

Harm Reduction Vending Machine a ‘success’ in Medina



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Published: Aug. 12, 2025 at 5:25 PM EDT|Updated: Aug. 12, 2025 at 7:33 PM EDT

MEDINA, Ohio (WOIO) - A free vending machine at Hope Recovery Community is open 24 hours a day is filled with life-saving overdose prevention drugs and hygiene products, a first in Medina County.

First opened in May, the vending machine dispensed 385 items in the first three months it was open.

The vending machine is outside the front doors of Hope Recovery located in the breezeway to encourage all those who need it to take advantage.

“Sometimes just a door is a huge barrier and we want to keep people alive long enough for them to figure out what recovery might look for them just to keep them safe, reduce disease, and minimize the consequence,” said Stefanie Robinson of Hope Recovery Community, a nonprofit focused on peer support helping people find recovery.

The vending machine has items like life-saving Naloxone, the generic of Narcan, communicable disease prevention items, basic hygiene products, and brochures for how people can find resources that best fit their needs.

Robinson says locating the vending machine just outside of Hope Recovery has also helped people seek the nonprofit’s assistance as well.

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“Now we’re hearing people that are coming a few times and then maybe they come in the door, it just takes a few times or maybe they never do. But they’re able to minimize harm, and we’re like, that’s we all win there. It’s just a matter of a way to love people exactly where they’re at,” said Robinson.

The Medina County Health Department funds the vending machine and restocks it each month.

“These items are going to meet someone’s immediate needs. This isn’t going to fix all of their problems, but it’s going to fix their needs that day. It’s going to provide the hygiene resources, the resource packets to get them to that next day,” said Stephanie Young, the Medina County Health Dept. Nursing Director.

The area with the vending machine also offers free locally-grown produce as well.

The health department is actively looking to add another harm reduction vending machine in Medina County soon.

Hope Recovery Community’s vending machine is located at 200 Highland Drive in Medina.