



# create+equity Collaborative

Learning Session 4 – May 18-19, 2022



**Affinity Group:**  
**Substance Use**  
**Intervention:**  
**Harm Reduction**  
**QI Coach:**  
**Clemens Steinbock**

## Sun River Health – New York

Aarathi Nagaraja, MD, Medical Director of HIV & Hepatitis C; Lisa Reid, LCSW, VP of Grant Funded Clinical Services; Mary Correa, MS, CASAC, Senior Director, Genesis and Hepatitis C; Dani Chen

### Aim Statement

By Jun 2022, increase the viral suppression rate for patients with substance use disorders by 15% by integrating harm reduction approach into primary care, prescribe antiretroviral (ART) and retain those patients in care by above 90-95%.

### Defining the Problem

Bronx, NYC has the lowest health index score in New York State:

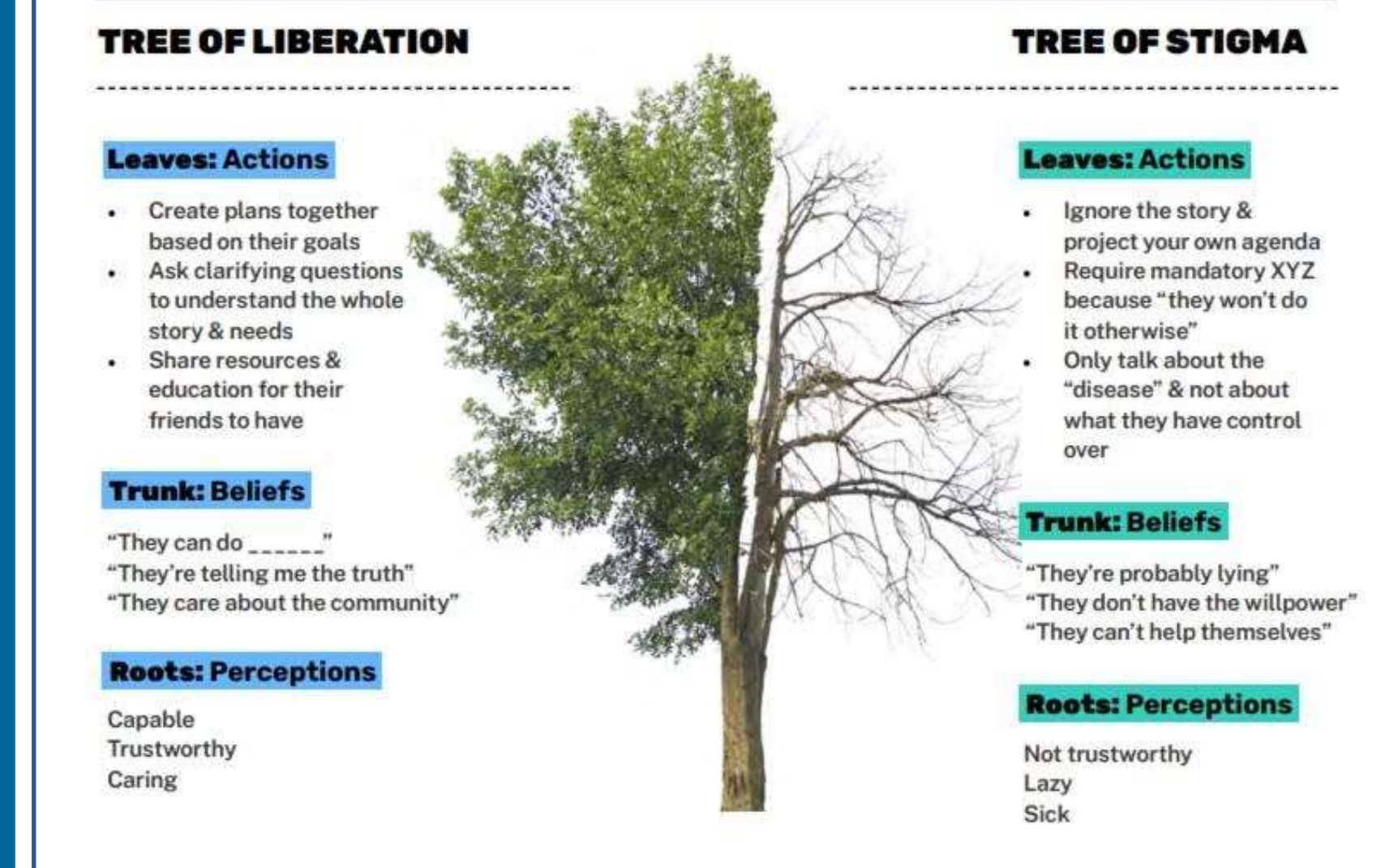
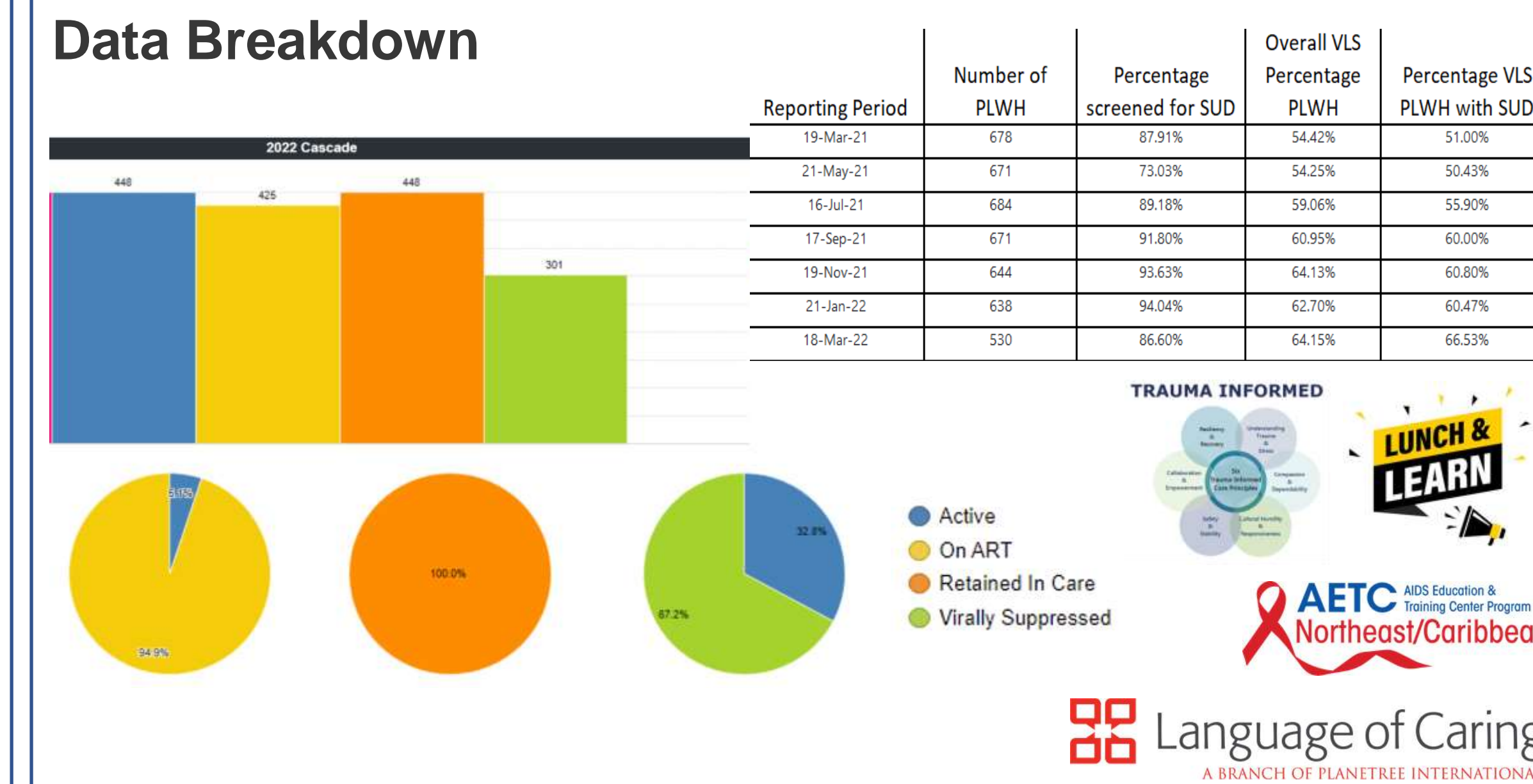
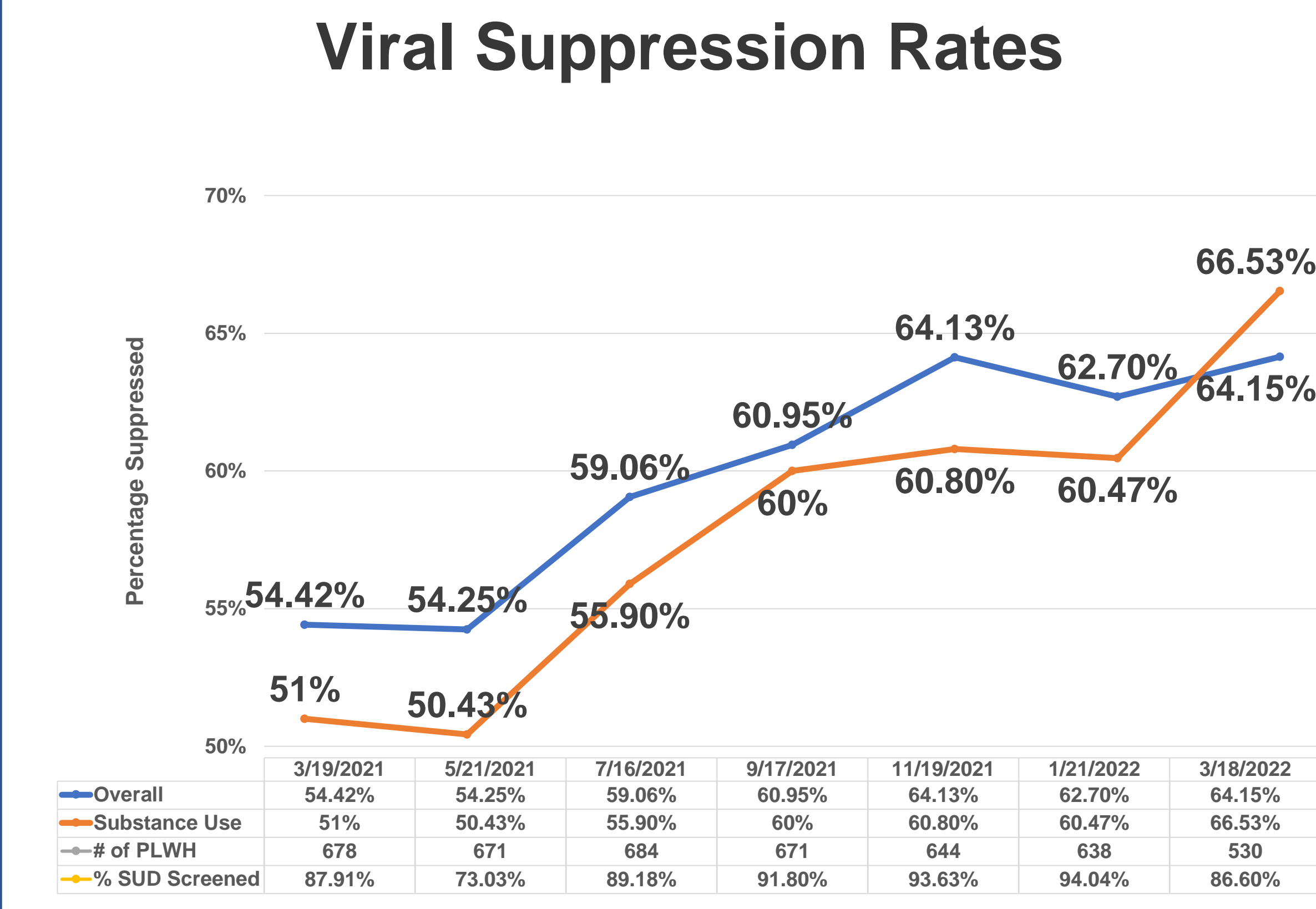
Mental health burden is 55% among people with HIV  
 Substance use disorder is 50% among people with HIV

