



Camden Coalition
of Healthcare Providers



The National Center
for Complex Health & Social Needs
An initiative of the Camden Coalition

Request for proposals:

Community Ecosystems Learning Collaborative

Deadline: January 15, 2021

Purpose

The Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers' National Center for Complex Health and Social Needs (National Center), with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is convening a results- and action-oriented learning collaborative to support organizations in developing and strengthening "ecosystem" approaches to serving the root cause needs of medically and socially complex populations.

Complex care ecosystems are composed of organizations across sectors within a community, working collectively and intentionally to better address the root causes of poor and inequitable health and well-being among populations with complex health and social needs.

At least five selected communities will receive 15 months of individualized technical assistance and will participate in a learning collaborative consisting of all of the teams, who will share their respective experiences and mutually support each other's efforts.

Background

Durably improving outcomes for people with complex health and social needs requires addressing not only the symptoms of these needs – e.g., current homelessness, addictions, chronic conditions, etc. – but their root causes as well. This is complicated by the fragmented and inequitable nature of health and social services systems, by the interconnectedness of a patient's complex needs, and by the lack of resources to meet those needs. COVID-19 has exacerbated the need for effective cross-sector partnerships to deliver integrated and equitable healthcare and social services. However, many complex care programs are not equipped to build and sustain these productive and equitable partnerships.

Achieving the necessary synergy between a wide variety of sectors, organizations, disciplines, and professions is no easy task – especially in the current crisis state. For example, there are limitations in data sharing, payment mechanisms, and trust across sectors. Individual advocates and model-builders, for their part, often lack the information, resources, and clout required to lead the development of a functioning complex care ecosystem beyond the walls of a single organization.

Through engagements with multiple sites, the National Center has developed an approach to partnering with communities to develop complex care ecosystems. This approach includes creating the structures for cross-sector collaboration, data sharing and analysis, asset mapping of resources, ecosystem mapping of the continuum of services, gap identification, and continuous process improvement.

The teams will benefit from a newly codified compendium of resources, created based on these engagements, and the learning collaborative will have the opportunity to provide feedback, create new resources for this tool, and contribute to the advancement of the broader field.

Participating teams will benefit from the technical assistance and peer-to-peer exchange in this learning collaborative, which will enhance the team's capacity for ecosystem co-design, equitable implementation, and sustainability.

Goals and objectives

This is an action-oriented learning collaborative with a focus on practical technical assistance (TA) and peer-to-peer learning designed to impart tangible lessons and skills to move a team's initiative forward. Because of the personalized and action-oriented nature of the learning collaborative, group meetings and TA calls will be flexible and adapted based on member interest and need.

The learning collaborative's goal is to support teams with complex care initiatives and cross-sector relationships to rapidly expand and sustain those partnerships to address the needs of individuals with complex health and social needs. The National Center also aims to generate learning from the application of the ecosystem principles in diverse settings to share tools, resources, and guidance with the broader field of complex care.

Objectives:

- To provide ongoing support to a community in implementing a cross-sector initiative that improves the health and well-being of individuals with complex health and social needs
- To strengthen a community's commitment to and capacity for sustainable cross-sector partnerships
- To prioritize health equity by elevating consumer voices and reducing health disparities for individuals with complex health and social needs

Team composition

Each participating team will be coordinated by a primary organization. The primary organization must be currently operating a model that serves individuals with complex health and social needs. Example models include care coordination, housing, re-entry, behavioral healthcare, and home care. The primary organization can come from any sector including healthcare, social services, public health, faith, government, academia, community-based, social entrepreneur, and legal. The primary organization is the applicant and the team coordinator. The team coordinator role includes serving as the logistical and communications point person on the team and leading the team's effort to build and sustain a complex care ecosystem. The team coordinator or a designated alternate will coordinate and participate in at least 90% of the TA and collaboration meetings. The primary organization can expect to spend approximately 4-8 hours per month on this learning collaborative.

A team is composed of a primary organization and at least 2 partner organizations, with a minimum of 1 partner from a different sector than the primary organization. These partners will have existing relationships (e.g., an informal referral process) with the primary organization and will be expected to participate in at least 75% of the TA and collaboration meetings. The partners can expect to spend approximately 3-5 hours per month on this learning collaborative.

