Meeting Patients Where They Are/The Places Will Be Different
Learning Objectives

1. Improve participant understanding of specific barriers in non-white individuals and communities involved with the court and criminal justice systems.
2. Enhance participant knowledge of effective marketing of Medicated-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in non-white communities.
3. Participants will be able to identify key areas that should be engaged to improve participation in MAT among court-involved non-white populations including community organizations, criminal justice settings, local courts, and emergency rooms/hospitals.
Introduction

- Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA) overview
- Key Data points of the FADAA program:
  - 85% Caucasian
  - 85.3% Non-Hispanic
  - The average of patients is 41.8 years
  - MAT offered to 23 jails
Key Focuses of the FADAA Program

- Reduce subsequent involvement of MAT patients in the court and criminal justice systems.
- Prevent the occurrence of overdose, death, and other adverse consequences from opioid and alcohol misuse or dependence.
- Stabilize patients using medications aimed at reducing the urge to use opioids/alcohol and blocking the effects of opioids/alcohol in the brain.
- Promote follow through on other forms of treatment and recovery support while facilitating positive changes in patients’ key life areas.
Missed Opportunities

- Population estimates and disparities
  - 17.9% Black/African American
  - 26.8% Hispanic
- Impact of the opioid epidemic on non-White populations
- Increased use of fentanyl leads to rises in overdoses and deaths among non-white populations
- Importance of closer examination and engagement of court-involved non-white individuals
Targeting Missed Opportunities - Stigma and Fear

- Types of stigma:
  - Social Stigma
    - Refers to the negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes held by society
  - Self-Stigma
    - When individuals internalize struggling with addiction.
  - Structural Stigma
    - Policies, laws, and institutional practices that create barriers to treatment and perpetuate discrimination
  - Professional Stigma
    - Healthcare professionals may hold stigmatizing attitudes towards individuals with substance abuse disorders
  - Cultural and Racial Stigma
    - Certain cultures and communities may stigmatize or ethnic stereotypes, can contribute to additional barriers to seeking treatment

- Negative Impact on stigma on seeking treatment
  - Methadone
Targeting Missed Opportunities - Fear of Self-Reporting

- Misconceptions about identifying and admitting illicit opioid use
  - The idea is that identifying and admitting illicit opioid use will result in jail time or a negative encounter with law enforcement
- Adverse effects on perceived standing in the community
  - Many patients indicate that they will only do what is required to fulfill their legal penalties
  - “SNITCH”
- Convincing patients of benefits of MAT and traditional treatment
- Fear of Withdrawal
Targeting Missed Opportunities - Lifestyle Feeds the Problem

- Glorification of dealers and drug use
  - More easily attainable lifestyle
- Financial incentives and lifestyle influences
  - Reinforced by mainstream music, social media, and lifestyle
  - Glorification of alcohol and opioid use, often in conjunction with other substances (Lean)
- Impact of substance use on involvement with the court and criminal justice systems
Communication - Cultural Differences

- Cultural backgrounds and communication breakdowns
  - Non-White populations and substance abuse counselors may have different cultural backgrounds, which leads to misunderstandings and communications breakdowns
    - The use of “ebonics” has grown tremendously (Urban Dictionary)
    - African American English (AAE), or Black English (spilling tea, lit, woke, drag)
      - Some phrases are adopted and made mainstream (bootylicious, woke, As f*$#)
    - Compounded even further with other non-white cultures and areas of the country
    - Looked at still as a broken and grammatically incorrect variation of standard English
- Importance of multicultural staff and representation
  - Having professionals who can speak this language naturally is imperative
Communication - Language Barriers

- Difficulties in communicating with counselors
- Frustrations and misunderstandings
Communication - Power Dynamics/Spirituality

- Feelings of powerlessness in the counseling relationship
  - May feel powerless in the counseling relationship, which can make it difficult for them to share
- Implications of effective treatment
  - Will make it difficult for providers to help their clients
- Importance of considering spirituality in treatment approaches
  - African Americans’ preference for relying on their spiritual and religious communities (i.e. the Black Church) for support
Use of Peer Recovery Specialists

- Having recovering individuals (especially those that have received MAT) on staff to promote the benefits of MAT
- Collaborating with court staff, jail/prison staff, and probation officers
  - Arrange brief discussions with prospective patients
    - Answer questions on how MAT works, medication side effects versus benefits and the advantage of MAT/Treatment reducing relapse and future involvement with the legal system
- Provides living proof that recovery is possible
Lack of access to Affordable Treatment - Area

