Chris Lukonis, MD presented at our recent Learning Collaborative to discuss the process by which patients move through the Hub and Spoke. For the past 15 years Dr. Lukonis has focused on treating patients with opioid use disorder with medication and psychosocial interventions. He sees patients in the Vermont Hub and Spoke initiative, and joined us for our June Learning Collaboratives to share his insights. He has focused his treatment efforts in central Vermont, first at a Hub as a medical director and now in a Spoke in a rural hospital system where he provides treatment with buprenorphine and naltrexone combined with psychosocial supports.

He described the critical role of the medication assisted treatment (MAT) team in providing appropriate care, referrals and provider engagement. When he worked as a Hub medical director, he dedicated considerable time to promoting buprenorphine prescribing in primary care settings (Spokes) in the surrounding area. In promoting prescriber involvement, he highlighted the importance of office visits, encouraging MAT members to meet local primary care providers at their offices to share experiences and even introduce the MAT team. These are essential elements to encouraging primary care providers to get their waiver and even get involved in the Hub and Spoke system.

### Learning Collaborative Takeaways

Following this discussion, Drs. Lukonis and Rawson fielded questions, providing guidance on a number of key issues facing Hub and Spoke providers, including:

- **Least Restrictive Level of Care:** Dr. Lukonis emphasized the importance of accurately assessing the severity of patient symptoms and checking on patient stability on an ongoing basis. A key takeaway is that providers must seek to provide the least restrictive level of care to help patients succeed and get back to their lives. In the context of the Hub and Spoke system, treatment with buprenorphine (or extended-release naltrexone for selected patients) in a primary care setting (Spoke) is the least restrictive level of care. While many patients need the more intensive monitoring and support provided in the Hubs, treatment in the Spoke setting should be used whenever possible.

- **Treating Pain & OUD:** Is it suitable to offer pain management in a Spoke, specifically with buprenorphine? This can be a very valuable service that can be delivered in primary care. UCLA is offering three half-day trainings in California on this topic with experts on this common dilemma. Find more information and register here.

- **Engaging Physicians as Buprenorphine Prescribers:** How did you convince primary care docs to prescribe buprenorphine in their practices? Dr. Lukonis said he spent time in primary care practices and shared his experience and built relationships with these providers. See information on the new expert facilitator program below.

### A New Resource: STR-TA Consortium

SAMHSA’s State Targeted Response Technical Assistance (STR-TA) Program is a new resource for supporting providers and communities tackling the opioid crisis. This free program provides evidence-based assistance in the realm of treatment, recovery and prevention. Go to [www.getSTR-TA.org](http://www.getSTR-TA.org) for more information and to submit a request.

### Resources

- **UCLA—CA H&SS Website**
- **DHCS—MAT Expansion Project Website**
- **Important Articles about MAT**
- **PSATTC Resources**
- **Motivational Interviewing Training (Self Paced)**
- **First Responder Naloxone Training Toolkit**

### Upcoming Events

- **American Psychological Association Convention**
  - August 9—August 12, 2018
- **DHCS Statewide Conference**
  - August 21—August 23, 2018
- **CSAM Conference**
  - August 29—September 1, 2018
- **Stigma and MAT Webinar**
  - September 6, 2018
  - 10 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- **Science and Practice of Treating Patients with Pain and Opioid Use Disorders—Training Series:**
  - Oakland: September 18, 2018
  - San Bernardino: September 26, 2018
  - Clovis (Fresno): October 10, 2018

### Register for the 15th Annual Statewide Conference

Integrating Substance Use, Mental Health, and Primary Care Services: Disruptive Innovations and Sustaining Change

- October 24—October 25, 2018
- Hilton Universal Hotel
Expert Facilitator Program

The vision of the California Hub and Spoke System is to build MAT capacity within both Hubs and Spokes, while also improving coordination across organizations. Because Spoke development and programming have been slower to evolve, increased efforts are now being focused on helping Spokes to overcome barriers to MAT. A new major initiative is the expert facilitator program led by Dr. Mark McGovern. This program links 18 individual medical experts with 18 regional Hubs and their coordinators—and forms dyads. These dyads will be trained to use "Implementation Facilitation", an evidence-based approach, to assist Spokes that are either not yet engaged in MAT, engaged but with small numbers, or to expand their existing practice and improve patient flow between Hub and Spoke services. This innovative campaign will be launched in the coming weeks. Contact UCLA for more information: kimberlyvalencia@mednet.ucla.edu

DEADLINE EXTENDED!
Submit CSAM MERF-MATES Scholarship Applications through August 3rd.

The Medical Education and Research Foundation for the Treatment of Addiction (MERF) has extended the deadline to apply for a MERF-MATES scholarship to August 3rd.

MERF Medication Assisted Treatment Expansion Scholars (MERF-MATES) will actively participate in mentored learning experiences throughout the California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) 2018 State of the Art Conference in Addiction Medicine, August 29th - September 1, 2018, in San Francisco, CA.

Save the Date: Stigma and MAT Webinar

Save the date and spread the word for a community-wide training webinar, Stigma and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), Thursday, September 6 from 10 am – 12 pm. Thomas Freese, PhD and Gloria Miele, PhD will provide an overview of how stigma, language, and assumptions about substance use and MAT impact people in treatment and ways to address stigma in healthcare settings and the community at large. Candy Stockton Joreteg, MD will discuss stigma related to pregnant women. A consumer in long-term recovery with MAT will present his perspective. Register for the Stigma and MAT Webinar here. (https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StigmaMAT)

Evaluation Corner

The Hubs and Spokes have seen promising growth, with over 5,000 new patients initiating MAT between August 2017 and June 2018. These preliminary numbers are expected to grow further, as systems continue to submit their required reports. Interviews with patients starting MAT in the Hubs and Spokes will begin in the next several weeks, to evaluate their experiences in the clinics and treatment outcomes.

Results from the recently completed provider surveys demonstrate that, while 91.3% of waivered providers offer buprenorphine maintenance, only 60.9% offer home-based inductions and 58% office-based inductions. Preliminary findings suggest that barriers to starting buprenorphine may include the needs for additional peer mentorship from other prescribing physicians, and further training related to stigma and MAT. Resources for ongoing mentorship building on the new Prescriber Facilitator Project may exist within the Hub and Spoke networks, as 67.6% of Hub and Spoke providers indicated interest in providing peer support to others. Additional results showed that a majority of waivered providers (72%), MAT Team members (80%), and Hub Leadership (92%) who attended Learning Collaboratives found them helpful.

Join the CA Hub and Spoke Listserv

Want to learn more about what you can do to help and how to be a part of our initiative? Join UCLA’s CA H&SS Listserv! Make sure you don’t miss out on resources, upcoming events and more! To join, contact: kimberlyvalencia@mednet.ucla.edu

Tracking our Progress: New Patients Added

The goal for the CA H&SS is to have 20,000 new patients on MAT during its two—year grant period. The goal thermometer below will track our progress throughout the program.

*Data based on 95% completion of monthly Hub data reports and 43% completion of monthly Spoke data reports.

Funding is made possible by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) “MAT Expansion Project” through the SAMHSA Opioid STR Grant Program.