



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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NEWS RELEASE  
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**ADDICTION PROFESSIONALS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
Reports Current Impact on NC Addiction Services and Requests Immediate Emergency Relief  
Due to COVID-19 Impact**

Raleigh, North Carolina – Addiction Professionals of North Carolina (APNC) released data today that shows the dire impact of COVID-19 on substance abuse services and the people struggling with addiction. Even before the opioid epidemic, more than 49,000 people receive treatment in NC each day. Another 400,000 have misused opioids, and there are over 1 million people who are uninsured.

A combination of lost revenue, staff reductions, service disruptions, and expenses for acquiring personal protective equipment and implementing telehealth are devastating an already tattered system. A NC specific survey of 70 addiction treatment organizations shows:

- Fifty-seven (57%) have had to close at least one program.
- Under current conditions, forty-three (43%) believe they can only survive financially for another month or less.
- Twenty-seven (27%) have had to lay-off or cut positions, and another 40% are deciding this right now.

Most community-based service organizations have lost half of their weekly revenue due to COVID-19. Their emergency reserves are nearly depleted. APNC is calling on the congressional delegation to provide emergency funding to stabilize the state's addiction treatment system. We are also calling on the General Assembly to act now on behalf of North Carolina citizens. "COVID-19 has created a perfect storm threatening the survival of addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery services- particularly for programs serving low income individuals. Our state and national policy makers must act with fierce urgency now to avoid catastrophic results. North Carolina families are counting on a service system to be there when their loved ones need it," said Sarah Potter, Executive Director of APNC. Potter continued, "Dedicated, emergency funding is needed in North Carolina to ensure these services can respond both now and after the crisis has passed."

We can't wait for a federal relief package for substance use disorder services before we act. "People struggling with addictions are suffering now without access to on-demand treatment, recovery and harm reduction services. The impact of unemployment, isolation, and anxiety are causing increased use and overdose. There simply aren't enough supports right now to mitigate that. I'm seeing it every day," reports Tyler Yates, a NC Peer Support Specialist and the GC Stop Syringe Exchange Coordinator.

APNC is partnering with the National Council for Behavioral Health and more than 40 other national organizations addressing mental illness and addiction to request a \$38.5 billion federal infusion of emergency funds to avert a large-scale public health calamity. We are a network of more than 650 organizations and professionals urging action on the part of our elected leaders. Dedicated funding for addiction services must also be considered as a part of North Carolina's COVID-19 response strategy.

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Addiction Professionals of North Carolina ([www.apnc.org](http://www.apnc.org)) is an organization of more than 600 members dedicated to leading prevention, treatment & recovery initiatives to create wellness and save lives through education and advocacy. The statewide organization is located in Raleigh.