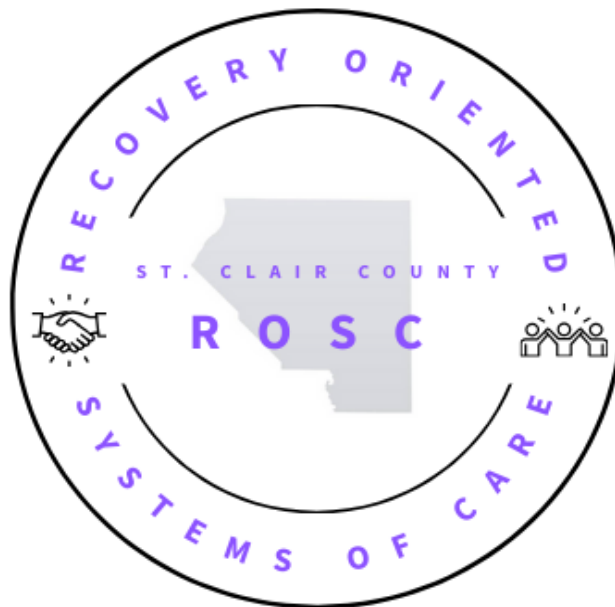


FY26 Strategic Plan

St. Clair County ROSC

Chestnut Health Systems

December 30, 2025



Council Mission: Build and empower recovery ready communities.

Council Vision: A community working together to embrace recovery and connect with those who seek it.

Funded in whole or part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery

Needs Assessment

➤ Community Demographics:

2024 Census.gov	St. Clair
Total Population	257,400
Male	48.40%
Female	51.60%
Population by Age	
Under 5 years	5.20%
5-18 years	22.30%
19-64 years	54%
65 years and older	18.5%
Population by Race	
White	64.40%
Black	30.60%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native	0.40%
Asian	1.60%
Hispanic or Latino	5.20%
Two or more	2.90%
Median Household Income	\$70,178
Persons in Poverty, percent	13.40%

- Overdose data from service area: The ongoing Opioid Epidemic continues to have an impact on the region with most recent reports showing an opioid fatality rate of 22.7 per 100,000 capita in St. Clair County.

➤ Gaps highlighted by FY26 Community Survey:

Since October 2025, lead agency ROSC staff, council members and community partners have gathered information from residents in St. Clair County. Efforts were made to collect data from a variety of communities and individuals, resulting in 556 completed surveys. This data shows gaps in the community's awareness of and access to mental health, substance use, and recovery support services with over 51% of respondents reporting they do not clearly know where to access substance use and mental health services with another 17% reporting being neutral which can also indicate they are unsure of where to access these services. Additionally, only 34% of respondents felt MAR was an effective treatment for substance use and 25% reported knowing where to access MAR services. Another challenge highlighted in the survey data is the community's attitudes and beliefs that result in negative stigma being directed at people who use substances or have mental health problems and need supportive services. While the data shows that around 69% of responders reported feeling that people who use substances deserve respect (showing over 30% feel they do not) and around 76% reported people with a mental illness deserve respect (showing around 24% feel they do not), this still indicates a significant amount of stigma is present in the community.

➤ Qualitative data collected from community members via key informant interviews:

In conducting outreach meetings in the area, many agencies reported on similar challenges.

1. Accessibility and Availability: *"Transportation is a huge barrier, especially for those in rural or underserved neighborhoods."* *"No services for people whose using."* *"Need housing."*
2. Stigma & Awareness: *"People in my community still see recovery as a weakness, so many avoid seeking help."* *"We need more education to normalize mental health and substance use recovery."*

3. Financial & Resource Constraints: *“Even with sliding scales, therapy and medication are still too expensive.” “There aren’t enough trained, patient and caring workers to meet the demand.”*
4. Cultural Relevance: *“The programs don’t reflect our cultural values or language needs.” “It’s hard to open up when staff don’t understand our experiences or current situations.”*

Council Outreach and Communication Plan

Purpose:

- To increase community awareness, effective communication, engagement and support for St. Clair County ROSC (SCCR), work with community stakeholders/council members to help strengthen the efforts for Council/ACTion teams and increase growth for recovery support service.
- Educate the community on substance misuse, reducing stigma and access to resources.
- To provide a framework for future activities and resources that will support the continuing development of recovery support services.

Objectives:

- To build awareness and understanding of recovery plan’s purpose, timelines and benefits to communities.
- Foster trust, transparency, maintain open, two-way communication channels so individuals feel heard and valued in seeking supportive services.
- Ensure outreach efforts reach marginalized and hard-to-reach communities.
- Encourage community-led initiatives that sustain recovery gains.
- Leverage social media presence to generate interest and support for SCCR, i.e. email blasts, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube channels to communicate the ROSC project, benefits, what’s new and council updates. This will allow for additional participation from the community to help build educational campaigns, monthly attendance, and increase project sector participation.

