



Baystate  
Health



University of  
Massachusetts  
UMASS Medical School

# Gándara Interprofessional Population Health Clerkship

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# Population Health Clerkship

The PURCH track strategically aligns medical education experiences with the priority health needs of low resourced communities of Western Massachusetts.

This PHC on Recovery Support Services builds on the MS1 Greenfield Rural Immersion Day on substance use disorders and aligns with the community health priority of mental health and substance use disorder services.

# Gándara Center

Gándara Center works to “promote the wellbeing of Hispanics, African Americans and other culturally diverse populations through innovative, culturally competent behavioral health, prevention and educational services.”

intimate partner abuse  
education

anger management

sex offender treatment

structured outpatient  
addiction programs

gambling disorder  
counseling

behavioral  
management

residential group  
homes

teen pregnancy and  
STI prevention

adolescent substance  
use prevention

adult long-term  
residential program

# Gándara Center Client Demographics

## Number of Clients

4,195 active clients  
with 2,700 or 65%  
from the Springfield  
or Holyoke area

## Gender

56% male  
43% female

## Age

Newborn to ≥ 65  
years; most clients  
are between 31-49

## Race

~87% unknown  
~9% White  
~3% Black  
~0.4% Asian

## Ethnicity

~65% unknown  
~35% Hispanic

## Disorders

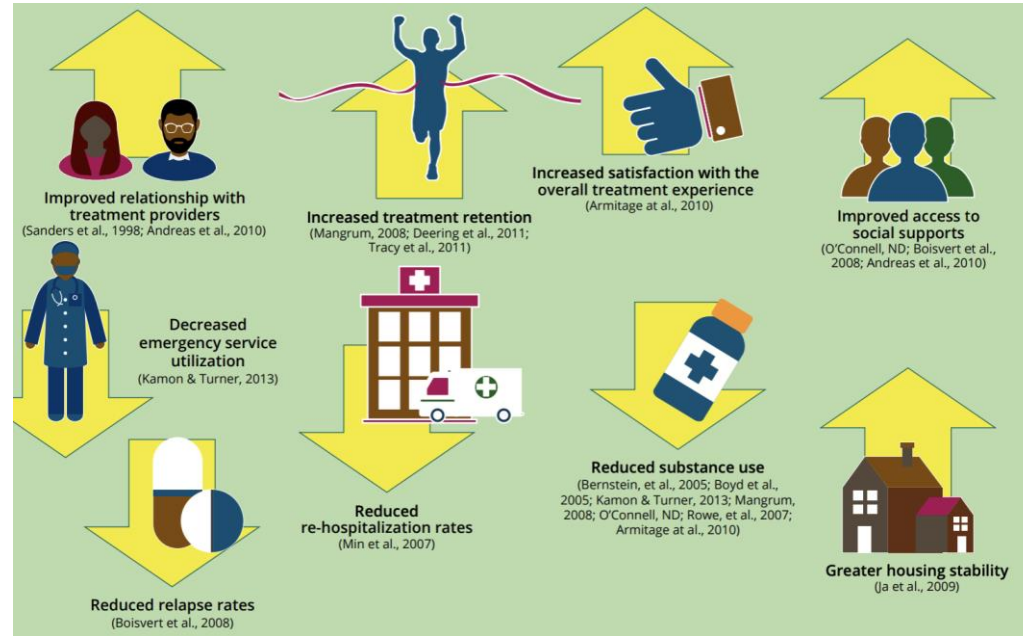
96% serious mental illness  
-depression, anxiety, PTSD, ADHD, adjustment disorder  
4% substance use disorder  
-opioid, alcohol, cannabis, and/or cocaine use

# Experience

We shadowed recovery support navigators at Gándara in Springfield for 1 week to learn about the role they play in supporting people in recovery.



## Impact of Recovery Coaches and Navigators



# Experience

- Through shadowing, we visited many Western MA organizations including:
  - Way Finders
  - Hope for Holyoke
  - Gándara Residential Services for Women
  - Gándara Addiction Recovery Program
  - Coles Place
  - Springfield Rescue Mission
  - Social Security Offices
  - Access to Recovery
  - Department of Transitional Assistance



# Survey

- The Gándara RSN Team was interested in better understanding:
  - What resources they had connected their clients with
  - What perception their clients had of the RSN services
- We created a survey tool based on conversations with the RSN team and validated survey tools as identified in a literature review

## Gándara Recovery Support Navigator Survey

Clients will be asked to fill out Questions 1-3 prior to working with a Recovery Support Navigator.  
 Clients will be asked to fill out Questions 1-4 after working with a Recovery Support Navigator.

