

BHBusiness Program Offers Virtual Learning Communities to Help Master Essential Business Operations

Contact: Donovan Kuehn, dkuehn@naadac.org
703.741.7686

Now that healthcare reform is really on the books, behavioral healthcare providers are getting bombarded with advice on how to prepare for it. To help clear through information clutter, SAMHSA has funded BHbusiness: Mastering Essential Business Operations.

Offered at no cost to participants, BHbusiness pools the collective wisdom of leading behavioral healthcare educators: SAAS, NIATx, the National Council and Advocates for Human Potential. The goal of this new training initiative is to ensure that providers are prepared for full implementation of healthcare reform in 2014, when an estimated 30 million people will be newly eligible for mental health and addictions treatment. Providers will have to build their capacity to treat more people and make the shift from relying on grants to billing payers.

The key course offering will be strategic business planning for addiction, mental health, peer support and recovery support organizations trying to figure out how they fit in the new health care delivery paradigm. This course will walk providers through a decision process that helps them engage key stakeholders, including board members, in identifying opportunities for partnership and reimbursement as well as gaps in service delivery that they may be able to fill. The other four topic areas offered include third-party billing, negotiating contracts with third-party payers, eligibility and enrollment and meaningful use of health information technology (HIT).

The modules, called *learning networks*, will feature:

1. Virtual teaching: New ideas and concepts will be presented in Internet based-instruction consisting of pre-recorded lectures and short articles. Students will be able to access the materials anytime, any place they have access to the internet.
2. Implementation and testing: During this phase, students will apply a new idea or concept to make a change in their organizations.
3. Virtual coaching: Expert coaches and facilitators will lead student discussions via teleconferences and webinars. Coaches will also be available via phone and e-mail to offer just-in-time assistance when students need it.
4. Ask an expert: Students can pose their content specific questions to nationally recognized experts on these web-based discussions.

"We encourage programs to connect with other programs in their state or county and apply as a BHbusiness Learning Network," says Amy McIlvaine, NIATx Director of Educational Services.

“Local learning networks allow providers to work as a group and adapt to the idiosyncrasies of their local markets and the way their states implement ACA.”

Adds McIlvaine, “What makes BHbusiness unique is the blending of traditional and Internet-based learning. Along with easy access to our web-based instruction, we’re building in opportunities to interact with other students and instructors.”

Students who complete the work will receive a certificate of completion and earn NAADAC CEUs.

For FAQs, complete application information, or to view pre-recorded webinar on BHbusiness, visit <http://bhbusiness.org/>

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