



Strategic 3-Year Plan

Fiscal Year 2026

Council Mission

The mission of the Northwest Suburban Cook County ROSC Council is to reduce stigma, improve access to timely and equitable care, and expand recovery-oriented support for individuals and families impacted by substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders throughout Northwest Suburban Cook County.

Council Vision

The Northwest Suburban Cook County ROSC envisions a community where individuals with lived experience are respected, supported, and empowered; where recovery-oriented services are accessible, culturally responsive, and coordinated; and where recovery is recognized as possible for all.

The Council

The Northwest Suburban Cook County ROSC consists of representatives from local community sectors, including faith counsel, educators, service providers, law enforcement, healthcare, people with lived experience (PLE), and housing providers. Members meet to discuss issues, concerns, gaps, and trends, and to find potential solutions.

Needs Assessment

Community Demographics (Population, Race/Ethnicity, Poverty Level, Etc.)

The Northwest Suburban Cook County ROSC service area includes Suburban Cook County, located northwest of Chicago. The service area covers approximately 944.9 square miles and serves a combined population of approximately 2,461,291 residents (2024 Census Reporter).

Suburban Cook County demographics include: Caucasian/White (40%), African American (21%), Asian (8%), Native American (0.2%), Pacific Islander (0.1%), Other (0.25%), and Two or More Races (3%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of residents identify as Hispanic.

The most commonly spoken languages at home are English, Spanish, and Indo-European languages. Approximately 126,433 residents across the service area are veterans.

Target Population: Individuals ages 14–65, with a particular focus on youth and young adults (ages 14–25), and veterans.

Overdose Data From The Service Area

KYC staff reviewed the 2024 Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) data and determined that many students may benefit from an individual substance use assessment based on the CRAFFT assessment criteria (C= ridden in a CAR driven by someone intoxicated; R= use alcohol/drugs to RELAX; A= use alcohol/drugs while ALONE; F= FORGET things you did while intoxicated; F= FAMILY or friends tell you to reduce drinking/drug use; T= gotten into TROUBLE while using alcohol/drugs). The Suburban Cook Illinois Youth Survey reports show the following:

SUBSTANCE USE CONSEQUENCES: During the past 12 months:

	10th	12th
Did you ever use alcohol or drugs to relax, feel better about yourself, or fit in	9%	15%
Did you ever use alcohol or drugs while you were by yourself, alone	7%	11%
Did you ever forget things you did while using alcohol or drugs	7%	13%
Did your family or friends ever tell you that you should cut down on your drinking or drug use	3%	4%
Have you ever gotten into trouble while you were using alcohol or drugs	4%	6%
Have you ever ridden in a car driven by someone (including yourself) who was "high" or had been using alcohol or drugs	6%	11%
Experienced 2 or more consequences (indicating the potential need for substance use disorder assessment according to the CRAFFT Screening Test)	9%	16%

Qualitative feedback obtained by the ROSC Council emphasized the need for:

- Increased community education on substance use and recovery
- Trauma-informed support for individuals and families
- Expanded recovery support options for diverse populations
- Greater coordination and visibility of available services

Gaps Identified In Our ROSC Community Needs Assessment

The survey highlights several gaps affecting how community members understand and access behavioral health and substance use supports. While respondents generally value harm reduction and believe people with mental illness and substance use disorders deserve respect, they also report significant barriers to care. Many described difficulty finding harm reduction resources, MAR providers, and mental health or substance use treatment services, pointing to limited availability, unclear pathways, and transportation challenges.

Stigma remains a major concern. Respondents consistently noted that stigma toward addiction, mental health, and MAR persists in their communities, which can discourage individuals from seeking help and undermine effective treatment.

The results also showed a need for stronger community education. Definitions of “sobriety,” “recovery,” and risk and protective factors vary widely, and many respondents expressed uncertainty or acknowledge a lack of knowledge about addiction.

Finally, families face ongoing stressors, especially related to housing, budgeting, communication, and transportation, that make it harder to maintain stability and engage in care.

Overall, the findings point to three primary needs: improving access to behavioral health and harm reduction services, expanding education to reduce stigma and increase understanding of addiction, and strengthening supports that address the social and economic conditions affecting families.