Targeted Audiences:

- From the fifteen sectors identified by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) SCCR has representation on the council from many listed who actively attend community events, meetings and provide on-going support to promote engagement and presence within the communities. Despite this engagement, SCCR has identified four sectors to target to increase awareness/supports: Person with Lived Experience (PLE), Faith-Based Organizations, Volunteer/Civic Organizations, and Media.
 - **PLE:** St. Clair Co ROSC has developed ACTion teams that is comprised of PLE’s, who are encouraged to share their stories of recovery and ways to help reduce stigma related to addiction. Sharing with this group is important because PLEs have first-hand experience in living with or being affected by mental health and substance use, and essential insight into designing effective, inclusive, and equitable health interventions that leave no one behind. Their engagement will improve health outcomes, develop trust, and dignity to achieve positive change.
 - **Faith-Based Organizations:** In the past year, SCCR has built relationships with some local churches who have invited us to attend events, disseminate the community survey, and help to spread awareness re: resources. Sharing with these groups is important because they are

trusted and regarded as a “safe place” for communities, who provide emotional support through programs and initiatives, helping individuals navigate life challenges and reducing feelings of despair. Engaging with faith-based organizations can lead to significant positive outcomes and connection in communities.

- **Volunteer/Civic Organizations:** Currently, SCCR participates in local coalitions, St. Clair Prevention Alliance and the Partnership for Drug Free Communities that share in resources and networking opportunities. Members of these coalitions attend monthly meetings, making connections with stakeholders and collaborating on community outreach initiatives, which increases awareness of the ROSC, council efforts, enhances well-being of communities and a personal fulfillment of social responsibility. Sharing and connecting with these groups is important because active collaboration strengthens processes, ensuring a diverse range of voices and perspectives are heard, which results in community awareness.
- **Media:** Currently, there is limited access to social media presence, however, SCCR plans to engage the council and ACTion teams on how to recruit and establish connections for local media outlets, develop/launch an anti-stigma campaign utilizing local newspapers, social media (such as Facebook) and radio ads. Sharing with this group is critical because media outlets encourage civic participation by highlighting community events and initiatives, motivating individuals to attend and voice their opinions on issues that matter to them.

Information to share with the sectors includes sharing personal stories, local support, treatment options, how to help others, relapse prevention, volunteer’s needs and community events and how their presence and participation can have a meaningful impact. To share this information, SCCR will connect in person by scheduling meetings, using digital platforms (i.e., social media and email), and through engagement at community events (i.e. local events, resource fairs, chamber meetings, etc.).

Key Messages:

- SCCR needs broad representation and knowledge from a variety of community members throughout St. Clair County regardless of income, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, living in an urban or rural area, recovery status, etc. Representation from multiple sectors will create an environment where individuals feel welcomed, respected and included regardless of these differences. This will ensure community/stakeholders, council and ROSC team feel valued and empowered to contribute to the work, as well as broaden the scope and efficacy of the ROSC.

Communication Channels & Frequency:

- SCCR will use email to communicate council and workgroup meeting invites, meeting agendas, meeting summaries, and community/partner agency events and activities (including digital flyers, webinar and training notifications, etc.). All meeting related communication will happen monthly. Ancillary information will be disseminated as appropriate in a timely manner. Facebook will be used to connect with the community at large, share posts relevant to the work of the council, and engage in posts shared by “Friends” that are in alignment with the work of the council. Facebook will be updated weekly at a minimum. SCCR will also communicate and engage targeted sector representatives through community meetings and networking events. Lead agency staff will be responsible for executing the communications.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Currently, lead agency staff are taking points on all aspects of the work. SCCR plans to recruit council members, including PLE's, to engage in roles such as correspondence, someone who will assist in gathering and disseminating information to the council, assist in taking notes during monthly council meetings, etc. SCCR would like to develop a social media team who can assist in the planning and implementation of educational campaigns.

Evaluation & Feedback:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach and communication plan, we will track attendance at monthly council meetings to determine if there is an increase in involvement from underrepresented sections, track engagement on social media (including the number of new "Friends", the number of people interacting with our posts, the number of people sharing content, etc.), and review the plan quarterly with the council to determine if adjustments need to be made.

Goals to address Community Challenges

Goal #1-Year One: Increase awareness of mental health, substance use, and recovery support services, with an emphasis on underserved communities, by promoting or hosting four educational public awareness events by June 30, 2026.

Objectives- Year One:

- Develop and conduct community surveys to determine baseline knowledge by December 30, 2025.
- Analyze survey data to assess gaps in awareness of services and identify priority areas (zip codes) of focus by January 15, 2026.
- Develop a workgroup (comprised of council members, key stakeholders, peers, etc.) that will meet monthly to drive planning and implementation of educational campaigns/events to promote awareness by September 30, 2025.
- Conduct at least 25 key informant interviews to gain perspective on needs, progress and strengths in promotion of local services by March 31, 2026.
- Develop social media page (Facebook) and update once per week to share and promote mental health, substance use, and recovery support messaging and educational events by September 30, 2025.
- Develop plans, messaging, and host or co-host four educational public awareness events with one event occurring during each quarter (by September, December, March, June) of the fiscal year, June 30, 2026.

