



## **The Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety Initiative (OPTIONS)**

**Project-to-Date Totals through September 30, 2023**

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This brief provides updates on the activities of Maine OPTIONS Liaisons through the statewide OPTIONS (Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety) initiative. This is based on data reported by OPTIONS Liaisons from the project's inception in October 2020 through September 2023. Liaisons are behavioral health clinicians working in all 16 counties in Maine, employed by behavioral health organizations contracted through the State of Maine, Office of Behavioral Health. In 2023, Governor Mills has increased funding to expand the Liaison program, with additional Liaisons being hired in counties with a higher need.

Liaisons provide brief therapeutic interventions, conduct proactive outreach with communities at the highest risk of experiencing an overdose, de-escalate behavioral health crises, and engage in post-overdose follow up visits and referrals of persons in need, as well as affected others, to community- and state-based services. They collaborate and coordinate with those on the frontlines responding to people experiencing an overdose or at risk of overdose, including first responders like law enforcement and EMS. Anyone can reach out or make a referral to their local OPTIONS Liaison at <https://knowyouroptions.me/options-liaisons/>.

This brief highlights data (from its inception in October 2020 through September 2023) that reflect activities of the OPTIONS Liaisons across a spectrum of services for individuals and communities to stay safe, get well, and stay well, such as

- Who makes referrals to OPTIONS Liaisons
- How these referrals are made
- Where OPTIONS Liaisons refer clients
- How clients engage with those referrals
- Demographics of clients served by OPTIONS Liaisons
- Number of individuals trained in overdose and anti-stigma education
- Number of naloxone kits distributed

Additional resources, data, and visualizations are available at [knowyouroptions.me](https://knowyouroptions.me) and [mainedrugdata.org](https://mainedrugdata.org).

## Key Metrics Snapshot

During the most recent reporting period of September 2023 OPTIONS liaisons' engagement included

- 78** co-response calls, conducted alongside law enforcement partners
- 63** postoverdose follow-ups, conducted frequently alongside law enforcement partners
- 106** individuals referred to community-based treatment programs, with 60% (64) attending their first treatment appointment
- 183** individuals referred to community-based recovery support programs
- 627** individuals trained in overdose and antistigma education
- 792** kits (1,584 doses) of naloxone (Narcan) distributed

From October 2020 through September 2023 (project-to-date-totals), OPTIONS liaisons' engagement included

- 1,743** co-response calls, conducted alongside law enforcement partners
- 2,471** postoverdose follow-ups, conducted frequently alongside law enforcement partners
- 2,425** clients referred to community-based treatment programs, with 77% (1,873) confirmed to have attended their first appointments
- 3,286** individuals referred to community-based recovery support programs
- 7,423** individuals trained in overdose and antistigma education
- 8,406** kits (16,812 doses) of naloxone distributed

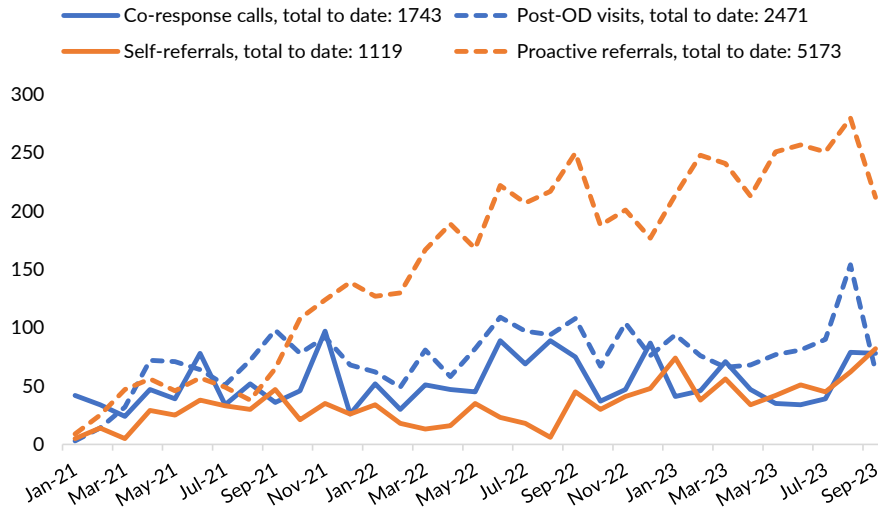
## How OPTIONS Liaisons Receive Clients

OPTIONS liaisons generate clients from operating alongside law enforcement officers as co-responders to nonfatal and fatal opioid overdoses as well as other substance-use-related public safety response calls. Co-response calls are those that OPTIONS liaisons respond to during the moment of crisis, whereas postoverdose follow-up visits are those that they respond to in the days following a substance-use-related crisis. Oftentimes, law enforcement partners accompany liaisons during both co-response calls and postoverdose follow-up visits.

