BOOM!Health Cited as Model for Harm Reduction

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Harm reduction centers—where injection drug users, sex workers and other at-risk populations can get clean needles, syringes, free condoms and information about HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV)—have long operated on the outskirts of the health care system. However, marginalized providers could soon experience a renaissance in the field thanks to new health care reform rules and creative partnerships, Kaiser Health News reports.

A new case study by the New York Academy of Medicine points to BOOM!Health in the Bronx as a possible model for other clinics across the country to amp up their services and save more lives.

Over the last two years, BOOM!Health has taken a different approach to syringe exchange. The organization combines its harm reduction center with primary care, preventive and behavioral health providers from across the community to provide a more holistic care approach for its homeless and drug-addicted populations.

For example, the center links up with local hospitals, federally qualified health centers and other community-based organizations to create on-site clinics and pharmacies for its patients. The center also allows social workers from teaching hospitals to come in to help homeless patients find affordable housing, nutrition aid and legal services.

The clinical partnerships allow the center to get substantial Medicaid funding from the state for the first time. Its approach has now been proven to help better connect these populations to support, leading to far fewer hospital readmissions in the area.

To read the case study, click here.

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