

Recovery Friendly Workplaces: Good for Employees, Good for Business

OSHA Region I Alliance Presentation
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Session Overview

- Recovery Friendly Workplace Overview & Why It's Good for Business
- RFW Process, Culture, & Corresponding Strategies
- RFW-Related Resources in NH & Beyond
- Questions





Recovery Friendly Workplace Overview



What is Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

The American Society of Addiction medicine adopted the following definition of addiction in 2019:

“Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual’s life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.”

They also note, “Prevention efforts and treatment approaches for addiction are generally as successful as those for other chronic diseases.”





Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative

- **Led** by Governor Chris Sununu
- **Launched** in March of 2018
- **Promotes** health, safety, and wellness for NH workplaces and employees
- **Empowers** workplaces to provide support for employees in recovery and those impacted by substance use disorders
- **Challenges** stigma
- **Encourages** employee retention and productivity





How We Support Our RFWs

- Customized approach
- Connection to statewide and local resources
- Tools and materials curated for each workplace
- Support for employees and loved ones
- No-cost trainings
- Sharing policy resources and samples
- Peer connections
- Committee/survey support
- Workforce development connections
- Ongoing dialogue, structure

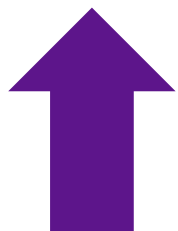




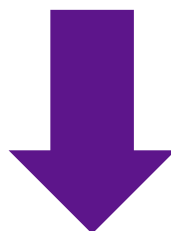
Why Should Employers Get Involved?

- Already employing those with SUDs
 - ~135,000+ in recovery in NH
 - Over 20 million, ~10%, with SUD (SAMHSA, 2018); ~9.1% resolved SUD in 2017 (Kelly *et al.*, 2017)
- Work is where we reach people
- Direct/indirect impact of SUDs
- Talent retention

Additional benefits of addressing SUDs:



- Productivity
- Employee health
- Morale
- Communication
- Employee satisfaction
- Community connection
- Customer loyalty

