

# Colorado Substance Exposed Newborns Steering Committee

May 2020

---

## The Steering Committee

The Colorado SEN Steering Committee seeks to identify and implement strategies for reducing the number of families impacted by substance use during pregnancy and for improving outcomes for families across the lifespan. With the generous support of the Attorney General's Office, the committee has continued to advance its priorities.

### Progress to Date:

- While 2019 was dedicated to the development of evaluation plans for the SEN Steering Committee and six work groups, 2020 has focused on implementation of these evaluation strategies.
  - Dating back to January 2019, data from each work group and the Steering Committee were compiled into 2019 Data Summaries.
  - Data tracking processes have been enhanced to enable continuous monitoring of key process evaluation metrics to support real-time learning and quality improvement.
  - An evaluation tool is currently being administered to examine collaboration effectiveness and satisfaction within the Steering Committee and work groups, whereby results will be utilized to inform improvements.
- The Family Advisory Board (FAB) continues to meet quarterly, with near perfect attendance by all members. The FAB provides feedback and guidance to the Steering Committee, with the goal of raising awareness and best serving the needs of families impacted by substance use. The FAB met most recently on January 21st and April 20th.
  - At the January meeting, FAB members participated in a story-sharing training, which members see as one mechanism for supporting families and destigmatizing help-seeking behaviors.
  - In April, the FAB provided feedback on 3 Story Design's rebranding of Mother's Connection (now the "Tough as a Mother" campaign), provided feedback on the patient resources included in the Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Provider Education Toolkit, and lent guidance on future priority areas for the SEN Provider Education Work Group.
- An ad hoc group from the committee convened to revise the vision and mission statements as well as to draft an equity statement. Insights and feedback from the Family Advisory Board were integrated into the statements, and updated drafts were circulated and workshopped among committee members, committee co-chairs, and the FAB on an ongoing basis to finalize the statements. The statements are included on the next page.

**Opportunity:** The SEN Family Advisory Board and Steering Committee will foster mutual collaboration including through SEN Work Group co-chairs attending FAB meetings, as well as FAB members attending Steering Committee meetings. The SEN Steering Committee will continue to discuss alignment opportunities across ongoing and emerging initiatives, with consideration for the impact of COVID-19 on behavioral and mental health landscapes. With support from Illuminate, the SEN Steering Committee will implement the comprehensive evaluation strategy throughout 2020.

## Updated Vision for Colorado:

The Colorado SEN Steering Committee envisions a Colorado that equitably serves all families through prevention and reduction of substance use during pregnancy and provides multigenerational support for families to thrive.

## Statement on Equity:

The Colorado Substance Exposed Newborns (SEN) Steering Committee acknowledges that systemic social, economic, and environmental inequities impact experiences and outcomes around substance use, pregnancy, and/or parenting. We also recognize that substance use is strongly correlated with individual, historical, and intergenerational trauma, as well as mental health conditions, toxic stress, sexual violence, and/or intimate partner violence. Thus, substance use during pregnancy and/or parenting must be understood in this broader context. To decrease inequities, systems, services, and policies must be trauma-informed, culturally-responsive, and serve individuals and families with dignity and respect.

## 2018-2020 Priority Area Work Groups

In the period beginning in 2018 and concluding at the end of 2020, the SEN Steering Committee will be convening, supporting, and guiding work groups to advance the six priority areas outlined below.

**The Colorado Hospital SEN (CHoSEN) Collaborative** is working to increase consistency in implementation of best practice approaches in the identification of and response to newborns prenatally exposed to substances and their caregivers at the time of birth across Colorado—through education and formal quality improvement efforts. The CHoSEN Collaborative includes a continuum of ways hospitals, practices, and individual perinatal care providers can engage, including formal quality improvement work led by University of Colorado School of Medicine and the Colorado Perinatal Care Quality Collaborative (CPCQC), continued perinatal provider education and assessments, and events to share practices.

### Progress to Date:

- CHoSEN has grown to 31 hospitals with 24 in Colorado, one in Montana, and six in Wyoming.
- CHoSEN Quality Improvement Collaborative (QIC) has continued to demonstrate shortened length of stays with the current average being 7.5 days.
- CHoSEN QIC has launched new work focused on family and patient engagement led by the University of Colorado School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, Section of Neonatology.
- A manuscript draft outlining the success and challenges of the CHoSEN QIC been submitted to a number of peer-reviewed publications.
- Illuminate Colorado completed facilitation of an additional offering of the Prenatal Substance Exposure ECHO Series for perinatal providers and support staff. The series had 21 participants, and evaluation data is forthcoming.