OPTIONS liaisons also generate clients through self-referrals and proactive referrals. Self-referrals occur when individuals contact OPTIONS liaisons themselves. Proactive referrals are those made by public safety officials, clinicians, community-based substance use supports, and affected others.

The following chart and table show the number of law enforcement calls responded to and postoverdose follow-up visits conducted by liaisons along with the number of self and proactive referrals.

OPTIONS Response Calls and Self- and Proactive Referrals, Project-to-Date

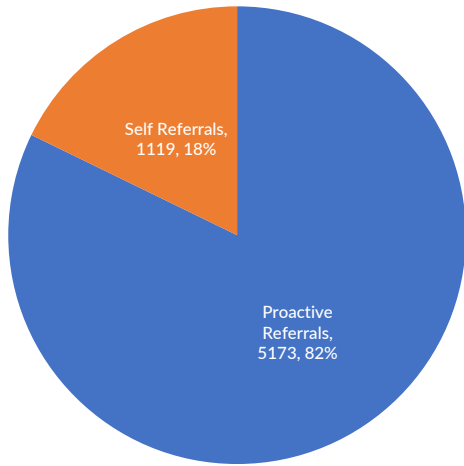


Monthly Client Interactions for OPTIONS Liaisons

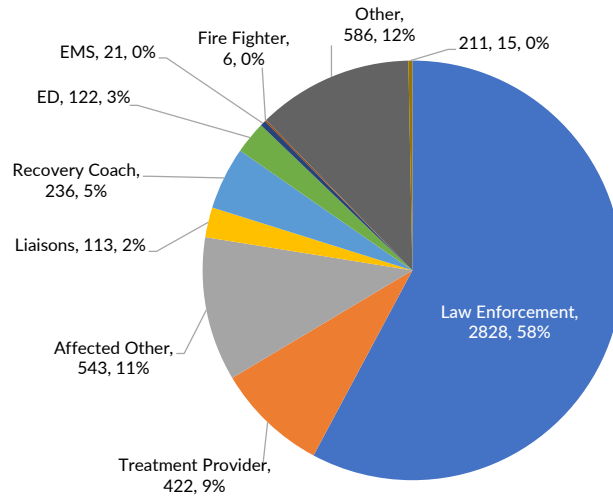
	Oct-Dec 2020	2021	Jan-Mar 2022	Apr-May 2022	Jul-Sep 2022	Oct-Dec 2022	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Co-response calls	N/A	555	133	181	233	171	41	46	71	47	35	34	39	79	1665
Post OD visits	N/A	715	192	249	299	247	94	76	66	68	77	81	90	154	2408
Self referral	N/A	308	65	74	69	119	74	38	56	34	42	51	45	62	1037
Proactive referral	N/A	763	424	579	674	566	214	248	241	213	251	257	251	280	4961

Proactive referrals to OPTIONS liaisons come from a variety of sources including law enforcement, treatment providers, affected others, other OPTIONS liaisons, recovery coaches, emergency department clinicians, and first responders. Data regarding the source of proactive referrals began being collected during the second year of the program in October 2021. The following two pie charts show the number and percentage of proactive referrals to OPTIONS liaisons as well as the number and percentage of self-referrals 18% (1,119) versus proactive referrals 82% (5,173). Law enforcement make up the preponderance of proactive referrals at 58% (2,828) followed by affected others 11% (543) and treatment providers 9% (422).

Proactive and Self-Referrals, Project to Date



Proactive Referrals by Type, Project to Date

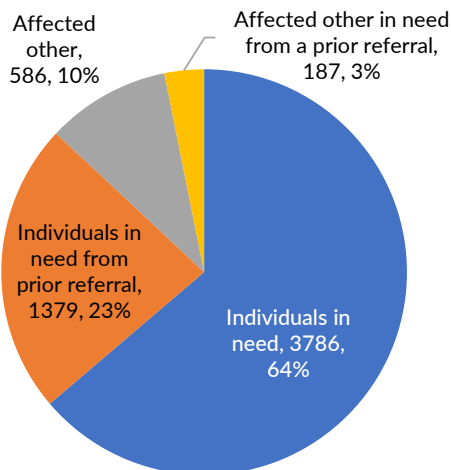


Note: Liaisons began reporting proactive referrals by type beginning in year 2 of the initiative (October 2021)

