

OPTIONS

SAVE LIVES

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

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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 for the month May 2026 as well as the OPTIONS program fiscal year starting in October 2024. This is based on a new data reporting system for OPTIONS Liaisons that began in October 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 increased funding to expand the liaison program, with additional liaisons and/or recovery coaches being hired in counties across the state.

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 impacted 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 the 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 OPTIONS Liaisons
- number of individuals trained in overdose and anti-stigma education

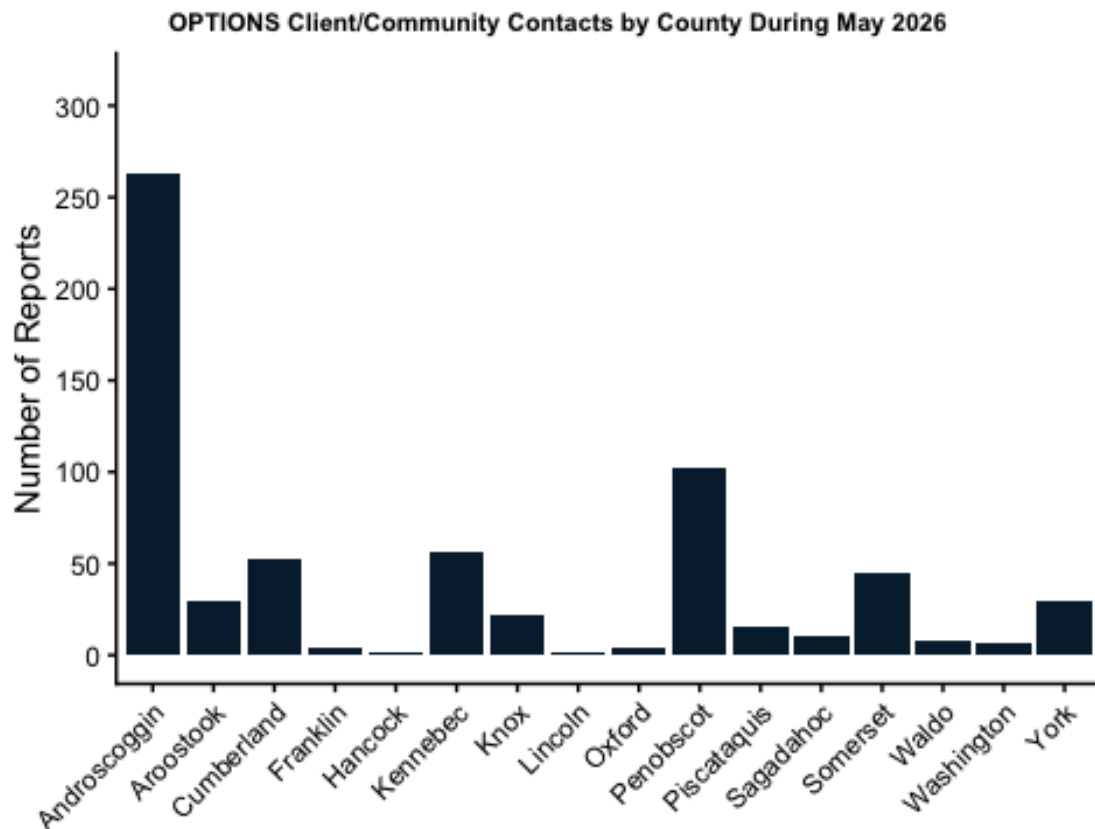
- number of community events
- number of naloxone kits distributed and to whom

Additional resources, data, and visualizations are available at <https://knowyouroptions.me/> and <https://mainedrugdata.org>.

Monthly Key Metrics Snapshot

During the most recent reporting period of May 2026 OPTIONS liaisons' engagement included

- **652** client, training, or event contacts made with an additional 66 client contacts attempted but unsuccessful
- **51** co-response or postoverdose follow-ups conducted, usually alongside law enforcement partners
- **57** individuals referred to treatment programs
- **60** individuals referred to community-based recovery support programs
- **106** individuals trained in overdose response and antistigma education
- **510** kits (1020 doses) of naloxone (Narcan) distributed

