



Harm Reduction

UPDATE

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CHRISTA WEATHERS CONSULTING

- **Implementation**
- **Integration**
- **Community readiness**
- **Funding strategy**
- **Communication**
- **Systems change**

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FRAMING OUR DISCUSSION

- Brief overview of harm reduction
- Historical review of HR in Montana
- What's happening in Montana
- National trends
- Gaps and opportunities

**MYTH: HARM
REDUCTION
ENABLES
SUBSTANCE USE.**

WITHOUT HARM
REDUCTION, PEOPLE
WOULD STILL USE
SUBSTANCES BUT IN
UNSAFE AND
UNSUPPORTED WAYS



HARM REDUCTION

Harm Reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs. -NHRC

**Creating connections to
care for people actively
using drugs**

- **naloxone**
- **Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)**
- **Safe Syringe/Safer Smoking/Safe Supply Program (SSP)**
- **Drug Checking and Fentanyl Test Strips (FTS)**
- **Low barrier housing, medical appointments, wound care**
- **Policies allowing services for people actively using drugs**
- **Low barrier housing, medical appointments, wound care**

MT HISTORY

Prior to 2013

“underground” networks of people distributing syringes and conducting HIV/HCV testing.

2013

the first public SSP was started in Missoula.

2017 legislation passed to amend the paraphernalia law to provide exemption for certain individuals, increase naloxone access and Good Samaritan protections.



Montana
UPDATES

Syringe Service Programs

Missoula
Open Aid Alliance
406-543-4770
openaidalliance.org

Kalispell
Flathead City-County
Health Department
406-721-8256
rjust@flathead.mt.gov

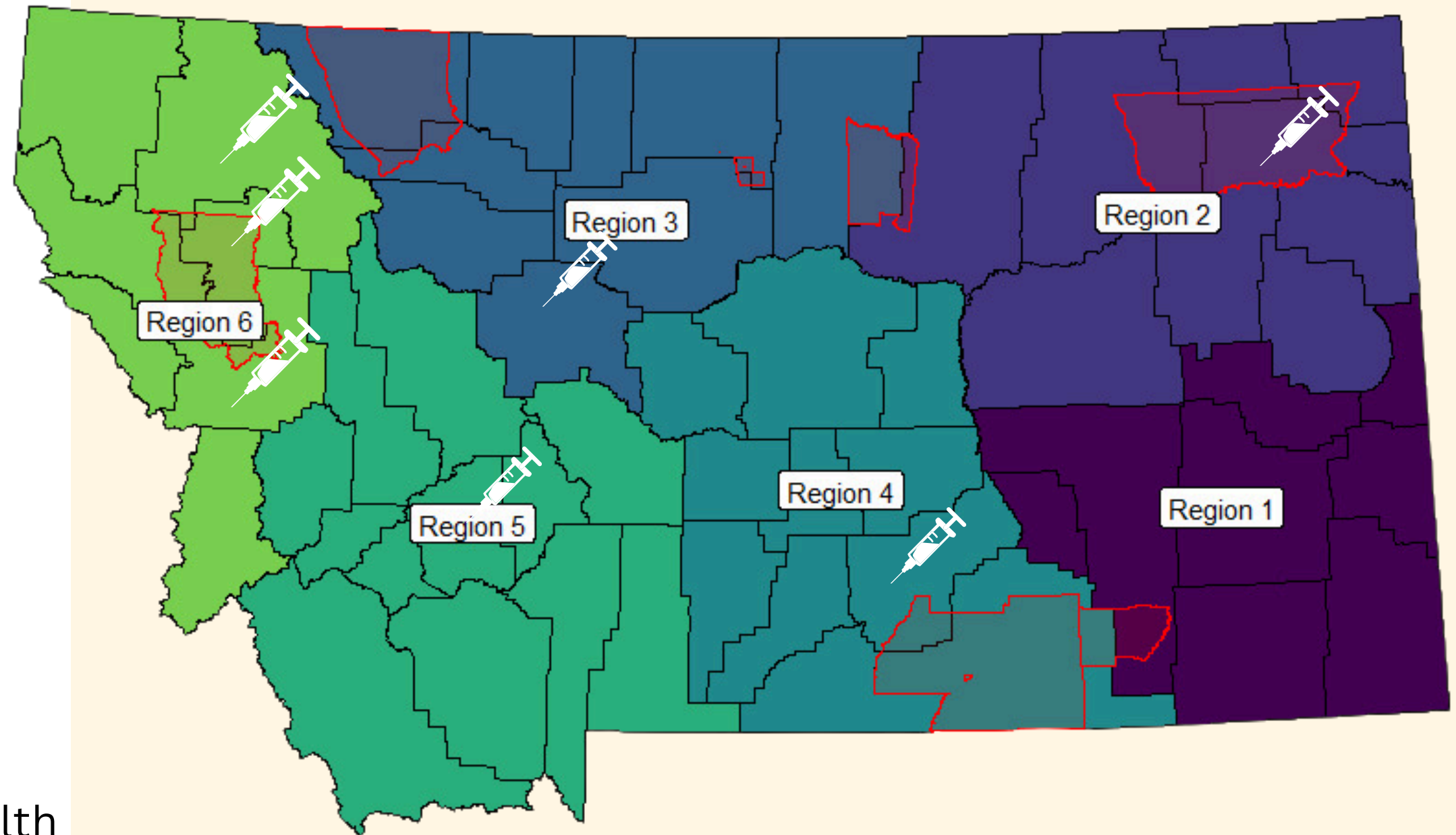
Billings
Riverstone
Health-RISE
406-651-6416
406-247-3227