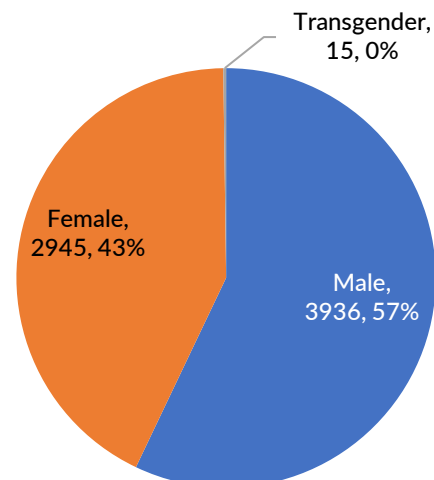
### Clients Served by OPTIONS Liaisons

OPTIONS liaisons serve not only individuals in need but also affected others. In many counties, liaisons are known members of the community who are able to reach at-risk individuals and those that might not engage with other state-based harm reduction, treatment, recovery, or prevention services. The following four charts show the demographic breakdown of clients served by OPTIONS liaisons. 63% (3,957) of clients are individuals in need connecting with OPTIONS for the first time, 24% (1,494) are individuals in need who had previously connected with OPTIONS, 10% (614) are affected others connecting with OPTIONS for the first time, and 3% (197) are affected others who had previously connected with OPTIONS. 57% (4,099) of clients identify

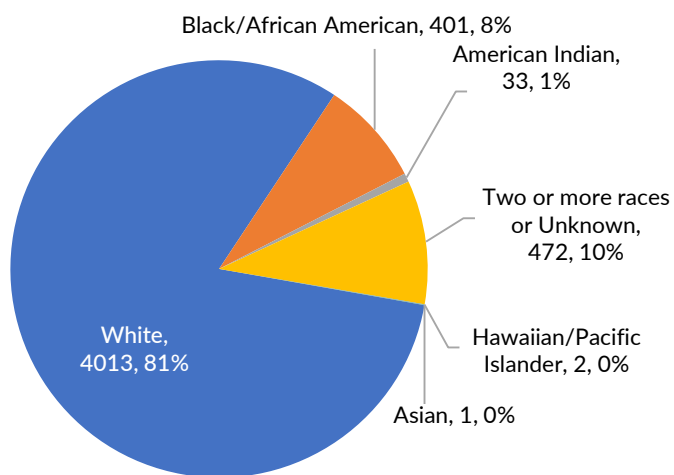
Individuals in Need and Affected Others, Project to Date



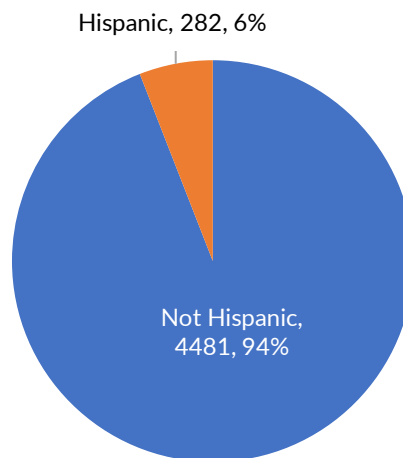
Gender of Clients, Project to Date



Race of Clients, Project to Date



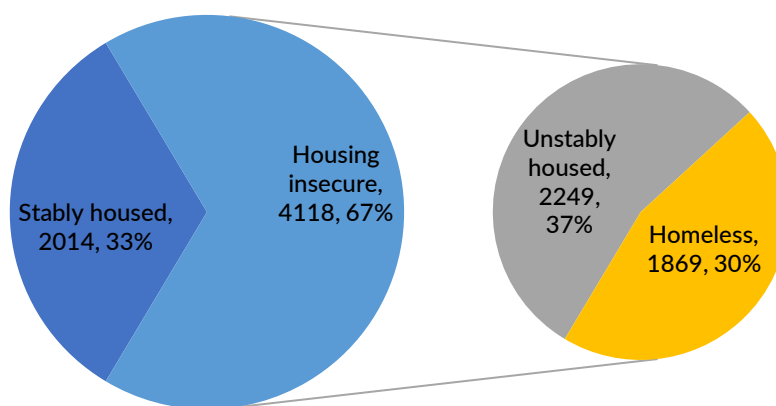
Ethnicity of Clients, Project to Date



as male, 43% (3,093) identify as female, and <1% (16) identify as transgender. The ethnicity of clients is 6% (289) Hispanic/Latino and 94% (4,640) not Hispanic/Latino. The racial composition of clients is 81% (4,184) white, 8% (420) Black/African American, 1% (40) American Indian/Alaska Native, <1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (2), and <1% Asian (1).

