

**Center for Care Innovations - *Addiction Treatment Starts Here***  
*Learning Network*  
Request for Applications (RFA)

### **Overview of Opportunity**

The Center for Care Innovations (CCI) is releasing a Request for Application (RFA) for the Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Network. The Learning Network is an 18-month initiative that offers continued support to alumni of CCI's previous addiction treatment learning collaboratives: Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net and Addiction Treatment Starts Here. The Learning Network will begin in March 2021 and conclude in August 2022.

The Learning Network is peer-led and will offer virtual and in-person learning opportunities, access to site visits and peer groups, coaching, and other technical assistance. Combined, we anticipate these efforts will enable teams to continue to refine their programs and expand medication assisted treatment (MAT) services to new sites and new populations. The Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Network is funded through the State Opioid Response grant as part of the MAT Expansion Project from the California Department of Health Care Services.

### **Learning Network Background**

Over the last five years, CCI designed and led two programs—Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net and Addiction Treatment Starts Here—focused on expanding access to treatment for people with opioid use disorder (OUD). Combined, these programs supported more than 70 primary care health centers in California with designing new or expanding existing MAT programs. MAT includes FDA-approved medications for OUD: -methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone.

Participants in these two programs were successful in improving access to MAT for their patients and enhancing their infrastructure to identify and treat substance use disorder (SUD). Combined, the programs increased the number of active MAT prescribers by 150 providers -- equivalent to more than the two active prescribers per participating clinic. In addition, the programs resulted in a combined increase of more than 2,000 patients receiving MAT. Many

participants doubled or tripled the number of patients accessing MAT for their OUD.

Central to this success was the creation of learning communities which offered a structured forum to develop new capabilities, share best practices, and discuss lessons learned. CCI seeks to build on this success through a MAT Learning Network. This Request for Application (RFA) is for the **Learning Network**. To view the RFA for the Learning Collaborative, visit

<https://www.careinnovations.org/atsh-2020/learning-collaborative/>

### *Learning Network*

Recognizing that sites with mature MAT programs can benefit from continued peer learning, CCI created an 18-month Learning Network for previous Addiction Treatment Starts Here and Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net teams. The goal is to provide additional peer support to participants. In lieu of grants to participants, CCI is creating a peer-led environment that will offer an array technical assistance and support to:

- Expand access to MAT and create sustainable models for ongoing MAT program expansion.
- Address emerging issues in caring for patients with OUD specifically, and SUD more generally.
- Develop new program capabilities through peer sharing.
- Problem solve around shared challenges.
- Learn promising practices from exemplar sites.

The Learning Network will serve as a continuation of the journey that teams began in Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net or Addiction Treatment Starts Here. It will focus on learning, sharing best practices, and taking action and is an opportunity to expand and elevate the MAT work undertaken thus far.

The Learning Network is funded through a grant from the California Department of Health Care Services as part of its [portfolio of projects](#) addressing the opioid crisis. Combined, these projects are known as the California MAT Expansion Project and are administered under the umbrella of California's State Opioid Response grant. The MAT Expansion Project has supported more than 30 initiatives, with the collective aim of increasing access to MAT, reducing unmet treatment need, and reducing opioid overdose related deaths through the

provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery activities. More information on California MAT Expansion Projects is available [here](#).

The Learning Network doesn't offer grant funding directly to participants. Instead, it focuses on peer exchange and technical assistance as a means of growing and improving MAT programs.

## **Program Components**

The Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Network offers a mechanism for clinics with mature MAT programs to continue to refine and expand these programs to new sites and new populations. Its focus will be on sharing and spreading ideas and best practices among peers — not didactic teaching from experts.

