



# Improving Substance Use Treatment Capability: A Training Approach

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## Background

In 2019, Beth Israel Lahey Health Behavioral Services (BILH BS) began system-wide implementation of Collaborative Care (CoCM). CoCM is an evidence based model of integrated care designed to treat persistent behavioral health conditions within primary care, including substance use disorders (SUD). The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic presented an increase in substance use at a state and national level, while a dearth of available treatment options drove increased demand for SUD treatment in primary care (NIDA 2022; Ornell 2020). An internally distributed provider survey served to determine a baseline of substance use treatment capability within BILH CoCM, as well as a gap in provider confidence and capability in meeting these treatment needs.

## Methods

BILH BS CoCM partnered with an addictions psychiatrist to develop a comprehensive training module for Behavioral Health Clinicians (BHC) specific to treating SUD within the CoCM model. A pre-module self-assessment was distributed to 25 participating BHCs to score provider comfort and knowledge in assessing and treating SUD. Providers responded according to a 5-point Likert scale. BHCs were then required to attend three 60-minute interactive didactics. A post-module self-assessment was then distributed to assess change in BHC comfort and knowledge of treating SUD and how new skills have been incorporated into patient care.

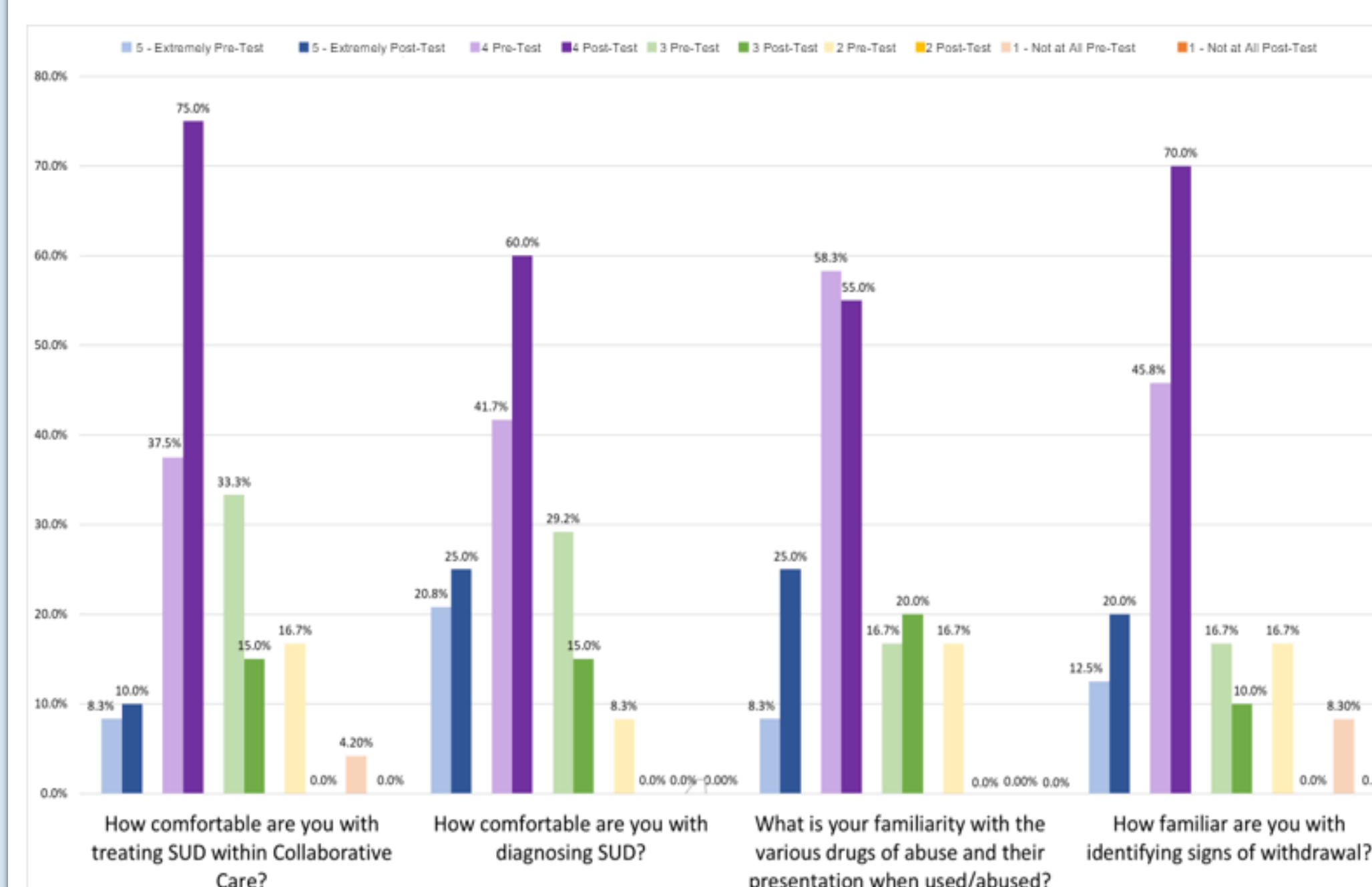
## Training Series

The goal of the SUD Training Series was to increase BHC competency and skill in recognizing and treating substance use related needs in primary care patients, and in turn increase overall provider satisfaction with treating SUD in CoCM.

SUD Training Series Learning Objectives		
Training #1	Training #2	Training #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the major classes of substances in substance use disorders</li> <li>Describe intoxication and withdrawal states</li> <li>Understand the basic brain chemistry of substance use disorders</li> <li>Outline the DSM continuum of substance use disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the "Umbrella of Harm Reduction"</li> <li>Understand stages of change and right intervention for each stage</li> <li>Describe the levels of care for substance use treatment</li> <li>Recognize how to best collaborate within the CoCM model</li> <li>Distinguish options for self-help recovery groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand stages of change and right intervention for each stage</li> <li>Describe the levels of care for substance use treatment</li> <li>Distinguish options for self-help recovery groups</li> <li>Motivational interviewing</li> <li>Medication assisted treatment (nicotine, alcohol, and opiates)</li> <li>Harm reduction 101</li> <li>Recognize how to best collaborate within the CoCM model</li> </ul>

