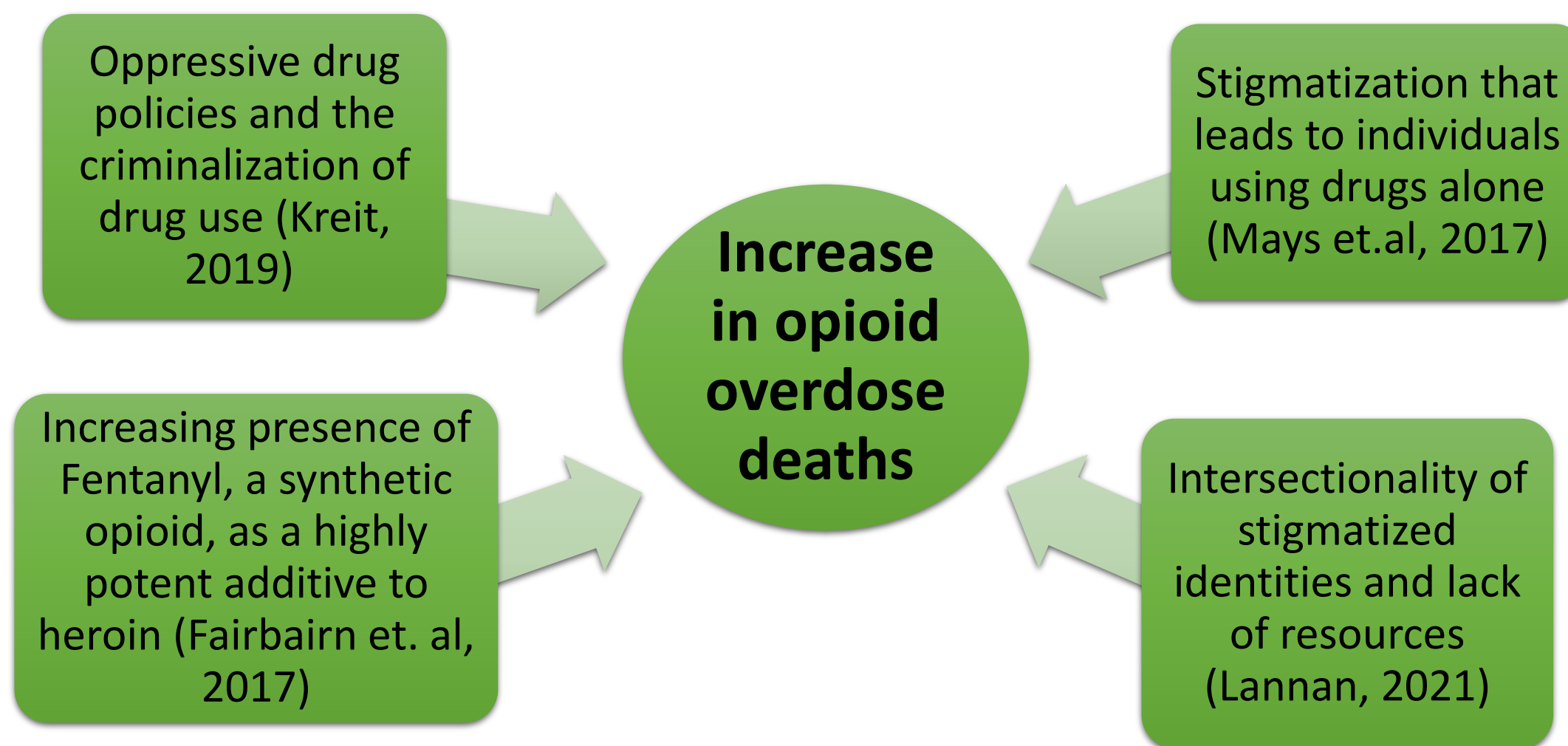


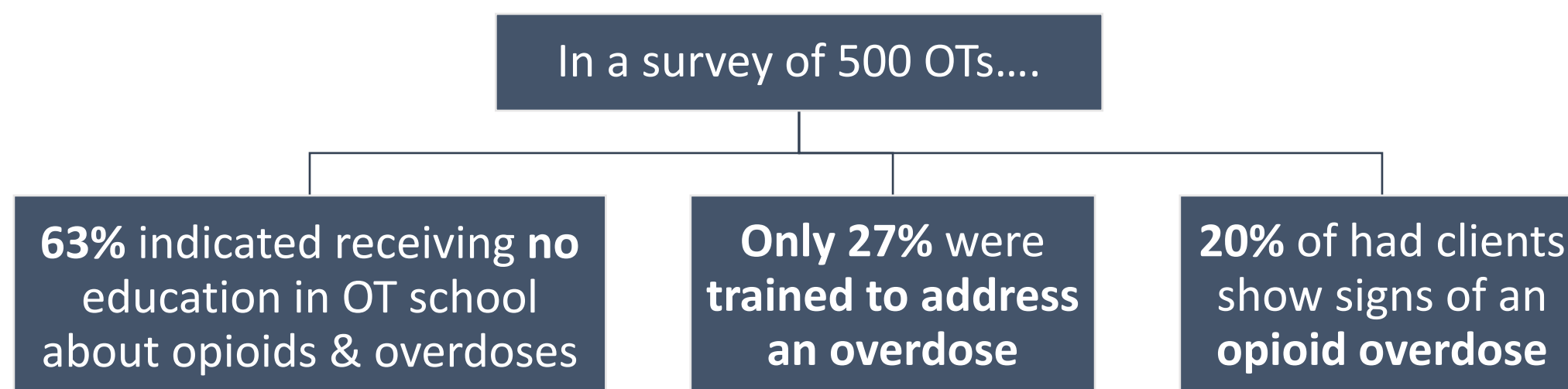
## Background & Significance

**Scope of the Problem:** The US Department of Public Health has identified a significant rise in opioid overdose deaths across the United States. In 2021 alone, there were **2,290 confirmed opioid deaths in Massachusetts** (Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2022).

### Potential Contributors to Increase in Opioid Overdoses



**Challenges to access of care:** Individuals who use drugs often demonstrate avoidance of healthcare resources due to perceived discrimination and stigmatization by providers (Mays et. al, 2017). Lack of healthcare provider knowledge impacts how people who use drugs engage in healthcare.



(McCombie & Stirling, 2017)

Substance use has **subjective meaning for each individual** and varies based on the person and the substance. As OTs, it is important to **understand the personal meaning** of the occupation of substance use so as to provide client-centered care (Kiepek et. al, 2022).

## Methods: Journalistic Inquiry & Policy Analysis

### OT Practitioner Interviews



➤ Three OTs who work(ed) in the field of substance use engaged in an anonymous interview to highlight the supports and barriers to client goal attainment.

### Structured Literature Review



➤ 24 articles were reviewed related to the topic of substance use, stigmatization, healthcare utilization, and efficacy of overdose prevention sites.

### Podcast



➤ 8 multidisciplinary stakeholders participated in a podcast interview that discussed aspects of stigmatization in addiction supports and the impact on healthcare professionals.

### Policy Implications Report



➤ Report compiled to demonstrate the impact of overdose prevention site implementation on OT practice using interview themes and results from literature review.

## Podcast Launch

**Podcast Goals:**

- Promote cultural humility
- Increase understanding of the impact stigma has for this population
- Education on complexity of substance use as an occupation
- Increase perceived self-efficacy in serving this client population

