

AHEC Veterans Mental Health Project

MARKETING THE TRAINING

When to Begin

The initial email blast should be at least 8 weeks prior to the training. If mailing brochures through U.S. Postal Service using bulk mail, send 10 weeks prior - bulk mail can take as long as 2 weeks to get delivered.

Who to Market To

Refer to the “Target Audiences” section of this toolkit as a reference in determining which health professionals you want to attend your CE event. Tips are provided for getting mail and email lists for these different groups. Below are two key groups A-TrACC would like for you to consider including in your marketing efforts.

1. FQHC/CHCs

Working with FQHCs can be challenging as they are structured differently than other clinics. The organizations include a multi-disciplinary clinical workforce that treats patients through a culturally-competent, integrated care system that is accessible. The organization can be complex with multiple people to contact.

FQHCs are generally run by an Executive Director who oversees the organization and a Medical Director overseeing clinical services. Based on size, additional leadership positions include but are not limited to Chief Operating Officer, Human Relations Director, Dental Coordinator, etc.

Establishing a relationship with the FQHC is key and utilizing multiple points of contact may be necessary. Key points to remember:

- Clinics will have a variety of staff. Always check with the Medical Director to see if they can provide you with information on their partnering organizations so you can invite them to your trainings. (If the clinic has an agreement with a local pharmacy, invite them to your programs)
- Extended hours are required at FQHCs, so offering training just for that clinic may be necessary and may need to be repeated to meet staff needs.
- The clinic has extensive data on its patient mix. You may be able to get additional information on patient types to assist in program development and/or refining speakers’ comments.
- Many centers have designated training times each month and may incorporate other FQHCs in the region. Most of these training times will be limited to one to two hours.
- FQHCs are highly involved in Quality Improvement projects. Be sure to check with the Medical Director or Executive Director as to what current projects they have and see if your program can fit into those projects or needs.

2. PCA/PCOs

PCA/PCOs are great potential partners for AHECs to co-sponsor and market VMH CE offerings including state-wide initiatives.

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) around the country, particularly community health centers and rural health clinics, are organized in states and regions as membership-directed Primary

Care Associations (PCA). Additionally, each state has an agency designated as a Primary Care Office (PCO). PCAs and PCOs receive funding from a number of sources including HRSA to monitor and advocate for access to primary care services throughout the state and to assist in providing technical assistance to FQHC's in the state.

- For a list by state of PCAs visit <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/technicalassistance/partnerlinks/associations.html>
- For PCOs by state visit <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/technicalassistance/partnerlinks/stateprimarycare.html>

These organizations can be instrumental in bringing agencies and key persons together to improve interaction by the regions providers. PCA/PCOs act as advocates for community-based health care programs with a focus on FQHC's. They also play a vital role in educating federal, state and local policymakers about issues relating to health care and the role of the health center.

What to Include on the Brochure/Flyer

The brochure should include:

- Title - AHEC Veterans Mental Health Project: (add title of your program)
- Project Tag Line: *“This training is part of the nationwide AHEC Veterans Mental Health Project.”*
- Date and time
 - Beginning time and ending time
 - Some credit providers may require an agenda to be on the brochure
- Agenda
 - If space available
 - If required by credit provider
- Location
 - Specific training site and city
 - Directions or where to get directions
- Program description/purpose
- Learning objectives
- Target audience - who is the training for?
- Continuing education credit information – get information from credit provider
- Registration information
 - Process – how to register
 - Registration fee (if applicable)
 - Early/late registration fees (if applicable)
 - What fee includes (Meals? Refreshments? Handouts?)
 - Refund or cancelation information
 - Cancel prior to the training
 - Do not show the day of the program
- List of speakers with short biography for each
- Who to contact with questions

How to Get Professional Mailing Lists

The easiest way to get mailing lists (email or mailing labels) is to contact the state professional associations or licensing boards for the disciplines you want to attract. An online search should give you this information. Using an internet search engine, type in the name of the discipline you are searching for (psychology, social worker, nursing, etc.) then type “licensing board,” then type your state and hit <Enter>. On the home page of most licensing boards will be a link to information on how to access the membership mailing list. There will be a cost, so be sure to include it in the budget.

Partnering with a college or university nearby would give you access to their alumni list, and they could be listed as a sponsor on the marketing materials. Some professional organizations may be willing to advertise your program on their calendar, training page or website.

Other Marketing Ideas

- Group Discounts: Group discounts are a good way to encourage an organization to send more people. Here is a fee schedule that has been used by other AHECs:
 - 1-4 people no discount
 - 5-9 people 10%-15%
 - > 10 people 20-25%
- “Bartering:” Some organizations may not be able to pay a registration fee (due to restrictions on how to use funds), but they may be able to provide something else needed for the program – the training site, AV equipment, duplication of handouts, food, staff time to help with registration etc. Exchange this service for people attending. Ex: an agency provides the training site and AV equipment at no charge in exchange they send XX number of people to the training at no charge.