

Boston University Researchers to Evaluate the Intersection between Suicide and Opioid Use

Boston, MA, April 17, 2019—Boston University School of Social Work's (BUSSW) Center for Innovation in Social Work & Health (CISWH) has launched a new research project focused on preventing suicide among people who use opioids.

“Research shows that opioid use disorders have a distinctly strong relationship with suicide as compared with other substance use disorders,” said [Bronwyn Keefe](#), PhD, MSW, MPH, research assistant professor at BUSSW and principal investigator for the project. “This project will allow us to learn more about the intersection between opioid use and suicidality with a goal of preparing the workforce to better serve this population and prevent further deaths by suicide.”

Funded by a \$65,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the project will create a suicide and overdose prevention needs assessment for agencies that provide opioid treatment across Massachusetts. The project team, consisting of Dr. Keefe; [Jordana Muroff](#), PhD, MSW, associate professor at BUSSW; [Deborah Chassler](#), MSW, senior academic researcher; and Collier Brown, MSW student, will conduct interviews with key informants around the state and survey recovery coaches, peers, and other frontline staff to determine where gaps in training exist. Based on the assessment, the team will provide recommendations on how to best prepare workers who support those at risk for opioid overdose and suicidality.