

Building a Healthier Milwaukee: David Crowley's Vision and Samad's House Help Reduce Overdose Deaths

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley links compassionate harm reduction services, like naloxone and fentanyl testing, to preventing overdoses & saving lives

MILWAUKEE, WI, UNITED STATES,
November 12, 2025 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley, a trailblazing leader with an unwavering commitment to preventing overdose deaths, has set a bold and audacious

goal: to make Milwaukee County the healthiest in America. He spearheads a movement rooted in innovative, compassionate, and evidence-driven public health strategies. At a sold-out screening of the PBS Independent Lens documentary "[Coming Home](#)," Crowley highlighted the county's groundbreaking harm reduction services as a cornerstone to making progress.

“

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*Milwaukee County Executive
David Crowley*

“The key to achieving this vision is meeting residents where they are—with dignity, respect, and practical solutions,” [Crowley declared in video remarks](#) at the No Studios event on October 23. He also cited the need for broader equity to address the historic health, economic, employment, and other disparities plaguing communities of color in Milwaukee.

Under Crowley's leadership, Milwaukee County has invested millions of dollars from opioid settlement funds into prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives. These efforts include supporting local organizations like Samad's House (www.samadshouse.org), a leading sober living facility for women and harm reduction hub founded by Tahira Malik. Her extraordinary journey from addiction and incarceration to



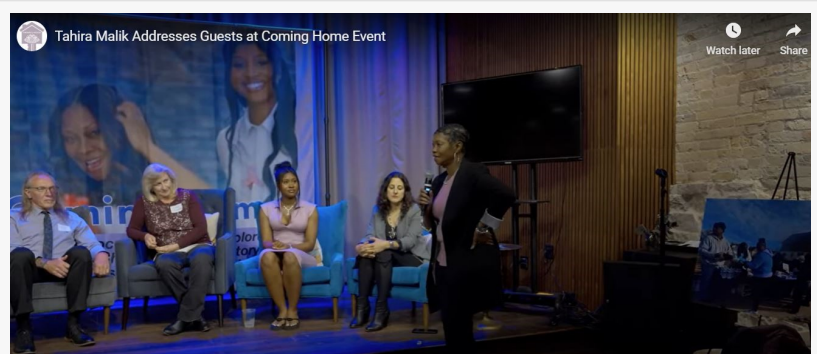
Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley

community leader is the focus of *Coming Home*, a powerful documentary that chronicles her mission to empower women and save lives.

The screening event, which raised critical funds for Samad's House, was a testament to the civic and community support for preventing overdose deaths, which disproportionately affect Milwaukee Black communities, despite similar drug usage with other demographics. It featured heartfelt speeches, a lively panel discussion, and a call to action for continued support for harm reduction services. Panelists, including Malik, her daughter Samia Harris, director/producer Joanna Rudnick, and harm reduction advocate Dennis Radloff, tackled pressing issues such as intergenerational healing, overcoming stigma around drug use, and ensuring resources reach the communities most impacted by overdose deaths.

Other speakers included Malik and Milwaukee Fire Chief Aaron Lipski. His Milwaukee fire stations provide free HOPE Kits to the public containing two doses of naloxone nasal spray, fentanyl test strips, a CPR face shield, and resource information cards. Lipski also oversees the Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative, which sends counselors and emergency medical personnel to visit individuals the day after they suffer non-fatal drug overdoses to provide peer support, naloxone, and other harm reduction resources.

In his remarks, Crowley highlighted the importance of data in Milwaukee County's public health



Tahira Malik addresses guests at the event.



Tahira Malik with her daughters at the event.



Guests enjoy dinner at the screening event.

"We've installed harm reduction vending machines across the county to make it even easier to access free harm reduction supplies, like fentanyl testing strips," he said. "And our overdose dashboard makes data transparent and publicly accessible to all community organizations with the decision-making tools to guide their work."

"They are lifelines," he said. "These efforts have contributed to a 30% decline in opioid overdose deaths in Milwaukee County in 2024 compared to 2023. But we know that there's still more work for us to do by providing treatment, harm reduction tools, education, and resources. Samad's House is empowering women to maintain their sobriety and rebuild their lives with both dignity and strength, and with your support, we'll keep saving lives and building a healthier, more compassionate Milwaukee County."

Further, Malik cited Jeremy Triblett, the prevention and integration manager at Milwaukee County's Behavioral Health Division, as instrumental to launching Samad's House in 2020.

"When we first started our journey on harm reduction, he was there," she recalled. "He saw that

Voices of the Front Lines
PODCAST



HOSTED BY
TAHIRA MALIK
SAMAD'S HOUSE FOUNDER



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we were serious about providing hope to the community. He knew that when I said to him, 'I'm tired of losing my loved ones to drugs. I'm tired because everybody I hung out with. So many loved ones I lost to drug overdose.'

Meanwhile, Crowley thanked the guests for attending the event and supporting Samad's House.

"Your presence tonight speaks volumes about your commitment to our community," he said. "Thank you for being here and for standing up with us in this crucial work. And thank you to Tahira and Samad's House for inspiring, uplifting, educating, and saving the lives of so many of our neighbors. We've seen what's possible when the community comes together. More families find hope...more of our neighbors will come home. Together, we are making a difference."

(For media interviews with Tahira Malik, contact Michael Frisby at mike@frisbyassociates.com or 202-625-4328.)

About Samad's House

Samad's House is a sober living home for women recovering from addiction. Samad's House is also a solution-based harm reduction organization that educates communities, emphasizing that everyone has the ability to save lives by learning the proper use of naloxone and fentanyl test strips. To learn more details on how you can support Samad's House, please visit www.samadshouse.org. Please find us on LinkedIn. Tune into our Voices of the Front Lines podcast, available at www.samadshouse.org, on [Amazon Music](#), and other major podcast platforms.

Michael K. Frisby
Frisby & Associates
+1 202-625-4328

[email us here](#)

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