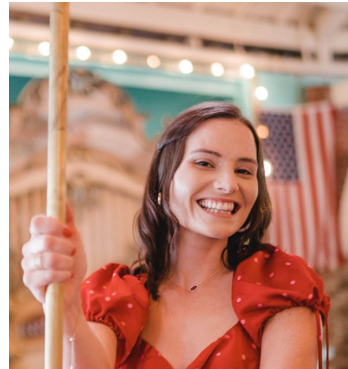# Implementing Point in Time Surveys at SSPs:
Toolkit Launch

Introductions

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Washington

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NACCHO

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NC Survivors Union

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University of Washington SHaRP

- The Supporting Harm Reduction Programs (SHaRP) Team at University of Washington works with harm reduction programs and their partners around the United States to improve services through monitoring and evaluation, research, and more.

- Reactive technical assistance

- Proactive guidance about M&E methods, systems, ethics and more

- Offer learning opportunities and trainings

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NACCHO

- The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents nearly 3,000 local health departments (LHDs) across the country
- NACCHO serves as voice for LHDs, supports LHDs and local partners through funding and technical assistance, and engages with federal policymakers and national partners on behalf of LHDs
- LHDs work across public health spectrum with various partners and sectors to promote and protect health, well-being, and safety of their communities

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Outline

- **Introduction to point in time surveys**
- Overall lessons learned from Learning Collaborative
- Components of a point in time survey project
- General point in time survey good practices
- Website tour
- Boots on the Ground Example: NC Survivors Union
- Questions

Value of a Point in Time Survey

Point in Time Surveys can....

- Support program improvement

- Meet specific learning goals and quickly respond to emerging trends

- Reduce overall data collection

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Overview

- Also known as cross sectional surveys

- Collect data during a limited time (2-4 weeks), which allows SSPs to ask a standard set of questions from a portion of participants

- Allow you to calculate proportions!

Routine Program Data	Point in Time Survey Data
SSP distributed 425 naloxone kits in 2021	75% of SSP clients obtained naloxone in the past 3 months

Successful Point in Time Surveys have one thing in common...

- Clear objectives! Before you take this project on, be sure you have learning goals.

- Never collect data for data's sake
  - "Because we're curious" is not enough

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Before you begin…

- Think about how you would fund it
  - Even without a specific grant to do this, you will need to reallocate at least some staff time
  - Are there lower-cost resources you can leverage? (TA, interns, etc)

- Consider what methodological approaches you might use
  - Data collection duration
  - Eligibility
  - Participant compensation (survey length)

- Timeline, including a realistic understanding of data analysis

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Lessons from the Learning Collaborative

Learning Collaborative

- March 2022 through January 2023

- Funded by NACCHO

- Facilitated by UW SHaRP

- 7 SSPs in 6 states

- 5 SSPs completed their PiTS

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Learning Collaborative

- Funded staff time to participate and to roll out the project
  - Did not fund incentives
- Monthly presentations on survey components and skills
  - Deliverables were all essential components of a PiTS project
- Hands-on technical assistance
  - Monthly optional office hours
  - 1:1 live support as needed
- Found that accountability around deliverables/deadlines were actually **appreciated!**
- Materials that were developed have been adapted into this toolkit

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Components of a Point in Time Survey

Phase 1: Planning

- Setting goals
- Setting a timeline
- Researching existing survey structures
- Protocol
- Never too early to think about analysis

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Phase 2: Design

- Prioritizing questions
- Pilot testing
- Formatting and programming the survey

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Phase 3: Implementation

- Methods and survey protocol
- Interviewer training
- Data collection
- Data monitoring

Phase 4: Data Cleaning & Analysis

- Check data you've collected for errors
- Calculate statistics
- Review results with stakeholders

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Phase 5: Dissemination of Findings & Program Improvement

- Create data visualizations
- Work on communication strategies to various stakeholders
- Implement findings

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Point in Time Survey Good Practices

Ethical data collection in monitoring & evaluation

- Culturally and structurally appropriate

- Minimalist data collection

- Compensation

- Privacy and security

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Good practices for PiTS

- Set expectations/be realistic about the amount of work this will take

- Be collaborative! Build team buy-in by having a clear purpose and identifying roles early
  - Be clear about whether and how PiTS implementation will change routine data collection

- Test survey questions and flow before programming the survey

- Plan for participant consent, confidentiality, and data security

- Build skills for survey programming, data monitoring, and data analysis

- Don't burn yourself out! Save energy for analysis and dissemination

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Website: www.sharpta.uw.edu/pits-toolkit

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NC Survivors Union

- Worked underground for over 10 years prior to SSP legalization in NC in 2016
- Formally founded in 2019, has grown significantly
  - Permanent staff of 8
- Flagship affiliate of national drug users union, National Survivors Union