### 1. Which of the following services are you currently receiving? Check all that apply:

- Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotic Anonymous, Marijuana Anonymous, or other recovery groups
- Recovery coach or sponsor
- Mental health services (therapist, counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist)
- Primary care services
- Medication Assisted Therapy (suboxone, methadone, naltrexone, vivitrol, etc.)
- Case management services

### 2. Please rate how you feel.

	Not at all	A little	Neutral	Very	Extremely
How stable do you feel in your recovery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How supported do you feel in your recovery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How motivated are you to engage with recovery services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How comfortable do you feel navigating social services (housing, social security, employment, transportation, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How comfortable do you feel expressing your needs to your providers (physicians, nurses, counselors, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. Please rate how you feel.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel confident.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel independent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel in control of my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel able to deal with crisis and situations that used to be a problem for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have coping strategies that help me maintain sobriety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have positive relationships with family or friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a recovery support network.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a stable housing situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Reflection



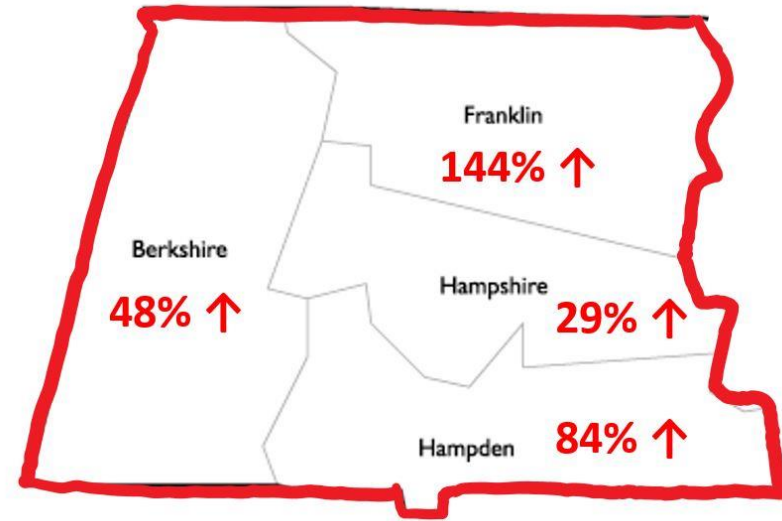
The most important conversations between RSNs and clients occur in the car as they drive to appointments and connect with different resources in the area.

We feel that the RSN services are invaluable.



# Substance Use Disorder in Western MA

- In 2018, there was a 73% increase in Western Massachusetts opioid overdose deaths
- Opioid-related deaths have increased 450% over the last 16 years in Massachusetts
- Those in Western Massachusetts report commuting 5+ hours to access treatment



# Demographics and Disparities in MA

## SUD Treatment Admissions in Springfield (2017):

- 73% male
- 33% 31 to 40 years old
- 75.1% high school or less
- 62.6% unemployed
- 41.7% experiencing homelessness
- 52.7% had received prior mental health treatment
- Polysubstance use over the year prior to admission

## Vulnerable Populations:

- Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics
- People with a serious mental illness
- People who have been incarcerated
- People experiencing homelessness
- Postpartum women

