disorders (SUD) are chronic and treatable medical conditions. Individuals suffering from addiction have trouble controlling their substance use even though they know it is harmful. Recovery takes more than just willpower. There are safe and effective treatment options available.

### Stigma

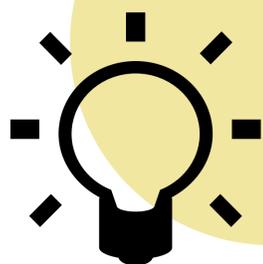
#### Assessment Participants Identified Next Steps

##### Authentically engage populations where the need and potential impact are the greatest.



- Grow partnership and collaboration among diverse organizations and agencies.
- Deliberately engage affected community members, including youth, in the identification, decision making, advocacy and systems change efforts to improve health outcomes.
- Build leadership within the recovery community and overall capacity for systems change.
- Center the voices of those most impacted by the issue by uplifting, trusting, and valuing lived experiences through storytelling.
- Increase availability of peer recovery support services.

##### Implement a community awareness campaign on substance use, mental health, and recovery.



- Share and celebrate stories of recovery in a variety of formats.
- Hold community events that facilitate positive interaction and connection between diverse groups of people.
- Provide educational trainings for students, general public and professionals that highlight a variety of substance use prevention and intervention topics.
- Grow awareness of recovery resources, treatment options and treatment formalities.

#### Words Matter: When Talking About Addiction<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

Using person-first language helps reduce stigma and negative bias when discussing addiction. For example, stigma-reducing language means saying something like, "individual with a substance use disorder" instead of "addict". Using these terms helps focus on recovery by expressing that the individual experiencing a substance use concern "has" a problem, rather than "is" the problem.

\*RHI Hub <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/4/stigma>

\*\*Stigma Reduction - CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/stigma/index.html>

\*\*\*National Institute on Drug Use - Words Matter <https://nida.nih.gov/drug-topics/addiction-science/words-matter-preferred-language-talking-about-addiction>



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
ONEIDA COUNTY

**COPE Coalition**

Community, Outreach, Prevention and Education



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