*“Comprehensive care cannot be provided without addressing Social Determinants of Health. It’s integral to every visit and every encounter.” – Provider*

*“Patients appreciated that management wanted to hear their experiences and would be using this group to help make positive changes in the clinic and to help with their health care.” - Consumer Focus Group Member*



## Creating a Culture of Harm Reduction to Improve Viral Suppression Among People with HIV with Substance Use Disorders



### Collaborative Activities

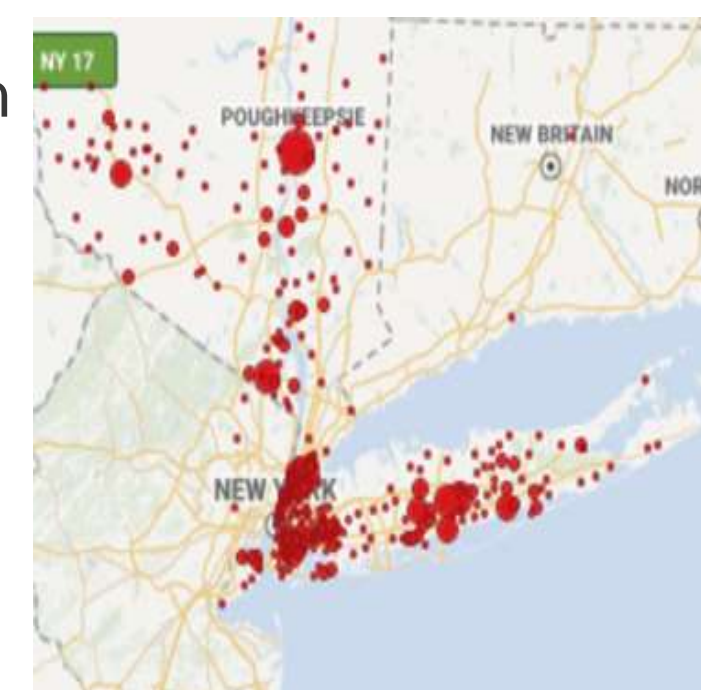
- Used learning sessions to drive data collection efforts
- Utilized our QI coaches to find CME and Non-CME accredited bi-monthly lectures for teams
- Incorporated QI project interests into Language of Caring, Trauma Informed Care, PrEP and stigma prevention projects
- Implemented an art project to promote patient engagement while creating a visual display depicting what helps our patients maintain their health

### Consumer Involvement

- Invited peers to kick off training to learn about project and participate in the completion of the driver diagram - peers were very engaged
- Presented project to Consumer Advisory Board and provided quarterly updates
- Completed annual surveys on quality of services
- Attended psychosocial education groups on harm reduction, prevention
- Peers attend monthly QI meetings, Affinity Group meetings, NYLinks trainings increasing knowledge of quality improvement
- Peer facilitated art group to promote patient engagement
- Peers co-facilitated focus groups to obtain consumer feedback

### Sun River Health

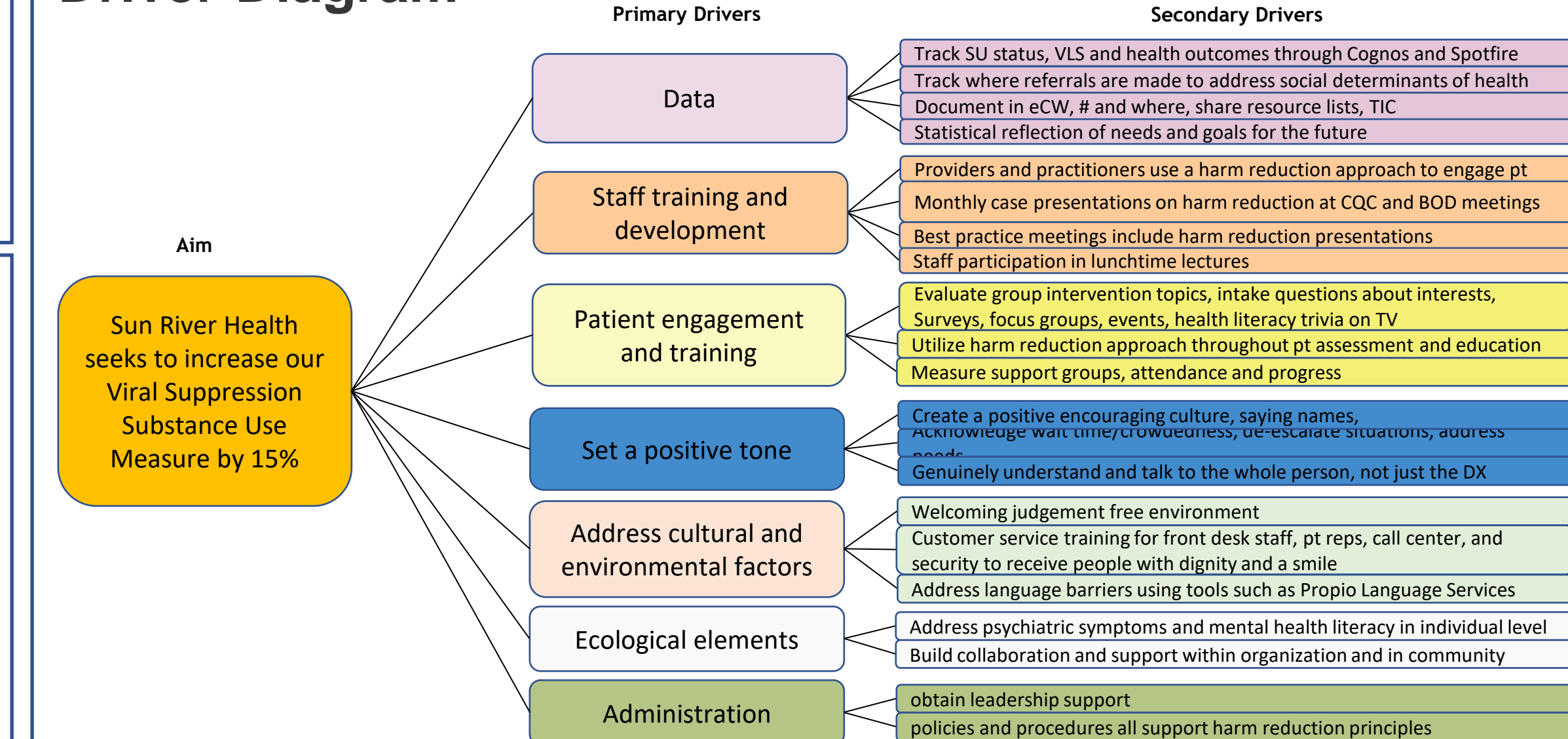
- A network of 43 FQHCs in New York State, Hudson Valley and Long Island
- 16 sites have integrated HIV/HCV
- Integrated medication assisted treatment and behavioral health
- RWHAP Part C NYC/Hudson Valley
- 2 Bronx Sites:
  - Inwood Health Center
  - HUB