OPTIONS liaisons are effective at reaching individuals in need and affected others that are experiencing housing instability and experiencing homelessness. The following charts show that 67% (4,118) of clients referred to OPTIONS liaisons since October 2021 are reported to be housing insecure; 37% (2,249) are unstably housed and 30% (1,869) are homeless. Those who have stable housing constituted 33% (2,014) of liaison clients.

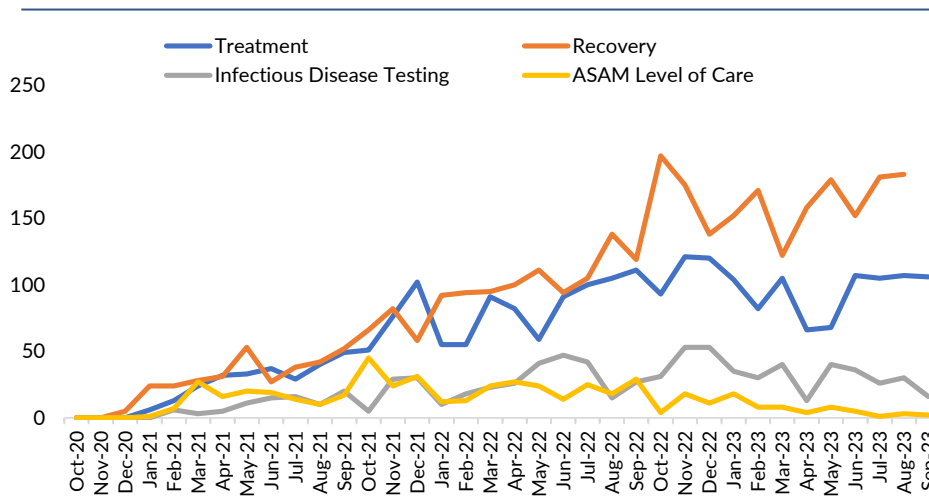
Housing Status of Clients, Project to Date



## Liaisons Connect Persons Struggling with Substance Use Disorder to Services

OPTIONS liaisons connect individuals with state- and community-based prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services. The first chart below shows client interactions and referrals to services. The second shows synergistic connections between OPTIONS liaisons and other state-supported programs across the six focus areas of the State of Maine Opioid Response Strategic Action Plan: infrastructure, public safety, prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery.

Client Interactions and Referrals by Type, Project to Date

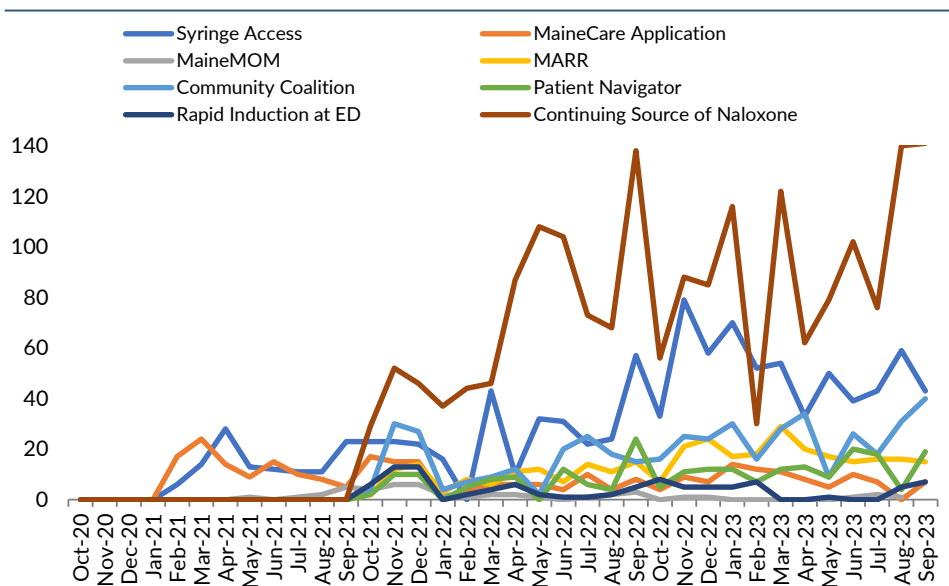


Note: Referrals to MARR, Community Coalitions, Patient Navigators, Rapid Induction, and Continuing Source of Naloxone were not reported by OPTIONS liaisons until October 2021

