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OPPORTUNITY

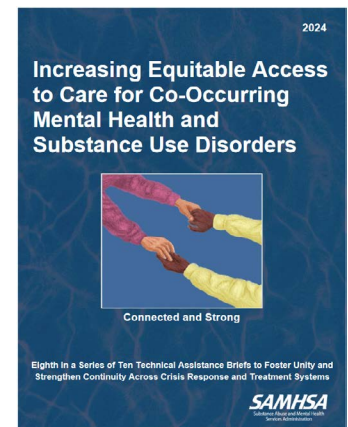
THE INSTITUTE FOR COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSES (ICCR) COHORT

The [Institute for Coordinated Community Responses \(ICCR's\)](#) mission is to work alongside rural communities to improve their collaborative, systemic response to domestic violence. The Institute was created as a program of the Conference on Crimes Against Women in 2018. CCAW provides a national platform to disseminate the highest level of training, information, and strategies to professionals who are responders and advocates to victims of the many and varied forms of crimes against women. Each year, the institute provides coordinated community response support to rural communities. The [ICCR Cohort](#) is a free, year-long training program available to teams of three— a law enforcement officer, prosecutor, and advocate — from rural, under-resourced counties throughout the U.S. who are motivated to create and sustain a systemic response to domestic violence. Team applications are due by Oct. 25, 2024. To apply, click [HERE](#).

RESEARCH & REPORTS

INCREASING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE FOR CO-OCCURRING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

This paper examines the need for comprehensive care for individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders (CODs). It highlights how these individuals interact with various systems using the Sequential Intercept Model and the Upstream model to show how individuals with CODs interact with child welfare, criminal justice, juvenile justice, and behavioral health. The paper also presents two case studies, one rural and one non-rural, to illustrate current challenges in accessing integrated COD treatment.



IMPLEMENTING PEER SUPPORT INTO PRACTICE IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: A QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY

Peer workers are people with personal experience of mental distress employed within mental health services to support others with similar experiences. Research has identified various factors that might facilitate or hinder the introduction of new peer worker roles into mental health services. While there is mixed evidence for the effectiveness of peer worker-delivered interventions, there are no studies exploring how implementation might be associated with effect. This article presents a case study using data from interviews with 20 peer workers and their five supervisors. It explores whether and how levels of engagement in a new peer support intervention were associated with its implementation and, therefore, how peer support in mental health services might be optimized in the future.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A RURAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT-INITIATED BUPRENORPHINE PROGRAM IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST: A STUDY PROTOCOL

Opioid-related overdose morbidity and mortality continue to impact rural communities significantly. Nationwide, emergency departments (EDs) have seen an increase in opioid use disorder (OUD)-related visits compared to other substance use disorders (SUD). ED-initiated buprenorphine is associated with increased treatment engagement at 30 days. However, few studies have assessed the implementation of rural ED-initiated buprenorphine, which has unique implementation barriers. This protocol outlines the rationale and methods of a rural ED-initiated buprenorphine program implementation study.

PROGRAM

MAINE JAIL'S GROUNDBREAKING OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAM SHOWS PROMISE

In rural Maine, the Somerset County jail has implemented a pioneering approach to address the high risk of overdose among recently released prisoners with opioid addictions. Sheriff Dale P. Lancaster and Dr. Alane O'Connor introduced a program offering monthly injections of extended-release buprenorphine (Sublocade) to inmates before their release. A recent analysis published in the journal [Health and Justice](#) revealed promising results. Compared to another rural Maine jail using daily medication, Somerset County's program saw three times as many former inmates continuing treatment after release. Additionally, while four deaths occurred among released prisoners from the comparison jail, none were reported among those who received the Sublocade injections from Somerset.

ARTICLES

NURSE PRACTITIONERS IN MENTAL HEALTH: ENHANCING CARE ACCESS IN UNDERSERVED AREAS

In the United States, disparities in mental health care access persist, particularly in underserved areas such as rural communities and low-income urban populations. In addition to their clinical skills, Nurse Practitioners (NPs) are also educators. NPs are uniquely positioned to provide holistic, patient-centered care that is both cost-effective and accessible, making them a key solution to improving mental health care for patients in underserved communities. This article explores how NPs, particularly those specialized in psychiatric mental health nursing, can be critical in providing essential care and bridging the gap in mental health care access in rural areas.



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FROM CRISIS TO COMMUNITY: A TRIBE'S RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

This article explores a promising solution to the opioid crisis devastating rural communities across the nation. In a rural Minnesota casino, an unassuming hallway hosts public health vending machines adorned with tribal art and stocked with free, lifesaving items ranging from Narcan — the brand name of an overdose-reversal drug — and fentanyl test strips to everyday necessities like socks and flashlights. These machines are profoundly impacting the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Reservation, offering a unique and effective response to the ongoing public health crisis.



Left to right: Cathy Chavers, Tribal Chairwoman of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Laura Palombi, and Pamela Hughes.

PODCASTS



RURAL ROADS

The RCORPodcast



THE RCORPODCAST EPISODE 7: INNOVATION TANK FOLLOW-UP: REDUCING JAIL-BASED RECIDIVISM IN UTAH

In this episode of Rural Roads, we are joined by team members from RCORP grantee Intermountain Health based in Utah. The team discusses their project and one initiative, which won the inaugural 2024 RCORP Innovation Tank at this past Reverse Site Visit in Washington, DC. They share insights on their work in Sanpete County, addressing issues such as opioid deaths and overdoses. The team talks about implementing programs in the jail, reducing recidivism rates, and hosting community events to combat stigma and provide support.

“SAVING PEOPLE’S LIVES”: ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Accessing mental health and addiction services can be especially difficult in rural communities, and solutions can be scarce. In this conversation, Brenda Romero, CEO of Presbyterian Española Hospital, a small rural hospital in New Mexico, discusses the methods for accessing treatment and the importance of the hospital’s innovative and community-focused work.



RESOURCES

RURAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

Rural communities face unique challenges that impact their ability to deliver fair and equitable justice. Despite these challenges, rural communities rely on their many strengths to address the needs of their residents.

The National Center for State Courts, in partnership with Rulo Strategies, launched the [Rural Justice Collaborative \(RJC\)](#) to showcase the strengths of rural communities and highlight the cross-sector collaboration that is a hallmark of rural justice systems.

The work under the RJC is supported by a cross-sector advisory council composed of rural judges along with additional stakeholders in the justice, child welfare, and behavioral health systems. The advisory council guides and identifies innovative programs and practices.

INNOVATIVE USES OF TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO SERVICES WITHIN THE CRISIS CONTINUUM

This paper focuses on the potential of technological innovations in making behavioral health crisis services more accessible and equitable across the United States. It includes case studies from states and providers in rural areas who were early adopters of leveraging technology to facilitate crisis care. This paper also focuses on those technologies that drive and support the crisis system, from call centers through mobile response to stabilization and respite programs.

FROM SETTLEMENT TO SOLUTIONS: RESOURCES FOR EVIDENCE-BASED OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUND USE BASED ON COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: A NORTH CAROLINA CASE STUDY

This opioid settlement fund website is a comprehensive resource hub, consolidating best practices, research, policies, trackers, and tools for quick and easy reference. In addition to showcasing our unique approach to understanding the settlement funds, we highlight exceptional resources developed by other entities. Explore the wealth of information here to enhance your understanding and efforts in addressing the opioid crisis. [Resources](#) include a [naloxone distribution calculator](#), an [overdose mapping tool](#), and a [community health assessment toolkit](#).

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