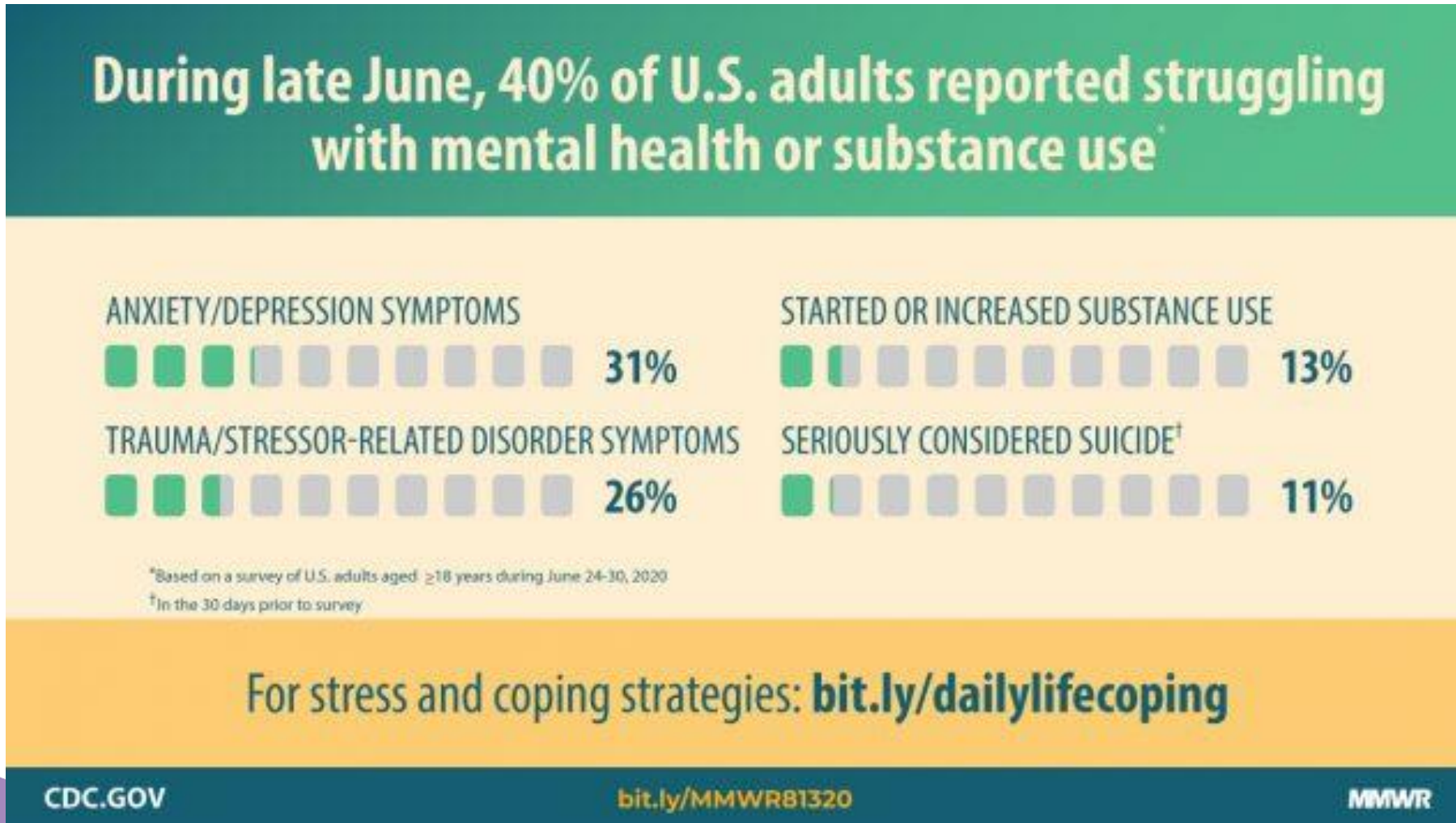


- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Impact on families



A Changed Landscape

AMA – 40+ states have seen increases in opioid-related mortality

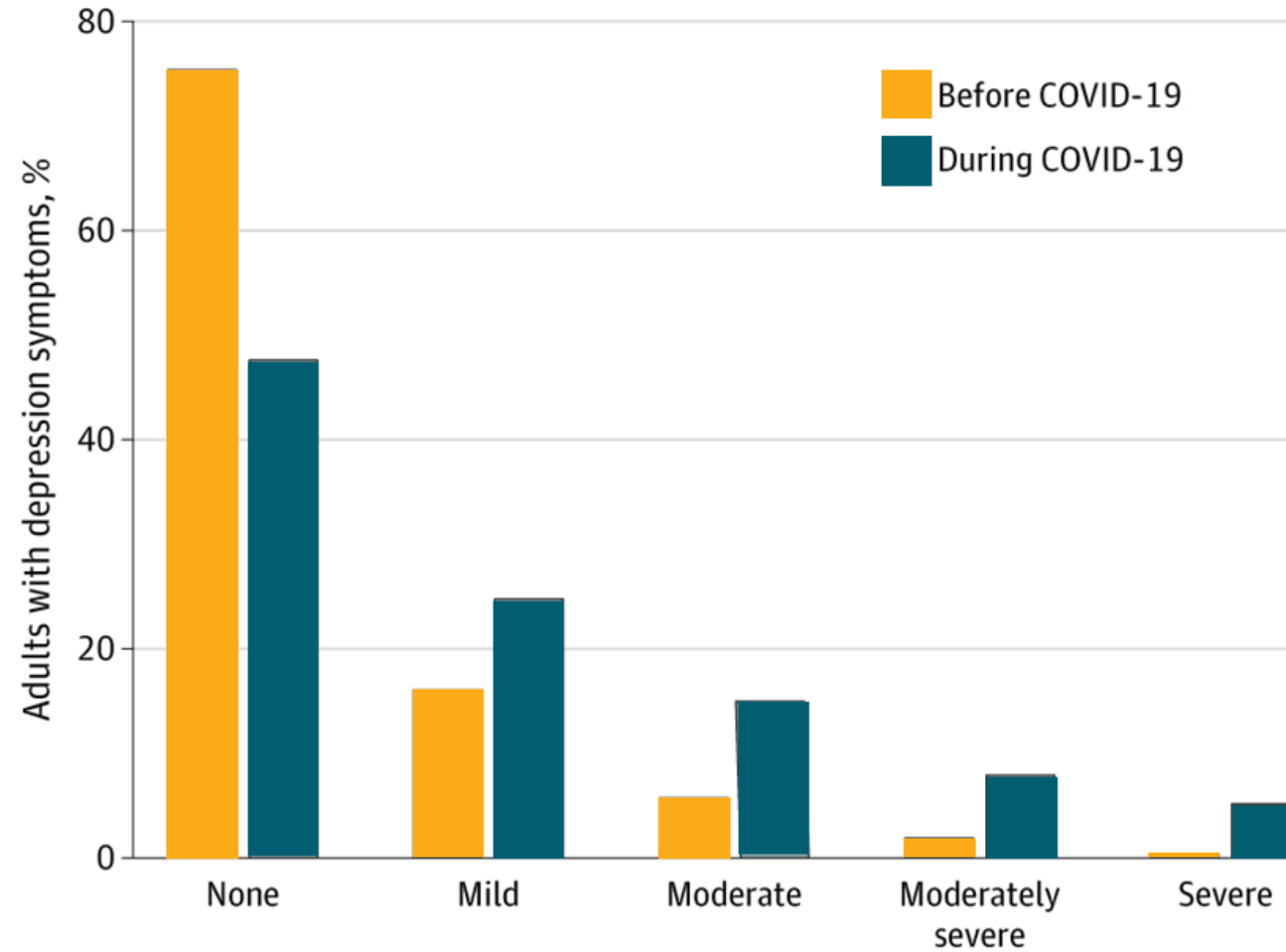


Nearly 1 in 5 report “heavy drinking”



Landscape, Continued

[Prevalence of depression symptoms in US adults before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)





Workers in Recovery Save Companies \$\$

Workers in recovery help employers **AVOID**
\$4,088
in turnover & replacement costs

Workers in recovery miss
13.7 days
LESS
per year
than workers with an SUD

Each employee who recovers from a substance use disorder
SAVES
a company over
\$8,500
on average

(Source: National Safety Council)