Data Source: Kenneth Young Center ROSC Community Needs Assessment Survey, FY26

Quarterly reporting during FY26 further identified:

- Gaps in school-based substance education
- Youth reluctance to seek help due to stigma and peer pressure
- Barriers for families related to transportation and scheduling
- Need for safe, trauma-informed environments
- Ongoing demand for harm reduction education, training and supplies

These findings demonstrate the ongoing need for a coordinated Recovery-Oriented System of Care that prioritizes equity, access, education, and lived-experience leadership.

Council Outreach and Communication Plans

Purpose

To increase awareness of recovery support services, reduce stigma related to substance use and recovery, and promote collaboration among community stakeholders across the ROSC service area.

Objectives

- Educate the community on mental health, substance use, recovery, harm reduction, and trauma
- Engage youth, families, veterans, and individuals with lived experience about the function of the Council
- Increase engagement by promoting ROSC activities, services, and events
- Strengthen collaboration among community partners

Target Audiences

- Individuals with lived experience and families
- Youth and young adults
- Veterans
- Schools and educators
- Law enforcement and justice partners
- Healthcare and behavioral health providers
- Faith-based organizations
- Community members and policymakers
- Council Members

Within each of these groups, care will be taken to ensure that underserved populations are also included: women, BIPOC, indigenous, LGBTQ+, migrants, and incarcerated individuals.

Information will be shared to engage, educate, and connect stakeholders through newsletters, social media, community presentations, council meetings, and events.

Key Messages

- Recovery is possible
- Stigma is a barrier to care
- Harm reduction saves lives
- There are multiple pathways to recovery
- Access, Education and Training

Communication Channels & Frequency

- Monthly council meetings
- Quarterly community presentations
- Annual and quarterly resource guide updates
- Weekly social media outreach
- Community events and partner-hosted activities

Below is a preliminary key of segments for outreach, with organizations and contact methods. This will be used as a guide for communication, and will be reviewed and revised as needed.

Segment	Key Organizations / Reps	Primary Contact Method
Internal Council	⇒ All members ⇒ Committee chairs ⇒ Workgroup leads ⇒ Council Chair / Co-chair ⇒ Project Coordinators	Email Internal chat / text Monthly meetings
Core Service Partners	⇒ Cook County Health Department ⇒ Gateway Foundation ⇒ Recovery Centers of America St. Charles ⇒ SHARE	Email Newsletter Partner meetings ROSC reporting at meetings
Recovery & Housing Supports	⇒ Way Back Inn ⇒ Gateway Foundation ⇒ SHARE ⇒ New Beginnings Recovery Mission	Email Resource directories Events
Judicial & Law Enforcement	⇒ Elgin Police Department ⇒ Schaumburg Police Department ⇒ Elk Grove Village Police Department ⇒ Rolling Meadows Police Department / Drug Court (Adult / Juvenile)	Formal email Briefings Updates at meetings
Community & Safety	⇒ Cook County Continuum of Care HUD Resources ⇒ PADS of Elgin ⇒ Alexian Brothers Center for Mental Health ⇒ Kenneth Young Center ⇒ Phoenix Family Center ⇒ Ecker Center for Mental Health ⇒ AMITA Health Center for Mental Health	Email Newsletter Community forum invites

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ NAMI ⇒ Hicks-Wright Organization ⇒ Talented Tenth Social Services ⇒ Boys & Girls Club ⇒ WINGS 	
Education & Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Harper College ⇒ Elgin Community College 	Presentations
Persons with Lived Experience (PLE) & Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Individuals from: AA, NA, SMART Recovery, Recovery Dharma, LifeRing, She Recovers, Women for Sobriety, Celebrate Recovery, Al-Anon and Alateen 	Peer networks Support meetings
Media & Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Daily Herald ⇒ Elgin Courier News ⇒ Chicago Tribune ⇒ WGN News ⇒ podcasts 	Press releases Social media kits

Roles and Responsibilities

- Council leadership and KYC staff coordinate outreach.
- Council Members support dissemination and engagement.
- Membership recruitment follows established protocols.
- Subcommittees, such as Communication, Project-Based, Data Analysis, and Feedback, will be created, with roles and responsibilities defined and determined.