**Opportunity:** The CHoSEN Collaborative is continuing to engage and recruit additional perinatal providers to participate and welcomes suggestions and connections for continued outreach, particularly in rural and frontier regions.

**Upcoming Forum:** Tuesday, May 12th 9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. (virtual only)

**The SEN Data and Research Work Group** is working to increase statewide data and research capacity in order to inform our work and to share successes and challenges.

Progress to Date:

- Launched the Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Data Linkage Project through the leadership of the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab (CO Lab) and collaboration of work group members from healthcare, public health, child welfare, and other state agencies to examine trends, predictors, and outcomes associated with prenatal substance use among birthing individuals and infants in Colorado.
- Activated data sharing agreements utilizing the Linked Information Network of Colorado (LINC) to securely integrate information from different administrative datasets and link maternal and infant data across systems throughout the perinatal period.
- Began the development of a Qualitative Research Project to elucidate and strengthen the findings of the Data Linkage Project, and to examine barriers and facilitators to prevention and treatment strategies for prenatal substance use through the perspective of Colorado birthing individuals and caregivers, providers, and child welfare professionals.

Opportunity: The Data and Research Work Group will support CO Lab in conducting trend analyses to provide preliminary findings for the Data Linkage Project. The work group will also finalize the qualitative research protocol and establish partners for study recruitment and data collection.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 14th from 10-11:30 A.M.

**The SEN FASD Identification Work Group** is working to assess the needs related to FASD identification capacity in the state and develop an expansion plan. The group began by conducting a scan of current places and professionals thought to be resources—including an evaluation of their training needs and referral patterns.

Progress to Date:

- Contributed to the planning of three FASD Roadshow events, as a way to raise awareness of FASDs and resources regionally available for families, and to receive feedback on priority areas. The first event was held in February in Pueblo, and the second was a virtual event in partnership with Weld County.
- Collaborated with the Office of Early Childhood to discuss opportunities for raising awareness of FASDs among Community Centered Board (CCB) staff.

Opportunity: The FASD Identification Work Group will continue to finalize recommendations based on Gap Analysis findings, incorporating feedback on statewide stakeholder input with additional funding from the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. This Work Group will also continue to explore training opportunities and collaboration with Community Centered Boards.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 29th from 12-1:30 P.M.

**The SEN Plans of Safe Care Work Group** is working to promote community-based strategies to meeting the CAPTA/CARA requirement regarding plans of safe care for infants and caregivers.

- Hosted a kickoff event for over 140 professionals from across the state to raise awareness surrounding the Plans of Safe Care Guidelines and Checklist; attendees included: hospital staff, behavioral health providers, county human service and public health staff, and state agency partners.
- Recruited and onboarded 10 new work group members.
- Provided insight to what content to include in a Plans of Safe Care Web-Based Training track for intake workers through the Child Welfare Training System.

Opportunity: The Plans of Safe Care Work Group will continue to strategize around best practice approaches for successful implementation by hospitals and child welfare staff across the state.

Next Meeting: Tuesday May 5th from 12-1 P.M.

**The SEN Policy Work Group** is monitoring state policy priorities to increase access to substance use disorder treatment and other services, decrease bias and discrimination in screening and testing, and other issues.

Progress to Date:

- Shared updates on a bi-monthly basis throughout the first half of the 2020 legislative session.
- Created a SEN Policy Work Group bill tracker to monitor and facilitate information-sharing regarding 14 different state initiatives related to substance use and families within categories of behavioral and mental health, early childhood, economic security, and family planning.
- Began a discussion of emerging needs and opportunities in light of COVID-19 surrounding substance use disorder treatment, recovery supports, prenatal care, birth settings, postnatal care, as well as intersecting issues.

Opportunity: The Policy Work Group will continue to consider implications for substance use and families while monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on the state budget, legislative processes, and behavioral and mental health landscapes.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 19th from 8:30-9:30 A.M.

**The SEN Provider Education Work Group** is working to expand provider education on related issues such as screening every pregnant woman with a validated screening tool in prenatal, hospital and postpartum settings.