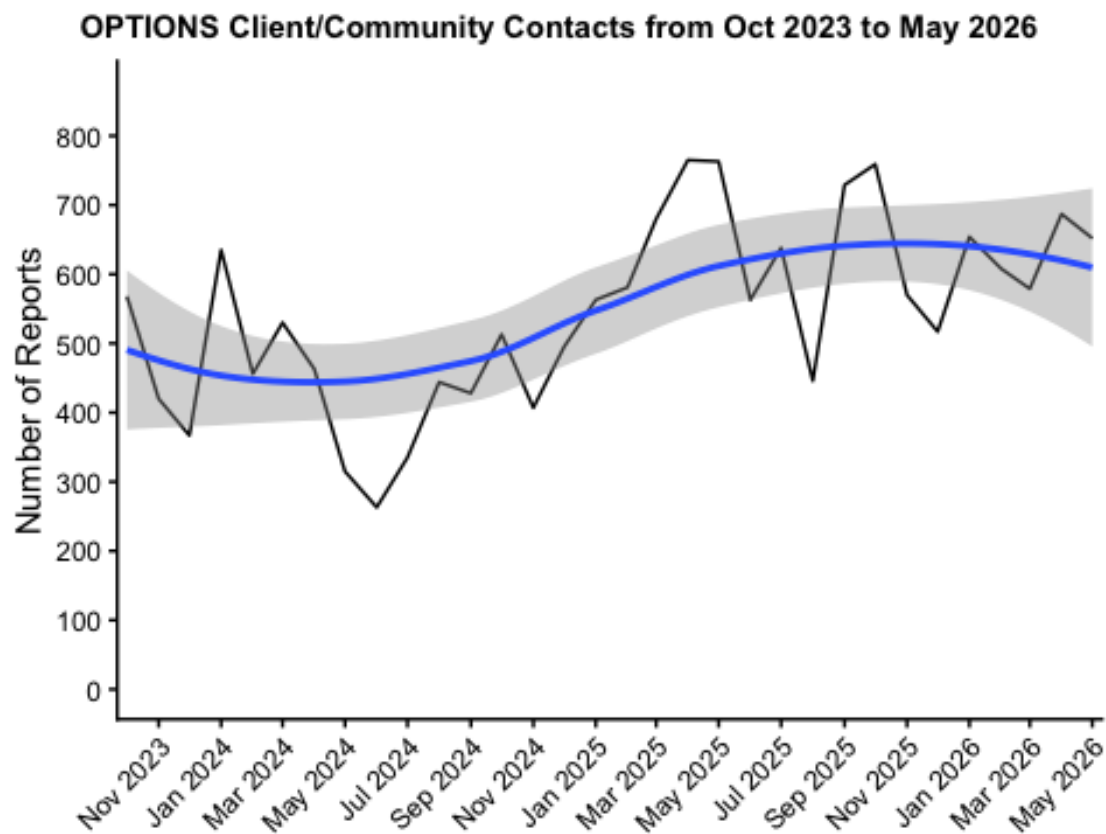


Fiscal Year-to-Date Key Metrics Snapshot

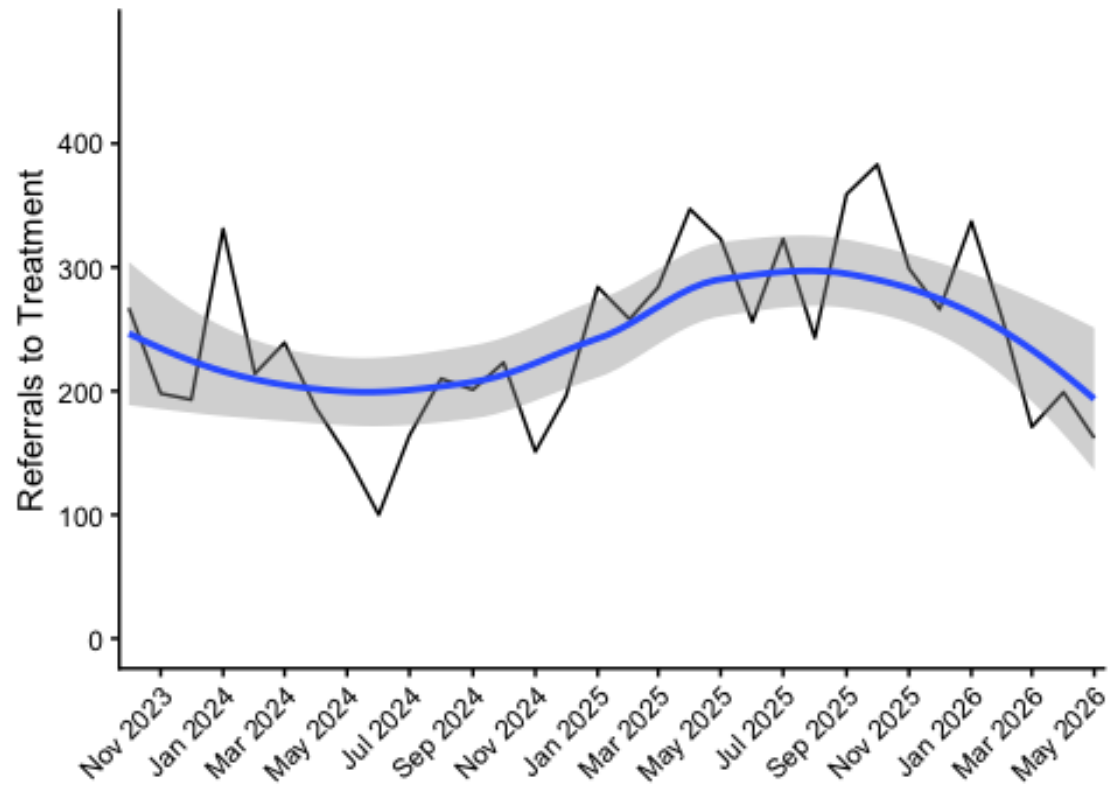
During the most recent reporting period of May 2026 OPTIONS liaisons' engagement included

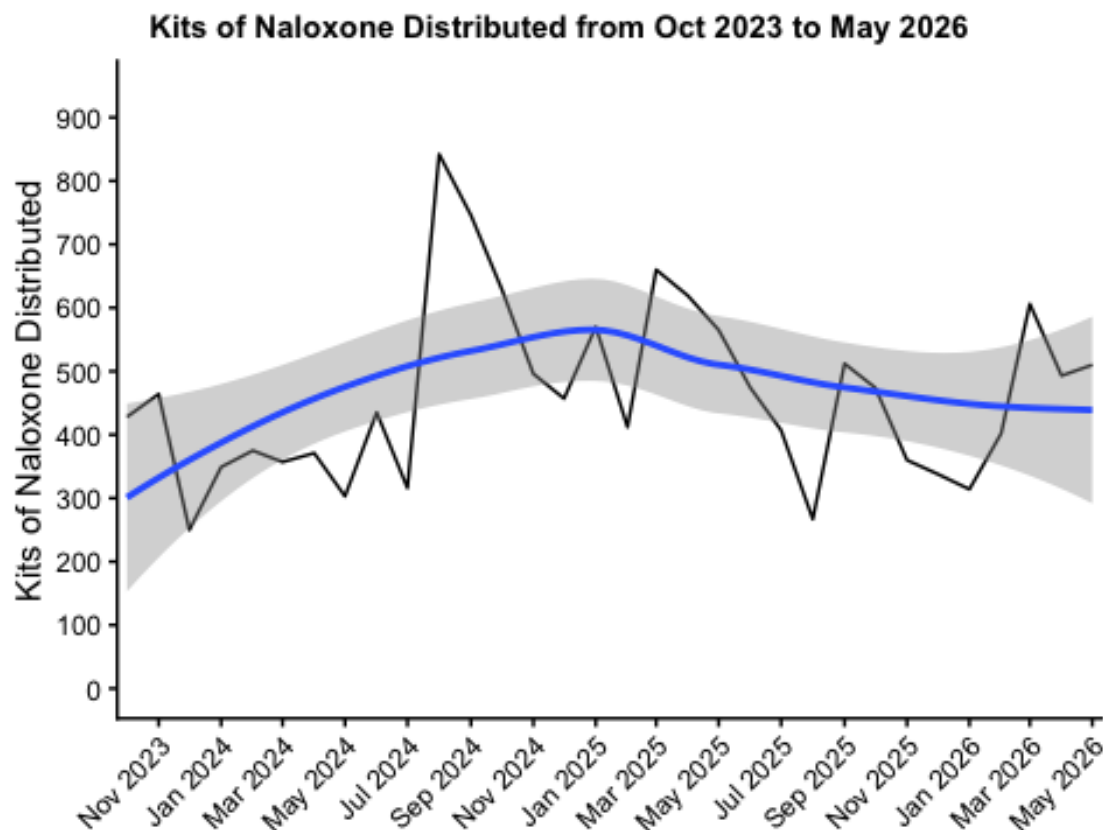
- **5028** client, training, or event contacts made with an additional 663 client contacts attempted but unsuccessful
- **954** co-response or postoverdose follow-ups conducted, usually alongside law enforcement partners
- **619** individuals referred to treatment programs
- **958** individuals referred to community-based recovery support programs
- **731** individuals trained in overdose response and antistigma education
- **3497** kits (6994 doses) of naloxone (Narcan) distributed