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NC Survivors Union

- Brick and mortar SSP

- Needs-based, supports secondary distribution

- Provides safer use supplies, hygiene supplies, overdose prevention supplies, HIV and HCV testing, linkages to care, and on-site drug checking

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Objectives

- Improve understanding of participant characteristics

- Assess community needs to better serve participants

- Modify data collection systems to minimize burden of encounter level data collection

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Eligibility & Timeline

- Open to all people seeking services at NCSU
  - People who had to leave early could return to finish later
- $10 cash incentive + NCSU t-shirt or tote
- Intended to start implementation in July, postponed to September
- Continued the survey beyond initial plan of 4 week implementation

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Methods

- Proposed survey questions based on funding requirements and areas of particular interest

- Reviewed topics and questions with staff and stakeholders

- Conducted 3 compensated pilot tests

- Programmed final survey in REDCap

- Recruitment: after services, offer survey to everyone

- Generally survey took 10-15 minutes to complete

- Data monitored weekly

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Key Findings

- Sample size: 77
  - 2 people declined to participate
  - 72 completed surveys
- Tobacco or nicotine (n=45) was the most reported substance used, with methamphetamine (n=41), heroin (n=39), marijuana (n=35), and fentanyl (n=31) being the next most reported
- High rate of injection alone among interviewees, with 63.5% reporting injection alone at least some of the time
- Found 22.1% of interviewees reported experiences with abscesses or similar skin infections in the past three months

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Key Findings

Race		
Arab American or Middle Eastern	1	1.3%
Black	10	13.0%
Declined to answer	2	2.6%
Different	5	6.5%
Indigenous	1	1.3%
Multiracial	4	5.2%
White	54	70.1%
Total	**77**	

Ethnicity		
Latinx/ Latine, Hispanic, or Spanish	7	9.1%
Not Latinx/ Latine, Hispanic, or Spanish	70	90.9%
Total	**77**	

North Carolina Survivors Union point in time survey interviewee age, 2022
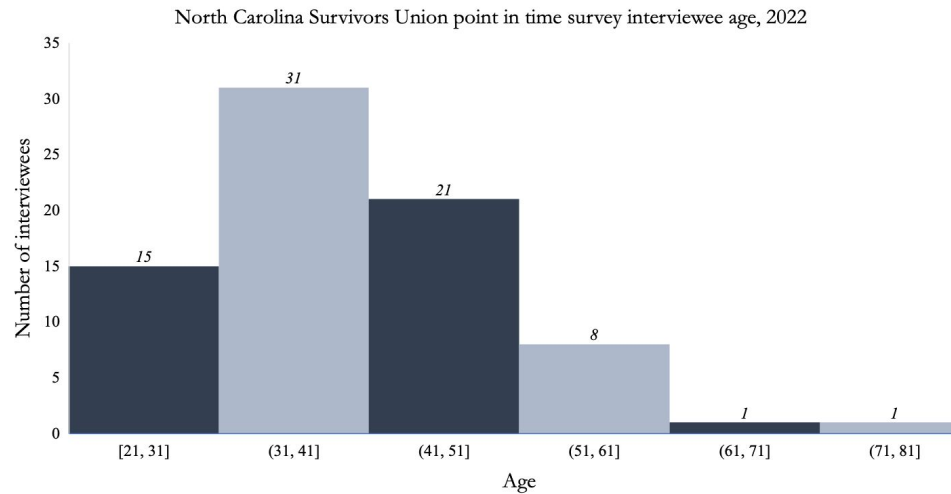
Gender		
Cis Woman	25	32.5%
Cis Man	44	57.1%
Transgender Woman	1	1.3%
Transgender Man	0	0.0%
Nonbinary	1	1.3%
Other	6	7.8%
Total	**77**	

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Key Takeaways

- Affirmed areas for program expansion.
  - Most notably, on-site medical services (antibiotics, MAT, etc.)
    - Building out partnership with Duke University to offer on-site medical care.
  - Barriers to on-site access for certain populations
    - Outreach to BIPOC communities
    - Enhanced tailoring of services

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Successes and Challenges

- Buy-in
  - Successes
    - Staff and leadership were excited to streamline data collection
    - Technical assistance support
  - Challenges
    - Scary to do something new!

- Planning and design
  - Successes
    - Lots of edits and improvements resulted in a culturally competent survey
  - Challenges
    - Difficult to facilitate quantity of input during survey construction
    - Delayed timeline
    - Learning new software

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Successes and Challenges

- Implementation
  - Successes
    - Interviewer training
  - Challenges
    - Unplanned absences
    - Petty cash

- Analysis
  - Successes
    - Ease of using REDCap, given staff capacity
  - Challenges
    - [Potential] Needed skills

- Dissemination
  - Successes
    - Grant writing and reporting
  - Challenges
    - Carving out continued staff time, without specifically dedicated funding, amongst other deadlines

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Questions?

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