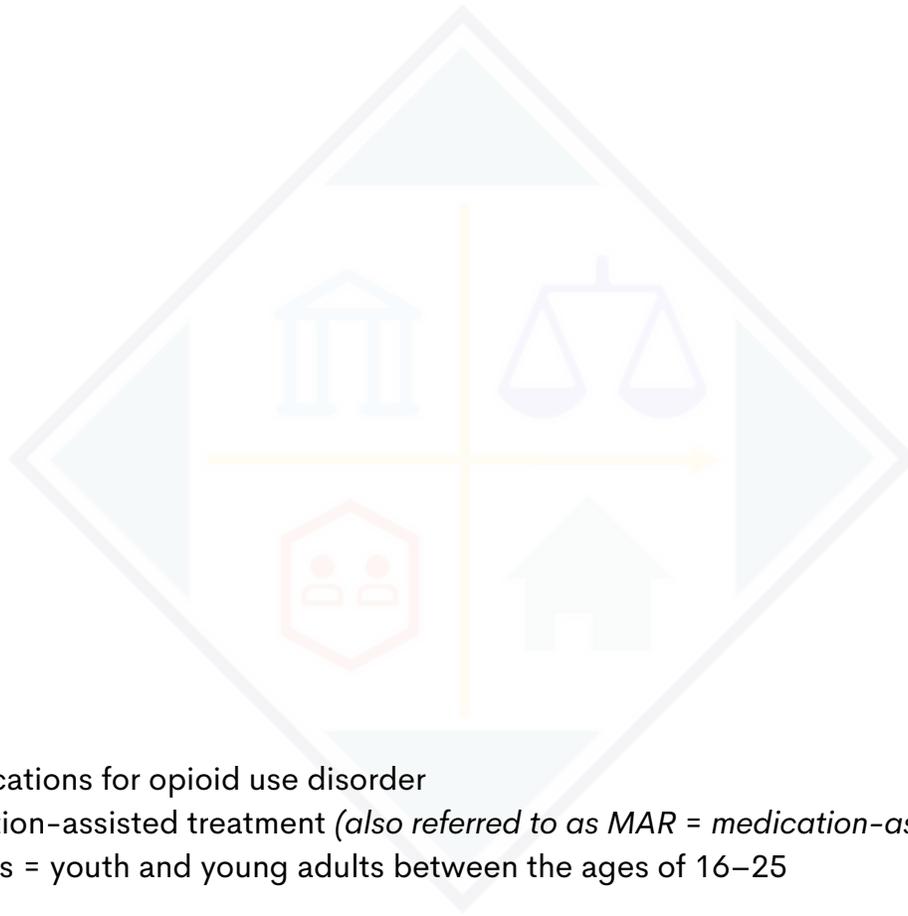




2026

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

GENERATED BY THE
JEAP INITIATIVE
COMMUNITY BOARDS



Key terms

MOUD = medications for opioid use disorder

MAT = medication-assisted treatment (*also referred to as MAR = medication-assisted recovery*)

Emerging adults = youth and young adults between the ages of 16–25

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Key



Justice-Involved Board



Provider & Payor Board



Young Adult Board

These icons indicate which Community Board(s) brought up these ideas in their brainstorming sessions.

The top 18 research priorities (out of 45 total) are listed below.

1

How can recovery support services help individuals who face barriers to care—such as those who don't meet medical necessity for detox, experience psychiatric symptoms stemming from substance use, or use non-opioid substances like methamphetamine—and how can these services expand access and fill critical gaps in the recovery journey?



2

What are current best practices for delivering recovery support services in prisons or jails, and how might those services be improved?



3

How does criminalization of substance use impact people's access to various services (e.g., housing, SNAP, education funds) that support recovery?



4

What policies, procedures, or laws (agency, statewide, or national) create barriers for people with a criminal record to build a recovery-supportive social network that may include other people with a criminal record?



- 5 _____ J Y
How can recovery support services help to coordinate and create a continuity of care for people reentering society from incarceration, including emerging adults?
- 6 _____ P
Does offering multiple services (that include recovery support services) in one physical location increase effectiveness, for example, by removing transportation barriers?
- 7 _____ J P
What combination or sequence of services, including recovery support services, have the most impact on outcomes—including items beyond return to use or recidivism, such as reduced healthcare costs, child welfare system costs, improved housing and economic stability, etc.?
- 8 _____ J P
What are the best practices for peer-delivered reach-in services within jails and prisons prior to release, and what benefits do virtual models offer—such as enabling peer matching or expanding access in rural or hard-to-reach facilities?
- 9 _____ Y
How does engaging loved ones in recovery support services impact participation and outcomes?
- 10 _____ P Y
How can recovery support services best address culturally relevant dynamics for substance use (e.g., intergenerational trauma, discrimination) for underserved communities and intersecting identities?
- 11 _____ P
What assessment tools work best to match individuals with needed recovery support services?