Project-to-Date Visualizations



OPTIONS Referrals to Treatment from Oct 2023 to May 2026





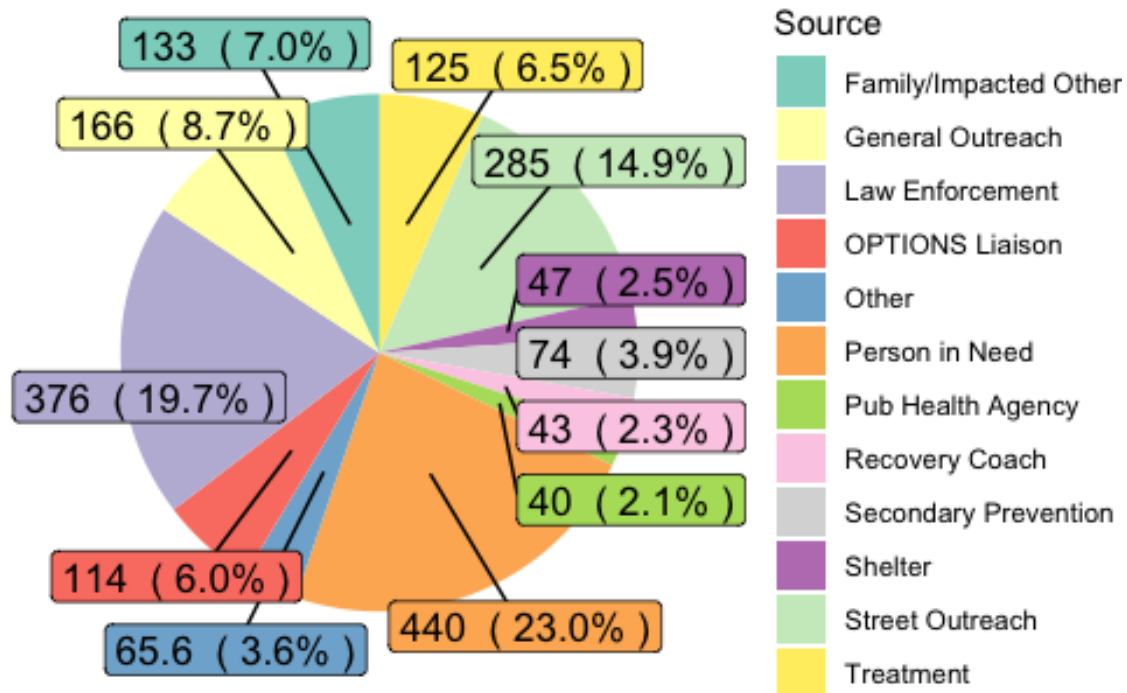
Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach (Referrals to Liaisons)

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.

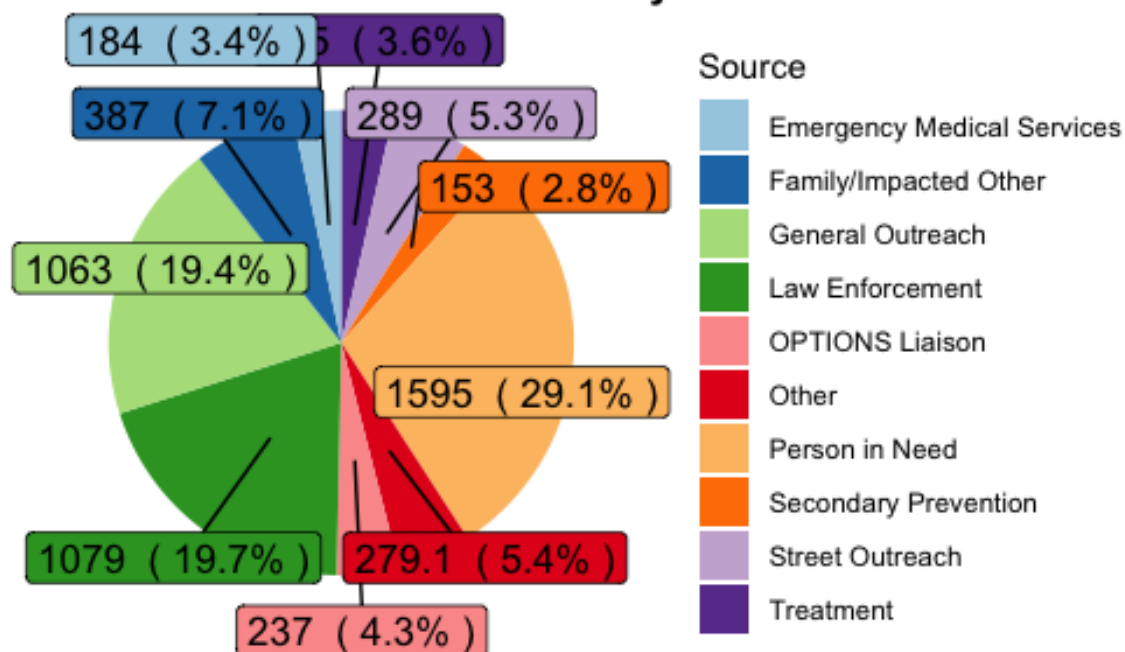
OPTIONS liaisons also generate clients through self-referrals and proactive referrals. Self-referrals occur when individuals contact OPTIONS liaisons themselves. Proactive referrals are those made by public safety officials, clinicians, community-based overdose prevention supports, and impacted others.

The following figure 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 for the current fiscal year.

