

# Amplify Annual Report

## 2020~2021



# Amplify



## 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Eileen Swan, Chairperson** Children's Advocacy Services for Education
- **Cephus Nolen Jr. Chairperson** Director East Hartford Youth Services
- **Geralyn Laut, Secretary** Prevention professional, tobacco treatment specialist and advocate
- **Michaela Fissel, Treasurer** Executive Director, Advocacy Unlimited
- **Teo Anderson Diaz** Vice President of Health and Wellness Center Outpatient Services
- **Esam Boraey** Visiting Assistant Professor, Wesleyan University
- **Alan Coker** Advocate
- **John Massicotte** Pastor, Director of Mental Health Support Ministries at Crossroads Community Cathedral
- **Leslie Paguada** Director of Early Care and Education
- **Larry Pittinger** Retired Recovery Resources Manager, Hartford Dispensary
- **Jane Theriault** Accountant

### OUR STAFF:

- Marcia DuFore, Executive Director
- Melisa Luginbuhl, Deputy Director
- Wende Cooper, Prevention Coordinator
- Annette Diaz, Way to Go CT Mobility Manager
- Allyson Nadeau, Outreach and Evaluation Coordinator
- Marie Raynor, Ryan White Coordinator
- Sounthaly Thammavong, Recovery Friendly Workforce Program Coordinator
- Leah Williams, CAC Facilitator

**We grieve the loss of our former Way To Go Program Manager who lost her battle to Covid this past year.**

For information, please contact Executive Director Allyson Nadeau at 860-667-6388 or [anadeau@amplifyct.org](mailto:anadeau@amplifyct.org).

# OUR MISSION



*Forging partnerships with people with behavioral health needs, families and our communities to influence best practices, policies and access to resources*

**To strengthen the ability of our region to assess needs, develop plans, and advocate for strategies and resources to advance healthy and inclusive communities.**

As we close out FY 2020-21, we find ourselves especially grateful for being able to work for over 45 years and the very grassroots level and in partnership with many of you to improve behavioral health services and promote the growth of healthy inclusive communities.

Amplify serves as the Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization for North Central CT. As such, Amplify is a unique catalyst, leading and uniting community leaders, residents, and partners with the behavioral health resources and prevention strategies they need the most. We bring together a wide range of voices to work toward a single-minded goal: build the most effective and responsive system of behavioral health promotion and support services that will improve the lives of all.

We welcome your involvement in Amplify's programs and initiatives. More information about how to become involved can be found on our website: <https://amplifyct.org/get-involved/>.

Amplify serves the North Central Region comprised of 37 thirty-seven towns in North Central Connecticut. Clusters of towns in this area are combined into six Catchment Areas that receive behavioral health services as a unit. Catchment Area Council (CAC) membership is comprised of town residents who are living with behavioral health challenges, family members, concerned citizens as well as behavioral health providers. This group reviews and evaluates current behavioral health services, identifies gaps based on town needs, and recommends changes that will serve the region.

Thirty-four Local Prevention Councils (LPCs) work at the grassroots level to raise awareness of substance misuse and offer early intervention plans and evaluation. While members might come from all walks of life, they share a passion and commitment to find ways to make a difference in the behavioral health of their community. With grants funded by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Amplify works with each Local Prevention Council to offer guidance, resources, and encouragement so that members come together to clear paths toward positive changes in their towns.

CAC and LPC members are key partners helping Amplify to understand, communicate and address the priority needs of North Central CT residents. Several years of Annual, Priority and Evaluation Reports can be found on our website: <https://amplifyct.org/publications/>.



# Our Major Initiatives to Improve Services

## *EDUCATING*

### News of the Week:

Through our “News of the Week” and social media communications, Amplify informs communities about resources, educational events, forums, advocacy opportunities, legislation, etc. that impact community members with behavioral health concerns.

Please e-mail us at [mdufore@amplifyct.org](mailto:mdufore@amplifyct.org) to be added to our distribution list.



