

# A HEALING RESPONSE TO SUBSTANCE USE & ADDICTION

## - A GUIDE FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES -

*Faith communities are on the front lines of substance use; responding to and counseling individuals, friends, and family that are impacted. This brief guide was created for faith leaders to help you connect individuals to services and care they may need. Our community has many great treatment and recovery resources and support services. You can be a trusted bridge to offer a healing response to substance use for those in need.*

### HELP IN AN EMERGENCY

Consider the situation and environment for a possible health or safety emergency – difficulty breathing, not able to stay conscious. If the person’s health becomes an urgent issue, call 9-1-1.

**Ask yourself:** Is this person safe? Am I safe?

### OFFER SUPPORT & RELIEF

Take time to listen. Many may simply want to talk and may not be sure about what they need or what help might be available. Be supportive and caring and offer to connect them to support in your congregation, if support exists. If resources such as homeless shelters, subsidized housing, food pantries, utility assistance, etc. comes up, call 2-1-1. The call center at 2-1-1 is full of trained staff who know the resources and are available to assist with a wide range of needs.

**Ask the other person:** What can I do to help? Do you have a safe place to stay, enough food to eat, clothes to wear? Call 2-1-1 for resources.

### CONNECT TO CARE

If the person you are meeting with wants help with their substance use issues, it’s important that they make a connection as soon as possible. If the person knows which treatment or recovery service they want, great! If they aren’t sure what help they need, resources below can help make that connection.

Make sure they feel your caring (non-judgmental) support. You want them to feel equipped and empowered to take the next step. Make the call together.

**Call 2-1-1 for a connection to substance use treatment and recovery services in the area.** If a peer recovery coach might be needed, ask 2-1-1 for this service; a trained coach will be available to meet in person with the individual that needs help.