



September 2021 Welcome Message

Hello, I'm Tim Jeffries, Senior Policy Advisor for Drug Policy for the Bureau of Justice Assistance within the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

On behalf of BJA, I would like to invite you to join us in recognizing National Recovery Month. Each September, we celebrate our fellow Americans—many of them friends, colleagues, and even family members—who have made progress on the road to recovery from addiction and substance use. Progress for which they, and we, as their supporters, should be rightly proud—for it is not easily won.



And while the central message of Recovery Month is one of hope—for history shows us that progress to recovery *is* possible and occurs every day—we also know that progress is not accomplished alone.

That is why Recovery Month also celebrates the tireless, day-to-day dedication of the community of support that surrounds each person in recovery. From law enforcement to first responders, from peer-to-peer recovery specialists to health and mental health care providers, from faith leaders to neighbors and family members . . . they all weave together the fabric of support and reinforcement that lets every person in recovery know that he or she is valued. These colleagues, our colleagues, are no less than heroes to the recovery community and also deserve our respect and recognition for each year of Recovery Month in September.

Recovery is indeed an act of community. And we all know that for a community to survive and thrive, it must constantly adapt to new demands and deepen its connections so that its members are able to find support when they need it. That is why we are pleased to join our federal, private, and public partners to support National Recovery Month.

For Recovery Month not only celebrates recovery and those who make it a reality, but it also actively works to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices that emerge from a strong, collaborative recovery network.

COSSAP PODCAST SERIES TRANSCRIPT

For BJA, that means developing a community of practice that enables American neighborhoods to optimize their use of data so that they can stay ahead of trends in drug use and avert new overdoses. It also means helping communities establish better connections along all the points on the continuum of justice and service systems where an addicted individual—especially in rural communities—can be reached, so that chances for a full recovery for everyone can be achieved.

This is the work of BJA's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program, or COSSAP. For four years, COAP—now COSSAP—has been the key to a nationwide substance abuse epidemic. Throughout COSSAP, BJA has provided awards to state, local, and tribal communities and demonstration sites around the country to respond to the opioid and emerging drug epidemic:

- COSSAP funding is expanding the use of ODMAP, a free mobile tool that easily and quickly tracks the locations of suspected overdoses and the administration of naloxone, in the process providing overdose data across jurisdictions to support community-based responses to overdose spikes.
- COSSAP funding has also launched a project that is establishing cross-sector partnerships in communities that enable public safety, public health, and behavioral health agencies to leverage their complementary roles to respond effectively to the substance abuse crisis.
- Other COSSAP programs are focusing on rural and tribal areas hit hard by the epidemic and on expanding opioid treatment programs in jails.
- Lastly, COSSAP funding has allowed numerous peer-to-peer learning opportunities for jurisdictions to learn from the experts, either on-site or through a virtual tour of best practice programs.

Critical to COSSAP's effectiveness is the support of a collaborative of experienced training and technical assistance providers who interface with each of the grantees to maximize program success. Examples of these training and technical assistance strategies include treatment and recovery practices, to webinars and other trainings to ensure grantees are successful.

As evidenced by the growing number of individuals in recovery in the communities served, the COSSAP Collaborative expands to meet this growing need to now include state-based and tribal-specific assistance in addition to peer recovery, prescription drug monitoring programs, prison and jails services, law enforcement diversion, and logistics. From urban cities in New York to rural/tribal jurisdictions in New Mexico, COSSAP funding is assisting a myriad of communities and programs at all entry points of the criminal justice system.

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Thus, I hope you will explore all that BJA's COSSAP Program has to offer at www.cossapresources.org. This one-stop shop includes resources, funding and training opportunities, and necessary tools for recovery that communities have utilized to combat substance abuse.

Much thanks to all of those who have worked tirelessly to reduce substance use nationally and, more importantly, BJA commends those citizens who are continuing their journey in success to recovery.

Thank you.