Polson
OAA & CSKT
Lake County Health
Department
406-273-1888

Great Falls
Little Shell Tribal Health
l.grosser@lstribe.org
406-315-2400 Ext. 127

Poplar
Fort Peck Assiniboine
and Sioux Tribes
406-653-1568
csavior@fortpecktribes.
net

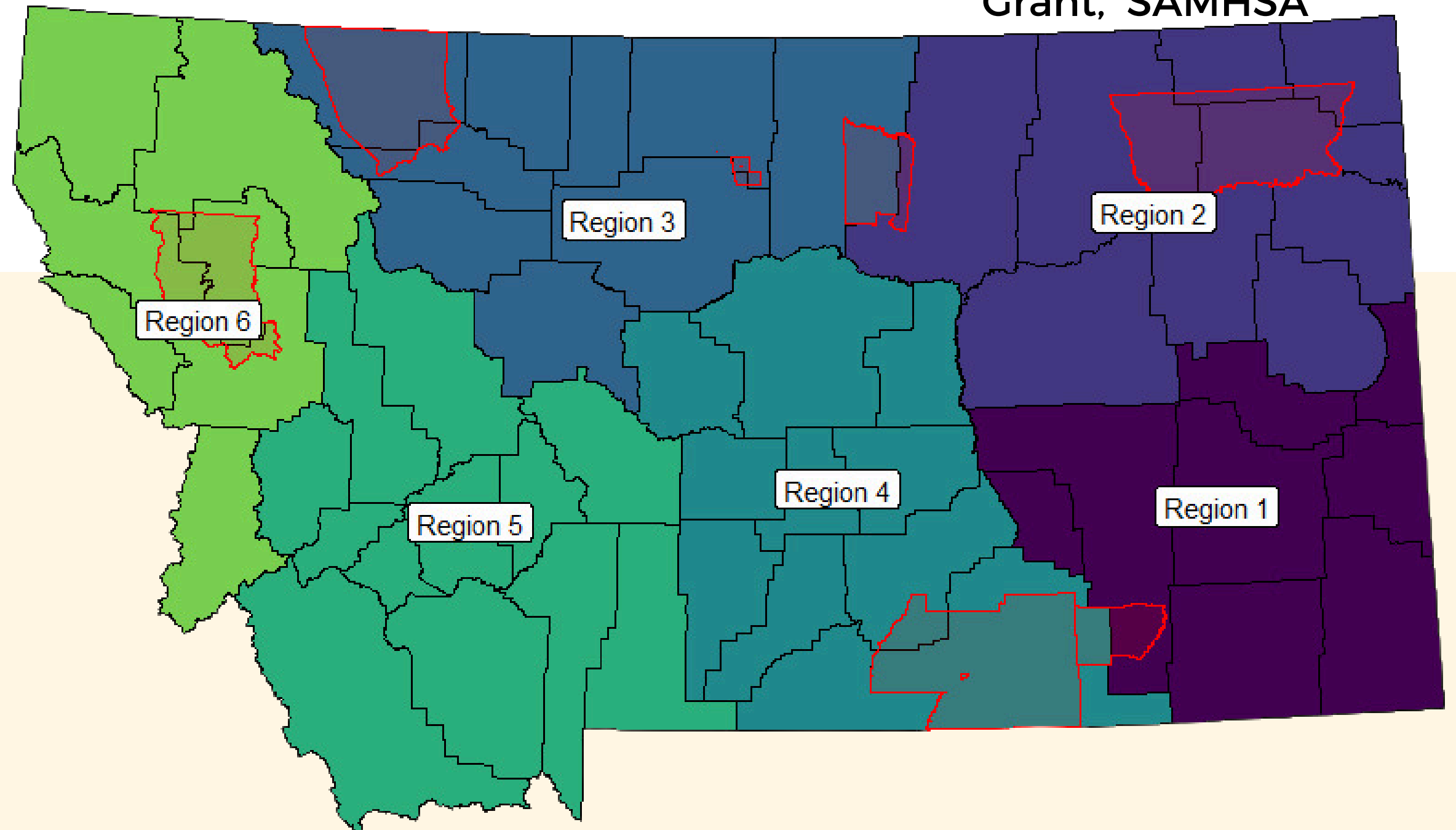
Butte
Butte-Silverbow Health
Department
406-497-5080
tcameron@bsb.mt.gov



