



Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association Opens Third Harm Reduction Center

The Four A's aims to reduce opioid overdoses, support Alaskans living with HIV, lower hepatitis and HIV transmission and more.

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The Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (Four A's) has opened a center in Wasilla, Alaska, where it aims to lower HIV and hepatitis transmission and reduce opioid overdoses, according to [Alaska Public Media \(APM\)](#).

Founded in 1985, [Four A's](#) was the first AIDS service organization in the state of Alaska. The Wasilla location is the organization's third center.

Executive director Robin Lutz told APM that before the new center opened, many people in [Alaska](#) were driving long distances to access clean supplies and other resources. "And for us, what that means is having access to sterile syringes for injection, drug users having access to other things like antibacterial wipes, tourniquets, HIV testing, condoms, lube, anything that someone might need to lower their risk, depending on what kind of drug injection they're doing," she said.

Lutz added that the new center uses a [harm reduction](#) approach, which provides drug users with safer ways of doing drugs while offering information on ways to get sober when they are ready to do so. The new center also operates a mobile needle exchange and provides Narcan for treating [opioid overdoses](#).

"People who access syringe access programs like ours are actually [70% more likely to complete drug treatment](#) if they choose to go," Lutz told APM. "And to me, that speaks about stigma and access to information and support. We welcome people with open arms where they're at."

What's more, the center connects HIV clients with health care and housing resources and offers supplies for [safer sex](#) and drug use and HIV and hepatitis testing. In addition to these essential resources, the organization prioritizes creating a safe space for people to feel comfortable and supported in ways they might not experience in their communities.

"We believe that everyone, especially people who use drugs, especially people who are living with HIV, absolutely deserve love and care," said Lutz. "So we're excited to be a bigger part of the community and welcome people."

Friday, August 25, Four A's will welcome all to its Wasilla location for Between the Lines, an art exhibit and paint night. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.

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