Outreach Winterization and COVID-19 Strategies

Plan for cold and inclement weather before the season begins
- Strategize with staff on alternate outreach solutions, staffing during bad weather, and the conditions for shutting down outreach
- Talk to participants about if and how their use changes with the winter so that outreach tactics can be adapted

Develop and keep a consistent outreach schedule
- Dependability helps participants to know where to find your services, even in bad weather
- A fixed schedule can help participants plan for limiting exposure to severe temperatures

Employ multiple tactics to notify participants of closures, location changes, or modifications to supply allotments, etc.
- Social media, text blasts, email, pre-recorded phone messages
- Post outreach schedules, inclement weather policies, and alternate locations/solutions (if applicable) where participants can easily access them
- Package notices with supply bundles

If supply allows, give participants 2-3 times the amount of supplies ahead of bad weather to limit participant burden
- Discuss with participants a winter weather plan to lessen overdose risk and how to make supplies last
- Provide suggestions on how to utilize household supplies for wound care, sterile supplies, etc. as alternative solutions if participant supplies run out

Partner with mutual aid programs to add harm reduction supplies to their offerings
- Have staff join mobile food delivery staff on a run to give supplies and discuss harm reduction strategies
- Offer to have free food giveaway at your location to meet more participant needs
- If a program will not allow supplies to be given, ask if they will allow information leaflets to be given
Sponsor a clothing drive for winter gear
  o Hold one large drive to collect all items at once or do several small drives for specific items
    ▪ Ex. A drive just for socks, gloves, hats, etc.
  o Keep items at a fixed site for participant pickup or leave items at specific locations in the community

Map encampments, track how often outreach is visiting those locations
  o Encampments can be hard to find and easily overlooked areas of the community
  o The needs of encampments can look different than the participants typically seen
  o Tracking locations and encampment needs will help to ensure that they are not being over- or under-saturated with harm reduction supplies

Think outside the box
  o Create a QR code for participants to order supplies
  o Make an online supply order form to limit cold weather exposure for both staff and participants
  o Try creative ways to stay connected to your participants, see what works and what does not
    ▪ The only risk you take is not trying at all

Get creative with COVID-19 funds, when allowed
  o Possible ideas are hand warmers, outdoor heaters, etc.