Client Interactions and Referrals by Type, Project to Date

	Oct-Dec 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Apr-May 2021	Jul-Sep 2021	Oct-Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Apr 2022	May 2022	Jun 2022	Jul 2022	Aug 2022	Sep 2022	Total	
Treatment	0	492	201	232	316	334	104	82	105	66	68	107	105	107	106	2425
Recovery	0	472	244	306	337	491	138	152	171	122	158	179	152	181	183	3286
Infectious Disease Testing	0	150	51	114	84	137	35	30	40	13	40	36	26	30	16	802
ASAM Level of Care	0	231	49	65	72	33	18	8	8	4	8	5	1	3	2	507

### Client Referrals to Other State-Supported Programs, Project to Date



### Client Referrals to Other State-Supported Programs, Project to Date

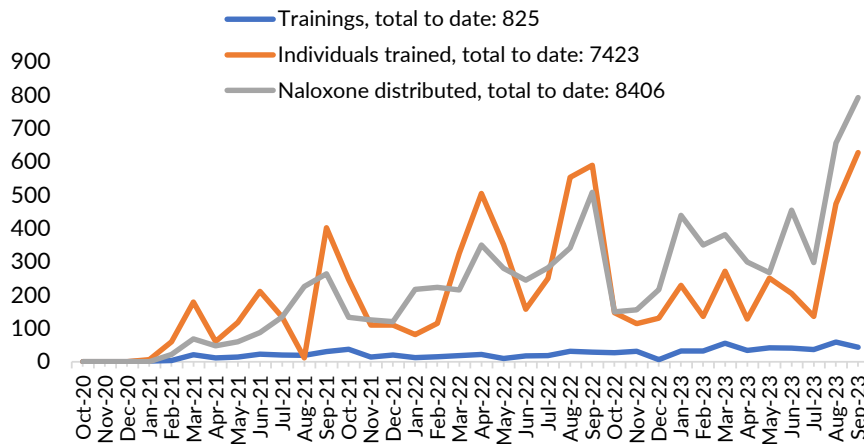
	Oct- Dec 2020	2021	Jan- Mar 2022	Apr- May 2022	Jul- Sep 2022	Oct- Dec 2022	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Total
Syringe Access	0	186	59	73	103	170	70	52	54	33	50	39	43	59	43	1034
MaineCare Application	0	149	10	16	22	20	14	12	11	8	5	10	7	0	7	291
MaineMOM	0	25	5	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	45
MARR	N/A	28	17	30	40	52	17	18	29	20	17	15	16	16	15	330
Community Coalition	N/A	61	20	34	58	65	30	16	28	34	9	26	18	31	40	470
Patient Navigator	N/A	22	13	21	34	28	12	7	12	13	9	20	18	4	19	232
Rapid Induction at ED	N/A	32	6	9	8	18	5	7	0	0	1	0	0	5	7	98
Continuing Source of Naloxone	N/A	127	127	299	279	229	116	30	122	62	79	102	76	140	141	1929

OPTIONS liaisons refer individuals for treatment programs in the moment when their clients are ready by meeting them where they are at. They use warm handoffs where they dial the phone number of the treatment provider for their clients. Some liaisons also drive individuals to their treatment appointment or MOUD (Medication for Opioid Use Disorder) inductions. For the project to date,

- 2,425** clients were referred for community-based treatment programs
- 77%** attended their first appointment with the provider (1,873)
- 23%** unknown if they attended their appointment or not (552)

OPTIONS liaisons also serve as community educators conducting a variety of trainings including Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution and anti-stigma trainings. The chart and table show the number and cumulative number of trainings conducted, individuals trained, and naloxone kits distributed by OPTIONS liaisons. OPTIONS liaisons have conducted 825 trainings, trained 7,423 individuals, and distributed 8,303 kits (16,606 doses) of naloxone from October 2020 to September 2023.

Number of Trainings Conducted, Individuals Trained, and Naloxone Kits Distributed by OPTIONS Liaisons



Trainings Conducted, Individuals Trained, and Naloxone Kits Distributed by OPTIONS Liaisons

	Oct- Dec 2020	2021	Jan- Mar 2022	Apr- May 2022	Jul- Sep 2022	Oct- Dec 2022	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sep 23	Total
Monthly Trainings	0	215	45	49	78	64	32	32	55	34	42	41	36	59	43	825
Monthly Trained	0	1648	521	1013	1392	392	229	136	271	128	251	205	136	474	627	7423
Monthly Naloxone	0	1287	655	875	1131	522	439	350	381	299	267	455	297	656	792	8406