OPTIONS Most Prevalent Proactive Referrals Oct 2025 to May 2026



OPTIONS Most Prevalent Referral Source at Any Time Oct 2025 to May 2026

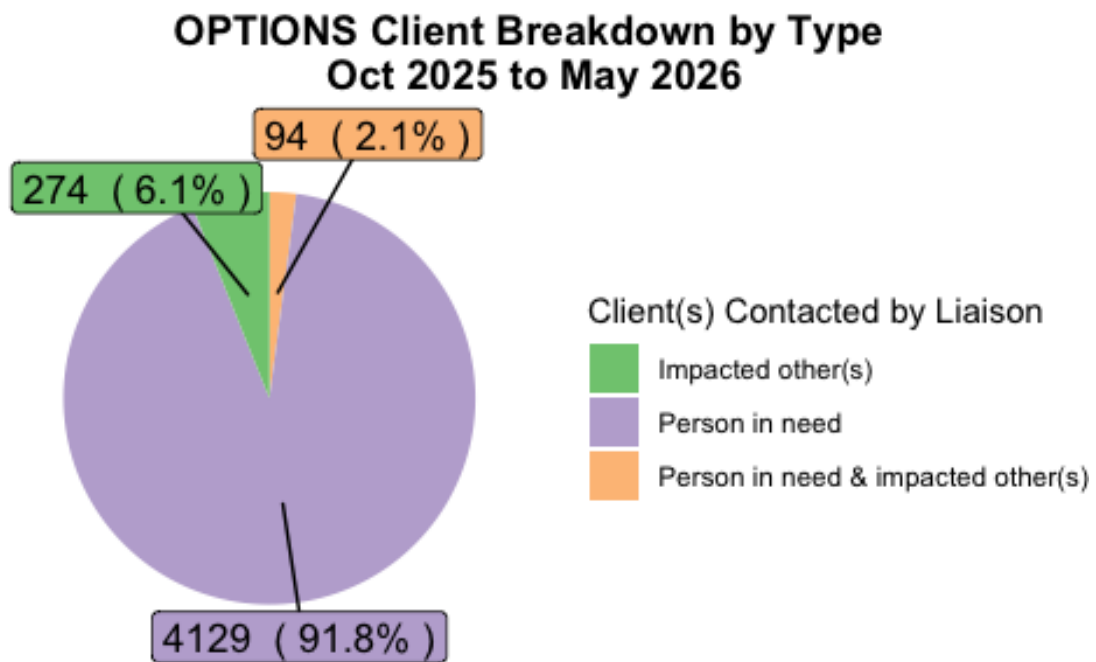


Proactive referrals to OPTIONS liaisons come from a variety of sources including law enforcement, treatment providers, other OPTIONS liaisons, recovery coaches, emergency department clinicians, and first responders. Data regarding the source of proactive referrals began being collected during the second year of the program in October 2021. The following chart shows the five most prevalent proactive referrals sources. Please note that referrals often come from multiple sources simultaneously. For example, a referral to an OPTIONS liaison can come from a law enforcement officer, emergency department staff, and an affected other at one time. The five most common proactive referrals sources from October 2025 to May 2026 are person in need themselves (440), law enforcement (376), street outreach (285), general outreach (166), and family/impacted other (133).

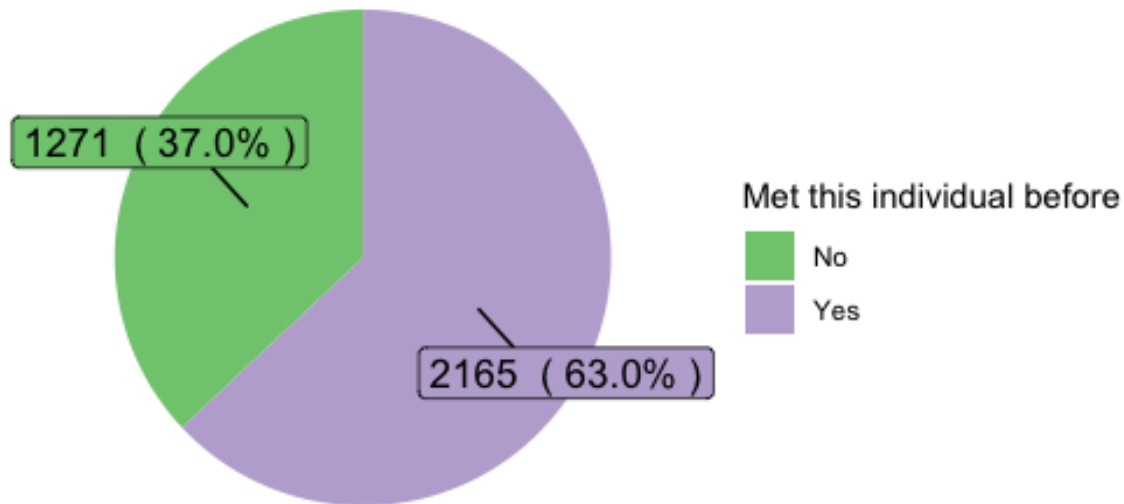
Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach (Demographics):

OPTIONS liaisons serve not only individuals in need but also others. In many counties, liaisons are known members of the community who are able to reach at-risk individuals and those who might not engage with other state-based secondary prevention, treatment, recovery, or prevention services. For the current fiscal year (October 2025-May 2026), the first chart shows the number and percentage of clients who are persons of need (4,129, 91.8%), impacted others (274, 6.1%), or both persons in need and impacted others (94, 2.1%). The second chart shows the number and percentage of clients who are first-time

users of the OPTIONS program (1,271, 37.0%) or someone who has contacted liaisons multiple times (2,165, 63.0%).