Recovery Is Good for Business



People in recovery

Missed Days

9.5

Turnover Rate

21%

General workforce

Missed Days

10.5

Turnover Rate

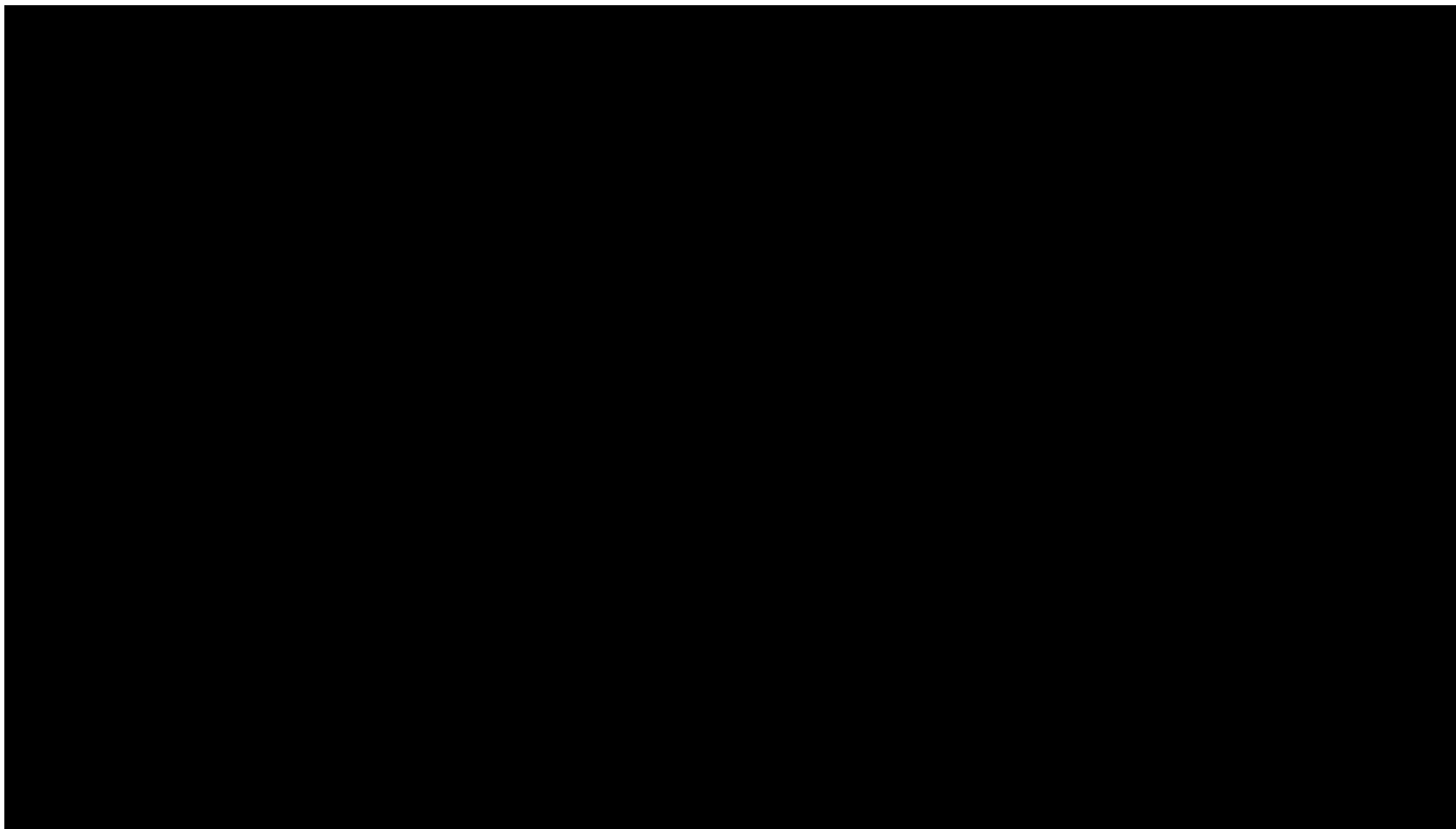
25%



(Goplerud, 2017)



