

September 2017

Special points of interest:

- Network survey announcement
- New ECHO Program in substance abuse launched
- New Network project recruiting providers

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WVPBRN call for survey proposals

The West Virginia Practice-Based Research Network (WVPBRN) is seeking proposals for a yearly survey to be conducted in the Network.

The WVPBRN will soon be accepting proposals for research questions to be included in a survey to Network members. The Network offers an unique perspective of primary care in West Virginia and has become instrumental in guiding clinical research in the state. These proposals will be due by early February 2018.

The goal of this survey resource is to reduce the number of surveys members are asked to complete and yet collect necessary pilot data for upcoming submissions including the network. Top proposals will have questions included in the survey.

The survey is set to be conducted in April 2018. Priority is given to proposals that are likely to result in grant application pilot data or peer-reviewed publications.

Applicants must be a member of the WVPBRN and the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute to submit a proposal. Those projects chosen will have a Network advisor to guide the project team to help refine questions. Project teams will have exclusive access to their portion of the survey results after the conclusion of the survey.

For additional information or questions, contact Andrew Denny, adenny@hsc.wvu.edu.

WVCTSI expands access to substance abuse

West Virginia continues to be devastated by the opioid epidemic, leading the nation in overdose death rates. According to STAT News, opioids could kill nearly half a million Americans in the next 10 years.

To address this growing crisis, the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute (WVCTSI) and the Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry have recently expanded its Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) program to broaden use of medication-

assisted treatment (MAT), a combination of behavioral therapy and medication to treat individuals with substance use disorder.

“Medication Assisted Treatment is the best evidence-based weapon doctors have right now to help the seemingly endless number of people whose lives are being destroyed by opioid addiction,” said James Berry, D.O.,





The mission of the WVPBRN is to improve the health of West Virginians by collaborating with primary care practices to conduct translational practice-based research.



(cont'd)

Addiction psychiatrist and medical director at WVU Medicine's Chestnut Ridge Center. "Unfortunately, there just aren't enough skilled MAT providers available to treat every patient who needs help."

"If we are to have any hope of changing the way we treat our patients who are addicted to opioids, we have to expand access to treatment," said Ryan Morrison, M.D., physician with Cabin Creek Health Systems and ECHO participant. "I think an interactive program like this ECHO could advance the accessibility and quality of opioid rehabilitation statewide."

This collaborative project between WVCTSI, new funding partner UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia, the West Virginia Primary Care Association, Cabin Creek Health Systems, West Virginia University, and Project ECHO, utilizes a hub and spoke knowledge-sharing network to connect rural healthcare providers with substance abuse specialists with the WVU Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry. These healthcare providers connect to no-cost bi-weekly sessions to present cases and participate in topics relevant to MAT.

"The ECHO program is a proven mechanism to amplify specialty expertise among community providers," said Sally Hodder, M.D., WVCTSI director. "Thanks to the effort and support of our partners we are able to augment provider knowledge around medication-assisted treatment and begin to tackle what may be the greatest healthcare challenge West Virginia has ever faced."



During sessions providers from across West Virginia will be instructed on the benefits of MAT and learn how to implement a group-based recovery model in various practice settings. Additionally, participants have the opportunity for in-person follow up consultations with substance abuse specialists at WVU's Comprehensive Opioid Addiction Treatment (COAT) Program.

"It's important that these providers have the ability to receive continued guidance while treating these patients," said Dr. Berry. "Addiction isn't a quick fix, we can't just give them a pill and say 'you're all better.' We need to offer these physicians the ability to adjust treatment as their patients' needs adapt."

Project ECHO originated at the University of New Mexico and has since spread worldwide to address a variety of healthcare needs.

WV Project ECHO Medication-Assisted Treatment is WVCTSI's third ECHO program to address substance abuse in West Virginia. Other existing programs have dealt with hepatitis C and chronic pain. WVCTSI has also recently launched a fourth ECHO program to increase rural access to specialized psychiatric care.

The WV Project ECHO Medication-Assisted Treatment is still accepting clinics that would like to participate in this free resource. For more information, contact Jay Mason at jdmason@hsc.wvu.edu.

WVPBRN member highlight: Mathew Weimer, MD

Dr. Mathew Weimer is a family physician and chief quality officer for Valley Health Systems in the Huntington area. He has been a member of the WVPBRN since 2014 and currently serves as chair of the Protocol Review Committee.



Weimer has also participated in panel discussions at annual WVPBRN retreats.

Dr. Weimer is also a member of the West Virginia Alliance for Creative Health Solutions. He is the immediate past chair of the Chief Medical Officer committee of the West Virginia Primary Care Association and is also a member of the clinical practice committee of the National Association of Community Health Centers.

Dr. Weimer has been an instrumental partner in several network projects including Project Better Health and IRIS Diabetic Retinopathy, and is leading the ePHQ-2 Depression

Screening project alongside Mary Ann Maurer, DO, family medicine physician at West Virginia University Charleston Division. Dr.



“Rural healthcare providers working in community health clinics are the key to improving the health and healthcare of West Virginia”

-Arnie Hassen, PhD

WVPBRN project seeks provider recruitment

The WVPBRN is participating in a network project to develop tools and resources to support practices with evaluating information on point-of-care devices for purchasing decisions. Brenda Korte, Ph.D., an independent researcher from WV and former program director at the National Institutes of Health, is looking for rural health professionals to participate in a usability study of the AdoptPOC program, an eLearning-based toolkit she is developing to support rural practices with technology assessment.

A recent U.S. study of the views of primary care practitioners on the future of point-of-care (POC) testing highlighted the perceived value of increased use of POC devices, but also communicated many challenges with adoption of POC testing programs. Determining which devices provide the necessary clinical performance and value is a challenge given the rapid development of new technologies, the wide range of potential settings and users,

difficulty in interpreting test accuracy studies within clinical contexts, and unclear financial impacts. This is further complicated by importance of organizational and local factors in technology adoption decisions, and need to communicate information to decision makers with different professional backgrounds and roles.

Dr. Korte is looking for physicians, non-physician practitioners, nurses, and practice managers who have contributed to decisions to purchase POC devices or implement POC testing programs within their practices. The study involves reviewing a technology adoption scenario related to patient self-testing and then using an evidence module to develop responses to review questions. Participants can choose between remote or in-person options. Providers will have the opportunity to participate in a second phase of the study to evaluate decision making tools. Look for more information to come soon.



WVPBRN

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Practice-Based Research Network

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West Virginia Practice-Based Research Network



Announcements

SAVE THE DATE

The 2018 WVPBRN Annual Retreat will be held March 22-23, 2018 at Stonewall Resort in Roanoke, W.Va. A planning team will begin working on setting the agenda for this event soon.

If you would like to be part of the planning team, please contact Andrew Denny, adenny@hsc.wvu.edu or call 304-581-1922.

