

RHIP and COVID-19 MINI-GRANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

COVID-19 Final Report for REACH

“REACH and Syringe Exchange Program Warming Project”



Summary of Results:

- The request was focused on purchasing essential outdoor living equipment for individuals experiencing both houselessness and active addiction.
- The provision and distribution of outdoor supplies, including tents, sleeping bags, tarps, heaters and propane vouchers was a collaborative effort between REACH and Deschutes County Health Services Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) both of which provide regular direct service to the target population.
- In addition to the distribution of supplies this collaborative effort encourage and grew positive relationships with many of our most vulnerable community members.
- This project's target population, people living unhoused and with active addiction are traditionally one of the most marginalized, stigmatized and vulnerable community members.
- The outreach model created opportunities to build relationship, meet people where they are and provide essential needs in a safe setting.
- The main benefit of the outreach effort was the prioritization of accessibility, confidentiality, compassion and care to a population that is offered reluctant to access services due to the stigmatization of substance use.
- We were able to reduce the burdens of living unhoused with active addiction, and subsequent risk of overdose by increasing the number of participants that have access to a regular supply of propane and heaters to keep warm and cook.

Quote:

“The past several years has been especially difficult with an increase in weather events, fires, impact of Covid and the increase in houselessness. Partnerships like this allow us to leverage our funds and people power. Thanks to the grant and the needed supplies we were able to meet people in the camps and on the street and build trust, this relationship building enabled us to guide people to resources in a safe caring way.”