

Executing Transylvania County's SUD Strategic Plan Progress Report: Jan-May 2025



TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY OPIOID SETTLEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Transylvania County's first opioid settlement fund spending authorization resolution took effect in early 2025, supporting 0.5 FTE for a Substance Use Systems Coordinator. This position will plan, organize, and manage the county's strategic plan for addressing substance use disorder (SUD) and ensure compliance with North Carolina MOA reporting and implementation requirements. The coordinator also provides oversight of county programs, contracts, and grants related to substance misuse and behavioral health. CARE Coalition Program Director Kristen Gentry began working in this role as of January 31, 2025.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

Primary prevention education & early intervention services

- Submitted closeout documentation for Drug Free Communities grant project.
- Submitted federal grant application for Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking to SAMHSA; funding would support strategies on alcohol enforcement, retailer education, parent outreach, and youth engagement.
- Submitted federal grant application for Strategic Prevention Framework—Partnerships for Success to SAMHSA; funding would support consistent and standardized prevention and early intervention services in Transylvania County Schools grades 5-8.
- Coordinated delivery of an evidence-based curriculum at the Cindy Platt Boys & Girls Club and Transylvania County Schools.

Adult recovery court

- Met with Henderson County Adult Recovery Court and District 42 judicial officials on possibility of sharing an adult recovery court; discussed possible challenges, developed budgets, and formed partnerships.

Transitional housing

- Researched recovery housing program components and best practices and developed a FAQ sheet to share key points.

Jail-based reentry and treatment program

- Submitted closeout documentation for first Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) grant project.
- Launched second COSSUP grant project.
- Led Request for Qualifications process to select sub-awardee to provide recovery support services for project.
- Executed contract for evaluation services for project.
- Supported small planning grant for emerging reentry council.

Perinatal recovery support

- Worked to establish partnerships with agencies that support pregnant women and young families, including Project CARA.

For more information, contact Substance Use Systems Coordinator
Kristen Gentry at 828-884-1751 or kristen.gentry@tconc.org

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CHALLENGES

Implementing Transylvania County's Strategic Plan on SUD has become more difficult as external funding for projects is currently limited. Project coordinators had planned to expand the impact of opioid settlement funds by applying for grants to provide additional support for priority programs.

However, several of these anticipated annual grant opportunities are not available at this time, especially at the federal level. Unavailable federal grant opportunities include:

- "Adult Treatment Court Program" from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, valued at \$500,000–\$1 million over 4 years
- "Rural Communities Opioid Response Program—Impact" from HRSA, valued at \$750,000 annually for 4 years
- "Grants to Expand Substance Use Disorder Treatment Capacity in Adult Drug Courts" from SAMHSA, valued at up to \$400,000 per year for 5 years

Since multiple federal grants have not been released this year, non-federal grant opportunities have become more competitive as programs must vie for fewer resources.

NEXT STEPS

Summer 2025

- Host a community meeting to share updates on progress and showcase strategic priorities happening across WNC.
- Continue to establish partnerships and project plans that support recommendations.
- Search for grant opportunities and explore alternative funding streams and resource sharing with neighboring counties and local organizations.

Fall 2025

- Receive notification on pending SAMHSA grant applications for prevention and intervention.
- Develop an RFP process to align with Option A and prioritized strategies.
- Submit annual progress report to NCACC.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

- Determine an award ceiling for subawardees who submit proposals through the RFP process.
- Select one commissioner to participate on the RFP subawardee selection committee.
- Consider a funding allocation from the opioid settlement to support prevention and early intervention services if grants are not awarded from other sources.

OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUND DISTRIBUTIONS FOR TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY

