

# Barre Health District (Central Vermont)

## Community Projects

February 1, 2023

**Backbone Organization:** Central Vermont THRIVE

**Barre's Data Driven Problem Statement:**

Prior to and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, substance use and co-occurring disorders increased as evidenced by higher levels of anxiety, depression, and substance use among the entire population, with disproportionately high levels among the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities. In 2021, there was a 33% increase in opioid-related fatal overdoses and a twenty-fold increase in stimulant overdoses, with 70% of the overdoses occurring among the Medicaid population. While there has existed a mobile team to people experiencing an acute crisis, this team has traditionally lacked the training capacity to adequately and with cultural sensitivity identify, assess, triage, and refer individuals in crisis with co-occurring disorders, including substance use disorder, to the right kinds of services, at the right time, in the right place.

**Barre's Community Goal/Vision:**

Crisis outreach services must be bolstered to include a diversified, well-trained team of responders who can provide immediate, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive support for a range of crisis issues, including substance use disorder. The current regional service provider workforce must become more inclusive and diversified to be more welcoming and relatable to the BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other communities experiencing inequities.

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## Community Project

**Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMHS)**

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## Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMHS)

Hiring a Project Manager to work with medical responders, mental health workers, and law enforcement. The Project Manager will help expand and enhance regional mobile mental health crisis services, including timely substance use response. There has been an increase in substance use and overdoses, so WCMHS's project will improve timely and appropriate responses for those with substance use disorder and get feedback from those with lived experience to better develop responses.

### Crisis Intervention Team Project

- 1) Development of an enhanced systems workflow for multiple emergency responders, identifying roles to streamline communications for optimal response.
- 2) Successful engagement with EMS for trauma-informed safety training in response to substance-related emergencies.
- 3) Reduction in overdoses and increased community engagement, thus decreasing ED utilization; increased engagement, identifying health inequities and developing training and awareness to reduce those inequities.