

Weekly Medical Directors Briefing January 11-15, 2021

“Nearly every problem has been solved by someone, somewhere. The challenge is to find out what works and scale it up.”

-Bill Clinton, former U.S. President

Scaling Up COVID Vaccinations: Reflections on the Science of Implementation and Spread

In spite of several months of planning, the scaling up of the COVID vaccine has been challenging. Often, the scaling up of successful pilot programs and improvement projects encounter problems. Successful large scale implementation is a skill set *not* necessarily associated with good intentions, innovative thinking, or the size of the organization.

Stephen Dubner offers a nice introduction to this challenge in a [Freakonomics Radio podcast](#), from early 2020.

In the last 10-15 years, a new social science concept called “[Implementation Science](#)” seeks to explain the factors leading to implementation challenges and how to overcome them. Several of these frameworks on how to increase the success of large scale implementation were combined into a [Consolidated Framework for Implementation](#).

Here are a few major reasons that scaling up of successful pilots may fail:

1. The Pilot did not actually work (look at the actual data, not the hype).
2. The people studied in the pilot are not representative of the general population.
3. Efforts to scale up implementations cut corners and no longer follow key aspects of the pilot program.
4. Scaling up does not account for limited supply of qualified staff and other inputs.
5. Scaling up assumes the “build it and they will come” theory; that demand for the intervention will spontaneously be high. An insufficient marketing plan is included.

Over the course of our careers, as we experience or witness failed implementations, it is too easy to develop a sense of fatalism about many proposed expansions. In the case of mass COVID vaccination, our society, health care delivery system, and economy, demand that we have a different mindset. Successful implementation is hard, it is a skill-set, but it importantly reflects a “can do” mindset, not a “can’t do” mindset. It means tackling challenges head on, seeking new solutions to problems encountered, including the key challenge of vaccine hesitancy.

We at PHC thank you, and your staff, for your work on promoting COVID vaccination among your staff and in your community, in the weeks ahead.

This Week's News

HHS Extending Public Health Emergency due to Pandemic

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has [extended the public health emergency](#) surrounding the COVID-19 Pandemic until April, extending key waivers for regulations on a variety of topics such as telehealth.

The public health emergency declaration was originally scheduled to expire January 21, 2021. HHS Secretary Alex Azar extended the emergency on Thursday, January 07, 2021, according to the notice.

This is the fourth time HHS has expanded the emergency, with the last one occurring in October of 2020.

The emergency initially launched a series of blanket waivers that suspended several federal oversight and reporting requirements.

One of the biggest areas of flexibility is under telehealth coverage. The agency was able to waive some requirements. For instance, under the emergency, HHS has allowed more types of providers to bill Medicare for telehealth services such as physical therapists and others.

It also granted waivers for the reimbursement of audio-only telehealth services for all providers.

CMSP Loan Repayment Program

The County Medical Services Program (CMSP) Governing Board is continuing its partnership with the Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development's Healthcare Workforce Development Division, to offer educational loan repayments to health professionals of up to \$50,000 in exchange for two-years of service at a CMSP-contracted provider site. Up to \$2 million will be awarded this year.

Applications will be accepted from January 04, 2021 – March 04, 2021.

[Check Eligibility](#)

[Apply Now](#)

[More Information](#)

Oxygen Saturation Monitors, BP Monitors, and Thermometers – No Cost for PHC Members

In response to COVID-19, PHC is providing blood pressure monitors, oxygen saturation monitors, and thermometers to be given at no cost to PHC members. PHC would like your help in getting these supplies distributed to our members and your patients who would benefit from this medical equipment.

Interested providers will need to complete the DME Request Form on our [website](#). Complete the form and submit to request@partnershiphp.org or fax to (707) 420-7855.

Providers will be expected to connect with the selected PHC members to ensure the member can use the equipment properly.