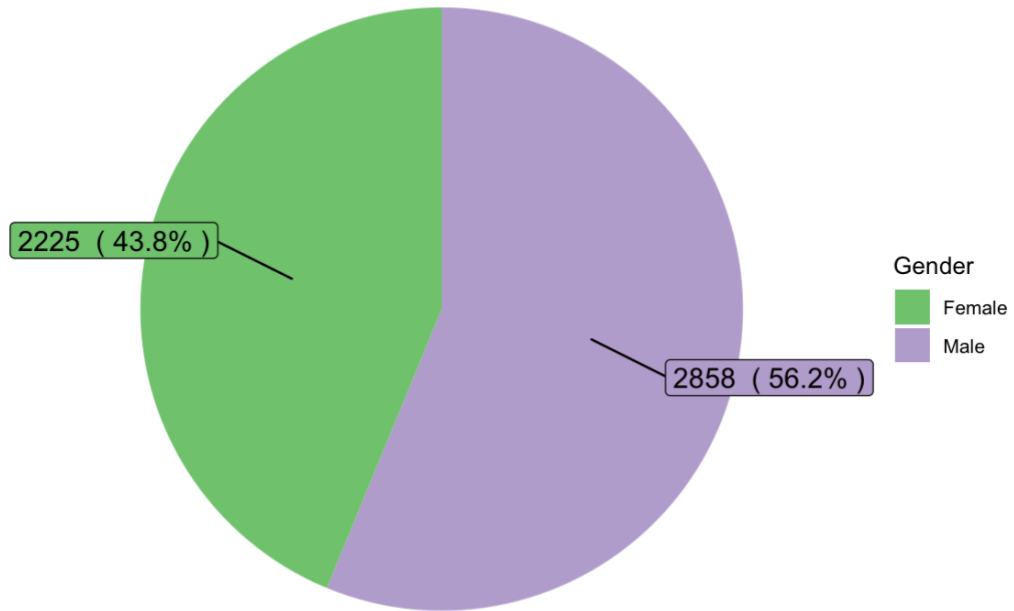


OPTIONS Utilization Oct 2025 to May 2026

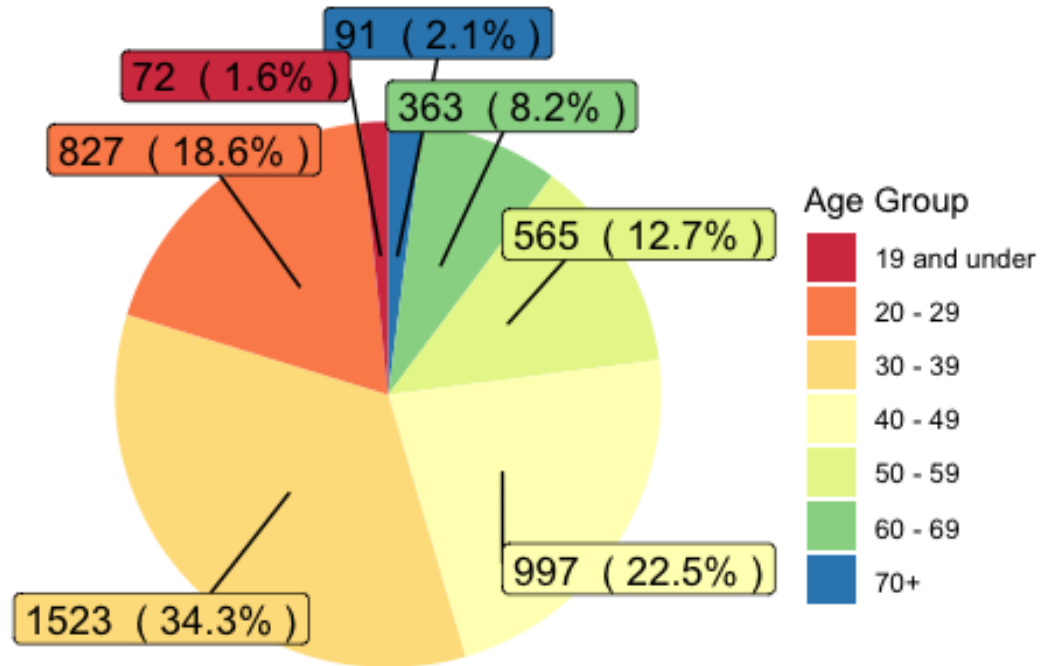


The following four charts show the demographic breakdown of clients served by OPTIONS liaisons for the current fiscal year. For gender, 56.2% of clients are male (2,858) and 43.8% are female (2,225). For ages, 1.6% of OPTIONS clients are 19 years old or younger (72), 18.6% are 20-29 (827), 34.3% are 30-39 (1,523), 22.5% are 40-49 (997), 12.7% are 50-59 (565), 8.2% are 60-69 (363), and 2.1% are 70 or older (91). The ethnicity of clients is 96.0% not Hispanic/Latino (3,640) and 4.0% Hispanic/Latino (150). The racial composition of OPTIONS clients when race is known is <1.0% American Indian/Alaska Native, <1.0% Asian, 9.2% African American/Black (369), 2.8% Multi-racial (112), and 86.7% White (3,465).

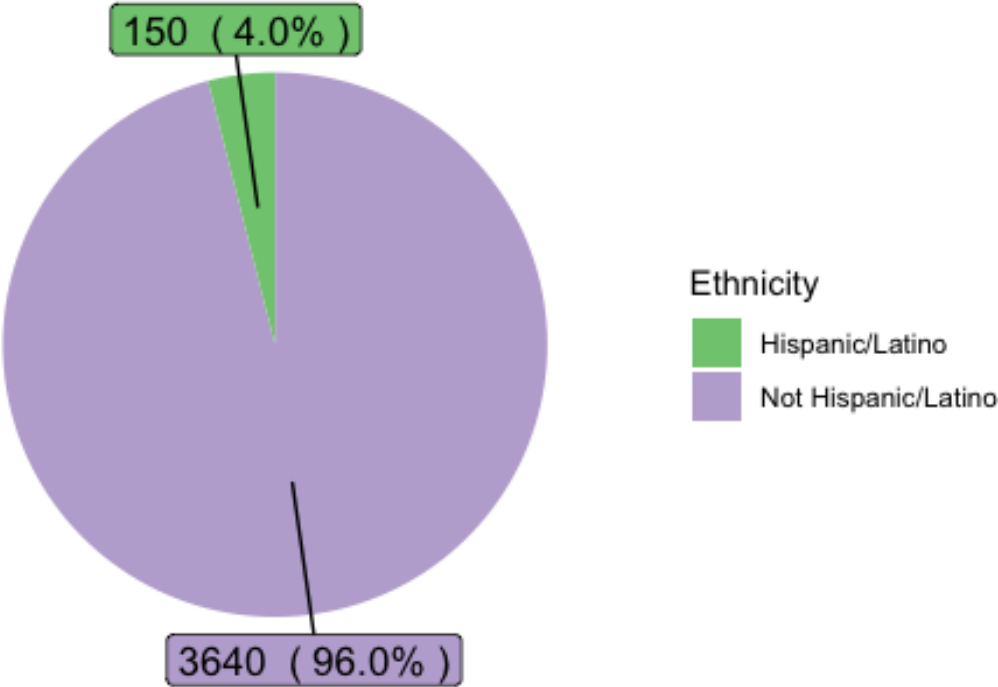
OPTIONS Clients by Gender
Oct 2025 to May 2026