Progress Achieved:

- Community Survey was developed and approved by August 30, 2025, and surveys were collected through December 15, 2025.
- ROSC council workgroup was proposed and developed during monthly council meetings and have started meeting monthly.
- Scheduled and met with over 20 community partners to learn about available services, discuss gaps and strengths they see in their area.
- Created a St. Clair County ROSC Facebook page.
- Collaborated with a community partner (Soulcial Kitchen) to host the first community educational and resource promotion event.

Next Steps:

- Continue planning and development of upcoming community education/promotion of service events.
- Continue key informant interviews to gather additional insights and evaluate impact current efforts to increase awareness of services.
- Build presence on social media, including increasing the number of contacts (friends) and regularly posting content relevant to the established goals.
- Continue to recruit workgroup (and council) membership and active participation to help drive planning and implementation of the work.

Outcome/Output Measures:

- Collected 555 surveys.
- Connected with over 20 community members and stakeholders to gather information and insights.
- Facilitated 6 council meetings where this goal was discussed and 3 specific workgroup meetings have been held so far.
- Since the development of the Facebook page 37 “Friends” have been made.

Goal #1 Three-year: To address gaps in awareness of mental health, substance abuse, and recovery support services, SCCR will increase community knowledge of services available by hosting or co-hosting 12 educational public awareness events and increase awareness of how to access services by 10% each of the next three years for a total increase of 30% by June 30, 2028.

Objectives:

- Yearly, develop, host, or co-host four educational public awareness events informed by the community survey data to promote available services and resources.
- Yearly, create and disseminate messaging to promote each educational public awareness event.
- Monthly, engage the council ACTION team to drive planning, promotion, and execution of events.
- Yearly, conduct four focus groups to review effectiveness of events held.
- Yearly, conduct community surveys to collect data on community awareness.

Outcome Measures:

- Number of educational public awareness events hosted or co-hosted.
- Number of messaging campaigns to promote events conducted.
- Number of ACTION team meetings held.
- Focus group feedback results/summaries.
- Increase of awareness of services reported in community surveys.

Goal #2-Year One: Release 6 stigma-reduction campaign messages to reduce stigma connected to the use of Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR) and harm reduction services by June 30, 2026.

Objectives for Year 1:

- Outreach and meet with local MAR and harm reduction (such as local Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution-OEND) teams to learn about current services and current levels and types of stigmas their participants experience by September 30, 2025.
- Conduct at least 25 key informant interviews to gain perspective on perceived and experienced stigma in the community by March 31, 2026.
- Research, attend training/webinars to learn about current harm reduction policies to gain a better understanding of what is available and what is not available or permitted at this time by September 30, 2025.
- Develop a workgroup (comprised of council members, key stakeholders, peers, etc.) that will meet monthly to drive planning and implementation of stigma-reduction campaign by September 30, 2025.

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- Analyze survey data to assess attitudes about people who use substances and MAR services by January 15, 2026.
- Develop (workgroup) 6 draft campaign messages: including social media posts, digital flyers, physical presence at events by February 1, 2026.
- Review campaigns with the council and at least 1 focus group (outside of the council) by February 28, 2026.
- Release campaign messaging monthly through June 2026.

Progress Achieved:

- Met with local MAR and harm reduction providers to learn about their current efforts to provide MAR, naloxone, drug testing strips, and other resources by September 30, 2025.
- Community Survey was developed and approved by August 30, 2025, and surveys were collected through December 15, 2025.
- ROSC council workgroup was proposed and developed during monthly council meetings and started meeting monthly, on July 16, 2025.
- Scheduled and met with over 20 community partners to learn about the perspectives and experiences with stigma.
- Created a St. Clair County ROSC Facebook page (find us by searching St. Clair County ROSC)

Next Steps:

- Analyze survey data to discover current attitudes associated with MAR and harm reduction.
- Use survey data zip codes to identify where to target messaging.
- Finalize the development of messaging and begin to implement the plans for the campaigns.

Outcome/Output Measures:

- Collected 555 surveys.
- Connected with over 20 community members and stakeholders to gather information and insights.
- Facilitated 6 council meetings where this goal was discussed and 3 specific workgroup meetings have been held so far.
- Since the development of the Facebook page 37 “Friends” are following who can promote/share when to social media campaign is launched.

Goal #2 Three-Year: To address the stigma connected to harm reduction and use of MAR services, SCCR will host or co-host an educational public awareness event once a quarter, totaling 12 events, and see a 10% reduction in reported stigma each year, by June 30, 2028.

Objectives:

- Yearly, develop, host, or co-host four educational public awareness events informed by the community survey data.
- Yearly, create and disseminate messaging to promote each educational public awareness event.
- Monthly, engage the council ACTION team to drive planning, promotion, and execution of events.
- Yearly, conduct four focus groups to review effectiveness of events held.
- Yearly, conduct community surveys to collect data on stigma.

Outcome Measures:

- Number of educational public awareness events hosted or co-hosted.
- Number of messaging campaigns to promote events conducted.
- Number of ACTION team meetings held.
- Focus group feedback results/summaries.
- Reduction of stigma reported in community surveys.