# Needs of People in Recovery

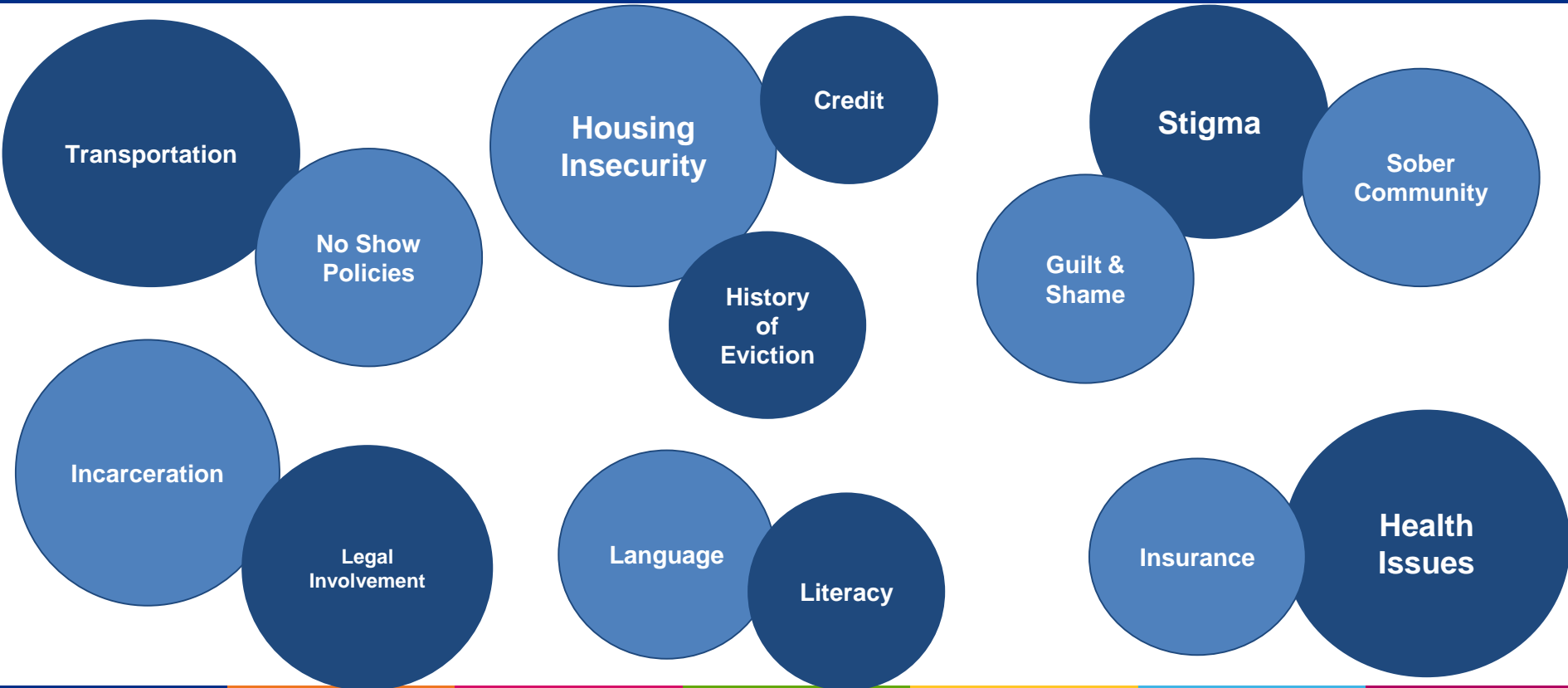
**12.2% of adults who need treatment for a SUD receive some type of specialty treatment**

**Only 40% of people enrolled in treatment for SUD (across OP, IOP, residential, hospital, detox) completed treatment**

When asked what would have kept them engaged:

- 54.2% reported social services including job training, stable housing, childcare
- Supportive staff, schedule flexibility of appointments

# Experience: Barriers Faced by Clients



# Advocacy



## Bureau of Substance Addiction Services

(BSAS)

Bureau of Substance Addiction Services



**BSAS oversees the statewide system of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services for individuals, families, and communities affected by gambling and substance addiction.**



# Advocacy Pitch

We are medical and pharmacy students working at a community-based organization studying *the impact of substance use disorders (SUD) on health and social well-being and how support services might help to improve outcomes during recovery*. **People with SUD often have to negotiate complex systems and encounter many barriers.** At the same time, clients must prioritize their recovery activities and attend to related and unrelated health comorbidities. **Recovery Support Navigators help to navigate these complex systems, provide transportation, and connect clients with a recovery network,** supports which are critical to clients' well-being and recovery. We believe that funding and support for the Gándara RSN and Recovery Coach program to increase RSN staff would be the most valuable addition to people with SUD in the greater Springfield community at this time. Currently, there are 6 staff members, each with 16 clients, and 35 clients on the waiting list. Considering the gap in time between being referred for services and receiving services can potentially be a vulnerable period in a client's recovery, **allocation of funding to the RSN and recovery coach program will allow RSNs and recovery coaches to support more clients, helping people in recovery to find stability and independence in their daily lives and connecting them to the social and medical support necessary to maintain recovery.**

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