OTP TTA CENTER

Opioid Treatment Program
Training & Technical Assistance Center

Meeting Patients Where They Are: Overcoming Access Barriers and Addressing Social Needs

May 6th, 2025 2:30-3:30 PM

Presenter

MASSACHUSETTS
OTP TTA CENTER
Opioid Treatment Program
Training & Technical Assistance Center

Christina Norman
Community Liaison
Comprehensive Treatment Centers (CTC) Acadia / Lowell

Session Objectives

1. Name at least one innovative practice for reaching patients outside the OTP setting, addressing barriers such as homelessness, transportation challenges, and food insecurity.
2. Identify at least one strategy for incorporating social services within OTPs.
3. Describe the impact of social services on treatment entry, adherence, relapse prevention, and overall well-being, and develop a plan for ensuring patients are connected to these services.

Poll

Which of the following resources do you currently offer to your OTP patients?

- Community health worker or community liaison
- Food on site
- Referrals to food programs
- Referrals to housing programs
- Transportation to OTP

ACADIA®
HEALTHCARE

State Opioid Response (SOR) grantee

Community Liaison on staff

Services

- Outreach
- Food
- Housing
- SOR room
- Uber Health for transportation

Community Liaison

- Going to where patients are
- Same day admission process
- Building relationship with other community organizations
- Linking patients to resources
- Allowing patients to text

The community liaison is the bridge between the clinic and the community.

Housing Resources

- Hotel program
- Lowell Transitional Living Center
- Coordinated entry intake (community partner)
- Housing specialist (community partner)

SOR Room

- Food
- Clothing
- Seasonal items (hand warmers)
- Hygiene Items
- Harm Reduction Bags
- Blankets/ sleeping bags
- Home goods
- Diapers

SOR Enhanced Services

- Therapeutic art group
- Gardening group
- Animal therapy group
- Mindful yoga group
- Recovery Carnival
- Resource Fairs
- Job Fairs
- Free cell phone days
- Dress for success/ mock interviews

Impact on Patients

"I love the gardening group- it gives me a purpose and love seeing what my hard work and consistency grows into. I've never had that feeling before."

–Patient at Lowell CTC

"Christina found me at my tent and would not give up. That is why I came back and gave recovery another try."

– Patient Lowell CTC

"I get to get clothes and feel good about myself. I wouldn't have this without that place."

– Patient Lowell CTC

Impact on Staff, Providers and Community

SOR allowed me to care for my client's health and wellbeing. For example, I was able to provide them with dry clothes blanket after they had been stuck outside in the rain that day/night.."
– Admin Lowell CTC

"SOR has also been helpful for our pregnant clients with helping to obtain diapers for them and other baby necessities. Trying to maintain recovery and being a parent is a tough job." –Clinical Sup. Lowell CTC

We are so thankful for your collaboration and work with us on the streets. You have truly been such an amazing part of the outreach team and breaking down any barrier to get people started at the clinic with rides and weekends and advocacy. We appreciate you." – Joe CO OP TEAM

Impact on Providers

The Lowell CTC liaison role is crucial to the facilitation of continued MOUD treatment in the community, and of patients being discharged to rehab /nursing facilities when they are receiving MOUD treatment. Without this role, there would be increased barriers and significant delays in discharging patients with SUD to other facilities/ appropriate level of care. That would prevent patients with SUD from accessing the treatment they need in a timely manner, and would create an undue burden on the acute care hospital as patient volume continues to exceed our capacity. Acute care hospitals are reliant on external systems and collaterals, such as CTC, to efficiently move patients on to the next step in their treatment journey. - Brittany M & Angela M Social Work Dept.

Testimonials

Jen Miksch, RN (Riverbend Lowell)

SOR Patients Lowell CTC

No SOR Funding?

Donations

Friends, family, staff, and social media posts

Partnership with community organizations

Greater Lowell Health Alliance, Riverbend, WISH project, and more!

Connect with Me!

Christina.Norman@ctcprograms.com

978-387-2536

Thank you!

Questions?

Upcoming Sessions: 3:30-4:30PM

Please click the link in the chat for the session you wish to attend!

Providing Culturally Responsive Services to BIPOC Populations	ZOOM LINK
Innovative Strategies for Patient Centered Care: Supporting Wellness	ZOOM LINK