



COP - RCORP

Communities of Practice for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program

Core Activity #4: Workforce Development Plan

Washington County, OH

Washington County Local RCORP Consortium

Washington County Health Department

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Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) and Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs (OHIO), through a shared services and braided funding approach, work directly with project directors from the five CoP-RCORP backbone organizations to provide leadership, training, capacity building, technical assistance and evaluation services, and management oversight for project activities. The project directors then bring back the shared learnings and experiences from the community of practice to their respective community-specific consortium, which is responsible for leading project activities within the five Ohio communities. This workforce development plan represents the shared work of the Washington County Local RCORP Consortium (local consortium), the Washington County Health Department (backbone organization), and the COP-RCORP Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation Team (PIRE and OHIO).

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Workforce Development Plan

Communities of Practice for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (COP-RCORP)

Washington County Local RCORP Consortium

Washington County Health Department

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Introduction

RCORP-Planning

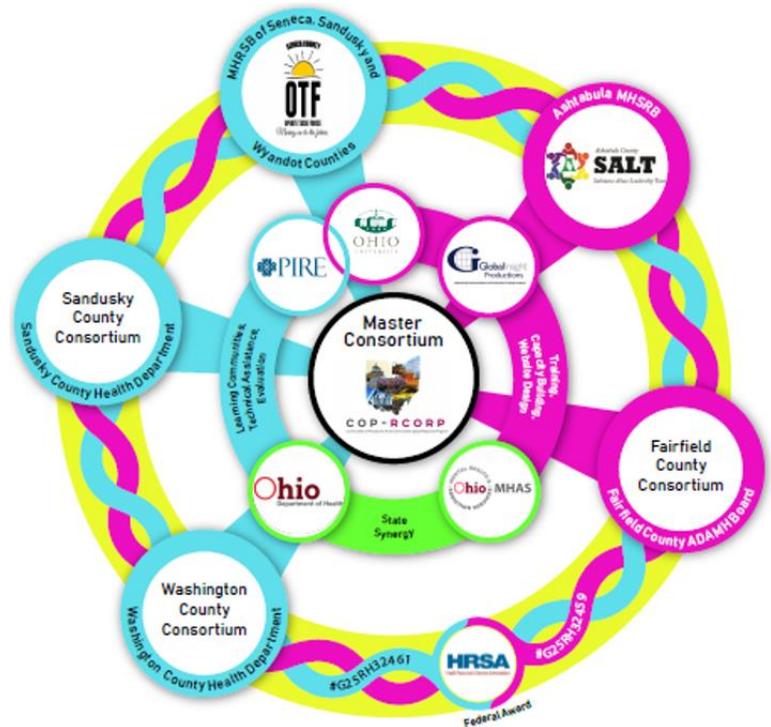
The Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) is a multi-year initiative supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to address barriers to access in rural communities related to substance use disorder (SUD), including opioid use disorder (OUD). RCORP funds multi-sector consortia to enhance their ability to implement and sustain SUD/OUD prevention, treatment, and recovery services in underserved rural areas. To support funded RCORP consortia, HRSA also funded a national technical assistance provider, JBS International.

The overall goal of the planning phase of the RCORP initiative is to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses in high-risk rural communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortiums to address prevention, treatment, and recovery. Under the one-year planning initiative, grantees are required to complete five core activities. The fifth core activity is to complete a sustainability plan for the consortium. This report contains the local consortia's workforce development plan from the planning phase.

CoP-RCORP Consortium

The Communities of Practice for Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (CoP-RCORP) Consortium was created in 2018 when the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) and Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs (OHIO) and braided together funding from two separate awards (G25RH32461-01-06 & G25RH32459-01-02). PIRE and OHIO then offered equitable access to five backbone organizations in the rural communities of: Ashtabula, Fairfield, Sandusky, Seneca, and Washington Counties. An organizational chart of the braided CoP is included here for quick reference. More information about the organizational structure, co-developmental process, and shared economy may be found on the project website:

<https://www.communitiesofpractice-rcorp.com/>



Workforce Development Plan Overview

Although Workforce Development is critically important to successfully addressing SUD/OUD, it has not received much attention at the state level in Ohio and there have been few resources devoted at the state and local levels to assessing workforce needs and gaps and to addressing development and retention needs of the SUD/OUD workforce. RCORP-Planning Core Activity 4 provided the Washington County Local RCORP Consortium with an opportunity to better understand its current workforce along with needs of the workforce. Because this is a new area, work by the Washington County local consortium on its SUD/OUD workforce will be ongoing throughout the RCORP-Implementation project.

