

Advancing the Science on Recovery Community Centers



The Steering Committee is made up of scientists, clinicians, RCC leadership and persons with lived experience from multiple organizations and institutions from across the US.

Principal Investigators:



John F. Kelly



Bettina B. Hoepfner



Robert D. Ashford



Patty McCarthy



Julia Ojeda



Philip Rutherford



Brandon G. Bergman



Lauren A. Hoffman



Vinod Rao



Amy A. Mericle

RCC Live Feature



We are featuring a different RCC at the start of each of our seminars in order to allow all participants to learn first-hand about RCCs



Devin Lyall

Executive Director of Wilkes
Recovery Revolution



Our Topic Today



**Let's talk about faith – how
does it intersect with RCCs?**

Jan Brown

Founder and Executive Director
of SpiritWorks Foundation

Ordained Deacon serving at
Bruton Parish Church in
Williamsburg, VA

Polling Questions



A pop-up Zoom window will appear with the poll questions



You must complete all questions before clicking to submit

→ Remember to scroll down to see all the questions!



We will share the poll results after a few minutes



Your responses will remain anonymous



Presenters



Akosua Dankwah

Doctor of Public Health
Candidate at Harvard T. H. Chan
School of Public Health

R24 Pre-doctoral Fellow

The Intersection of Church Clergy and Recovery Community Centers in Tackling the Opioid Use Disorder crisis

Akosua B. Dankwah, MPH
April 1, 2022



HARVARD
T.H. CHAN
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



RECOVERY
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

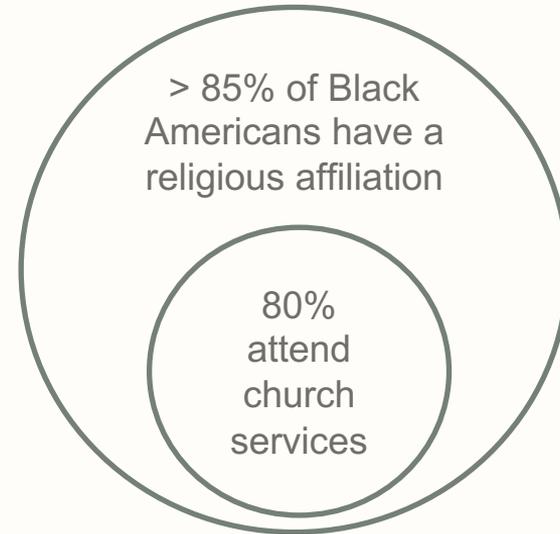
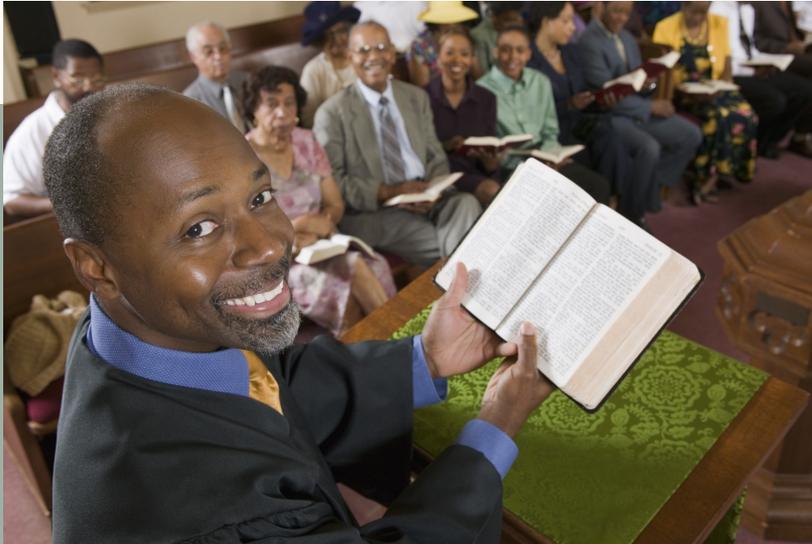


HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL



FXB Center
for Health & Human Rights
at Harvard University

Black American churches are influential in their communities



Stewart JM, 2015

Black American churches have supported public health interventions



Photo credit: NBC News 2-14-21

- HIV prevention and education
- Cancer screenings
- Nutritional health promotion
- Influenza immunizations
- COVID-19 vaccinations