The Power of RFW

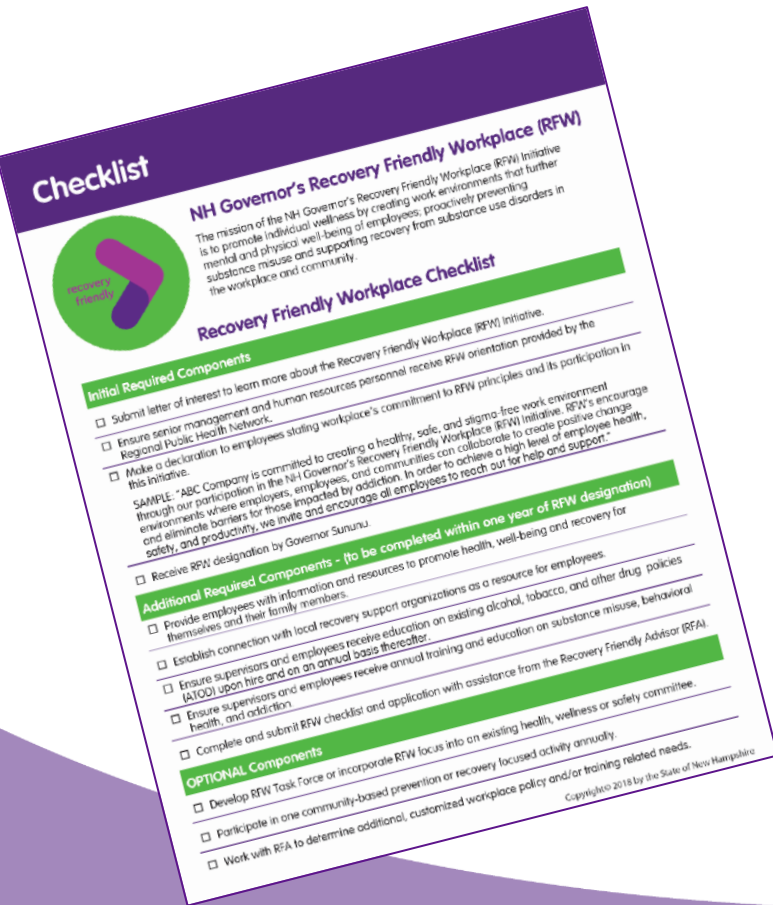




RFW Process, Culture, & Corresponding Strategies



RFW Checklist



Initial Required

Letter of Interest
Orientation
Declaration
Designation

Additional Required

Info & Resources
Connection to Recovery Orgs
Education & Trainings

Optional

RFW Task Force
Community-Based Activities
Customized Trainings





RFW Trainings

“In Person”¹

Why the Workforce Needs People in Recovery

Overcoming the Impact of Substance Use Disorders through Recovery: A Panel Discussion

Self-Care During Times of Isolation

“In Person”¹ or Online (Self-Paced)

Understanding SUD, Bias, Stigma, & Discrimination

RFW Panel: Journeys, Processes, Policies & Practices, and Outcomes

About Recovery & Workplace Wellness

Accessing Resources in NH: 211 & The Doorway

How To Save a Life With Narcan

RFW Overview & Growing Your Recovery Friendly Workplace

New Content – Online Only Currently

Identifying & Supporting Employees With Substance Use Concerns

Employer & Employee Vignettes

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion for NH Workplaces

How to Support a Loved One With SUD (and Keep Taking Care of Yourself in the Process)

¹ “In person” refers to a training that is conducted live-time, either via Zoom or in person when conditions permit.





A Culture of Support

“

Every time I walk into work [Genfoot] and see that symbol, it gives me a little more hope that people do care.

”

-Shawn, RFW Employee





Challenging Stigma



Language Matters:

Consider Using This Language

- Person with a substance use disorder
 - Person with an alcohol use disorder
- Person in recovery
- Person living with an addiction
- Person arrested for a drug violation
- Person with a felony
- Choose not to at this point
- Medication is a treatment tool
- Had a reoccurrence
- Maintained recovery
- Positive/negative drug screen
- Substance use/misuse
- Died by suicide

Instead of This Language

- Addict, junkie, druggie
 - Alcoholic
- Ex-addict
- Battling/suffering from an addiction
- Drug offender
- Felon
- Non-compliant
- Medication is a crutch
- Relapsed
- Stayed clean
- Dirty/clean drug screen
- Substance abuse
- Committed suicide



➤ What Can Employers Do?

