



The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

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Serving and Representing: Port Morris, Mott Haven and Melrose



VANESSA L. GIBSON
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

CLARISA M. ALAYETO
CHAIRPERSON

ANTHONY R. JORDAN
DISTRICT MANAGER

March 10th, 2025

Honorable Rafael Salamanca
NYC Councilmember 17th District
1070 Southern Boulevard
Bronx, NY 10459

Honorable Diana Ayala
NYC Deputy Speaker/NYC Councilmember 8th District
214 St. Ann's Avenue
Bronx, NY 10454

Dear Councilmember Salamanca & Deputy Speaker Ayala:

Despite having approximately 25 substance abuse treatment providers within Community Board 1, our streets and public spaces continue to be overwhelmed by the visible impacts of addiction—ranging from illicit drug use to discarded paraphernalia—and the crisis is only escalating with arrests, overdoses, and overdose deaths. The current approach fails to effectively protect our community by supporting those in need. We are also witnessing ongoing arrests, record numbers of overdoses, and overdose deaths,¹ indicating that the current approach is not working.

There is ample evidence that we cannot arrest ourselves out of a health crisis. This community still feels the negative impact of the “War on Drugs.” We ask that history does not repeat itself. However, we have real concerns about the capacity and funding of existing organizations to advance effective strategies that reduce visible disorder and support our neighbors' treatment process.

We do not want any additional treatment providers in our community. However, several community-based and otherwise directly impacted person-led, dynamic organizations addressing substance use presented to the Health and Human Services Committee of Community Board 1. ***We've been impressed by On Point NYC, St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction, Bronx Opioid Collective, and Acacia Network,*** which conduct street outreach, needle clean-up, peer support, mental health counseling, ongoing case management, medication-assisted treatment, housing, and employment services. These groups often collaborate closely, communicating about hotspots, coordinating service provision, and building trust over time with our unhoused community to encourage treatment. We must

¹ “In 2023, residents of Hunts Point-Mott Haven, CrotonaTremont, Highbridge-Morrisania, East Harlem, and Fordham-Bronx Park had the highest rates [of overdose deaths] as was the case in 2021, and 2022.” NYC Health EPI Data Brief. “[Unintentional Drug Poisoning \(Overdose\) Deaths in New York City in 2023](#)” October 2024. Accessed Jan. 30, 2025.

acknowledge that people need consistent contact with treatment providers over a period of time before a substantial change occurs. There are no quick fixes to addiction and mental health treatment.

Therefore, we are asking for a commitment to funding our community. **The groups listed above face two key challenges that require additional funding to address:**

1. **They do not have the funds to do street outreach 24/7 and**
2. **Staffing to dedicate a team to certain hotspots.**

Public drug use is rampant overnight, leaving our parks and playgrounds littered with dangerous materials in the mornings. These organizations need additional investment to increase staffing and engage with individuals overnight and on weekends to keep our community safe for everyone.

Additionally, as budget season approaches, **we urge you to require all treatment providers who receive any government funding be required and funded to collect syringes.**

Furthermore, we appreciate the recent \$6M investment in the Bronx Recovery Center at Lincoln Hospital² to increase access to substance use treatment. These community-based organizations are critical to the successful handoff to this new center. Lastly, we encourage the you to consider long-term solutions that can improve the quality of life in our community, such as **more mobile units for service providers, increased access to mental and medical health services, a respite center to give people a place to go, or a feasibility assessment for an overdose prevention center, which has had incremental success in Harlem and Washington Heights.**

All our elected officials can be more forward-thinking in their approaches, and we know that the skillset, experience, and knowledge already exist in CB1. We are only asking that the organizations already doing the work in CB1 receive further investment and responsibility to do more. We do not want any new organizations. We have plenty.

In Service,



Clarisa M. Alayeto
Chairperson



Marilyn Pena
Committee Chair of Health & Human Services



Dalourny Nemorin
Committee Chair of Policy & Legislation

² "Bronx Invests \$6M in New Opioid Recovery Center." NYC Newswire, 18 Oct. 2024, <https://nycnewswire.com/news/bronx-invests-6m-new-opioid-recovery-center>. Accessed Jan. 30, 2025.