

# Dept. of Health Services: Announces expansion of harm reduction efforts

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*New funding for public health vending machines aimed at preventing or reversing overdose*

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson joined attendees at the state's inaugural Harm Reduction Conference in Green Bay today to announce expanded efforts to address the overdose epidemic and the devastating impact it has had on communities statewide.

"Overdose continues to take far too many lives in Wisconsin, and I am proud to support our partners across the state who work to save lives, prevent harm, and promote hope for the future," said Secretary-designee Johnson.

Johnson announced increased efforts to support harm reduction strategies, which aim to minimize the harmful effects of substance use, reduce risk behaviors that can lead to injury or communicable disease, and prevent the progression to a substance use disorder. Successful harm reduction efforts nationwide have helped to provide information on substance use risks and strategies to quit or cut down on use.

As part of Wisconsin's approach to harm reduction, DHS has awarded one-time funding of up to \$55,000 to [28 local partners](#) to support the purchase and installation of public health vending machines, which can include items such as overdose prevention education, naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and other harm reduction-related products. DHS has an additional funding opportunity open for public health vending machines. Communities interested should apply by June 30.

"These machines act as a safe haven for people to obtain no-cost, stigma-free

preventive health and wellness services. They provide discrete, confidential access to harm reduction tools,” Johnson said. “Most importantly, the tools in these vending machines can prevent overdoses and save lives.”

Public health vending machines join other efforts Wisconsin is deploying to address the overdose epidemic, such as NARCAN and fentanyl test strip distribution, partnerships with law enforcement and EMS, and initiatives related to injection drug use.

Find additional information regarding [harm reduction](#), [free naloxone distribution](#) and [fentanyl test strips](#) on the DHS website.