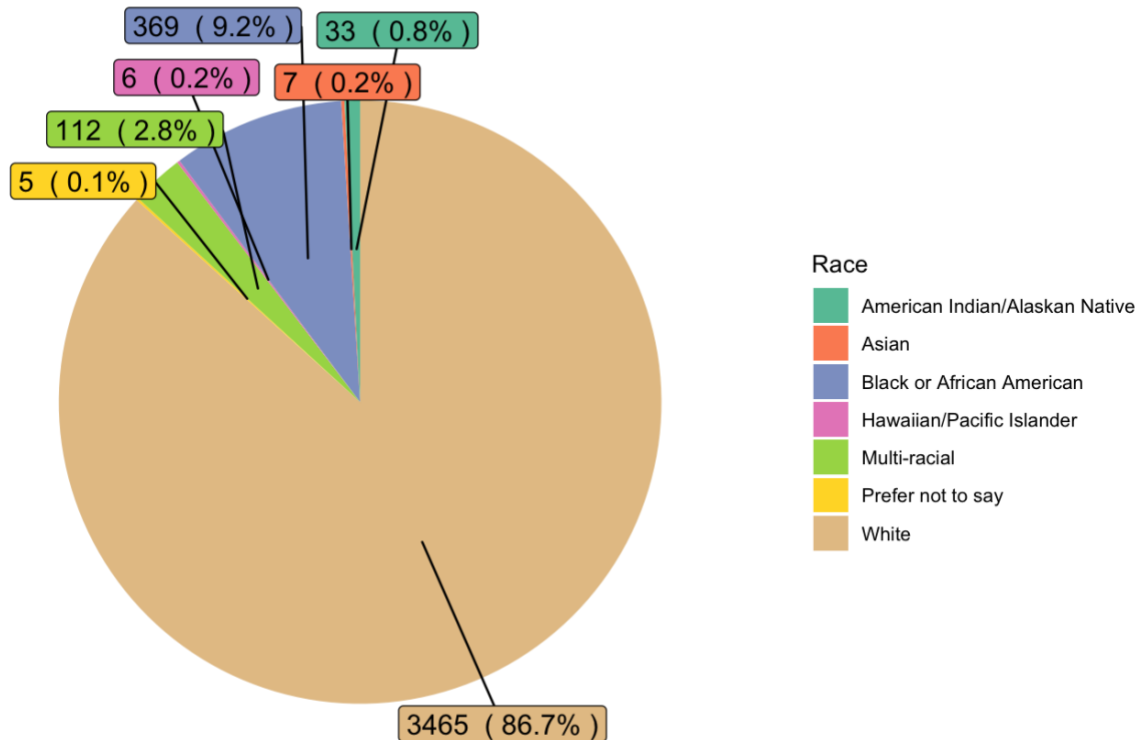
**OPTIONS Clients by Age Group
Oct 2025 to May 2026**



OPTIONS Clients by Ethnicity
Oct 2025 to May 2026

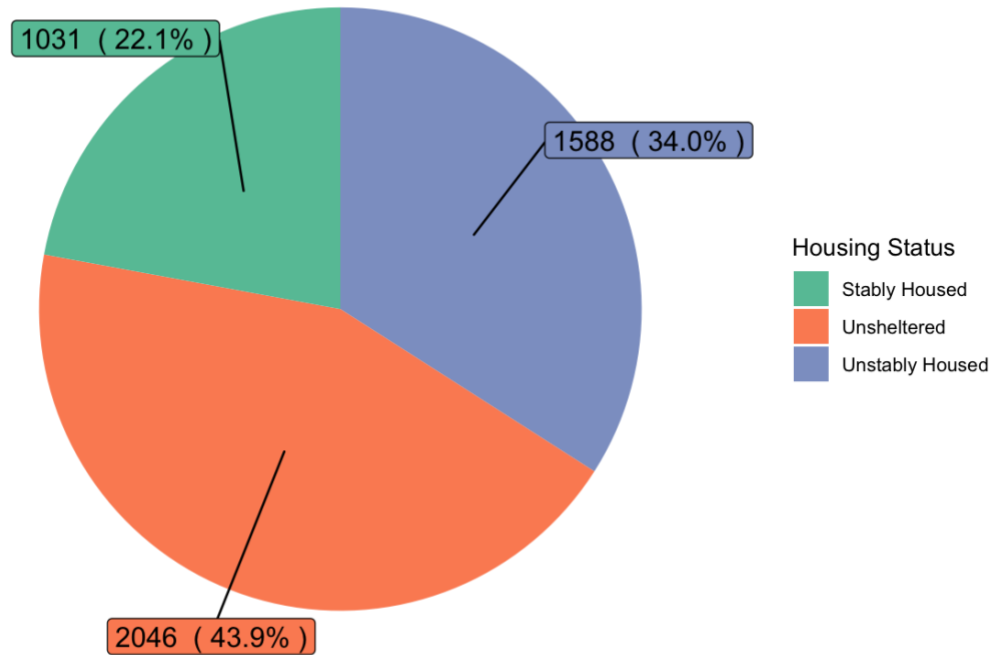


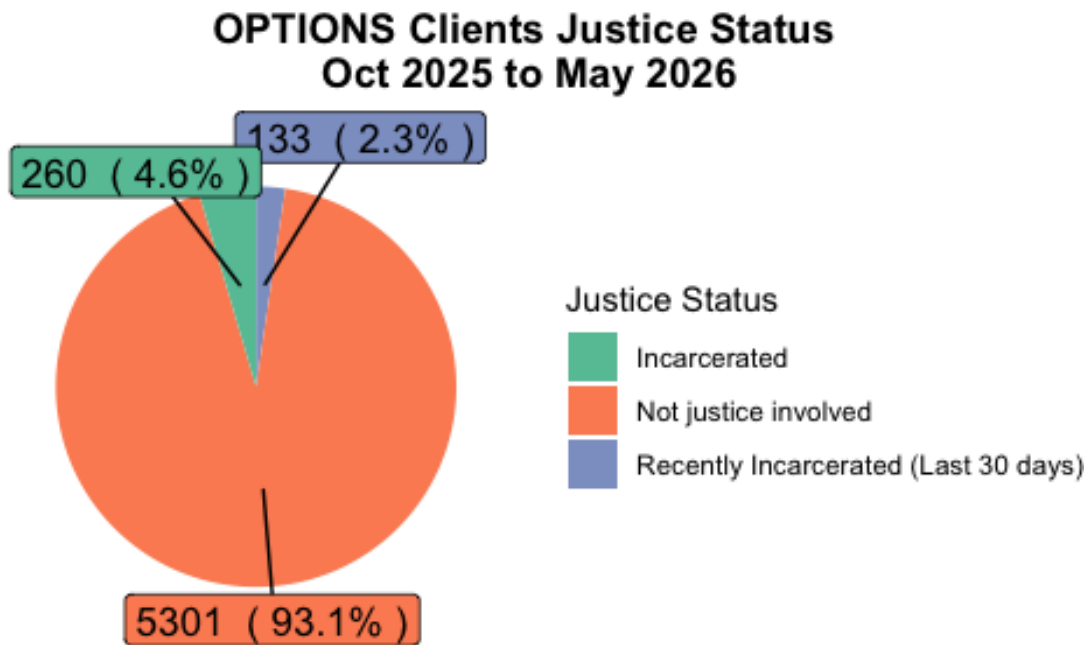
OPTIONS Clients by Race
Oct 2025 to May 2026



OPTIONS liaisons are effective at reaching individuals in need and other who are experiencing housing instability as well as those who are - or have recently been - justice involved. The following charts show that from October 2025 to May 2026, 77.9% (3,634) of clients referred to OPTIONS liaisons are housing insecure; 34.0% (1,588) are unstably housed and 43.9% (2,046) are unsheltered, with 22.1% (1,031) of clients having stable housing. 4.6% (260) of OPTIONS clients were currently incarcerated and 2.3% (133) had been incarcerated in the past 30 days.

