



TALKING POINTS

New Futures Advocates

New Futures' *Five Points for New Hampshire's Future* sets forth policy initiatives that are part of a comprehensive, integrated approach intended to build upon legislative progress in addressing New Hampshire's substance misuse crisis made during the 2016 legislative session. The progress achieved should not lull policymakers into complacency. Granite Staters expect action by lawmakers to reduce and eliminate the devastation caused by substance misuse. They can use New Futures' *Five Points for New Hampshire's Future* to hold public officials accountable for making New Hampshire's substance misuse crisis a top priority in 2017.

INITIATIVE #1 - RESTORE THE ALCOHOL FUND

Why should I support this?

- The intent behind the creation of the Alcohol Fund in 2000 – that a small portion of the very substantial revenues generated through the sale of alcohol, an addictive substance that when misused imposes a significant burden on society, should be dedicated to addressing the problems caused by alcohol and drugs – is even more valid today.
- An Alcohol Fund, fully funded through a small percentage of the gross profits from growing alcohol sales – an approach overwhelmingly supported by Granite Staters, would provide additional resources to support critically needed prevention, treatment and recovery services in New Hampshire.

What needs to happen?

- Fully fund the Alcohol Fund at the original, legally mandated formula of five percent of gross profits from the sale of alcohol.
- Ensure funds are not re-directed to the general fund.
- Support critical services funded through the Alcohol Fund.

How can this happen?

- **Budget policy** - Support a state budget that provides that five percent of gross profits of liquor sales are dedicated to the Alcohol Fund and ensure that the funds are non-lapsing and not swept from the fund for other purposes.
- **Administrative policy**
 - Support the role of Governor's Commission to oversee delivery of effective and coordinated alcohol and drug abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services throughout the state of New Hampshire.
 - Ensure gaps in services and individual health insurance coverage are filled using Alcohol Fund resources.

Why is this important?

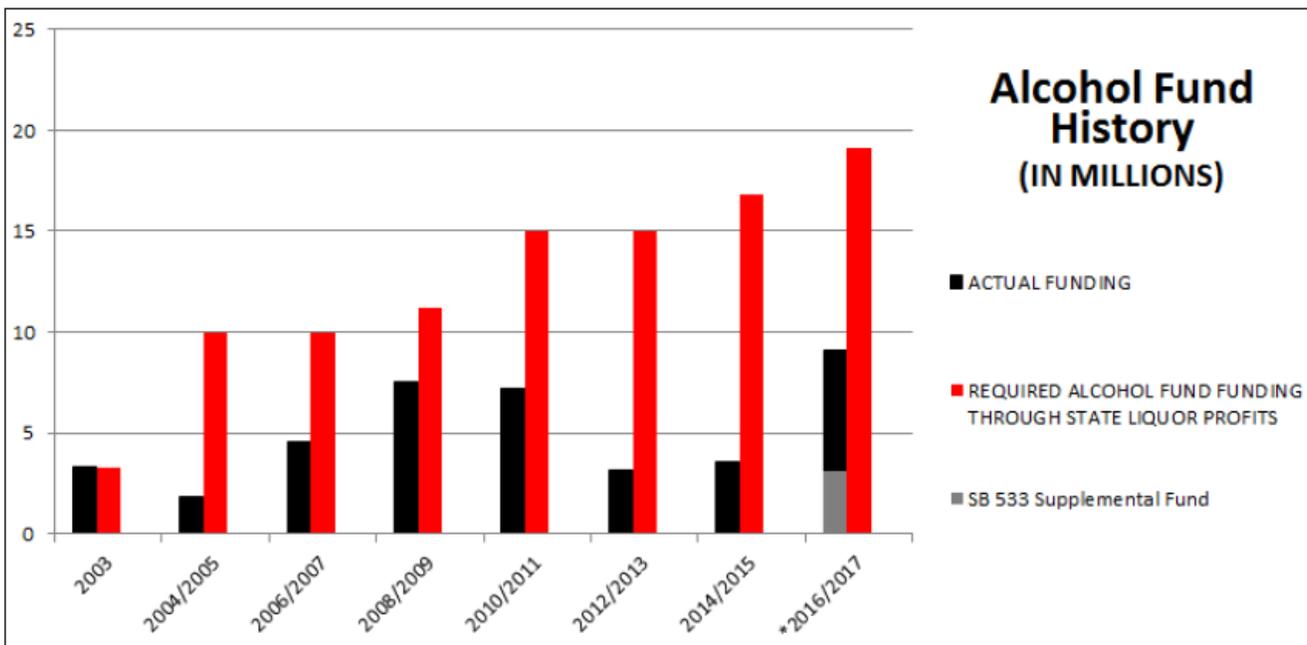
The funds budgeted in the Alcohol Fund for State Fiscal Years 2016-2017 provide for substance use disorder treatment and prevention efforts and recovery supports identified as priorities by the Governor's Commission on Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery (Governor's Commission; see "Background" below for a description of the history, membership and duties of the Governor's Commission), including:

