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**Report to  
The Vermont Legislature**

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**Overdose Prevention Center Pilot Grant Progress Report  
May 1, 2025**

**In Accordance with Act 178 (2024), Section 2**

**Submitted to:** The Joint Fiscal Committee and the Joint Health Reform Oversight Committee

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## **Overdose Prevention Center Pilot Grant Progress Report: May 2025**

### **Introduction**

Section 2 of Act 178 (2024) requires the Department of Health (Department) to report on the status of distribution of the grants to the City of Burlington for establishing an overdose prevention center that meets the requirements of Act 178 and the Operating Guidelines. This report provides that update.

### **The Status of the Distribution of the Grants**

Section 2 of Act 178 requires the Department to grant funds to the City of Burlington to establish an overdose prevention center upon submission of a grant proposal that has been approved by the Burlington City Council.

The Department of Health has been meeting with the City of Burlington's Overdose Prevention Center liaison since mid-January to help facilitate the proposal's development. Communications have included the Department providing an overview of the grant process to the City and answering additional questions about processes, reporting expectations, and timelines associated with the grant agreement.

The City of Burlington submitted a City Council approved Overdose Prevention Center Proposal to the Department on April 29, 2025. The Department has already begun to review the City Council approved Overdose Prevention Center Proposal to ensure compliance and fidelity with Act 178 and [the Overdose Prevention Center Guidelines](#). When the Department determines that the proposal is in compliance, the Department will move forward with executing a grant agreement with the City with a start date of on or before July 1, 2025.

### **The Status of the Overdose Prevention Center Evaluation**

Section 3 of Act 178 (2024) requires the Department to contract with an independent consulting entity to study the impact of the overdose prevention center in Burlington, which is referred to in the Act as the overdose prevention center pilot program. In September 2024, the Department contracted with Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) to conduct this study. PIRE collaborated with the Department to develop the evaluation report, required pursuant to Section 3(b) of the Act, which was submitted to the Legislature in January 2025. The Department will continue to work with PIRE to meet the annual evaluation requirements described in statute.

In addition to working with PIRE on the annual evaluation requirements, both PIRE and the Department were exploring the opportunity to join the Study Assessing the Effectiveness of Overdose Prevention Centers Through Evaluation Research (SAFER). SAFER currently aims to evaluate the effectiveness of overdose prevention centers in New York City and Rhode Island. SAFER is a collaboration between Brown University School of Public Health and New York University Grossman School of Medicine. SAFER recently communicated to the Department that

funding will unfortunately not be expanded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), to include Vermont as part of this evaluation. While Vermont will not be included as part of the SAFER project, PIRE, the Vermont Department of Health, and SAFER staff plan to stay connected to share information and to discuss identifying future ways to collaborate.