### Addressing Problem Gambling

Thanks to funding from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Problem Gambling Unit, Amplify provides leadership for a team of consumers and professionals to raise awareness about problem gambling and connect them with resources that can help. Amplify Ambassadors lead training workshops for organizations, tailored to meet their unique needs, including:

- The PAWs Program, in which teens are helping each other notice the warning signs of gambling and learn that it isn't just a risk-free game.
- The Behavior Health 101, which is specifically designed for faith communities and civic groups.
- The Asian American Pacific Islander Ambassadors (AAPIA) Program, where Asian Ambassadors hold community conversations designed specifically for Asian Americans and for other minority groups. In response to the pandemic, ambassadors are converting all of their sessions to on-line forums with presentations translated into Chinese Mandarin, Chinese Cantonese, and Laotian.



To get involved with gambling awareness efforts , please contact [mluginbuhl@amplifyct.org](mailto:mluginbuhl@amplifyct.org).



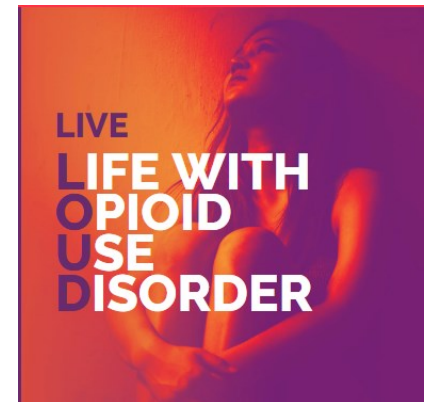
## Addressing the Opioid Epidemic:

In October 2015, Governor Malloy reconstituted the CT Alcohol and Drug Policy Council in response to a frightening increase in opioid-related overdose deaths. The Council is charged with developing and implementing a strategic plan for responding to CT's Opioid Crisis. Amplify is an appointed member of the Council and the Treatment and Recovery Support Subcommittee.

Amplify has joined forces with many committed partners working at the state and regional level on strategies to **stem the tide of Opioid crisis**. Strategies to date include:

- **public forums and marketing campaigns** to raise awareness (2 such campaigns are Change the Script and Live Loud (pictured to the right))
- expanding access to life-saving **NARCAN** and medication-assisted treatment (MAT) programs,
- developing on-line resources for **navigating treatment**, inpatient bed availability, and prescriptions for NARCAN.

Amplify gave out \$45,000 in mini-grants during FY 2020-21 for local coalitions to implement substance abuse prevention and behavioral health promotion initiatives within their communities. To date, we have conducted over 75 **NARCAN trainings** (now accompanied by suicide prevention training) and given out over 1800 **NARCAN kits** to community members. Please contact [mdufore@amplifyct.org](mailto:mdufore@amplifyct.org) for more information or request training.



## Preventing and Responding to Suicide

You've seen the headlines: suicide rates have increased 33% since 1999 in the US according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These deaths cut across all demographic groups – no segment is immune. But we are not powerless – there are ways to help.

Amplify coordinates the Regional Suicide Advisory Board. This regional coalition provides the local infrastructure to build capacity and to promote suicide prevention activities in support of the vision of the CT Suicide Advisory Board and as outlined in the CT State Plan. Activities include training in how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis, intervention and postvention best practices (promoting healing and reducing risk after a suicide), and grief support resources.

While suicide can feel like an individual act, it doesn't happen in vacuum and its ripple effect can be profound.

*To get involved with suicide prevention efforts and/or join our Regional Suicide Advisory Board, please contact [anadeau@amplifyct.org](mailto:anadeau@amplifyct.org)*

*For suicide prevention information and resources, please visit [Prevent Suicide CT](http://PreventSuicideCT.org).*



## Our Major Initiatives to Improve Services

### ADVOCATING

#### Legislative Advocacy

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of the Legislative Office Building. Our Legislative Town Hall was held virtually instead. Amplify staff and partners testified in support of sustainable funding for prevention to address the Opioid epidemic, suicide, and risks of harm related to cannabis use and on-line gambling; improvements to address health equity and crisis response;; and funding to support peer support, and affordable housing; and in opposition to outpatient commitment.