### Podcast Episodes and Interviewees

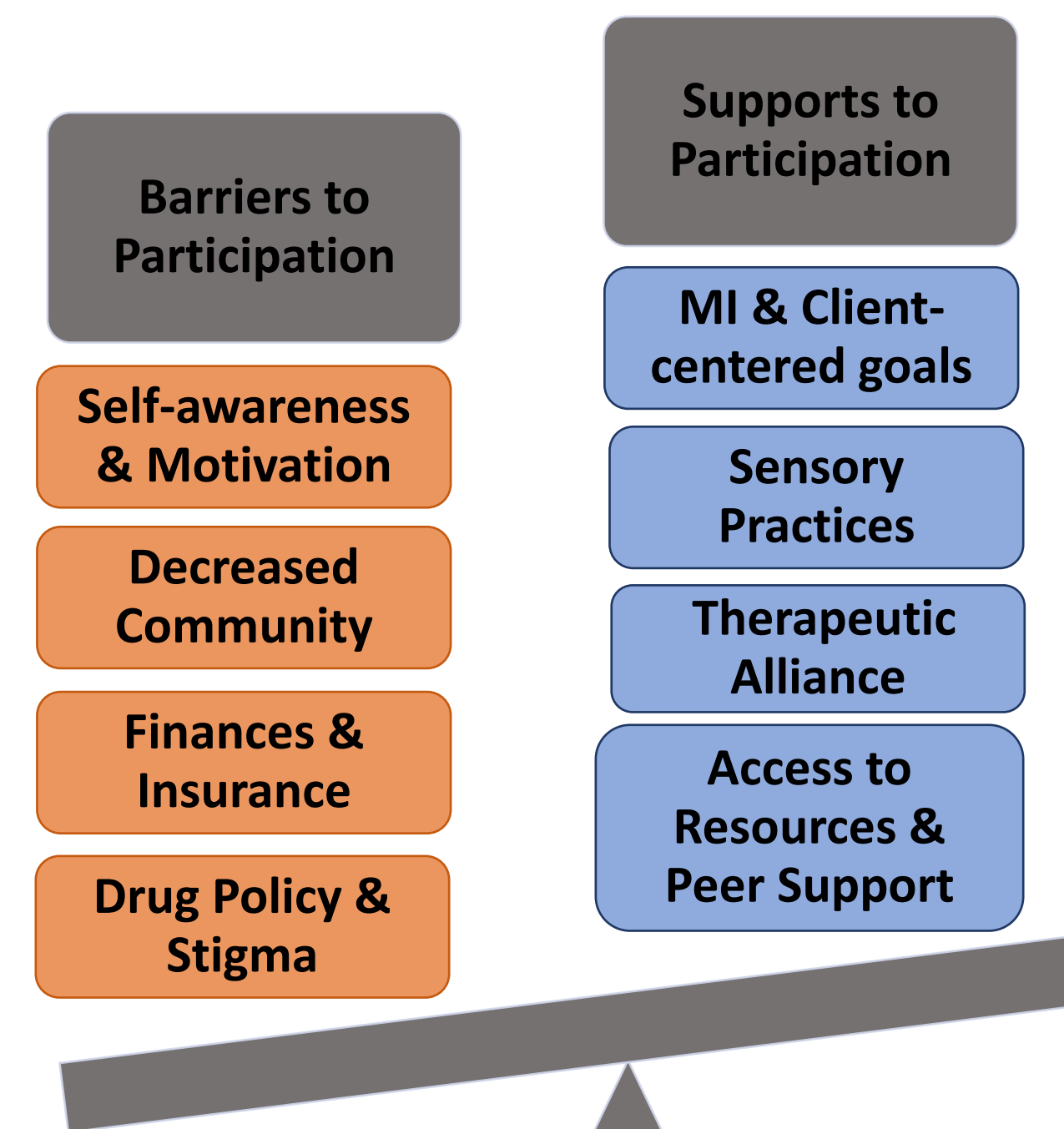
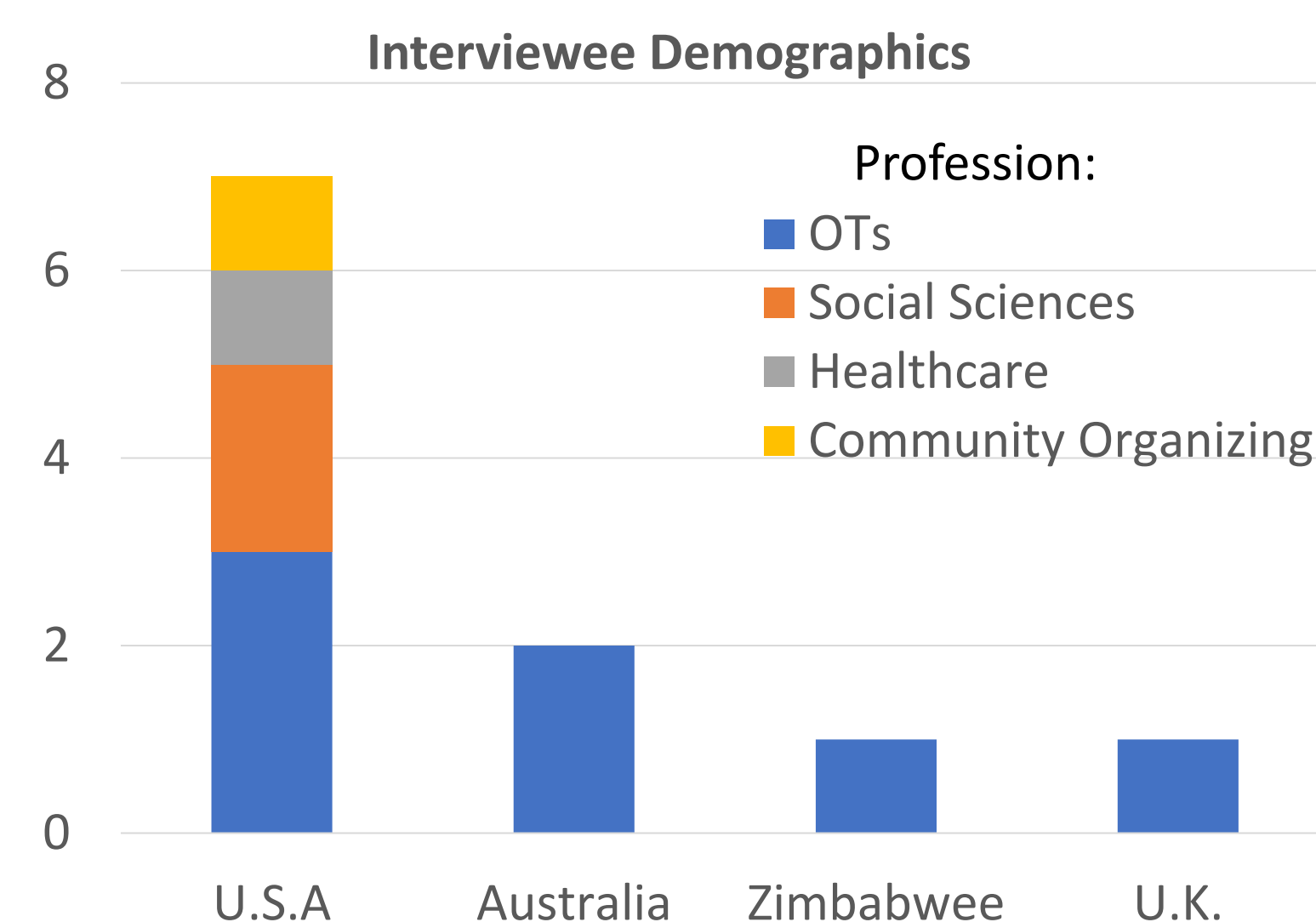
<b>Ep. 1:</b> Welcome to Occupations Unpacked!	<b>Ep. 2:</b> Substance Use is an Occupation <b>Karina Sanson-Fisher</b>	<b>Ep. 3:</b> Stigmatization & Healthcare: How We View Substances Matters <b>Dr. Avik Chatterjee</b>	<b>Ep. 4:</b> Expanding Knowledge of Addiction Supports: Medication Assisted Treatment <b>Mora Lucero</b>
<b>Ep. 5:</b> Sensory Practices for the Empowerment of People who use Drugs <b>Michelle Taylor</b>	<b>Ep. 6:</b> How Policy Impacts Practice: Implications for People who use Drugs <b>Dr. Erin Madden</b>	<b>Ep. 7:</b> Overdose Prevention Centers: Community Centered Care at NYC's OnPoint <b>Sam Rivera</b>	<b>Ep. 8:</b> Trauma Informed Care for People who use Drugs <b>Dr. Amy Lynch</b>
		<b>Ep. 9:</b> Where Do We Go From Here? Advocacy and Next Steps <b>Tay Amin-Arsala</b>	