## Results

20 BHCs completed the 3-part training and post-module self-assessment.

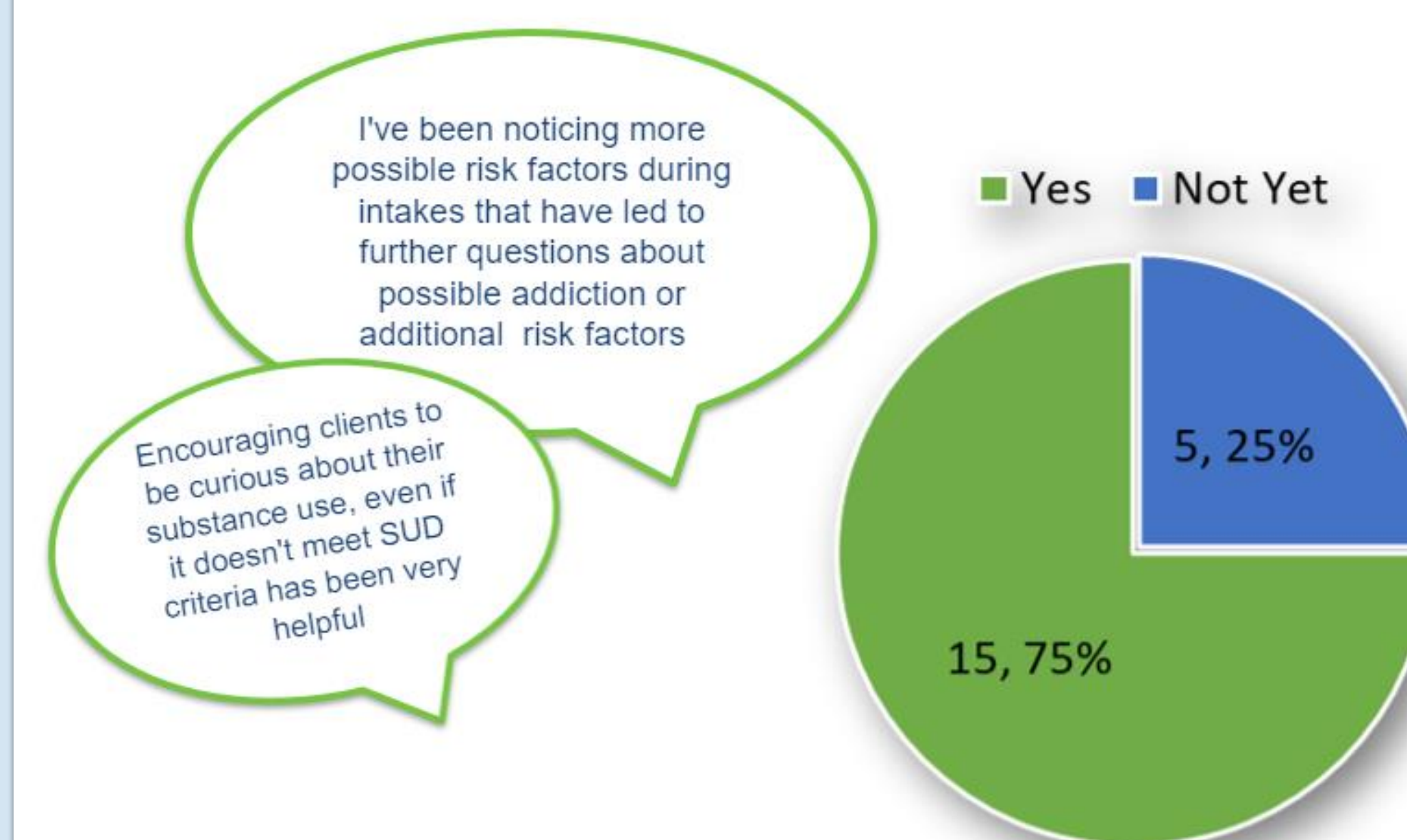


There was a significant shift in self-assessed comfort and familiarity in recognizing signs of SUD and providing informed treatment, with 0 BHC responding in the 1-2 range in the final assessment.

## Results

BHC were asked to respond to qualitative questions regarding what knowledge they retained, and how they planned to implement information from the training in working with CoCM patients.

Have you incorporated this training into your work with patients?



What were your "takeaways" from the SUD Training Series?

- Increased understanding of MAT options and the continuum of addiction treatment
- Framing SUD treatment as a public safety concern, working in a harm reduction model
- Using MI techniques, "rolling with resistance" and recognizing stages of change
- Understanding of risks associated with alcohol and substance use, including overdose and withdrawal
- Recognize how to build community support, refer to higher or alternative levels of care

### References

NIDA. (2022, February 25). *COVID-19 & Substance Use*.  
Ornell, F et al. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on substance use: Implications for prevention and treatment. 2020; *Psychiatry research*; 2020:289.

## Discussion

- ✓ BILH BS BHCs self-assessed an improvement in overall comfort and knowledge in assessing and treating SUD in the context of CoCM and primary care following the Training Series.
- ✓ BHCs reported immediate changes to their patient engagement practices and treatment planning.
- ✓ This training module may prove essential in building provider capability in the treatment of SUD within primary care.
- ✓ There is an opportunity to continue to assess gaps in knowledge and enhance continuing education with periodic provider surveys and training expansion.

### Sustainability and Next Steps

- Continue to monitor provider satisfaction and confidence in treating patients with substance use related needs.
- Identify regional and practice-level needs related to substance use and addiction treatment, including available community resources.
- Include the recorded SUD Training Series in new BHC orientation.
- Create a communication tool to include in program onboarding materials that clarifies when CoCM is the right treatment option for SUD, and when to refer to other levels of care.