- 12** _____ **J** **Y**
What barriers do underrepresented groups face upon reentry, and how can recovery support services help mitigate their impact?
- 13** _____ **J** **Y**
What are best practices for incorporating trauma-informed care into recovery support services, including for special populations like young adults and those involved in the criminal legal system? What are the key ingredients of trauma-informed care in these contexts?
- 14** _____ **J** **P**
What are the returns on investment for peer recovery support services in the reentry context regarding issues like recidivism, access to housing, employment, and education? Are there special considerations for emerging adults?
- 15** _____ **J**
What factors increase criminogenic risk, and what recovery support services might help address these factors?
- 16** _____ **J** **P**
What are the most important outcomes to track to establish the financial benefits of recovery support service programs relative to their costs?
- 17** _____ **P** **Y**
What are the most effective support plans for peer support specialists to manage substance use triggers and trauma for both themselves and those they serve?
- 18** _____ **J**
Given the rapid growth of digital health platforms (e.g., virtual peer services, recovery chatbots), how do these tools impact barriers, engagement, and recovery across diverse populations, including emerging adults and those with criminal legal system involvement?

The **remaining research priorities** are listed below, in no particular rank.

How do internal (e.g., mental health symptoms, internalized stigma) and external (e.g., community stigma, healthcare disparities) variables impact substance use treatment access across different geographic and demographic groups, and can recovery support services help?

P Y

How well has MOUD/MAT been accepted in different contexts—such as the criminal legal system (e.g., treatment/specialty courts, law enforcement, prisons), recovery housing, treatment providers, peer workforce, and social networks—and which policies or strategies, including recovery support services, have helped improve integration as an evidence-based recovery pathway?

J P

What additional challenges do emerging adults seeking recovery face compared to other age groups seeking recovery, and how can recovery support services address them?

Y

How are evidence-based practices for mental health issues (including suicide) best integrated in a criminal legal context, how does this vary between the juvenile and adult systems, and how can recovery support services play a role?

J

Y

How can harm reduction and overdose prevention services and information most effectively be included in substance use recovery programming for emerging adults?

Y

What are the most effective ways to assess peer support specialists' readiness for their professional role? Which criteria are necessary for certification? Are there specific considerations for peers in criminal legal system settings (e.g., forensic peer support, peers within carceral settings)?

J

P

What strategies can make recovery housing, recovery support services, and recovery/mutual aid groups more welcoming for underrepresented groups and increase their representation within such services?

P

Y

What helps emerging adults come back from a recurrence of use, especially if they have limited resources, and what role can recovery supports play?

Y

What is the best way recovery support services can provide education to parents or other loved ones about being supportive of their emerging adult experiencing substance use issues and taking a strengths-based approach?

Y

Does the effectiveness of peer support services vary based on the amount of time peers have in recovery and the nature of support they receive in their role (e.g., training, supervision, counseling), and does this vary between clinical and recovery-oriented contexts?

P

What are the most critical elements in someone's social network that promote positive outcomes (e.g., social support, practical skill building, modeling), and how can these be measured and leveraged in recovery support services?

P

Y

What are effective strategies to use within recovery support services for helping emerging adults overcome barriers and get access to treatment earlier?

P

Y

How can peer support services improve treatment retention and support transitions (e.g., from transitional to long-term housing)?

J

P

What recovery supports help emerging adults in overcoming developmentally relevant challenges, such as building healthy social networks, stigma around disclosure of treatment and recovery status, and glorification of substance use in media and entertainment?

Y

Are recovery support services that are tailored to a specific community more effective in helping members of that community achieve recovery compared to recovery support services for the general population?

P

Y

Does effectiveness of service combinations or sequencing vary between different groups, such as emerging adults, individuals with a history of trauma, and other underrepresented groups?

P

Y

What are the key features of recovery housing—such as accountability, social support, or combination of services—that provide the most help?

J P

Beyond recidivism and abstinence from substance use, what other factors (e.g., financial or social milestones, recovery capital, other achievements) can serve as benchmarks for evaluating success along the recovery journey, and how can MOUD/MAT and harm reduction be incorporated into these measures?

J P Y

Are there holistic recovery support services—which not only address physical addiction (i.e., detox), but also encompass physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being—that show promise, and what are the mechanisms of action?

P Y

What factors, including recovery support services, foster resilience along the recovery journey? Especially how does this apply to emerging adults?

Y

How might recovery support services reduce stigma and improve long-term outcomes for individuals choosing a harm reduction recovery pathway, including use of MOUD/MAT?

P Y

What factors lead to the most effective use of Medicaid billing for peer support, including state certification differences, and how does this access inform outcomes?

J P

How well have treatment/specialty courts performed since the current opioid epidemic began in the 1990s, and how can recovery support services support their performance?

J P

What factors increase substance use, and what recovery support services might help address these factors?

P Y

What barriers limit access to quality services that pertain to co-occurring mental health and substance use issues, and what strategies in recovery support services can help overcome these barriers? Are there 'lessons learned' from previous attempts that did or did not work well?

J P

How well have treatment and specialty courts performed, and how can recovery support services support their performance?



Which populations are served by different types of recovery housing, and how do access (including economic burden) and outcomes differ?