#### Health Equity and Racial Justice

With funding from the CT Health Foundation, Amplify supports the Ministerial Health Fellowship (MHF), an advocacy coalition of Black faith leaders who address health equity concerns and state policy that impacts persons of color. The MHF held a successful Legislative Town Hall in February 2021 to advocate for preserving Medicaid eligibility, promoting affordable healthcare, and ensuring the integration of community health workers into the health delivery system .



#### Greater Hartford Ryan White Part A Planning Council

The *Greater Hartford Ryan White Part A Planning Council* unites funders, healthcare providers, and people living with HIV/AIDS under a common goal: to help those with HIV/AIDS improve their health and quality of life. This legislatively mandated Council reviews data, conducts research, assessments, and focus groups. Members educate and provide resources to individuals with HIV in an attempt to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS. Through these efforts, the Council identifies gaps in care and recommends how to best allocate federal Ryan White grant funds to the Transitional Grant Area.



Serving Hartford, Tolland, and Middlesex counties, the *Ryan White Part A Planning Council* meets regularly and is supported by Amplify staff, Marie Raynor. For more information about the Planning Council meeting times and its activities, please visit the Ryan White Hartford Website: [www.RyanWhiteHartford.org](http://www.RyanWhiteHartford.org).

## Promoting Recovery

Amplify was privileged to support the commitment and Region IV initiatives to support Recovery Friendly Communities. These are communities that support and facilitate recovery. They address stigma, offer community leaders who promote the benefits of being sober and tolerant toward those who are in recovery; access to education, treatment, and supports; safe environments where people can be open about their recovery, enjoy healthy interactions at work and play that do not center around alcohol or illicit drugs; and caring communities that endorse sobriety but can still take a hard line toward those who bring drugs into the community.



We are so excited for an opportunity to take this work the step further with a Recovery Friendly



Workplace Initiative to support these same supports for recovery in Region IV workplaces. For more information about please contact Sou at 860-667-6388 or [sou@amplifyct.org](mailto:sou@amplifyct.org)

## Way To Go Connecticut

Amplify's Way to Go CT program **promotes coordination and marketing of transportation options** for people with disabilities, older adults, and Veterans in North Central Connecticut. Our Mobility Manager works closely with individuals and communities to address gaps and barriers in transportation options. We are a "One Stop Shop" where individuals can find solutions to their transportation challenges.



Resources available via Way to Go CT include a comprehensive web-based and hard copy of the "Transportation Resources for North Central CT" guidebook, a transportation navigation website: [www.waytogoct.org](http://www.waytogoct.org), and an on call-center for individual assistance. We conduct regular and ongoing outreach to older adults, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

Our website is fully ADA compliant, translatable into more than 195 languages and compatible with accepted screen reader programs for the visually impaired. Hardcopy resource guides have been translated into Polish and Spanish.

Please feel free to connect with our Mobility Manager, Annette Diaz for information or assistance by calling 860-667-6388 or email- [adiaz@waytogoct.org](mailto:adiaz@waytogoct.org)/ [info@waytogoct.org](mailto:info@waytogoct.org).



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WAYTOGOCT



# Our Major Initiatives to Improve Services



**Amplify**

## 2021 Region IV Priorities

### Substance Misuse

Alcohol  
Heroin/Fentanyl  
Marijuana

### Mental Health

Depression  
Anxiety  
Suicide

### Emerging Issues

- Increase in overdose death rates (fentanyl, stimulants, methamphetamine).
- Legalization of recreational use of marijuana.
- Alcohol use appears to have worsened since the onset of Covid19.
- Mental health impact of Covid-19
- Suicide rates and varying by gender, racial and ethnic group.
- Behavioral health workforce is not able to expand in response to the need.
- The lack of awareness about problem gambling & treatment resources.
- Expansion of online gambling.

### Strengths, Resources & Assets

- Telehealth has increased access to behavioral health services.
- 1115 Demonstration Waiver for SUD inpatient & residential treatment for adults & children
- Improved coordination between Mobile Crisis Services & Law Enforcement.
- Efforts to address health equity & standardization of race, ethnicity, & language (REL) data.
- Regional initiatives leading to service system improvements for prevention, treatment, & recovery.
- Strong commitment to developing & maintaining recovery support services (i.e. peer support).
- Regional network capacity of medication assisted treatment ("MAT") providers.
- Interest in suicide prevention (Gizmos Pawesome Guide to Mental Health & Zero Suicide).
- Region IV has a First Episode Psychosis program and Geriatric Behavioral Health services.

### Resource Gaps & Needs

- Funding & resources for prevention (human capital, staff, financial).
- Flexibility of funding to support innovation in response to local needs.
- Families need support & education about the impact of substance misuse on the entire family.
- Information about community resources in lieu of law enforcement intervention in times of crisis.
- Focus on developmental assets, resilience training & emotional intelligence with youth.



# 2021 Priority Needs Assessment Recommendations

## Substance Use

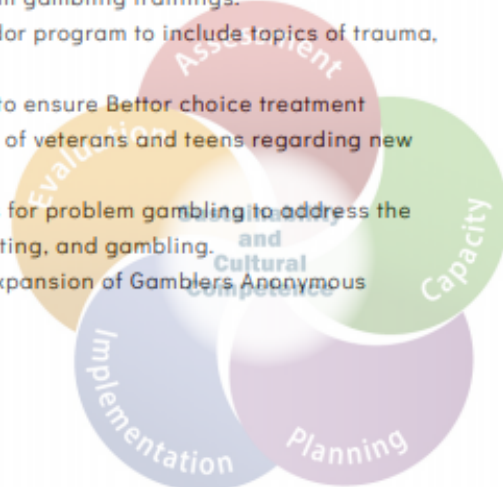
- Continue efforts to reduce overdose deaths
- Adapt & share local campaigns (Let's #MentionPrevention) to target counterfeit medication misuse, cannabis, vaping.
- Target decreased perception of harm (cannabis), increase awareness about impact on youth (including use in vape devices).
- Promote access to outpatient options to prevent overdoses while awaiting treatment.
- Represent regional perspectives in the Alcohol & Drug Policy Council (ADPC) ADPC and its subcommittees.
- Support the establishment of "Recovery Friendly Communities" and "Recovery Friendly Workplaces"

## Mental Health & Suicide

- Enhance reach of suicide prevention/mental health gatekeeper trainings with focus on Amplify's health equity goals and 2020 Youth Anxiety Review recommendations.
- Partner with local health and prevention leads (health districts, Local Prevention Councils) to tailor outreach to at-risk communities.
- Promote Universal screening among primary care and health/behavioral providers.
- Continue to explore options for mobile and tele-health options for people with limited income or living in rural communities
- Work in partnership with the Mobile Crisis Response Learning Collaborative (MCLC).
- Increase leadership development opportunities for people in recovery and family members to inform systems improvement efforts.

## Problem Gambling

- Include computer gaming as a topic in problem gambling trainings.
- Continue partnership with the AAPI Ambassador program to include topics of trauma, mental health, and addiction.
- Work with the Regional Gambling Awareness to ensure better choice treatment providers have capacity to address the needs of veterans and teens regarding new online sports betting and gaming issues
- Review school survey questions and use rates for problem gambling to address the overlap between computer gaming, sports betting, and gambling.
- Engage leaders of Gamblers Anonymous for expansion of Gamblers Anonymous meetings