PHC Educational Opportunities and Events

Quality & Performance Improvement Training Events

For up-to-date events and trainings by the Quality and Performance Improvement Department, please view our [Quality Events Webpage](#).

Looking for more educational opportunities? The Quality & Performance Improvement Department has many pre-recorded, on-demand courses available to you. Trainings include:

- ABCs of Quality Improvement: An introduction to the basic principles of quality improvement.
- Accelerated Learning Educational Program: An overview of clinical measures including improvement strategies and tools.
- 2020 PCP QIP High Performers - How'd They Do That: Learn best practices from the 2019 PCP QIP high performers.

You can find these on-demand courses, and more, on our [Webinars Webpage](#).

Management of Depression in 2021: An Update

CME credit is pending for review.

As a result of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and its consequent social and economic turmoil, a mental health crisis looms, of which depression is projected to be a major part. Therefore, there is perhaps no better time to review treatment of depression than now. Depression treatment has advanced in the past decade, and this webinar will focus in particular on psychopharmacological advances in the treatment of this critically important mood disorder.

Who should attend this webinar? Health care providers in primary medical clinics throughout the PHC network.

Date: Friday, January 29, 2021

Time: Noon – 1 p.m.

[Sign-up Now](#)

Questions? Contact Continuing Education Program Coordinator Liezel Lago at (707) 720-2736 or llago@partnershiphp.org.

Project Management 101 Webinar

[Flyer](#)

This two-session webinar is an introduction to the concepts and tools used in project management. Participants will learn project management principles and the tools used in each phase to manage projects successfully.

Project Management – Session 1 of 2

Objectives:

- Introduce the concepts and tools used in project management
- Learn project phases and processes
- Understand steps in framing and planning projects

Date: Wednesday, February 03, 2021

Time: Noon – 1:15 p.m.

[Sign-up Now](#)

Project Management – Session 2 of 2

Objectives:

- Apply concepts from Session 1 in a group activity
- Learn the key points in executing and monitoring projects
- Understand how to successfully close and transition projects

Date: Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Time: Noon – 1:15 p.m.

[Sign-up Now](#)

Engaging Patients in Quality Improvement Webinar

We are pleased to invite you to a webinar that will support your continued quality improvement skill development. This training session will introduce the concept of patient engagement in quality improvement with the goal to improve patient experience and health outcomes.

Participants will be able to:

- Explain why engaging patients in quality improvement is important.
- Describe several strategies to engage patients in improvement.
- Describe aspects of care that could be improved through the involvement of patients.

Date: Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Time: Noon – 1:15 p.m.

[Sign-up Now](#)

Recommended Educational Opportunities Outside of PHC

Outpatient Therapeutics Mini-Series

This mini-series, supported by HHS ASPR, will provide a deep dive on new and emerging COVID-19 outpatient therapeutics, including monoclonal antibodies. The goal of this mini-series is to equip clinicians with the appropriate knowledge, resources, and tools needed to initiate and scale administration of these therapies and reduce strain on the U.S. healthcare system.

Dates: Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Time: 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

[Sign-up Now](#)

CSAM State of the Art Addiction Medicine Available Online

Earn up to 17.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ and 16.25 MOC credits!

The California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) brings together national experts to share frontiers of research, treatments, and policies in the field of Addiction Medicine. This conference covers expansion of treatment into correctional

health, hospital consultation services, emergency rooms, and even across the Border. It will cover how, despite the pandemic, telehealth can reach those who are isolated. It will address the worrisome trends in fentanyl, methamphetamine, tobacco and benzodiazepines use; legalization of cannabis, treatment updates for youth, cannabis and alcohol in pregnant women; and novel treatments such as non-benzodiazepines for alcohol withdrawal and psychedelics for substance use disorders.

The activity consists of 22 lectures that were presented live (virtually) on September 22-25, 2020.

Member Rate: \$345

Non-Member Rate: \$495

[More Information](#)

[Registration](#)

Time: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Training Fees: \$300 per attendee

[Sign-up Now](#)