- Develop/implement process
 - Examples: RFW Committee, Survey
- Parity in policies
- Train supervisors
- Reduce injury risk
- Rx drug take-back events
- Narcan



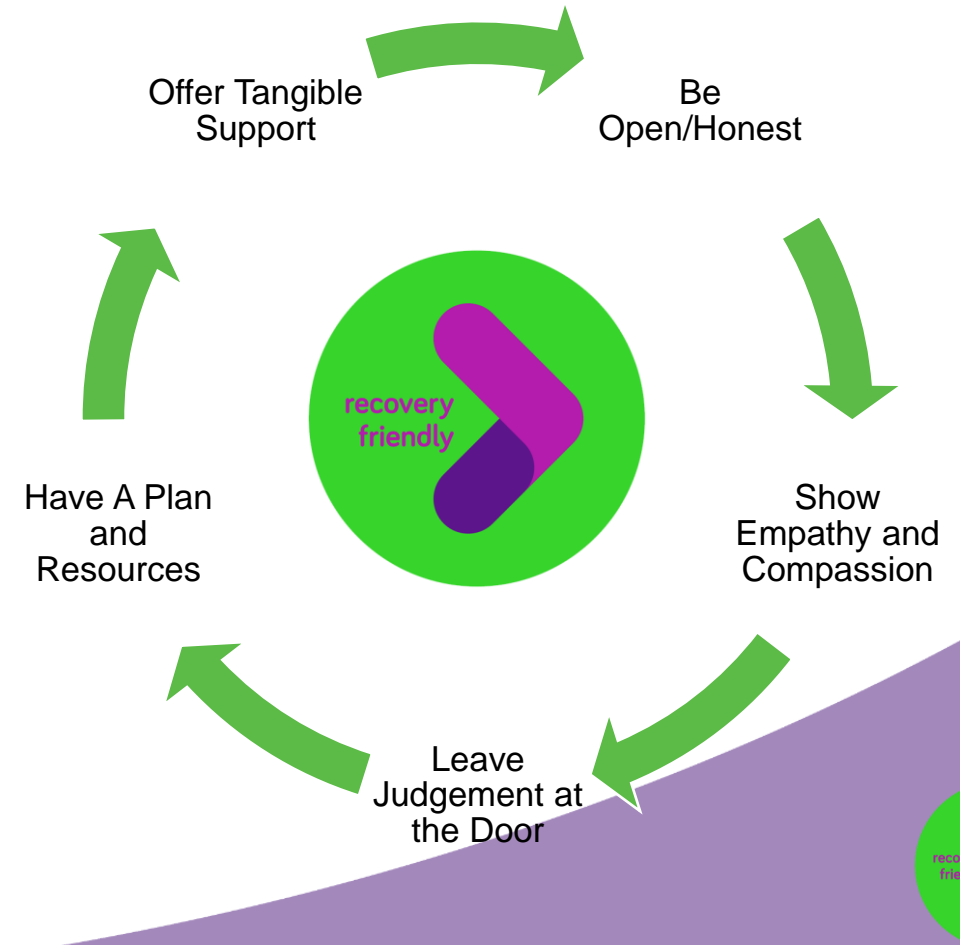
(Photo: Official RFW Designation for Jake's Market & Deli)





Supporting Employees With Substance Use Concerns: The Recovery Friendly Approach

- While having some possible signs and symptoms of a substance use concern may be helpful (bit.ly/RFW_SignsandSymptoms)...
- The best identification practice is to have open and honest conversations with employees in a safe, supportive, and recovery-friendly environment. Creating this environment is key to becoming a Recovery Friendly Workplace.
- When holding space for conversations about substance use concerns, remember to:





Supporting Employees: Encouraging Conversation

Be sure to:

- Implement a **policy** that provides job security and mechanisms to engage recovery services for employees who are open and honest – **don't punish** employees for disclosing they may have a concern.
- Identify leaders and team members who are “**recovery allies**” and know what a supportive approach looks like and what steps to take when an issue arises.
- Adopt an approach of consistent **supportive follow-up** rather than punitive employee monitoring.



