

AN INITIATIVE AIMED AT BUILDING CAPACITY IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE STIGMA-FREE CARE TO PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS.

Flanigan CA¹, Lloyd D¹, Hastings S¹, Ellendon N¹, Mason SM¹, Curry R¹, De Sanctis Johnson C¹, Cotroneo R¹

¹New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute

Background: Access to quality healthcare is a basic human right for all, including people who use drugs (PWUD). Stigma creates significant barriers to the delivery of essential prevention and health care services for PWUD.

Description of model of care/intervention: The year-long Drug User Health Capacity Building Initiative (DUHCBI) is designed to build capacity within health care organizations to deliver stigma free care to PWUD. Participating organizations conducted the following activities six months before and after the initiative: Staff Assessment (SA) to measure staff attitudes towards caring for PWUD; Organizational Assessment (OA) of the policies and practices for providing services to PWUD; Patient Satisfaction Survey (PSS) to assess patient feelings and experiences about staff within the organization. Organizations also participated in monthly webinars and attended two in-person meetings to build knowledge and share best practices.

Effectiveness: Across the 11 participating organizations, 482 SA, 324 PSS and 11 OA were completed pre-initiative. Post-initiative data are being collected and will be available at the conference.

At the final in-person meeting, participants shared the following organizational changes, as a result of participating in the DUHCBI: increased institutional leadership support for services for PWUD, newly developed clinical resources and trainings focused on reducing stigma; revisions to policies to address stigma and the need for trauma informed care; expanded access to buprenorphine; changes to language to be person-centered and inclusive of PWUD; installation of syringe disposal containers in public bathrooms; and the creation of a Consumer Advisory Board giving PWUD meaningful roles in organizational planning.

Conclusion and next steps: There is a lack of evidence-based interventions to reduce stigma associated with drug use in health care settings. The DUHCBI serves as a model to enhance capacity in health care organizations to provide equitable health care services. The DUHCBI is expanding to include additional health care organizations.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: The authors have nothing to disclose. No industry funding was used to support this initiative.