- Maintaining certain existing treatment service contracts with providers;
- Medication assisted treatment and withdrawal management services;
- Recovery support services and infrastructure;
- Support for a DCYF Drug and Alcohol Counselor;
- Maintaining the successful Life of an Athlete prevention program;
- Technical assistance and training services;

- Public awareness and targeted education programs;
- Juvenile Court Diversion services;
- Monadnock Regional Access Point;
- Manchester Wrap services; and,
- Support for the Governor’s Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health.
- The majority of Alcohol Fund expenditures for SFY 2016-2017 support prevention, treatment and recovery services for which there is no third party reimbursement or other payment source. Also, individuals who do not have health care coverage for substance use disorder treatment are able to access services supported through the Alcohol Fund. A fully funded Alcohol Fund would enable expansion of those services and would continue to fill major gaps in funding for prevention, treatment and recovery services.

Additional facts:

- During State Fiscal Years 2014-2015, the Alcohol Fund, in combination with other state and federal funding, supported the initiatives, programs and services described in the *white paper*.



INITIATIVE #2 - SUPPORT PERMANENT MEDICAID EXPANSION

Why should I support this?

- Even with this significant expansion of health coverage, New Hampshire has been slow to increase its treatment capacity.
- This has resulted in weeklong waitlists for individuals in desperate need of treatment.
- When polled by the New Hampshire Alcohol and Other Drug Service Providers Association, treatment providers indicated that, while they wished to expand treatment capacity, the piecemeal approach to reauthorizing Medicaid Expansion deterred them from doing so.¹
- For some practices, more than 80 percent of their clients are Medicaid Expansion beneficiaries.
- Without assurances that this program will continue beyond the next two years, practices are unable to make capital improvements necessary to expand treatment capacity and meet the needs of Granite Staters

What needs to happen?

- Ensure low-income individuals have access to affordable substance use disorder treatment through Medicaid Expansion services.

How can this happen?

- Budget policy - Support a state budget that provides for a permanent reauthorization of Medicaid Expansion, also known as the New Hampshire Health Protection Program.
- Legislative policy - Support legislation that removes the sunset provisions for the statute authorizing Medicaid Expansion.

Why is this important?

- The program is called the New Hampshire Health Protection Program (NHHPP)
- It is also known as Medicaid Expansion
- This is a program that provides affordable healthcare coverage to more than 50,000 low-income Granite Staters.
- This program includes one of the most robust substance use disorder benefit arrays in the country, covering prevention, treatment and recovery support services.
- Thousands of individuals have accessed treatment through Medicaid Expansion.
- Without it, New Hampshire's most vulnerable citizens would not have access to critical substance use disorder treatment.
- Medicaid Expansion provides low-income individuals (less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level) with access to affordable health coverage.
- Under the Affordable Care Act, states with Medicaid Expansion programs are eligible to receive 100 percent federal match for program expenses until 2017.
- After 2017, the federal match begins to phase down to 90 percent, where it will remain indefinitely.

¹ NH Provider Association Member Survey, 2015.

Additional information

- Prior to the implementation of Medicaid Expansion, [New Hampshire had one of the highest per capita rates of substance use disorder in the country, while ranking 49th in access to treatment.](#)²
- In 2013, SAMSHA estimated that, of the 103,000 New Hampshire residents suffering from substance use disorder, only 6,000 were able to access treatment.³
- Since the implementation of Medicaid Expansion, New Hampshire has more than doubled its 2013 treatment access rate. Of the 50,000 beneficiaries currently enrolled in the program, more than 14 percent have used their coverage to access treatment for substance use disorder (7,500).⁴

² SAMHSA, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, (2014).