The Workforce Development Plan that follows below assesses SUD/ODU workforce needs and gaps, articulates goals and activities designed to facilitate progress toward improving recruitment, training, and retention of the Washington County SUD/ODU workforce. The plan also identifies opportunities at the federal, state, and local levels that will contribute to further development of the Washington County SUD/ODU workforce. This Workforce Development Plan will result in the formation of three workgroups (subcommittees of the OTF) that will work on each priority area.

Current SUD/ODU Workforce in Washington County

During the process of writing the RCORP-Planning and RCORP-Implementation grant submissions to HRSA, COP-RCORP local consortia gathered data about their community’s existing SUD and ODU workforce. Local consortia drew from these data, as well as data collected as part of their Needs and Gaps Assessment to respond to guiding questions provided by PIRE and OHIO regarding the current needs and gaps of the SUD and ODU workforce. These guiding questions operationalized the workforce plan guidance provided by HRSA and JBS, the national RCORP-Planning technical assistance provider.

The school-based PAX program in Washington County reaches 3,000 students with about 150 school staff trained in its delivery across the County. A Hub partner (Eve, Inc. – a women’s shelter) delivers the evidence-based prevention program “Too Good For Drugs” in Washington County schools. The county is a Project DAWN community, distributing Naloxone through “Recovery Engagement” Teams.

The Washington County Local RCORP Consortium has provided an inventory of treatment centers and services, as reported in Table 1. The 2017 Washington County Community Health Assessment (CHA) notes that there is a significant lack of behavioral health services in the County. The CHA reported that substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment were among the five weakest health factors in Washington County.

Table 1. SUD/ODU Treatment Providers in Washington County

Name of Provider	Address	Description of Services
Eve, Incorporated	PO Box 122 Marietta, OH 45750	Temporary housing for domestic violence, school-based preventive programs
Hopewell Health Centers	2434 Richmiller Lane, Suite F Belpre, OH 45714	MAT, counseling, mental health services
Life & Purpose Behavioral Health	207 Colegate Dr d, Marietta, OH 45750	MAT, counseling, mental health services, peer support
Marietta Memorial Hospital	401 Matthew St, Marietta, OH 45750	Geriatric Psych Ward
Oriana House, Inc.	27830 State Rt. 7 Marietta, Ohio 45750	MAT, counseling, mental health services
SperoHealth	418 Colegate Dr, Marietta, OH 45750	MAT, counseling
Integrated Services for Behavioral Health	11 Graham Dr, Athens, OH 45701	In-home counseling
Salvation Army	136 Front St, Marietta, OH 45750	Some temporary housing and vouchers for hotels, coats, meals
Washington/Morgan Community Action	218 Putnam St, Marietta, OH 45750	Some transitional housing, wrap around services

While treatment centers are primarily located and headquartered in Marietta, the SUD/ODU workforce does extend into other areas of the county. However, transportation infrastructure in Washington County is fragmented and inadequate, causing patients to miss appointments and leading to inefficient use of existing workforce. Table 2 lists the number and location of SUD/ODU professionals in Washington County.

Table 2. SUD/ODU Workforce

Type of Provider	Number of Providers in the Service Area	Location
Prevention Professionals (OCPSA, OCPS, OCPC)	No known prevention specialists	N/A
Psychiatrists	8	Marietta, Belpre, Vincent,
APRNs	6	Marietta, Belpre
Psychologists	4	Marietta
Licensed Clinical Social Workers	6	Marietta, Belpre, Beverly
Professional Counselors (LPC, LPCC)	39	Marietta, Belpre, Beverly
Peer Support Specialists	1	County-wide

Established physicians in Washington County have expressed resistance to provide MAT, mostly due to lingering stigma around drug abuse and treatment, but capacity is increasing (with 5 prescribers currently providing MAT), and the Washington County Health Department expects further increases in the number of providers offering MAT in 2020. Table 3 shows the number of prescribers currently providing MAT in Washington County.

Table 3. Number of Prescribers Currently Providing MAT

Health Care Providers with a Waiver to Provide MAT	Number of Providers in the Service Area
Physicians	2
Nurse Practitioners	3
Physician Assistants	0
Other Mid-Level Prescribers (CNM, CRNA, etc.)	0

Washington County drug court utilizes Peer Recovery Supporters to aid individuals in recovery and to steer individuals into treatment. In the past two years, Washington County has had a drug treatment facility (Oriana House), a recovery service (Rigel), and a sober living facility (Oxford House) start up in Washington County. The Oxford House was discontinued due to operational issues, so recovery housing is still a major gap in services.

Washington County SUD/ODU Workforce Needs and Gaps

Recruitment

Local providers cannot compete with the pay scale in larger population centers, such as Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, especially for licensed professionals, which are the most acute shortage. OUD positions, especially those with advanced degrees, are often advertised for months without being filled.

