

CP American Lung Association Leadership Academy

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Project Goals

To reduce disparities related to the impact of commercial tobacco on people with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. (Note: This does not include sacred, medicinal or traditional tobacco use by American Indians and other groups.)

Project Description

Individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders are disproportionately impacted by the harms of tobacco. Adults with serious mental illness die an average of 25 years earlier than others, and tobacco use is the number-one cause of death in people with mental illness. Seventy-five percent of adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorders want to quit smoking, but only 40% of Minnesota's mental health treatment facilities and 31% of substance use disorder treatment programs offer tobacco treatment.

The Leadership Academy Collaborative works to close this gap by increasing the number of mental health and substance use disorder programs that offer tobacco treatment and have tobacco-free grounds. This helps individuals add years to their lives by reaching their recovery and wellness goals.

The Leadership Academy Collaborative uses the following pathways to fulfill its mission:

- Professional Education. We created a tobacco treatment guide for organizations called “Tips from the Field,” and we offer technical assistance and other free resources.
- Reimbursement. We are working to increase reimbursement for facilities that provide tobacco treatment services through education and policy change.
- Statewide Policy Partners. We are building a coalition to integrate tobacco treatment and tobacco-free environments in all Minnesota mental health and substance use treatment settings.

Entities Involved

The Leadership Academy is led by the American Lung Association in Minnesota and includes partners from mental health, substance use treatment and public health organizations, as well as the Minnesota Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, provider networks such as CentraCare, and public health employees from Hennepin County.

How Health Plans Support the Project

Participating health plans include UCare, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

Staff from these health plans serve as partner organizations in the Leadership Academy, attending bi-annual convenings and serving on the Leadership Academy Advisory Committee and action teams.

Additional Information

www.lung.org/behavioralhealth-minnesota

Resources for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Professionals include “Tips From the Field,” downloadable PDFs on social norms, and the “Minnesota Leadership Academy Collaborative Statement on Tobacco Dependence Treatment and Tobacco-Free Policies in Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment Settings.”

Questions?

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