Slade JL, Holt CL, Bowie J, et al., 2018

Churches have supported drug misuse recovery groups



- Traditional recovery groups
 - Alcoholics Anonymous
 - Narcotics Anonymous
- Christian-based recovery groups
 - Celebrate Recovery
 - Adult and Teen Challenge

Woodruff A & Frakt AB, 2020

Resulting Themes from my larger study

- 1 Clergy have empathy and knowledge
- 2 Clergy believe that hopelessness and inequity are OUD risk factors
- 3 Clergy are committed to helping people flourish beyond staying alive
- 4 Clergy welcome collaboration with medical and state agencies

Promise for church collaborations with Recovery Community Centers

1

Clergy members want to be part of the solution

“Clergy and lay leaders are not in competition with professional health care providers. Our work is complementary to the work of professional health care providers. Fighting opioid addiction requires an intentional, integrated effort by both spiritual and secular community leaders”

2

Clergy members see the importance of communities

“Because we’re not talking about people who are out there. We’re talking about our sons and daughters. We’re talking about our fathers and mothers. We’re talking about our cousins. We’re talking about Sister so-and-so who lives a couple of doors down.”

3

The church actively assists people with food, housing, education, and other needs like RCCs do

“We got programs right? But really **focusing on the individual and their particular needs from food, clothing, shelter, emotional, physical, educational, all those things**”

4

Clergy members are well-equipped to provide guidance on hope and purpose, which are important recovery themes

“The church tells you that this is not the end of your life. The church helps you to know that mistakes are not a downfall. A mistake is the beginning of a new life. It’s a time to change a new page.”

Areas of Some Concern Requiring more Discussion

1

Some clergy members are not fully trusting of the medical community

“My concern is sometimes these manufacturers don't tell you about its side effects which can eventually lead to more devastating state of the individual. Some of the drugs can even lead to cancer, it can lead to organ damage , **you never know**”

2

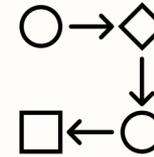
Clergy members have some deeply rooted concerns about some harm reduction approaches

“And so, would you encourage your child to go use the test strip first or are you trying to bring them to Christ like we're supposed to do? We're supposed to bring people to do what's godly. **We can't do that while inventing new ways of how to cheat**”

Conclusion



Clergy could be strong partners with the medical community in addressing recovery if some concerns can be addressed



More formal research and evaluation is needed based on these qualitative research findings