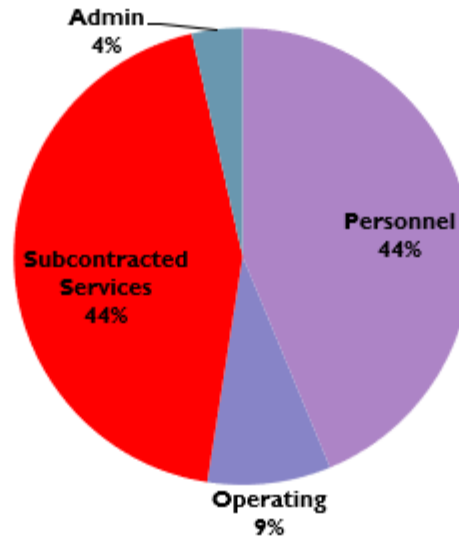




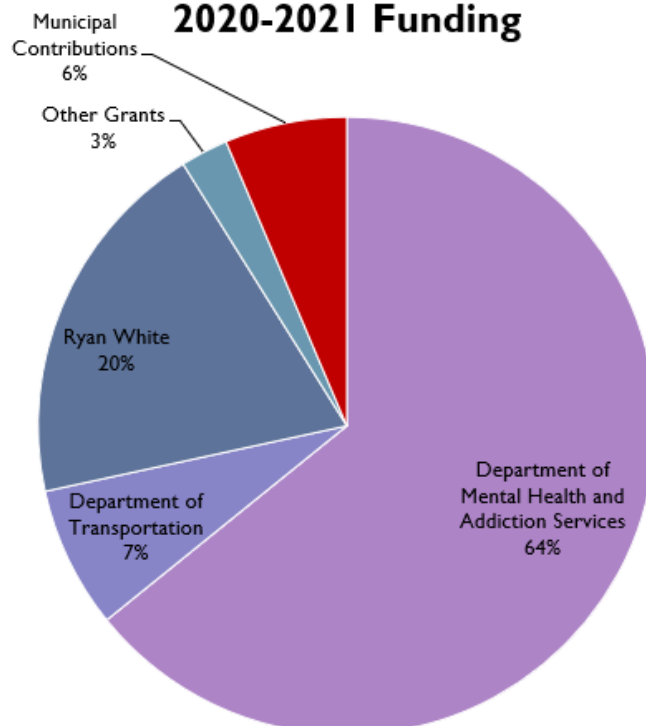
# Our Major Initiatives to Improve Services

## *FINANCIALS*

**2020-21 Resource Allocations**



**2020-2021 Funding**



***Amplify gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, organizations, public & governmental agencies for investing in our work and our communities during FY 2019-2020:***

<u>INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS/ DONORS</u>	<u>ORGANIZATIONS &amp; FOUNDATIONS</u>	<u>MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS</u>
Sheryl and William Breetz John and Nancy Calderbank Adam Cohen Susan and Wendell Coogan Judith Cowen Kathleen Douglas Marcia and Thomas DuFore Anita Ellis Dennis and Mary Keenan Patrick and Susi Keane Geralyn Laut Maggie McCarroll Mui Mui McCormick Cephus Nolen Ken and Joanne Perry Larry Pittinger Bonnie Potaki Gayle and Howard Renker Judith Shaw Maura Sheil-Hughes Hilary Silver Richard Tashijan Quyen Truong & Laura Suroviak Cheryl Zeiner	-Benevity Fund -Catholic Campaign for Human Development --Cross Street Training and Academic Center --Hartford Foundation for Public Giving --Sorrell Family Foundation -UConn Health Disparities Institute -United Way (Anonymous Donors)  <u>STATE &amp; FEDERAL AGENCIES</u> -Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services  -Department of Transportation  -Health Resources and Services Administration	Andover Avon Berlin Bloomfield Bolton Bristol Burlington Canton East Granby East Hartford East Windsor Ellington Enfield Farmington Glastonbury Granby Hartford Hebron Manchester Marlborough New Britain Newington Plymouth Rocky Hill Simsbury South Windsor Southington Stafford Suffield West Hartford Wethersfield Windsor Windsor Locks



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