Queenie C. Plater, M.S. • 3rd+
Senior Human Resources Executive | Strategic Advisor
1mo •

A few takeaways: Her manager needed a dose of humanity. Be approachable, listen, try to put yourself in your employee's shoes. Build trust. Being more human can help you retain your valuable employees. Having happy, respected, productive employees is a win-win for everybody. Remember to keep the “human” in human resources!

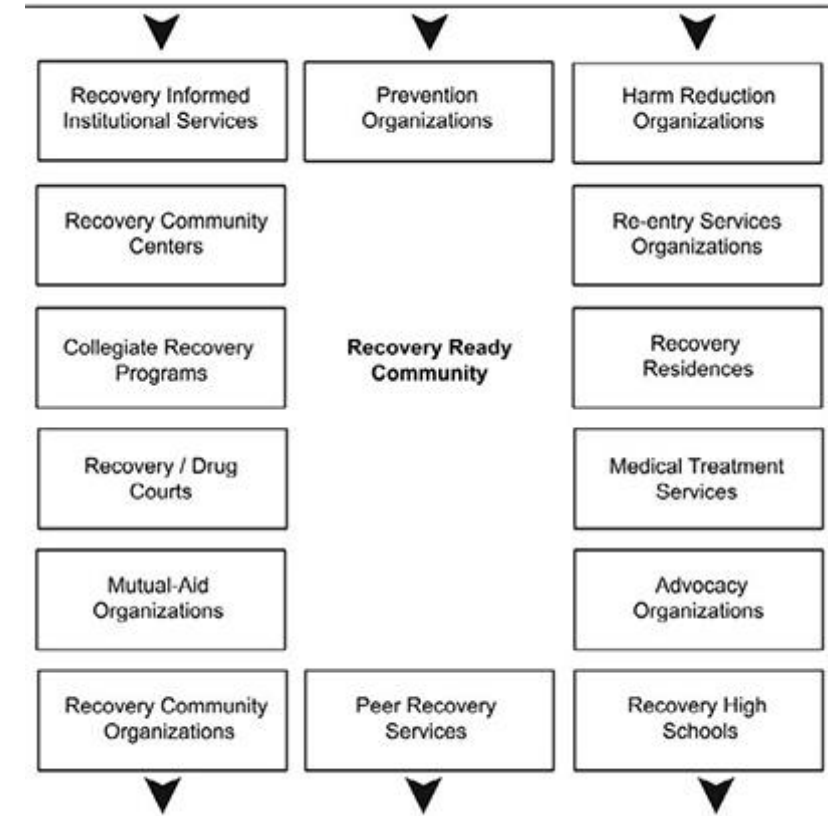




Supporting Employees: After Identification/Disclosure

Policies/practices to support employees who identify as having a substance use concern:

- Recovery-informed **leave of absence and return to work** policies
- **Communicating often** about the importance of employee health and wellness
- Establishing **partnerships** with community-based recovery support providers



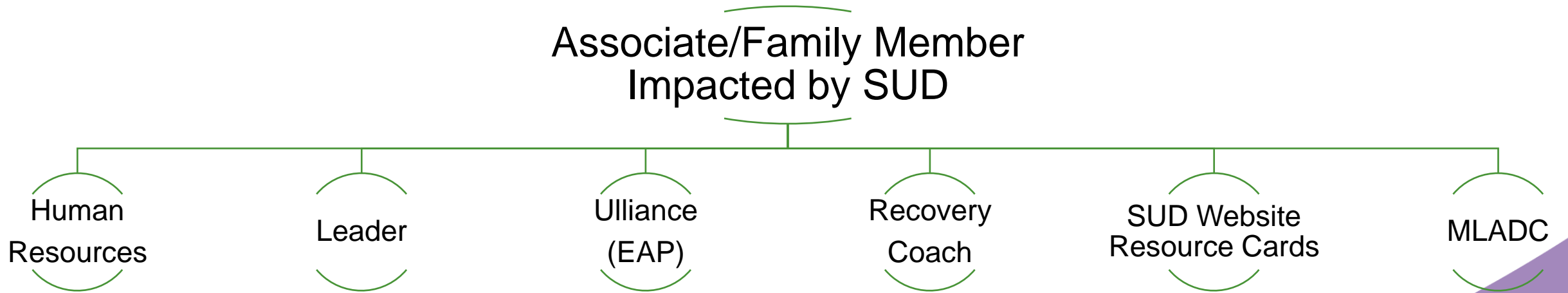
(Source: Ashford et al., 2019)