OPTIONS Clients Housing Status
Oct 2025 to May 2026

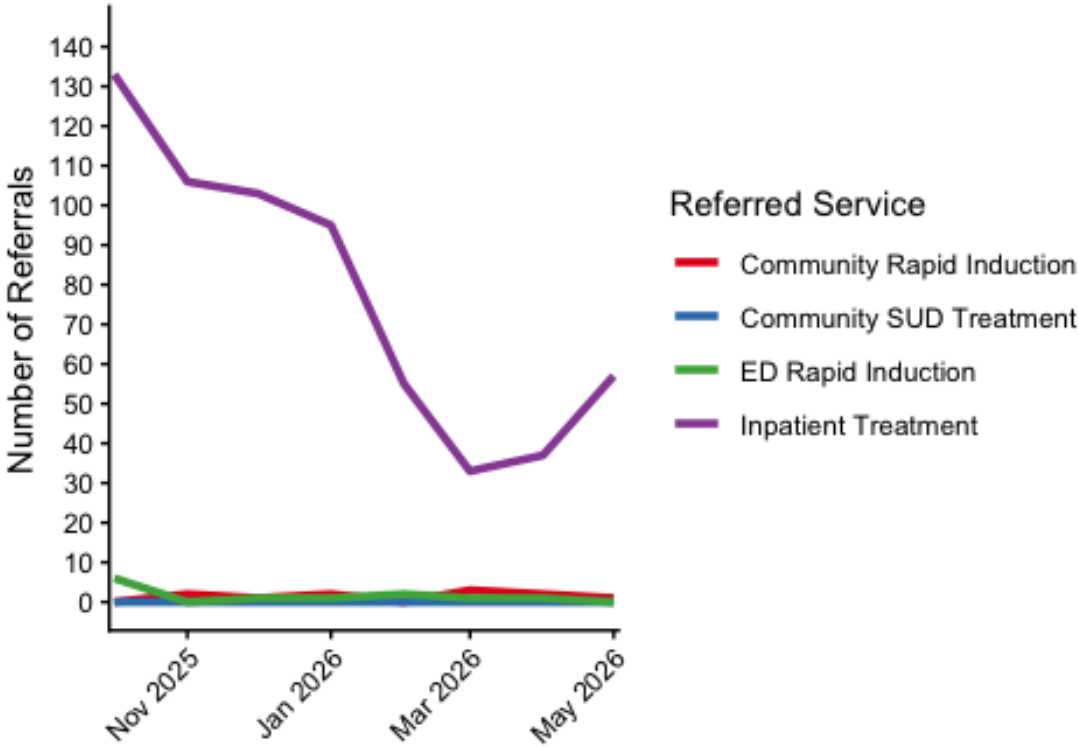




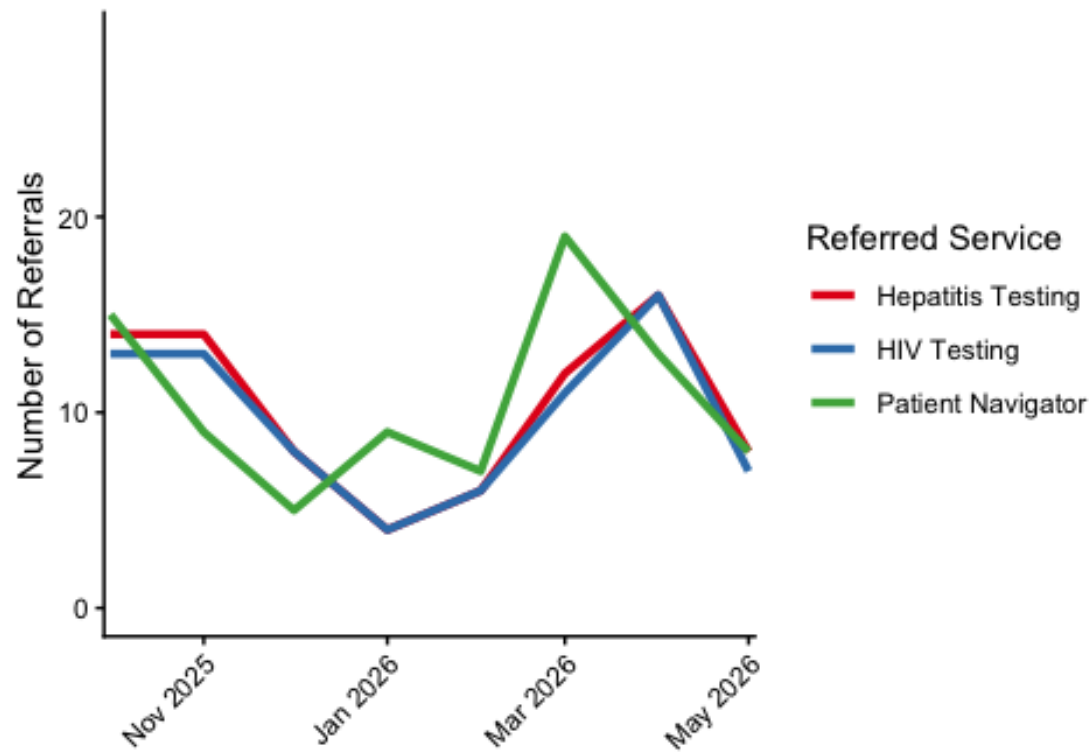
Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach and Safety (Referrals to Services):

