

# HARM REDUCTION

refers to a wide range of evidence-based strategies and interventions aimed at reducing the “negative consequences associated with drug use.”<sup>1</sup>

**Specific interventions include:** syringe exchange programs, overdose prevention sites, sterile injection and smoking equipment, fentanyl test strips, drug test sites, and the provision of naloxone for the reversal of opioid-related overdoses.<sup>2</sup>

**Harm reduction strategies may also include more community and structural efforts, including:**

- educating and deploying outreach coordinators, first responders, community organizations, medication assisted treatment and addiction recovery providers, primary care providers, doulas and other maternal health providers, and others.
- overdose prevention and response trainings, BLS certification, access to safer consumption supplies, public health education on drug use, overdose, sex work, and stigma, STI/STD testing.
- policies that serve to decrease drug and sex work criminalization, or increase access and accountability for quality access to naloxone, appropriate treatment, public transportation, and social services more broadly.

As a **movement founded on the principles of social justice**, harm reduction seeks to empower and affirm the dignity of people who use drugs (PWUD), and recognizes that drug use is a “complex, multifaceted phenomenon” that intersects with various social inequities to shape vulnerability to drug-related harms.<sup>1</sup>

As a result, **proponents of harm reduction are increasingly advocating for a holistic framework that addresses these intersection and builds solidarity with other social justice movements**, such as those for racial equity, decarceration, sex work decriminalization, LGBTQIA+ health justice, housing justice, and reproductive justice.<sup>3</sup>

1. National Harm Reduction Coalition. Principles of Harm Reduction. National Harm Reduction Coalition. Published 2020. Accessed June 28, 2023. <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

2. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. What Is Harm Reduction? Published February 16, 2022. Accessed June 28, 2023. <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2022/what-is-harm-reduction>

3. National Harm Reduction Coalition. Harm Reduction Intersects. National Harm Reduction Coalition. Accessed June 28, 2023. <https://harmreduction.org/resource-center/harm-reduction-intersects/>