³ *Id.*

⁴ NH DHHS BDAS, Data as of January 2016.

INITIATIVE #3 - INVEST IN EVIDENCE INFORMED PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Why should I support this?

- In order to support a new generation of healthy Granite Staters, policymakers must expand substance misuse prevention efforts by embracing policies that support data collection, evidence informed programs and practices for youth and young adults, evidence informed early childhood supports and services, and affordable health care.

What needs to happen?

- Recognize that investments in early childhood wellbeing (access to healthcare, early intervention services and quality childcare, for example) result in delayed initiation and decreased use of drugs by adolescents.
- Strengthen New Hampshire's capacity to promote healthy social, emotional and physical development of infants, toddlers, other young children and their families and to provide mental health services and supports.
- Support evidenced informed prevention strategies such as student assistance programs in schools and fully funded juvenile diversion programs.
- Support evidence informed drug and alcohol screening of New Hampshire youth.
- Offer age appropriate, evidenced informed substance misuse prevention curriculum in all schools.
- Support ongoing collection of youth data through the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

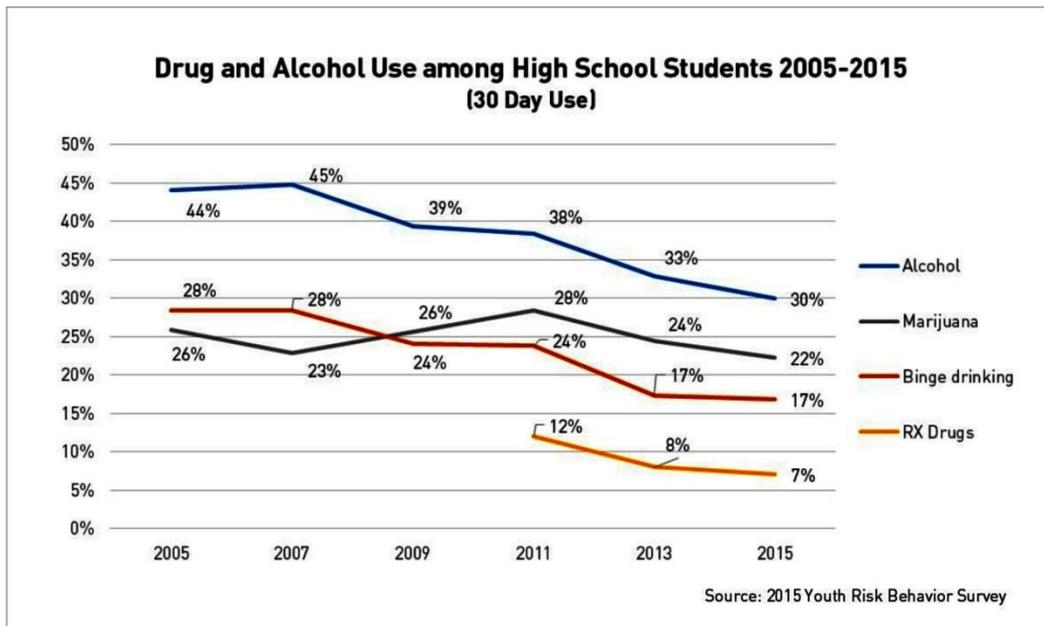
How can this happen?

- Budget policy - Support funding for evidence informed substance misuse prevention strategies and programs, and early childhood supports and services.
- Administrative policy
 - Support Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services' Screening Brief Intervention, Referral and Training (SBIRT) initiatives.
 - Monitor implementation of rules changes for the prescribing of opioids to prevent new cases of prescription drug misuse, especially among youth.
- Local policy – Offer age appropriate, evidenced informed substance misuse prevention curriculum in all schools. Support the participation and administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in school districts.

Why is this important?

- Substance abuse and addiction are preventable disorders.
- While substance use generally begins during the adolescent years, there are known biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to the risk that begin accumulating as early as the prenatal period.

- This creates opportunities to intervene very early in an individual’s life and thereby prevent substance use disorders—and, along with them, a range of other related behavioral problems—long before they would normally manifest themselves.