- Limited treatment options in certain area can make it difficult for them to find the help needed.
  - Limited space at recovery centers (detox is always full)
- FADAA network coverage
  - Network has become more expansive including providers from Pensacola to Key West and almost county in between
Lack of Access to Affordable Treatment - Cost

- Substance abuse treatment can be expensive and often not covered by insurance or Medicaid
- Marketing efforts at the community and individual levels need to emphasize the state’s investment in MAT and other treatment options
  - Vast majority of services are offered at little to no cost to patients
Medicated
Assisted
Treatment (MAT)
Lack of Trust in the Healthcare System/Providers

- Non-white populations are more likely to have had perceived negative experiences with the healthcare system
  - Lack of trust in the healthcare system, such as being misdiagnosed or mistreated
    - Leads to poor follow-through on recommendations
    - Hearing from patients that have experienced the benefits of medications may help reduce negative perceptions of medications
- Lack of trust in providers leads to poor follow-through on recommendations
- Importance of trust in the success of treatment
Benefits of Medications

- Importance of sharing positive experiences with medications
- Emphasize the role of patient testimonials in reducing negative perceptions
- Providing medications that help with withdrawals.
  - Clonidine
  - Buprenorphine
Healthcare Literacy

- More likely to have low health literacy, which means they may not understand why they are taking their medications or how it works
  - Educating patients about medications during clinical medical assessments is so important
  - Reinforced through discussions with the patients through the MAT episode of care
- Explain the need for educating patients about medications and MAT
Cultural Beliefs

- Cultural beliefs that may make non-white individuals less likely to take medication or seek treatment
  - Many believe that taking medication is a sign of weakness or not necessary
    - Machismo in Hispanic culture
    - Psychiatry/Therapy = “Crazy”
  - This also appears to the patient that they have lost control
- Believed that treatment will led to the inability to provide
  - Requires time off of work
- Feeling the Affects of “The War on Drugs”
  - The effect of the “Crack Epidemic” in the 1980’s
“Reaching In”

- Allows for greater access to treatment through enhanced, targeted communication
- Demonstrating a willingness to truly meet the patient where he/she is in their communities, emergency rooms/hospitals, or jails/prisons
- Empathize with the patient and show that you are invested in their lives and improvising their circumstances
Engaging Communities

● The pillars of a non-white community are the people who are most respected and influential with community
  ○ Pastors (religious leaders)
  ○ Business Owners
  ○ Respected Members and well-known and respected by peers (Big Bro)

● Work with those leaders to identify barriers and strategies for getting court-involved individuals engaged in MAT and other beneficial treatment/recovery support

● Attend community events and meetings
  ○ Great way to meet people
  ○ Learn about the issues that are important to them
    ■ Emails, making calls, visiting, and social media
  ○ Builds trust, identifies needs, and promotes understanding and acceptance
Jails and Problem-Solving Courts

- Problem-Solving Courts offer non-violent offenders with substance use disorders a treatment alternative to incarceration
  - Becomes an introduction to treatment for non-white offenders
  - Can easily become a check in the box for the offender (My probation officer told me I had to).

- Allows for the distribution of resources
  - SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery)
    - Allowed for qualifying patients to apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- Allows for access to Mental Health Services
  - Often introduces individuals to underlying issues (depression, anxiety, family issues)
Emergency Room

- Overdose can often reveal the Realness of “Rock Bottom”
  - Understanding how close to death the patient became can cause a want for treatment
  - An immediate intervention or connection with the patient after overdose has proven effective on patients entering treatment
- Ed providers still need education on the effectiveness of MAT in a hospital setting before discharge
  - Intense withdrawals
  - Excellent opportunity to engage and explain the benefits of MAT once the patient is stabilized
  - Many patients have encountered withdrawals before and continue to use to not get “sick”. Ensuring the patient that these symptoms can be mitigated by MAT provides a level of comfort
Bridge Programs

- Providers that have established bridge programs should review their approaches to “potential” patients to ensure
  - No assumptions are made about substance use problems based on culture, race, or other factors
  - Language used to explain MAT and other substance abuse services is appropriate and makes the potential MAT patient feel valued
  - Transportation is offered or arranged to get the individual to the community-based provider for MAT evaluation and initiation
  - The Value of MAT for court-involved individuals is facilitating successful treatment, reduction of use/harm, and improvements in personal and interpersonal matters (e.g., relationships, employment etc.)