Case Study: Hypertherm

Hypertherm Internal Pathways to Support



(Source: Hypertherm/Headrest)





Case Study: Genfoot America

- 5 employees have come forward
- Hiring from local recovery homes
 - 2 now Shift Leaders
- Helping Hands Committee
- Decreases in
 - Accidents/injuries
 - Lost days
 - Light duty days



A Genfoot employee speaks at Genfoot's second all-day RFW training event.





RFW-Related Resources in NH & Beyond



NH Resources



Get Connected. Get Help.™
An Initiative of Granite United Way



Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs)



nhrecoveryhub.org

Learn more about how 211, The Doorway, and RCOs partner to serve those impacted by SUD [here!](#)



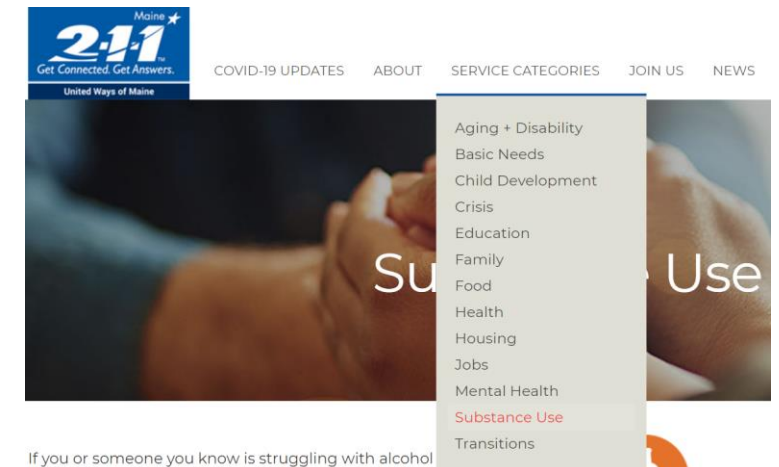
NH Resources, Continued

- [Peer Support Agencies](#): No-cost, peer-based support for those with mental illness
- [NAMI NH](#): Information, trainings, & suicide prevention/postvention
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention NH](#): Education & advocacy; support for survivors of suicide loss
- [Headrest Crisis-Suicide Prevention Line](#):
 - For those experiencing a crisis: **1-800-273-TALK**
 - For general questions/to book an intake: **603-448-4872**
 - For a teen-specific hotline: **1-800-639-6095**



Resources Beyond NH

- See if your [211](#) interfaces with Substance Use Disorder supports
- Find a [virtual All-Recovery meeting](#)
 - For people in or supportive of recovery
 - People from all recovery pathways with any behavioral health concern welcome
 - Including groups for family members, LGBTQ+-identifying people, women and mothers, and those interested in harm reduction
- Learn more about [Multiple Pathways to Recovery](#), including a variety of [meeting types](#)
- Look for peer-based agencies (some terms to search: “recovery community organization” and “peer [mental health or recovery] support”)



Resources Beyond NH, Continued

- Find resources from the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) and [find a local chapter](#)
- Find resources at the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI) and see if you have a [local NAMI chapter](#)
- For free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals:
 - Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at **1-800-273-TALK**
 - Can also text **HOME** to **741741** for free, 24/7 crisis counseling



Questions?



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Thank you!