OPIOID EDUCATION AND NALOXONE DISTRIBUTION PROJECT (OENDP)

funded by State Opioid Response Grant, SAMHSA

A regional approach



Region 1

Newly hired
Eastern MT Community Mental
Health Center

Region 2

Cheryl Bighorn-Savior, RN
FT Peck Tribal Health
csavior@fortpecktribes.net

Region 3

LaVonne Grosser
Little Shell Tribal Health
l.grosser@lstribe.org

Region 4

Goldstein Little Eagle
Bighorn Valley Health Center
One Health
Goldstein.littleeagle@onechc.org

Region 5

Ali Mullen
Lewis and Clark Public
Health
amullen@lccountymt.gov

Region 6

Rachel Just
Flathead City-County Health
Department
rjust@flathead.mt.gov

OVERDOSE DATA 2 ACTION

CDC funded, Building on the OENDP regional framework:

- distribute naloxone to those most likely to experience or witness an overdose
- develop **Navigators** to facilitate linkage to care for people at risk of an overdose.

Linkage to Care =

MOUD

Harm Reduction

Contingency Mgmt.

Primary Care

**Housing/food/basic
needs**

VENDING MACHINES



- Kalispell
- Missoula (4)
- Great Falls
- Helena-no syringes
- Billings
- Hardin-no syringes
- Others??

Show promising results related to increased access

Best to pair with a program and staff that can assist if someone wants additional services

24/7 access is ideal

NATIONAL TRENDS

- Harm Reduction is being integrated into federal grant opportunities addressing health and housing. HR is now included in the National Overdose Strategy and SAMHSA Continuum of Care
- Drug checking programs - point of care and send away
- Recognition of the effectiveness of pairing interventions within SSPs
- Safer smoking programs to engage people who are not injecting
- Overdose prevention centers

GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Invest in existing Montana SSPs to expand access and sustainability. Identify strategic areas for additional SSPs**
- **Drug checking services for PWUD**
- **Mail order, mobile, telehealth MOUD and harm reduction**
- **Continue integrating harm reduction strategies into mobile care teams, crisis diversion, behavioral health systems, housing projects etc.**
- **A harm reduction strategic plan for Montana or adding it to continuum of care**



Photo by Brooks Anderson | @movementphotographer

<https://aidsunited.org/about/our-initiatives/harm-reduction/>

OTHER UPDATES/QUESTIONS



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