My Public Health Leadership Journey



Collaboration between Church and Community

Leading a free health clinic



State Impact

Health System
Transformation Project



Collaboration between Churches and State

Doctoral Project

Finally, friends, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

-Philippians 4: 8

Thank You



John F. Kelly, PhD, ABPP

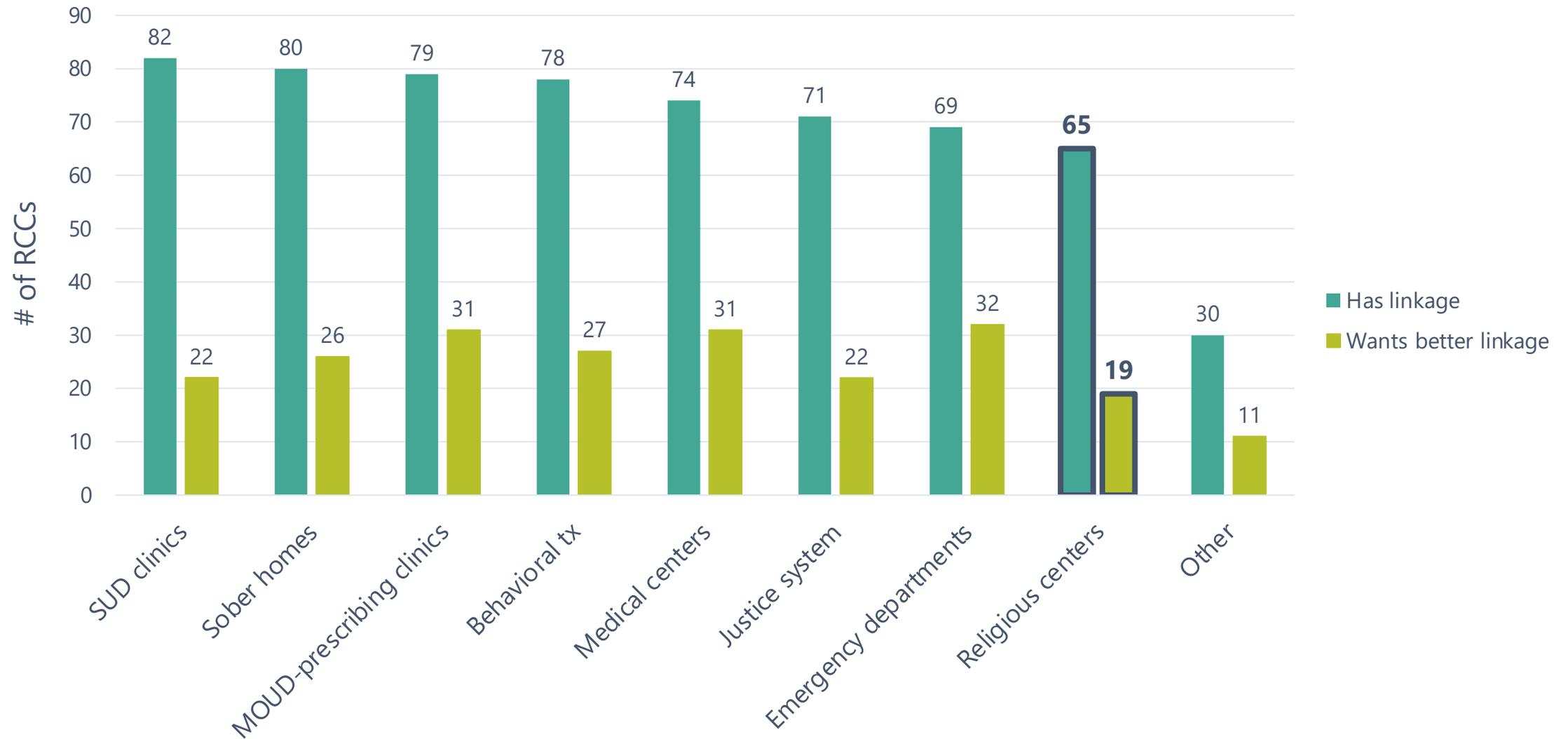
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Findings from our Nationwide Survey of RCCs



Our Questions to Directors



Part 1:

- Spiritual health is important at your RCC, but you do not work with a faith-based organization. Why is that?

Part 2:

- In what ways do you work with the clergy at your RCC?
- Does involvement of faith-based organizations ever create barriers for some of your member who do not share that faith?



Presenters



Lynn Ferro
Director of Northampton
Recovery Center



Northampton Recovery Center

HOW WE ADDRESS SPIRITUAL HEALTH

April 1, 2022

Mission Statement:

...NRC provides a creative place for people to heal and grow in mind, body and spirit.

From the very beginning, for every All Recovery Meeting, or Community Meeting, there was one of the following:

- Mindfulness meditation
- Refuge Recovery -> Recovery Dharma
- Yoga (union within: harmony between body and mind)
- Yoga Nidra (guided deep meditation also known as yogic sleep)





This group is facilitated by a multi-faith health-care chaplain who has been part of the NRC for a few years and specializes in consequences of substance use.

SPIRIT IN RECOVERY

WITH ANNE BAUER

MONDAYS | 3-4 PM

AT THE NRC AND BY ZOOM

<https://zoom.us/j/404412215> or (929) 205 6099

NORTHAMPTON RECOVERY CENTER

25 ARMORY STREET | DOWNTOWN NORTHAMPTON

This group provides a judgment free space to explore personal spirituality. Please join us to learn of practices from various traditions such as contemplation, prayer, song and meditation to deepen your experience of the sacred in every day life.

There is a place of stillness inside of ourselves where we can cultivate a sense of peace, self forgiveness and compassion towards others, while we grow stronger in our recovery.

Learn more at northamptonrecoverycenter.org



What do we mean by spirituality?

Technically, the word spirit means breath. When we breathe, (respiration), when we are inspired (inspiration), when we die (expiration).

We cannot be alive without spirit:

spirit lives within us all. The fact that we are all important, sacred, falls right in with our belief that we all deserve love, respect, kindness and a voice, or we wouldn't be a peer recovery support center.



Cathedral in the Night

an outdoor Christian community in downtown Northampton which seeks to create a safe place for all people: the homeless, the housed, the church-less, the churched, the student and the resident to explore, question and live out their spiritual beliefs; to gather for a meal and to empower one another to engage in issues of social justice by working to fight the causes of inequality and homelessness.

Tessie: Pastor Steph's assistance dog ->



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Presenters



Michael Earielo
Program Director of Everyday
Miracles Recovery Center



Tarusa Stewart
Executive Director of iHOPE