



October 27, 2023

Dear Mayor Fuller,

Please docket the acceptance of \$ 446,104.67 into the HHS budget. These funds have been received from the opioid settlement abatement payments.

Over the last few decades, opioid addiction has ravaged communities all over the country. As such, the Department of Justice has entered into several settlements with opioid manufacturers, distributors, and retail pharmacies. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has signed onto the settlement agreements with Johnson and Johnson, a collective of opioid distributors, Walmart, Teva, Allergan, CVS and Walgreens. These historic settlements will bring over \$900 million into Massachusetts for substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support. Each municipality within the Commonwealth has been given the option to sign on, as a party, to the settlements. 60% of the settlement funds will be for the statewide Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund and 40% will be allocated to Massachusetts municipalities. Based on current settlements thus far, Newton is on track to receive \$3.8 million, distributed across seventeen payments, between 2022 and 2039.

Per the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, the funds must not be used to supplant existing resources and must be used to implement one or more of the following strategies:

1. Opioid use disorder treatment
2. Support people in treatment recovery
3. Connections to care
4. Harm reduction
5. Address the needs of criminal-justice- involved persons
6. Support pregnant or parenting women and their families, including babies with neonatal abstinence syndrome
7. Prevent misuse of opioids and implement prevention education

Newton's Strategy: Newton formed a substance use coalition in October of 2022. The Newton Coalition for Community Wellness consists of a variety of stakeholders from staff members from City Departments, community partners, and Newton residents. The work of the coalition focuses on youth prevention, parent support, community education and harm reduction.

We are looking forward to partnering with the Newton Wellesley Hospital substance use services clinic as they work directly with our residents and their families struggling with substance use disorder.

The expertise and lived experience of the coalition members will help guide the City's priorities in using the funds, which include:

1. Expanding treatment options for individuals for individuals with opioid use disorder
2. Increasing connections to care for individuals at risk of developing opioid use disorder
3. Enhancing support for individual who have lost someone to substance use and/or who currently have a loved one who is using substances
4. Implementing harm reduction measures such as increased access to naloxone
5. Providing school and community-based substance use education, programming and resources for community members across the lifespan

Thank-you,

Linda Walsh
Commissioner
Newton Health and Human Services