Professionals in West Virginia cannot easily transfer their licenses or certifications to Ohio, limiting the available workforce.

Community-level factors also contribute to Washington County's ability to attract professionals from outside the county. Childcare is limited. School system infrastructure is aging. There is a strong community belief that addiction is a choice, "those people" made their beds so they deserve what they get. This stigma, as well as pay differences, also acts as a formidable barrier to recruiting workforce from other fields, such as the oil and gas industry and construction.

Retention

There is currently little opportunity or support for staff to advance in the OUD field. The consortium is working to develop a career ladder for the peer recovery workforce by recruiting peer recovery supporters through AmeriCorps. As more agencies utilize peer recovery supporters, these individuals will enter a professional workforce and may be inspired to get their GED or college degree, offering more opportunities for career advancement within OUD services.

The consortium has identified burnout as a serious barrier to retaining Washington County's OUD workforce. The increasing demand to provide services to a high need community, paired with staff shortages, places unmanageable pressure on existing staff. Paperwork, reimbursement challenges, and the continually changing policy landscape contribute to stress among management personnel. The OUD workforce must also navigate the same fragmented transportation system that poses a barrier to patients seeking treatment.

Training and Retraining

Training is available to the current and potential OUD workforce through the Behavioral Health Board. PAX trainings are offered regularly, along with motivational interviewing, Peer Recovery Supporter training, and a self-care LGBTQ+ program. Internships are available at the hospital and at all Washington County behavioral health providers. Job shadowing is offered at all Washington County behavioral health sites.

However, barriers exist to accessing these trainings and resources. Transportation challenges prevent interested individuals in taking advantage of some of these opportunities. Licenses/certifications are not easily transferrable from state to state, which is a problem for a border county like Washington.

SUD/OUD Workforce Resources and Opportunities in Washington

Partnerships

A key component in the Washington County's OUD workforce is the Washington County Hub, which was formed to coordinate prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts and is well attended by 25 local organizations and over 40 community leaders. Subcommittees (Education/Prevention, Treatment, Housing, and Workforce) meet approximately monthly. Each committee has a Chairperson and the Hub is co-chaired by a local judge and a legal services representative.

Marietta College (MC) has a Master's program in Clinical Counseling and a Physician's Assistant program, Washington State Community College (WSCC) is starting a certificate program in chemical dependency, Marietta Memorial has a new Residency program (MD, DO), Ohio University has a broad range of programs from entry level to doctorate. The Washington County Behavioral Health Board is starting to explore cross-river collaboration with the Mid-Ohio Valley Rural Health Alliance, which consists of FQHCs, rural hospitals, a major hospital (WVU Medicine), West Virginia University at Parkersburg and a major behavioral health provider (Westbrook) to better address gaps in infrastructure and workforce.

Federal, State, and Local Programs

Two providers (Life and Purpose Behavioral Health and Hopewell Health Centers) have named the National Health Service Corps programming as one of their best recruitment/retention tools. One provider (Land of Goshen) became an approved site in the Fall of 2019. However, Oriana House was denied NHSC status. Hopewell is a lead agency in another HRSA RCORP grant. Identifying other area provider organizations who are eligible to apply to become a NHSC site or a NHSC SUD/OD expansion site provides a key opportunity for Washington County.

Some providers in Washington County utilize HRSA's virtual job fairs to assist with recruitment, as well as participating in the Opioid Workforce Expansion Program for Professionals. These are federal resources the consortium would like to make more widely available throughout Washington County.

SUD/OD Workforce Goals for Washington County

Preliminary goals for Washington County to improve recruitment, training, and retention of its SUD/OD workforce follow below. As noted above, workforce development is a new area for Washington County and its stakeholders and additional planning work is needed. The goals below will be addressed during the three-year RCORP-Implementation project by creating three workgroups that will focus on workforce strategic planning related to provider recruitment, training, and retention. A key outcome of the RCORP-Planning grant has been a shared commitment by Washington County consortium to monitor and address SUD/OD workforce issues through developing, operationalizing, and sustaining workgroups focused on these three areas of workforce development.

Recruitment

The Washington County Local RCORP consortium will research common barriers to recruitment and explore ways to mitigate them. The consortium will facilitate collaboration among behavioral health partners to implement models on effective recovery services and to consider entry level peer-support roles at a variety of community venues.

Retention

The consortium will develop an understanding of what barriers providers have in applying and qualifying for loan repayment programs. Offering loan repayment and tuition reimbursement is a key strategy in retaining current OUD workforce.