Evaluation & Feedback

Evaluation and feedback will be determined and provided by the Subcommittees, and will include data points to collect that will show impact:

- Event attendance and participation
- Social media engagement analytics
- Resource guide usage
- Community and partner feedback
- Quarterly council review

Council Goals, Objectives, and Outcome Measures

Goal 1: Reduce Stigma Around Recovery

Goal 2: Expand Harm Reduction Access

Goal 3: Close Referral Gaps

Goal 4: Strengthen ROSC Council Membership

Objectives for Year 1 (July 2025-June 2026)

- Connection and representation are important factors in recovery. Sharing lived-experience stories from a wide variety of individuals in Recovery can strengthen community awareness, reduce isolation, and promote engagement.
 - *Create social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X for ROSC Council. (Goal 1)*
 - *Share 4 recovery stories from youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ voices on social media accounts by June 2026. (Goal 1)*
- Misinformation about substance use, recovery, and even pathways to recovery remains prevalent within the community and can undermine engagement and understanding.
 - *The Council will combat this by creating and holding educational presentations. 2 community groups by March 2026 to challenge myths. (Goal 1)*
 - *Topics: substance use, recovery, pathways to recovery, harm reduction, risk reduction, stigma, coping skills, addiction as a chronic disease, early intervention.*
- Using person-first language brings the concepts of addiction and recovery home, supporting more respectful dialog and understanding. Distancing, divisive words increase stigma, and stigma is one of the largest barriers to treatment.
 - *Partner with 3 schools, clinics, or faith groups by December 2025 to promote recovery-positive language. (Goal 1)*
- The catchment area supported by this ROSC is culturally diverse, with several different languages spoken (English, Spanish, Indo-European). Language barriers may delay access and create additional obstacles to care.
 - *Create educational materials in 3 languages by May 2026 to reach diverse communities. (Goal 1)*
- Train and educate Council Members to educate and distribute harm reduction supplies, which include safe sex supplies (condoms, lube, dental dams), drug testing kits (fentanyl, xylazine, benzodiazepines), and naloxone, and provide referrals to HIV / STI testing.
 - *Expand harm reduction supply distribution by 2 sites by February 2026. (Goal 2)*
- Underserved populations include women, BIPOC, indigenous communities, LGBTQ+, migrants, and incarcerated individuals. Barriers to care can be reduced through intentional outreach and engagement strategies tailored to underserved communities.
 - *Expand Council outreach to underserved areas by April 2026. (Goal 2)*

- Trauma-informed harm reduction strategies require an understanding of trauma’s impact, recognition of its signs, and responses that promote safety, trust, and avoidance of retraumatization. This approach emphasizes safety, trust, and responses that are grounded in an understanding of trauma rather than blame.
 - *Train 5 new partners in trauma-informed harm reduction by June 2026. (Goal 2)*
- *Train 15 professionals in trauma-informed referrals by May 2026. (Goal 3)*
- *Develop and distribute a referral list with partners by June 2026. (Goal 3)*
- *ROSC Coordinator and Project Associates will provide education for Council Members. These educational materials and presentations will be in place by September 2026. (Goal 4)*
 - *Topics: ROSC History, purpose, and structure; vision, goals, and objectives; strategic plan; ROSC framework, to ensure members understand key concepts (i.e., person-centered care, recovery capital, community-based services, individual pathways to recovery). (Goal 4)*

Objectives for Year 2 (July 2026-June 2027)

- *Share 8 recovery stories from youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ voices by June 2027. (Goal 1)*
- *Present to 3 community groups by March 2027, and to gauge stigma and bias we will use pre- and post-presentation surveys. (Goal 1)*
- *Partner with 5 schools, clinics, or faith groups by December 2026 to promote recovery-positive language. (Goal 1)*
- *Update educational materials in 3 languages by May 2027 to reach diverse communities. (Goal 1)*
- *Expand harm reduction supply distribution by 4 sites by February 2027. (Goal 2)*
- *Expand Council outreach by 10% to underserved areas by April 2027. (Goal 2)*
- *Train 8 new partners in trauma-informed harm reduction by June 2027. (Goal 2)*
- *Train 20 professionals in trauma-informed referrals by May 2027. (Goal 3)*

Objectives for Year 3 (July 2027-June 2028)