### *Curriculum*

We outline below the types of content we anticipate addressing throughout the 18-month Learning Network. Topics were identified over the course of Addiction Treatment Starts Here, and in interviews and analysis conducted after work was completed. As we gain insight into the interest areas and needs of the Network, we will adapt the curriculum. We anticipate addressing:

- Developing a MAT model for the future, given COVID-19 and the pandemic's constraints on in-person visits.
- Tools and approaches to address stimulant use disorder.
- Managing co-occurring substance use, such as alcohol, methamphetamine, cocaine, tobacco, and/or benzodiazepine use.
- Refining care team roles, including drug and alcohol counselors, care managers, behavioral health therapists, and others.
- Expanding services for pregnant patients and youth.
- Addressing issues related to stigma, bias, and health equity.
- Identifying patients through adopting improved inreach and outreach strategies.
- Harm reduction.
- Trauma-informed care.
- Creating a sustainable staff onboarding and orientation structure that provides ongoing training for providers and staff.

- Building partnerships to promote collaboration across care transition points, such as with acute care hospitals with emergency departments, sobering centers, and behavioral health providers.
- Creating linkages to community organizations to address social risk factors.

### *Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Network Activities*

The Learning Network will include a mix of activities that have proven effective in enabling teams to refine MAT programs and services.

- Learning Session: One in-person learning session will be offered (attendance is optional). The learning session may be offered virtually if pandemic-related regulations prevent large in-person gatherings.
- Topical Webinars: Quarterly 90-minute webinars led by peers and experts. Teams may also access webinars offered by the Learning Collaborative that address topics of interest.
- Office Hours: Access to periodic office hours with Addiction Treatment Starts Here coaches (office hours will be either monthly or quarterly, depending on demand).
- Peer Groups: Access to virtual forums for prescribers, nurses (including RNs, LVNs, and medical assistants), and SUD counselors.
- Site Visits: Option to learn from sites with mature MAT programs. Site visits are likely to include virtual and in-person options. Note: In-person site visits are typically limited to 10 participants. As such, participation is not guaranteed.
- Data submission: Submission of data on two measures at the launch and conclusion of the collaborative (e.g., teams will submit data only two times during the course of the project but can submit more frequently if desired).
- An online community.

### **Eligibility**

The Learning Network is exclusively for alumni participants of Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net and Addiction Treatment Starts Here. Previous

participants in Addiction Treatment Starts Here and Treating Addiction in the Primary Care Safety Net are eligible to apply. Multiple sites within the same organization may apply but we ask that each site complete its own application. If you have a question about whether you qualify, please contact Briana Harris-Mills ([briana@careinnovations.org](mailto:briana@careinnovations.org)).

## Timeline

The Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Network runs from March 2021 to August 2022. Key dates include:

- RFA Released: November 30, 2020
- Informational Webinar: December 16, 2020
- Application Deadline: January 8, 2021
- Cohort Announced: March 1, 2021
- Program Start: March 9, 2021
- Kick-Off Webinar: March 9, 2021
- Submission of baseline data: April 30, 2021
- Quarterly webinars: Schedule will be shared prior to collaborative start
- Learning session: [TBD]
- Submission of endpoint data: July 15, 2021
- Program End: August 30, 2022

## Participant Expectations

Based on our experience with designing MAT collaboratives and peer networks, we identified factors we think will contribute to a positive experience. We designed participation expectations with this in mind.

This network is intended to be flexible and responsive to the needs of participants. We ask each organization to act as a partner in shaping the network by committing to:

- Actively share challenges, opportunities, bright spots, and questions with fellow program participants. This sharing can be done via participation in learning events, using the listserv, and joining coaching office hours.
- Attend all quarterly webinars and share on topics through storyboards, brief presentations, and other methods to highlight experiences.
- Participate as a dedicated team. At least two individuals **are required to be committed to the Learning Network** to promote continuity. Ideally, teams are multi-disciplinary and represent the many functions needed for a successful

MAT program. We recommend that teams include an x-waivered prescriber and a front-line staff person.

- Submit data on a streamlined measure set -- data would be submitted at baseline (e.g., program launch) and endpoint (e.g., program conclusion). See the Appendix for the measure set.
- Complete periodic surveys to assess experiences in the Learning Network; surveys will be designed to be as brief as possible.