The consortium will work with behavioral health providers to understand their workforce shortages and collaborate with education partners (specifically MC, WSCC, and Career Center) to explore filling provider areas of need. Addressing staffing shortages will prevent burnout and lead to greater retention of the existing workforce.

Training and Retraining

The consortium will collaborate with behavioral health agencies in Washington County to identify current scholarship programs for individuals willing to stay in the area and explore new scholarship sources.

Federal, State, and Local Program Participation

The consortium will investigate eligibility requirements for NHSC sites, identify why local provider agencies who previously applied were denied certification as NHSC sites, and will work in partnership with them to assist in reapplying for NHSC certification. Additional opportunities for other sites to become NHSC certified also will be explored.

Partnership Development

Much of the development of Washington County's OUD workforce relies on establishing relationships with behavior health agencies and local universities. Work will be ongoing to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop new partnerships to better support Washington County's SUD/OUD workforce.

Ongoing Monitoring of Labor Market Trends and Data

This effort was the first time in Washington County that an environmental scan of the community's SUD/OUD workforce had been completed. Monitoring will be ongoing and future work also will identify and utilize labor-market data as well as utilize ongoing epidemiological data about drug use and other related public health threats. This approach will help the Washington County COP-RCORP consortium understand employment trends along the County's healthcare and SUD workforces and will help ensure that the reach and competencies of its SUD/OUD workforce can address emerging public health concerns related to SUD/OUD in the future.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Project leads from the consortium and backbone organization reviewed the available data, identified partners and stakeholders to engage to form workgroups, and developed a set of overarching goals to explore and further refine. The consortium has identified nine potential organizational partners within their community who may contribute to operationalizing the workforce development plan. (Appendix A lists these organizational partners and describes their roles in the community's OUD workforce.)

Having identified key stakeholders and community needs, the Washington County Local RCORP Consortium and its partners will utilize this report to develop concrete objectives and metrics to advance Washington County's SUD/OUD workforce. This will be an iterative process informed by conversations with community members, organizational partners, service providers, and other impacted populations. Key next steps include forming a workforce development team and three workgroups (corresponding to each of the identified workforce goals of recruitment, retention, and training) that will develop action plans for each goal and objective that include measurable and time-bound indicators of progress. A template for this action plan is included in Appendix B. COP-RCORP and local consortium efforts on workforce development will continue during the RCORP-Implementation project.

APPENDIX A: Environmental Scan of Washington County's SUD/OD Workforce

Organization	Sector	Name of Contact	Area: Prevention, Treatment, and/or Recovery	What does this organization contribute to your community's workforce plan? Why is this individual key to your community's workforce plan?
Marietta College and Washington State Community College	State universities, community colleges, and vocational schools Specify Other:	Hilles Hughes	Treatment	Degree programs in Clinical Counseling and Physician's Assistant at MC; Chemical Dependency Certificate at WSCC
Washington County Behavioral Health Board	Government agencies Specify Other:	David Browne	Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery	Scholarships for treatment careers, funding for PAX, Peer Supporter, and other workforce trainings, coordination of BH related efforts
Life and Purpose Behavioral Health, Hopewell Health Centers, Oriana, Land of Goshen	Community behavioral health clinics Specify Other:	Doug Pheifer Sherry Shamblin, Coda Click, Amy Smith	Treatment and Recovery	Infrastructure, advise on critical workforce components
Washington County Health Department	Government agencies Specify Other:	Shaeleigh Sprigg	Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery	Coordination of efforts
Washington County Jobs and Family Services	Government agencies Specify Other:	Flite Frieman	Treatment Recovery	Assistance with transportation issues, connecting individuals in recovery with employment
Buckeye Hills	Government agencies Specify Other:	Mindy Cayton	Treatment and Recovery	Evidence-based self-management programs, potential lead agency for mobility manager (transportation),
Southeast Ohio Legal Services	Other Specify Other: Legal	Robin Bozian	Treatment and Recovery	Drug Court, co-chair of opiate hub, coordination of workforce issues
The Right Path, Family and Children First Council	Area Health Education Centers Specify Other:	Cathy Harper, Cindy Davis	Prevention	Core RCORP partners, Handle with Care, Parents as Teachers, workforce effort coordination
Washington County Commission/ Community Health Improvement Associates	Government agencies Specify Other:	David White, Richard Wittberg	Recovery	Sponsor of AmeriCorps grants – development of Peer Recovery Supporters; Manager of AmeriCorps grants

APPENDIX B: Workforce Strategic Planning Template

Activity Table

Goal:						
Objective:						
Strategy						
Activities	Timeline		Responsible Party	External Partners	Cost and Possible Funding	Metrics/ Indicators of Progress
	Start Date	End Date				