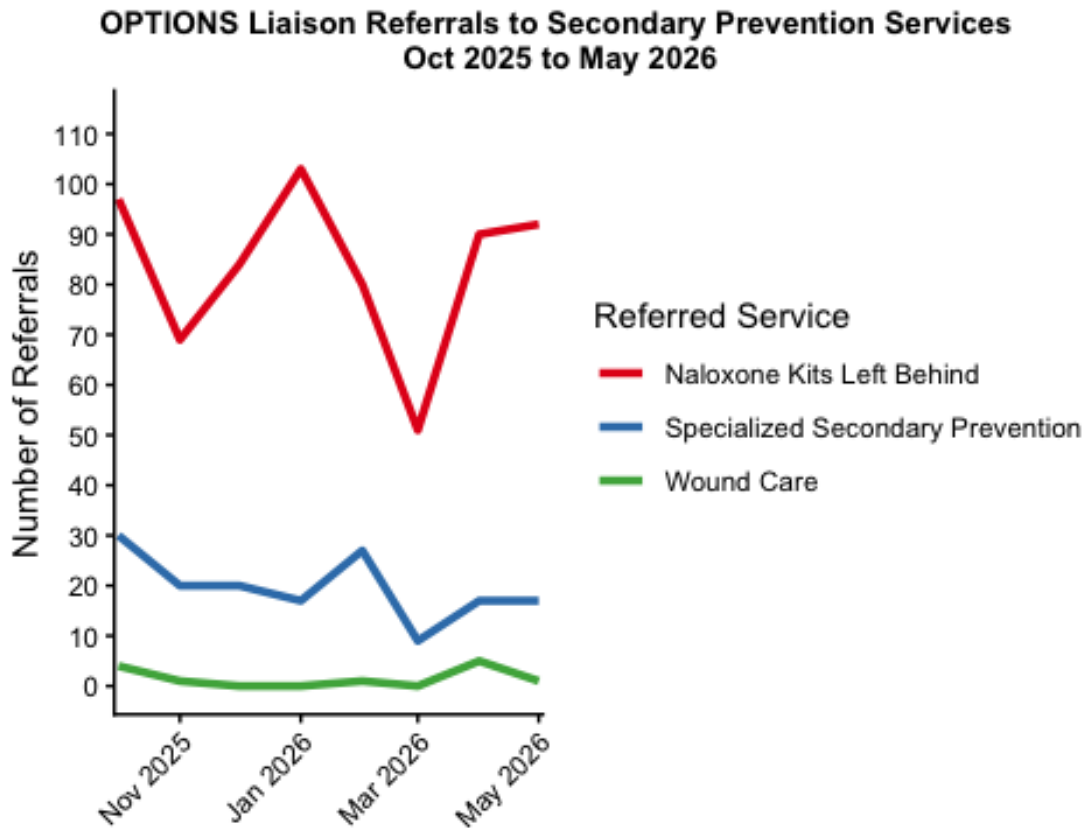
OPTIONS liaisons connect individuals with state- and community-based prevention, secondary prevention, treatment, and recovery services. The tables show referrals from OPTIONS liaisons to various services across these four focus areas of the State of Maine's Opioid Response Strategic Action Plan.

OPTIONS Liaison Referrals to Treatment Services
Oct 2025 to May 2026



**OPTIONS Liaison Referrals to Prevention Services
Oct 2025 to May 2026**

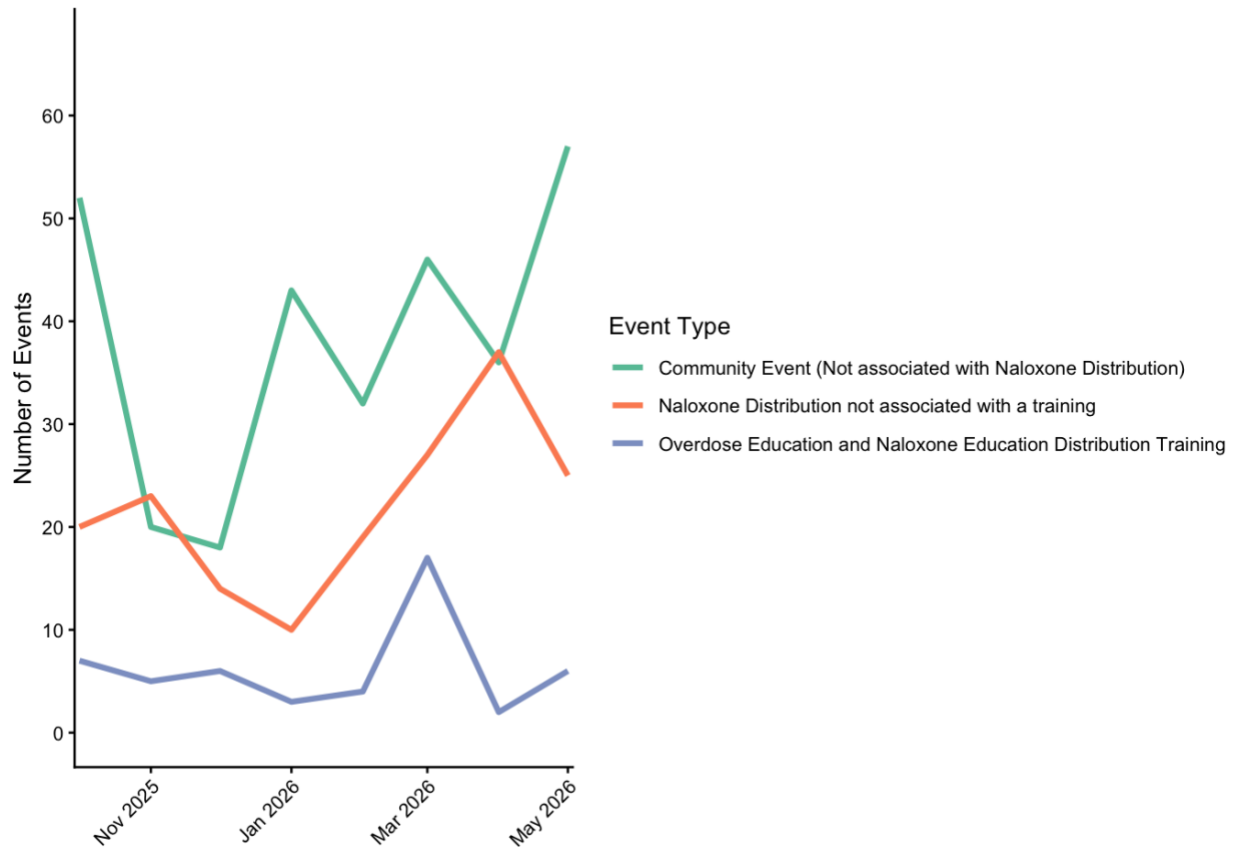




Overdose Prevention Through Safety and Naloxone

OPTIONS liaisons also serve as community educators conducting a variety of trainings and community events including Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) and anti-stigma trainings. The table shows the number of trainings conducted, individuals trained, and community events by OPTIONS liaisons from October 2025 to May 2026. OPTIONS liaisons have conducted 50 OEND trainings, trained 731 individuals, and participated in 304 community events.

Events Hosted by OPTIONS Liaisons
Oct 2025 to May 2026





As part of trainings, community events, and outreach work, OPTIONS liaisons serve as primary distributors of naloxone to various members of the community from people in need themselves, others, clinicians, municipal employees, educational institutes, law enforcement, and many others. From October 2025 to May 2026, 6994 doses of naloxone were distributed.