### **What You Get**

- Free technical assistance from expert coaches.
- Platform to learn from peers about improving your MAT program.
- Access to forums and site visits that offer insight into challenges and opportunities to expand access to addiction treatment for your patients.
- A virtual community to get timely questions answered.
- An opportunity to serve as a peer mentor to clinics just starting their MAT journey. Funding would be available to offset time participating in this additional work. We are gauging interest in the peer mentor program by asking several questions in the Learning Network [Application Form](#). CCI will provide additional information about the peer mentor program to interested teams.

### **What Makes a Strong Application**

CCI is looking for applicants with the following characteristics:

- Commitment to actively and openly share approaches and lessons learned with other teams.
- Commitment to participate in Learning Network events (e.g., quarterly webinars, forums, office hours).
- Ability to submit data on a small measure set -- data submission would be required at program start and conclusion. Teams that wish to submit data more frequently (e.g., quarterly) can also do so.
- Representation from a multi-disciplinary team (e.g., a team that includes participation from different roles, including prescribers, front-line staff, and senior leaders).

To apply, please read through the instructions on the next page.

## How to Apply

### Step 1: Attend Informational Webinar (Optional)

Interested organizations are encouraged to participate in an informational webinar on December 16, 2020 to hear a program overview and ask questions. [Register here.](#)

### Step 2: Apply Online

Applications must be [submitted using our online form](#) by January 8, 2021 at 5 pm PT. The program cohort will be announced by March 1, 2021. Each site should submit its own application.

### Application Questions

Please respond to the following questions using CCI's electronic [Application Form](#). Please note that the first question is designed to help us understand the potential capabilities of the Learning Network -- responses to this question may not necessarily influence decisions about your application.

1. Describe the current state of MAT implementation within your site. In your response, please address:
  - a. The number of clinic sites within your organization with MAT programs up and running.
  - b. What behavioral health services you have in place for patients with SUD (e.g., counseling, peer engagement, support groups).
  - c. Which behavioral health services are available virtually.
  - d. Whether you provide mobile MAT services.
  - e. Whether you provide MAT for pregnant patients.
  - f. Whether you provide MAT to adolescents and/or youth.
  - g. Whether you provide services specific to patients without stable housing (e.g., health for the homeless).
  - h. Approximate percentage of MAT patients who lack access to stable housing.
  - i. The biggest social risk factors your MAT patients currently face.
  - j. Whether you have an ED Bridge program.
  - k. The degree of coordination and communication with your local Bridge program (e.g., emergency department).

2. What are the three biggest challenges your site currently faces with your MAT program?
3. Define your goals for Learning Network participation:
  - a. What do you hope to learn?
  - b. What do you hope to contribute?
  - c. What do you hope to change?

### **Additional Opportunity (Learning Network + Peer Mentorship)**

4. CCI seeks up to 10 “peer mentor teams” for the next wave of the Addiction Treatment Starts Here Learning Collaborative. Peer mentor teams participate in the Learning Network and also receive a stipend to provide support and guidance to Learning Collaborative teams. We define peer mentor teams as approximately 2-4 people within a clinic site that would serve as faculty for Collaborative learning sessions and webinars (based on areas of expertise), provide informal coaching to teams new to providing MAT, and offer feedback and guidance in other ways. Your peer mentor team is the same as your Learning Network team. While applying as a team, support to Learning Collaborative teams can occur in group or individual settings (e.g., prescriber to prescriber discussions). CCI is able to provide a stipend of up to \$10,000 for peer mentors (in addition to travel expenses as applicable). We anticipate that peer mentor teams would devote about 20-25 hours to mentoring activities over the course of the program.
  - a. Is your team interested in being a peer mentor?
  - b. If yes, please describe why your team is interested.
  - c. What curriculum topics (e.g., MAT program models, care team roles, MAT medications, trauma-informed care) is your peer mentor team best positioned to speak about?

### **Next Steps**

Upon reviewing applications, CCI may request follow-up information or schedule a phone call with your team. CCI will contact you by March 1, 2021 to let you know whether you have been accepted into the Learning Network. In the meantime, please hold March 9, 2021 (12 pm - 1:30 pm) for the Learning Network kick-off webinar. Once you have been accepted into the program, we will send webinar registration information, along with the URL to join the meeting.