

THE BIG PICTURE

- The annual Kentucky Harm Reduction Summit brings together public health professionals, peer support specialists, recovery community organizations, and other partners.
- In 2025, approximately 380 attendees convened to share innovative practices, learn from individuals with lived experience, and collaborate on solutions to Kentucky's ongoing drug overdose crisis.
- This year's summit emphasized workforce development, tailored approaches, and creative engagement methods to renew and re-energize Kentucky's harm reduction network.

What is the Kentucky Harm Reduction Summit?

The Kentucky Harm Reduction Summit (KY HRS) is an annual statewide gathering designed to strengthen Kentucky's harm reduction workforce.

Participants represented local health departments, recovery community organizations, state and federal agencies, universities, and healthcare systems.

- Attendees came from across the Commonwealth, **with all 120 counties represented**.
- **46% of participants served Appalachian communities** (n=292*).
- Nearly one-half self-identified as **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-defined navigators** (n=313).**

The 2025 summit featured more than 15 sessions on topics such as youth-centered substance use prevention, hepatitis C elimination, opioid abatement funding, wound care, and disaster preparedness. Sessions highlighted strategies being implemented across the Commonwealth, as well as new funding opportunities and innovations in the harm reduction space.

The 2025 KY HRS also included interactive opportunities for connection and engagement:

- A **collaborative art project** encouraged reflection on harm reduction principles while building team connections.
- A **bingo networking activity** fostered interaction, icebreaking, and new partnerships.
- **Exhibitors** provided opportunities for attendees to connect with statewide and local organizations, share resources, and explore new harm reduction tools.

Exhibitors played a particularly important role in enriching the summit experience. Their presence connected participants to statewide and local organizations, strengthened collaboration, and supported the workforce in bringing innovative strategies back to their communities.

Continuing education credits were offered to in-person attendees, and recorded sessions are available to extend learning opportunities beyond the event. These options ensure that knowledge shared at KY HRS can be applied long after the event concludes.

*In this report, n= refers to the total number of participants who responded to a specific question or evaluation. For example, n = 313 means that 313 individuals answered the survey question.

**According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, harm reduction navigators include peer navigators, certified peer recovery specialists, peer support specialists, case managers, patient navigators, community health workers, persons with lived experience, and other individuals who link people who use drugs to harm reduction resources, substance use disorder treatment, and/or recovery support services.

PEER 2 PEER:

INFORMATION FOR PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS, CARE NAVIGATORS, AND OTHERS DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING RECOVERY

Feedback on the Harm Reduction Summit

The KY HRS planning committee actively incorporates survey feedback from participants, speakers, and exhibitors to guide future events. Attendees provide input on individual sessions, the overall summit, exhibitors, and interactive activities, ensuring every aspect of the event is evaluated. This feedback helps refine session topics, inform location selection, and identify growth opportunities.

Notably, **97% of participants reported gaining knowledge that they were likely to apply in their work.**

Additionally, **57% of respondents to the day one evaluation (n=205) reported they had previously attended KY HRS**, highlighting both the summit's value to returning participants and its role in building a sustained, statewide learning community.

By prioritizing ongoing evaluation, the summit ensures participants have a direct voice in shaping KY HRS so that it remains responsive, relevant, and impactful.

HELPFUL LINKS

- Endured sessions: [2025 Kentucky Harm Reduction Summit | UK HealthCare CE-Central](#)
- Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center link to presentation materials: [Harm Reduction Summit Materials & Presentations | KIPRC](#)

Please help us improve our services by completing a brief survey. Scan the QR code below to access the survey.



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