Learning collaborative components

The National Center will select at least five teams to participate in a 15-month learning collaborative beginning on April 6, 2021. There is no cost to participation and the National Center will fund all travel and lodging related to participation for at least two individuals from each team. Applications are due January 15, 2021. The details and expectations include:

- **Technical assistance:** Participant teams will receive ongoing intensive and individualized technical assistance by the National Center staff and subject matter experts. Participant teams will receive support around the development and implementation of their action plans to create an ecosystem for complex care. Participant teams will receive support to apply the ecosystem concept to their unique model of complex care delivery to enhance outcomes and expand the impact of their program. Over the 15 months, teams will participate in bi-weekly (every 2 weeks)

60-minute calls with National Center staff and subject matter experts to receive individualized technical assistance.

- **Collaboration and exchange:** Participant teams will participate in a vibrant learning collaborative that includes relevant subject matter experts. The teams will have the opportunity to share insights and problem-solve challenges with peer organizations, sharing their respective experiences and mutually supporting each other's efforts. Over the 15 months, the learning collaborative will meet for 2 day-long retreats (virtual or in-person given current health, safety, and travel conditions) and bi-monthly (every 2 months) through 90-minute webinars, group calls, presentations, or case conferencing. The kickoff retreat will occur on May 3, 2021. The closing retreat will occur at the end of the learning collaborative engagement in June 2022.
- **Virtual site visits:** The National Center staff and subject matter experts will conduct a virtual site visit with each team at the beginning of the engagement in April 2021.
- **Evaluation:** Experts at the National Center will support team efforts to develop aims, outcome measures, and evaluation strategies that include feedback from the community served. Additionally, the National Center will conduct an evaluation, in close collaboration with learning collaborative participants, to assess which modalities for ecosystem development are the most effective.

Eligibility criteria

To participate in this technical assistance and learning collaborative opportunity, applicants must:

- Operate an existing model that serves individuals who have complex health and social needs;
- Identify 2 or more partners with a minimum of 1 partner from a different sector than the primary organization (e.g., public health, housing, behavioral health, criminal justice, healthcare), in the community with whom the applicant has existing relationships that can partner to build or grow a complex care ecosystem for an identified target population;
- Demonstrate leadership-level support and commitment to the proposed integration efforts through a letter of support from all organizations involved;
- Identify an engaged project leader to lead and facilitate the team's participation;
- Commit to developing or enhancing a strategy for soliciting ongoing feedback and input from the community served, through engagement with a diverse array of community representatives including those with lived experience;
- Be willing to participate in data sharing, tool and resource sharing, and codification of findings for the advancement of the complex care field; and
- Be able to commit to attending the learning collaborative kick-off on May 3, 2021 and the closing retreat in June 2022.

Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed by the National Center based on the following criteria:

- The strength of an existing complex care program and relationships between organizations;
- Demonstrated commitment to establishing a complex care ecosystem (i.e., cross-sector, systems-level process improvement) for an identified targeted population;
- Demonstrated commitment to improving health equity and addressing root causes of health and well-being;
- The feasibility, manner by, and extent to which the applicant organization proposes to create and sustain a complex care ecosystem;
- Past history of or commitment to meaningfully partnering with community members to solicit feedback to guide programmatic activities;
- The potential impact of the proposed activities, including the number of individuals impacted by the work and the potential for replication and spread;
- The capacity to capture and analyze data to assess programmatic efforts;
- Demonstrated organizational leadership commitment to create a complex care ecosystem;

- The degree to which the proposed project management team possesses the capacity to successfully carry out the proposed initiative; and
- A viable plan to sustain the work initiated during the learning collaborative period and after it ends.

How to apply

Please submit the **application** by January 15, 2021.

The National Center will notify the finalist teams by February 8, 2021 that they are invited for an interview. Selected teams will be notified of their invitation to join the learning collaborative by March 1, 2021.

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Rebecca Koppel at rkoppel@camdenhealth.org.

About the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers

We are a multidisciplinary nonprofit working to improve care for people with complex health and social needs in Camden, NJ, and across the country. The Camden Coalition works to advance the field of **complex care** by implementing person-centered programs and piloting new models that address chronic illness and social barriers to health and wellbeing. Supported by a robust data infrastructure, cross-sector convening, and shared learning, our community-based programs deliver better care to the most vulnerable individuals **in Camden** and **regionally**.

The **National Center for Complex Health and Social Needs** (National Center), an initiative of the Camden Coalition, connects complex care practitioners with each other and supports the field with tools and resources that move complex care forward. The National Center's founding sponsors are the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and AARP.

For more information about the Camden Coalition, visit www.camdenhealth.org.