

Subject: Budget Adjustment Request for Syringe Service Programs - SFY22, 23, CY22, 23

Date: Jan. 10, 2024

To: House Appropriations Committee, House Human Services Committee

Dear Members of the Committees,

I hope this memo finds you well. I am writing to provide a comprehensive breakdown of the budget for Syringe Service Programs in the State Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023, as well as the Calendar Years 2022 and 2023. The information outlined below summarizes the funding distribution and amendments that occurred during these periods and serves as support for our SFY23 Budget Adjustment Request.

State Fiscal Year 2022:

- **Calendar Year 2022 State General Funds:**
 - Total: \$250,000
 - Allocation Ratio (In Place for a Decade):
 - Safe Recovery: 59% = 147k
 - Vermont Cares: 24% = 59k
 - HHRC: 14% = 35k
 - AIDS Project of Southern Vermont: 5% = 12.5k
- **Budget Adjustment (State Fiscal Year 2022):**
 - One-time allocation from Tobacco Settlement Funds: \$150,000
 - Allocation to three AIDS Service Organizations:
 - Safe Recovery Howard Center: \$200,000
 - Amendment increased State General Funds: \$295,000
 - Allocation to ASOs HIV Prevention & Care:
 - Vermont Cares: \$140,000
 - AIDS Project of Southern Vermont: \$100,000
 - HHRC: \$55,000

State Fiscal Year 2023 and Calendar Year 2023:

- **Base Funding for Syringe Service Programs:**
 - No changes to base funding- remained 400k total
 - \$295,000 for AIDS service organizations remains in place
- **Amendment (Calendar Year 2023):**
 - Roll-over of funds from State Fiscal Year 2022 into Calendar Year 2023 grant were allowed- boosting our CY2023 budgets to higher than the previous totals in CY22.
- **Additional Funding Requests (State Fiscal Year 2023):**
 - No additional State General Funds or one-time funding requested during the SFY23 HHS Committee Testimony by Theresa Vezina. Note that SSP's felt confident that Opioid Settlement funds would flow in to match previous

years funding and include supplemental funding to expand services statewide.

- No tobacco settlement funds requested or allocated
- NOTE: at the end of SFY2023 the ASO's reached out to HCSR to look at the current funding ratios since other programs around the state had grown and were serving in new areas and more ppl etc.
- A joint meeting was fruitful, and a new split was agreed upon by the four existing programs for SFY24

Budget Adjustment Request SFY23:

- **Request:**
 - Budget adjustment of \$500,000 added to the existing base 300k
- **Rationale:**
 - Shortfall of \$91,000 in CY24 (which includes 5 months of SFY23) for VT CARES and all other programs experienced a shortfall, the amount of the shortfall is directly related to the ratio of funding per program.
 - No opioid settlement funds received to date
 - The long anticipated \$100,000k per SSP allocated in ACT22 from the opioid settlement funds was not allocated in SFY23 and we are unclear when it will be made available. The current funding is insufficient for needs leaves our programs with less funding the previous year.
 - Additional funding is necessary to maintain and expand life-saving services that SSP's have been desperately needing and wanting to expand for many, many years.
 - As a side note: Vermont CARES has been able to expand our services over the last 6-7 years because of the support of private foundations like Elton John, NASTAD, Comer and more. But that requires entering into a very competitive and unstable landscape of RFP's that are nationwide and not guaranteed funding.

We urge you to consider this budget adjustment request seriously, as it is crucial for the uninterrupted operation and expansion of our syringe service programs. Your support will directly contribute to the well-being of the community and the continuation of vital services.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your support.