### Step to Select the Intervention: Harm Reduction

- Reviewed data on social determinants of health experienced by our patients
- Presented project to executive leadership for support of implementation
- Identified team members from key departments
- Held a kick-off meeting with the team and completed a driver diagram
- Presented the project to the Consumer Advisory Board
- Promoted and implemented the project at each site, quarterly meetings across all regions, Annual HIV/Hepatitis/MAT conference, and updates to leadership
- Integrated Trauma Informed Care, Stigma, Language of Caring

### Driver Diagram



### Embedding a Harm Reduction Approach in Primary Care Setting:

- Obtained support of leadership to implement intervention
- Conducted consumer focus groups using intervention process measures to obtain feedback
- Conducted kick off meeting, reviewed harm reduction principles and overall project
- Conducted staff training utilizing professional development orgs and evidence-based interventions
- Incorporated harm reduction approach into clinical staff orientation and ongoing training
- Reviewed environmental assessment, signage, waiting room, flow
- Reviewed registration forms and EMR templates, case conference language
- Currently reviewing job descriptions, interviewing process, documentation
- Continue to utilize weekly meetings to share updates, training
- Share project updates at quarterly cross-regional quality meetings, Annual Genesis Conference
- Embedded approach in organizational structures:
  - Staff Orientations Provider Grand Rounds Annual conference
  - MAT Lunch & Learns Job descriptions – staff expectations Case conference language
  - EMR structured data Collaborated with other Sun River projects

### QI Team Members:

Aarathi Nagaraja, MD; Lisa Reid, VP of Clinical Services; Mary Correa, Sr. Director; Sarah Usher, HCV Coordinator; Ashley Hall, Adherence Educator; Elizabeth Pizarro, Adherence Educator; Carl Tyler, Adherence Educator, Dani Chen



### Lessons Learned

- Culture change takes time and collaboration
- Discuss regularly with consumer group for feedback
- Be flexible and ready to integrate project activities and findings into new initiatives
- Maintain a schedule of meetings to keep the team focus when competing projects emerge
- Cheerleaders are critical to maintain momentum
- Social determinants of health continue to be the greatest barrier & require macro level change
- Embed approach in organizational structures – training, documentation – for sustainability
- Awareness and knowledge promotes a harm reduction lens among staff
- QI projects are hard work but build unity!

### Sun River Health

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 Caseload: ~670  
 Subpopulation: ~330