

**PEER LEARNING SESSION:**  
Expansion into EDs, SBHCs, and  
FQHCs



## Session Summary

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau Technical Assistance Innovation Center (MCHB TAIC) hosted the 3rd of 4 ad hoc, virtual, peer-to-peer learning sessions on April 17, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. EDT via Zoom (Option Year 1, Task 5.5.1). Fifty-one participants registered for the session, and approximately 26 attended. They represented Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) and Screening and Treatment for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders (MMHSUD) awardees, Health Resources and Services Administration staff, and MCHB TAIC staff. Subject matter expert Dr. John Straus facilitated the discussion moderated by JBS International Technical Assistance Specialist Elizabeth Carr, MA, LPC, ACS. The session focused on expansion efforts of PMHCA and/or MMHSUD programs into emergency departments (EDs), school-based health centers (SBHCs) and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), with the following questions<sup>1</sup> framing the discussion:

1. What areas currently present challenges to the building of partnerships in the community (e.g., SBHCs, FQHCs, healthcare providers in pediatrics and maternal health)?
2. What challenges has your program experienced in supporting care coordination in EDs?
  - a. If you're a new program, what challenges might you expect?
3. Within your region, what opportunities are available within EDs for PMHCA/MMHSUD collaborations?
  - a. Utilization of the Emergency Medical Services for Children Innovation and Improvement Center's [PMHCA Technical Assistance Toolkit](#) can be helpful.
4. What messaging/marketing outreach has been successful in helping community partners understand your program's services?
  - a. If you're a new program, what is your plan for outreach?
5. What do you find most helpful about your program's current partnerships with SBHCs, EDs, and/or FQHCs?
6. How can you utilize the School-based Health Alliance [Stakeholder Map](#) to identify potential school partnerships?
7. How does your program help support collaborative care within FQHCs?

During this discussion, awardees focused on key questions surrounding expansion efforts, care coordination in EDs, messaging and outreach strategies, and the benefits of current partnerships.

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<sup>1</sup> Since questions are used as discussion prompts, they can be taken out of the numbered order. The discussion may not include all questions, depending on participant interests and priorities.

The discussion emphasized the challenges of resource limitations, cultural considerations, and legal requirements, while underscoring the significance of tailored approaches, community engagement, and capacity building in fostering effective collaborations and promoting sustainable change within maternal and child health initiatives.

## Summary of Challenges in Expansion Efforts

- Having limited resources and time available for potential partners to engage in collaborative efforts
- Understanding the cultural context of potential partners and adapting approaches accordingly
- Navigating legal requirements (e.g., mandated reporting for substance use during pregnancy)
- Developing tailored training programs to address legal and reporting requirements
- Identifying strategies for maximizing available resources and streamlining collaborative efforts
- Ensuring decision-making processes effectively represent community voices
- Addressing the diverse needs and challenges of different types of partners (e.g., schools, primary care providers, mental health [MH] centers)
- Integrating training programs into existing healthcare systems and collaborating with external training providers
- Building trust and fostering effective communication among partners
- Leveraging existing resources within the community to expand services and reach a broader audience

“We’re currently thinking about doing ED trainings on perinatal psychosis and how to address the MMHSUD crisis in EDs.”

—*MMHSUD Awardee*

## Lessons Learned in Expansion Efforts

- **Partnership Development:** Building partnerships requires reaching out to diverse stakeholders, including hospital groups, practitioners, and community organizations. Effective collaboration necessitates proactive engagement and relationship-building efforts.
  - An MMHSUD program shared that their state has been successful in connecting with EDs regarding education, viewed through a capacity-building lens: “The Perinatal Quality Collaborative is collaborating on an AIM [Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health] bundle, with MMHSUD integrating their training efforts. The entire Obstetrics (OB) department has undergone training in SUD.” Additionally, the

program has implemented creative supports like collaborations with EDs to include a crucial question: “Are you currently pregnant or have you been in the last year?” If the question is answered affirmatively, the system automatically flags the patient for the OB department to assist with triage and care.

- In discussions with FQHCs regarding psychiatric services, awardees have noted that wait lists for MH services can be lengthy. Partnering with a PMHCA/MMHSUD program can alleviate wait times, allowing FQHCs to “offload medication questions” to the PMHCA/MMHSUD, so they can use their limited capacity for more critical care needs.
  - An MMHSUD awardee shared that their program successfully integrated the ECHO Model with EDs. They conducted six sessions of training focused on MH care within hospital settings. Meetings with hospital staff were held to determine topics of interest, resulting in good turnout and positive reception.
  - It was recommended for programs working with child/family services to develop a specific training for perinatal providers.
  - An awardee shared a resource for training offered through the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare: The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan of Safe Care (POSC).
    - The link to [CAPTA POSC](#) can be distributed directly to provider networks.
- **Resource Limitations:** Limited resources and time can pose significant challenges to partnership development. Identifying strategies to maximize available resources and streamline collaborative efforts is essential for overcoming these obstacles.
  - **Cultural Considerations:** Understanding the cultural context of potential partners is crucial for establishing trust and fostering effective communication. Adapting approaches to meet partners where they are, along with respecting their terms and conditions, can facilitate meaningful collaborations.
  - **Community Engagement:** Involving community voices in decision-making processes ensures inclusivity and relevance. Actively engaging partners and providing opportunities for representation in advisory committees, working groups, etc., foster a sense of ownership and investment in shared goals.
  - **Tailored Approaches:** Recognizing the unique needs and challenges of different partners is vital for successful collaboration. Tailoring approaches to suit the specific requirements of schools, primary care providers, MH centers, and other partners enhances effectiveness and sustainability.
  - **Capacity Building:** Investing in capacity building, particularly through targeted training programs, strengthens the capabilities of healthcare providers and enhances service delivery.

Integrating training into existing programs and collaborating with external providers optimize resource utilization and promotes skill development.

- **Navigating Legal and Reporting Requirements:** Understanding and complying with legal obligations (e.g., mandated reporting for substance use during pregnancy) are essential for ethical and legal practice. Developing tailored training programs to address these requirements ensures adherence to regulations and promotes accountability.
- **Building Connections:** Leveraging peer-support programs and existing community resources expands service reach and enhances program effectiveness. Building connections with local resources and partnering with established programs facilitate access to additional support networks and expertise.

## Resources Shared

As mentioned earlier, an awardee shared the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare's [CAPTA Plans of Safe Care \(POSC\)](#) to highlight several POSC trainings for maternal health providers.