- *The ROSC Council will organize and host an event by June 2028 to amplify recovery narratives from people with lived experience, incorporating both previously documented and newly shared stories.*
 - *The event will intentionally highlight and celebrate youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ voices. (Goal 1)*
- *Present data to 5 community groups by March 2028 to challenge myths. (Goal 1)*
- *Partner with 10 schools, clinics, or faith groups by December 2027 to promote recovery-positive language. (Goal 1)*
- *Expand harm reduction supply distribution by 10 sites by February 2028. (Goal 2)*
- *Expand Council outreach by 10% to underserved areas by April 2028. (Goal 2)*

- *ROSC Council will plan and host an event by June 2028 to highlight Trauma-Informed Professionals who have been trained within the first 2 years. (Goal 2)*
- *The ROSC Council will plan and host a Recovery Event designed to highlight the achievements of the Northwest Suburban ROSC Council and demonstrate progress made. (Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4)*
 - *This event will feature collaboration with healthcare organizations, judicial and law enforcement, community leaders, community members.*

Outcome Measures and Progress Tracking

The ROSC Council will implement the following projects in FY26.

1. Community Education Campaign to Reduce Stigma: launch a multilingual education campaign to address stigma surrounding substance use and recovery. The campaign will feature recovery success stories, anti-stigma resources, and youth-led awareness initiatives, especially in underresourced and immigrant communities. Community events will be co-designed with Peer Recovery Specialists and local leaders to ensure the greatest impact.
 - a. Outcome Measures will be based on channel.
 - i. Social media: views, clicks, comments, saves, likes
 - ii. Presentations: gauge bias, perspective, and beliefs by using a pre-presentation survey and post-presentation survey. Additionally, attendance will be used to illustrate progress.
 - iii. Flyers / Advertising: increasing the library of current flyers and advertising to include multiple languages

Goal	Project	Due Date	Status
1	Create social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X for ROSC Council.	06/2026	In Progress
1	Share 4 recovery stories from youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ voices on social media accounts by June 2026.	06/2026	In Progress
1	Create and hold education presentations to 2 community groups by March 2026 to challenge myths.	03/2026	Completed 03.10.26
1	Partner with 3 schools, clinics, or faith groups by December 2025 to promote recovery-positive language.	12/2025	Completed 10.22.25
1	Create educational materials in 3 languages by May 2026 to reach diverse communities.	05/2026	In Progress

2. Harm Reduction Kit Distribution and Training Expansion: expand harm reduction efforts by training community partners, offering mobile kit distribution, and integrating harm reduction education into KYC’s youth programming. Trainings will be co-facilitated by people with lived experience and adapted for specific populations, including LGBTQ+ youth, Spanish-speaking residents, and individuals experiencing homelessness.
 - a. Outcome Measures will be based on individual tasks / subprojects under this goal.

Goal	Project	Due Date	Status
2	Expand harm reduction supply distribution by 2 sites by February 2026.	02/2026	Completed 01.09.26
2	Expand Council outreach to underserved areas by April 2026.	04/2026	In Progress
2	Train 5 new partners in trauma-informed harm reduction by June 2026.	06/2026	In Progress

3. Integrated Resource Navigation & Warm Hand-Off Network: formalize partnerships with local emergency departments, jails, shelters, and community-based organizations to implement a warm hand-off model that ensures individuals are not lost between systems. The project will also create a community-facing resource map and toolkit for direct service staff.
 - a. Outcome Measures will be based on individual tasks / subprojects under this goal.

Goal	Project	Due Date	Status
3	Train 15 professionals in trauma-informed referrals by May 2026.	05/2026	In Progress
3	Develop and distribute a referral list with partners by June 2026.	06/2026	Completed 04.13.26

In addition to Outcome Measures as indicated above, progress will be gauged through the annual community needs survey to ensure that the ROSC Council is still addressing identified needs, and its work remains relevant and beneficial to the community.

The 4th Goal focuses on internal council development, to gauge and increase member knowledge and understanding of the Council and its responsibilities.

Goal	Project	Due Date	Status
4	ROSC Coordinator and Project Associates will provide education for members.	09/2026	Planning

An annual ROSC Council survey will also be conducted to obtain feedback from members on the effectiveness of the meetings, the topics to cover, and the activities to engage in for the year that align with the strategic plan.

This plan reflects the Council’s vision and the shared commitment that guides its work: that recovery is possible, support is available, and community strengths help reduce stigma. Partnership, education, lived experience, and continuing engagement are the foundation of the Council and provide support for the service area.