Progress to Date:

- Promoted the Colorado Perinatal Substance Use Provider Toolkit: 8 professional organizations promoted the toolkit through online newsletters and social media channels.
- Updated the toolkit dissemination plan in consideration of COVID-19 to ensure appropriate timing of widespread circulation of the toolkit to perinatal providers across the state.
- Reviewed an additional 50 resources with expanded topic areas for the toolkit, including trauma informed care, intimate partner violence, policy implications, engaging fathers and other caregivers, and more.
- Began a brainstorming session around the Work Group's objective post-toolkit, in recognition that the toolkit will require ongoing work.

Opportunity: The Provider Education Work Group will continue to work with a technology consultant to improve the functionality of the toolkit, and will collaborate with the SEN Family Advisory Board to inform current and future work.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 20th from 2:30-4 P.M.

**To join a work group, nominate someone to a work group, or receive more information, contact Jordan Smith at [jsmith@illuminatecolorado.org](mailto:jsmith@illuminatecolorado.org).**

## Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force Committee Update

---

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidence-based, early intervention practice designed to identify, reduce, and prevent misuse of alcohol and other substances. When combined with community-level prevention strategies, SBIRT contributes to the prevention of physical and behavioral health issues that may result from substance use.

The COVID-19 public health crisis has caused collective trauma worldwide and in such difficult times, many turn to substances to cope with resulting anxiety and fear. Substance use and substance use disorders have the potential to cause additional vulnerability to the effects of COVID-19. Because of this, it continues to be tremendously important to provide physical and behavioral health providers with the tools to have meaningful conversations with their patients about substance use and health.

**SBIRT Advisory Council Co-Chairs:** Bethany Pace-Danley, Peer Assistance Services, Inc. & Kacy Crawford, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

**SBIRT Adolescent Work Group Co-Chairs:** Kelsey Robinson, Peer Assistance Services, Inc & Christy Boland, Colorado Association for School-Based Health Care

**SBIRT Training and Education Work Group Co-Chairs:** Sam Bourdon, Peer Assistance Services, Inc. & Darlyn Baker, Contractor with ViewPoints Psychotherapy

---

The SBIRT Advisory Council has met quarterly since October 2019. The Advisory Council currently consists of 48 members. We continue to recruit new members to join the Council and its two work groups, focused on 1) adolescent SBIRT, and 2) training and education.

### Adolescent SBIRT Work Group

---

The Adolescent SBIRT Work Group has connected with the Colorado chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Work Group has narrowed their focus to a white paper series. The first white paper will be on best practices in Adolescent SBIRT, based on a literature review by the group. The next step will be to survey providers in Colorado with the help of the Colorado AAP and craft a subsequent white paper on current adolescent SBIRT implementation across the state.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 3-4PM via Zoom

### SBIRT Training and Education Work Group

---

The SBIRT Training and Education Work Group members created a proposal outlining SBIRT capacity building for the Colorado Community College System. The proposal outlines the need for Screening and Brief Intervention training and capacity building for healthcare providers in collegiate communities. Workgroup members are coordinating with José Esquibel of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention to introduce the proposal to Chancellor Joe Garcia of the Colorado Community College System.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2-3PM via Zoom

## SBIRT *in* Colorado Updates

---

### Statewide Training and Technical Assistance:

- In response to COVID-19, all sites with training scheduled through June 2020 have been offered the option of either a web-based training or rescheduling.
- SBIRT *in* Colorado hosted their first live, virtual TA session on Friday, April 17th.
  - Six individuals attended the first session
  - SBIRT *in* Colorado plans to offer additional live TA sessions covering topics including online Kognito simulations, screening guidance, and SBIRT implementation for polysubstance use.

### **SBIRT Advisory Council Member Updates & Related Projects**

---

- The SBIRT Advisory Council met on Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020
  - Heather Tolle, Substance Use Disorder Evaluator and Stephanie Russell, Evaluation Manager, Colorado Office of Behavioral Health, presented on Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health Disorders
  - José Esquibel, Director of the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention, provided legislative updates
  - Many members are currently finding ways to transition into telehealth services. SBIRT *in* Colorado provided updates on virtual training and technical assistance.
    - A topic of interest among Advisory Council members is how to ensure that screenings and brief interventions are still taking place while many practices shift to telehealth services
  - The next SBIRT Advisory Council meeting will be held in July