Additional information:

- Results of the latest Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), administered in 2015, indicate that substance misuse among youth is on the decline in New Hampshire.⁵

⁵ Youth Risk Behavior Survey, NH Department of Education, 2015

INITIATIVE #4 - ADVANCE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Why should I support this?

- One of the most common barriers encountered by individuals with substance use disorder is the waitlist for treatment.
- A number of factors impact waitlists, the most significant being a small workforce of qualified treatment providers.
- New Hampshire needs to support individuals who want to become substance use disorder professionals by removing barriers to licensure and providing student loan assistance.
- New Hampshire also needs to incentivize qualified clinicians, currently practicing in New Hampshire but not serving individuals with substance use disorder, to expand their practices to include treatment services.
- Workforce shortages are a significant barrier to increasing treatment capacity in New Hampshire. New Hampshire should evaluate current barriers to licensure and reassess existing loan assistance programs for young professionals entering the addiction treatment field.
- Furthermore, New Hampshire must ensure that insurance carriers are not preventing expansion of treatment capacities by violating federal parity law or chronically under paying providers for substance use disorder treatment.

What needs to happen?

- Remove practice barriers to professional licensure.
- Support programs to encourage students to pursue professional licensure to treat individuals with substance use disorder.
- Support incentives for existing practitioners to include substance use disorder treatment among their offered services.

How can this happen?

- Budget policy - Support a state budget that provides increased workforce development funding.
- Legislative policy - Support the creation of a study committee to evaluate barriers to licensure and certification in New Hampshire.
- Administrative policy - Support the New Hampshire Insurance Department in their full investigation of private insurance carrier practices having the effect of prohibiting workforce development.

Additional information:

- The 2015 Center for Excellence Substance Use Disorder Provider Report referenced above analyzed New Hampshire's field of qualified treatment providers.
- This report found numerous qualified professionals are practicing around the state, but many have restricted their practice areas and are not currently providing substance use disorder treatment services.

- The New Hampshire Insurance Department (NHID) recently released the preliminary findings for their 2016 market conduct review on behavioral health claims administration, which lends credence to the reimbursement experiences of providers in the field. NHID found that insurance carriers have chronically underpaid substance use disorder treatment providers; resulting reimbursement rates significantly lower than Medicare rates.
- In late 2014, the New Hampshire Center for Excellence (the Center) set out to assess substance use disorder treatment capacity in New Hampshire.
- As part of this work, the Center completed a field survey of all professionals qualified to deliver treatment services in New Hampshire.

INITIATIVE #5 - REMOVE BARRIERS TO INSURANCE COVERAGE

Why should I support this?

- New Hampshire can do better to support individuals in recovery and should begin by looking at barriers to recovery within existing health insurance carrier practices.
- New Hampshire must support individuals in recovery by ensuring access to services and medications that reduce the risk of relapse.
- Current carrier practices for covering such services must comply with federal law, requiring regulatory oversight from New Hampshire Insurance Department and the Department of Health and Human Services.

What needs to happen?

- Support efforts to ensure health insurance carriers are compliant with federal law.
- Support coverage for recovery support services in private carrier benefit arrays.
- Support efforts to eliminate barriers to non-opioid alternative medications on tiered formularies.
-

How can this happen?

- Budget policy - Support a state budget that provides increased funding for peer recovery services.
- Legislative policy - Support the legislation clarifying the duties and responsibilities of insurance carriers to make non-opioid alternatives available for individuals in recovery.
- Administrative policy - Encourage and support a full investigation into health insurance carrier compliance with the federal parity law by the NH Insurance Department and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Why is this important?

- In the 2016 session, the legislature passed a number of bills aimed at improving the ability of individuals with substance use disorder to access treatment in a timely manner.
- Recovery support services are evidence-based, non-clinical, support services delivered to individuals in early recovery by peers with lived experience.
- Recovery support services help to keep individuals in recovery and shorten the length of relapse events by connecting individuals with services in a timely manner.
- Similar to recovery supports, non-opioid alternatives also help individuals to remain in recovery.
- Many non-opioid alternatives are not included on preferred drug formularies, meaning they are only available to individuals in recovery through a denial and appeal process, or off formulary with exorbitant copays.