Podcast Access



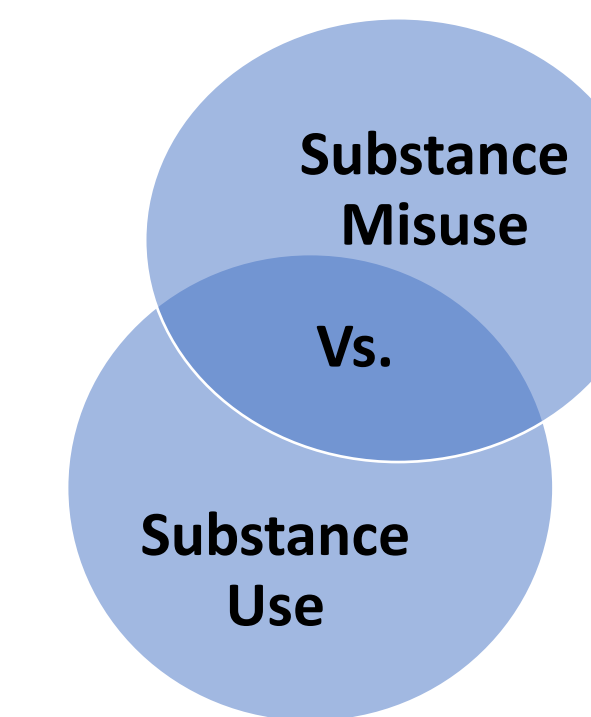
## Interview Themes

- ❖ 11 multi-disciplinary stakeholders participated in key interviews — 8 of which appeared in a publicized podcast episode.
- ❖ Interviews were semi-structured, lasted ~45 minutes to an hour, and recorded via Zoom to be edited on Audacity.
- ❖ Episodes of the podcast was streamed in 5 continents, 15 countries, over **580** times as of April 15<sup>th</sup> 2023. Listener population varied from 18-60+ years old.



- ✓ **3 out of 11** interviewees identified the need for more OTs in substance use.
- ✓ **9 out of 11** interviewees identified the need for more research, innovation, and assessments for this field.
- ✓ **11 out of 11** participants emphasized the importance of decreasing stigma around substance use.

## Discussion



- Interviewees brought up the importance in understanding the difference between substance use and substance misuse—which emphasizes *that substance use does not always mean someone is misusing or abusing substances.*
- Substance use is an occupation and OTs need to understand the personal, societal, and political factors that impact a client who engages in use.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use is not a specialty—**ALL** OTs need to be knowledgeable given the current climate.

➤ Drug laws were enacted for the purpose of being stigmatizing and impacts both **condition stigma & intervention stigma** of both healthcare professionals and the general public.

➤ Current policy criminalizes substance use and impairs recovery of which interferes with client goal attainment

➤ Stigmatization of drug use has an impact on client **quality of life, access to resources, employment opportunities, and access to healthcare.**

➤ **OTs are valuable advocates** in this setting to promote positive healthcare outcomes and the promotion of client-centered practice using a *strengths-based lens, motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, sensory practices, and life skill development around goal-setting.*

### Types of Stigma

Condition Stigma	Intervention Stigma
Discriminatory or prejudice beliefs/behaviors of someone based on their medical condition, in this case, substance use disorder	Discriminatory beliefs or actions that is not based in the client's behavior, but in the type of intervention they use such as overdose prevention sites or medication assisted therapy.

(Madden, 2019)

## Implications & Future Direction

### OT Recommendations:

- ❑ Further research into occupations that are outside the binary frameworks of health promoting or health deprecating
- ❑ Increased presence of OTs in substance use field
- ❑ Acknowledgement by AOTA/ACOTE on the importance of understanding substance use as an occupation and the integration of this concept into OT education standards.

### Societal and Political Recommendations:

- ❑ Repeal of the federal Anti-drug Abuse Act of 1986, pejoratively known as the "crackhouse statute" the prevents overdose prevention sites from being opened and financed without potential criminal charges.
- ❑ Reduction of intervention stigma within healthcare demonstrated by increased provider acceptance of evidence-based models of recovery that are not abstinence based (i.e., overdose prevention sites).

### Acknowledgement:

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### References:

