TANF AODA Grant Evaluation:
Using Data to Improve Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Low-Income Parents

Presented by:
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BACKGROUND
For 2017-2021

Principal Investigator
Dr. Lisa Berger
Former CUPH Director, currently Associate Dean and Professor at UW-Milwaukee Helen Bader School of Social Welfare (HBSSW)

Evaluation Coordinator
Michelle Bunyer
CUPH & UW-Milwaukee

Evaluator
Michelle Corbett
CUPH & UW-Madison

Additional support: Jess Alanis (2017-2019) and Mary Kusch (summer intern 2020)

1 For 2022, the project will move from HBSSW to CUPH, Michelle Bunyer will become the Principal Investigator, and Dr. Lisa Berger will no longer have a role on the project
- TANF AODA grant awarded to Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division by Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Care and Treatment Services, Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery for 2017-2021 (extended through 2022)

- Award funds substance use disorder assessment, treatment, care coordination, and recovery support services for TANF-eligible individuals (*low-income with a minor child(ren) or currently pregnant*) in Milwaukee County

**Priority populations**
- ★ Pregnant women
- ★ People who use IV drugs
BHD contracts with community-based organizations which provide treatment and recovery support services throughout Milwaukee County.

Types of assessment, treatment, and recovery support services available through TANF AODA funding:

- Access Point Assessment (to determine needed services)
- AODA Residential Treatment
- AODA Day Treatment
- AODA Outpatient Treatment
- Recovery Support Coordination
- Peer Support
- Bridge Housing
- Employment Services
- Medication Assisted Treatment
GRANT GOALS
Goal 1: Provide appropriate alcohol and drug addiction outreach, intervention, treatment, care coordination, and support services for individuals and their families who are TANF eligible and who have a family income of not more than 200% of the federal poverty level.

Goal 2: Provide services of the highest quality that are evidence based or promising practices in accordance with the elements, standards, and core values of the TANF outreach, treatment, and support program.

Goal 3: Achieve positive family functioning, self-directed recovery, and improved quality of life among persons and families served.

Goal 4: Track the number of alcohol and drug-related deaths in the county and among service providers and implement appropriate anti-drug diversion, overdose prevention, and other effective strategies.
• TANF AODA is not a program it is a funding stream; some services may be paid for with grant dollars but others may be paid through insurance or other BHD sources

• The publicly funded behavioral health system is complex and always changing

• BHD has an internal evaluation team which handles most of the analysis for reporting on performance measures to the state

• CUPH Evaluation team is funded at a high % FTE

• The Scope of Work for the evaluation is revised each year

• Examining more than outcomes

• The CUPH evaluation team shares data and reports year-round and leads monthly TANF AODA evaluation meetings with BHD staff
KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS
✓ Who are the consumers served by this grant?

✓ Are priority populations being enrolled in services?

✓ What is the profile of each priority population?

✓ How can BHD better engage with individuals in the community who might be eligible for services through this grant?

✓ What is the quality of services delivered to consumers?

✓ Are providers engaging in quality improvement activities?
✓ Are providers using evidence-based or promising practices in accordance with the core values of the grant?

✓ How well are consumers engaged and retained in Recovery Support Coordination services?

✓ How does substance use change for consumers after services? Quality of life?

✓ What information is accessed and how is it being used to understand the trends in substance-use related deaths in Milwaukee County and among TANF consumers?

✓ What changes to access and/or services might help to reduce the number of substance-use related deaths?
EVALUATION ACTIVITIES
Collected Original Data

- Focus groups with TANF-eligible consumers
- Executive Director interviews
- Clinical/Operations Leader interviews
- Recovery Support Coordinator survey
- Evidence-based practices training surveys
Explored Administrative Data

- Analysis of BHD data gathered at Assessment, Intake, 6-months, and Discharge
Supported Quality Improvement Initiatives

- NIATx Collaborative evaluation
- NIATx project technical assistance for community providers

Post-It Comments
“What one thing in today’s meeting made it worth your time to attend?”

Word Cloud
“Today’s meeting in one word.”
Created Materials for Sharing Evaluation Information

- Annual reports, streamlined data reports, 2-page summaries
CHALLENGES
- Unclear expectations for evaluation deliverables at the beginning
- Change in TANF Project Director a few months into the project
- Time needed to cultivate relationships with TANF staff to establish trust
- Gaining buy-in from BHD internal evaluation staff
- Learning BHD acronyms, processes
- Understanding BHD priorities
- Managing expectations (ours and theirs)
CUPH CONTRIBUTIONS
→ evaluative thinking (inquisitiveness, value of evidence, perspective taking)

→ resources (knowledge and staff) to collect original data for identifying improvements needed to meet grant’s goals

→ experience helping teams build their capacity to practice data-driven decision-making

→ UWM faculty knowledge of current substance use disorder research literature

→ data exploration and communication expertise

→ bridge between the academic world and community provider world
IMPACT OF PARTNERSHIP
Steps taken by BHD based on evaluation findings...

- Added TANF AODA Peer Support position
- Created TANF AODA video for publicizing substance use treatment services
- Added TANF AODA information to BHD website
- Shared training feedback with Matrix Model & Finding Your Best Self trainers for consideration when planning future trainings
- Brought Matrix Model trainer back for one-on-one consultation
- Regularly adjusted NIATx Collaborative agenda to respond to attendee suggestions
- Developed RSC information sheet to be distributed at Access Points and Drug Court
- Added BHD staff time to assist with verifying TANF eligibility
“The involvement from CUPH has been instrumental in the way we report data, look at data, and understand data.”

“They brought organization to the way they report data and have made interpreting the data easy and accessible for the CARS team.”

“The CUPH team looks beyond what needs to be reported and pulls data that is useful when looking at current trends and possible ways to improve systems.”
“Projects like TANF AODA allow faculty to be in touch with what is happening in the field and to share this knowledge when teaching MSW students.”

“Faculty can share research and any other expertise as well with the field.”
Questions?

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