

Building and Sustaining SOAR Collaborations with Medical Providers

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA) SOAR Technical Assistance (TA) Center
Policy Research Associates, Inc.

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Services Administration

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Welcome!

Dorrine Gross
PATH Program Coordinator, SOAR COR
Division of State and Community Systems Development
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

March 8, 2023



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Purpose and Objectives

- Understand the importance of building and sustaining relationships with medical providers both inside and outside of your agency.
- Apply strategies to working collaboratively with SOAR applicants and their treating sources on developing quality SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI applications and treatment plans.
- Educate medical providers on the SOAR model and SSA disability criteria.

Agenda

Presenters

- Traci Fuglestad, MSW, SOAR Benefits Specialist/SOAR Local Lead, Sulzbacher Center, Jacksonville, Florida
- Dr. Abirami Krishna, M.D., Psychiatry Year 4 Resident, Dr. Richard Christensen Community Psychiatry Fellow, University of Florida, Jacksonville, Florida
- Brandy Lewis, SOAR Program Manager/SOAR Local Lead, Outreach Community Health Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- SOAR Beneficiaries from Jacksonville, Florida and Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Questions and Answers

- Facilitated by the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

The SOAR Model: The Benefits of Medical Collaboration

Dr. Abirami Krishna, Psychiatrist
Traci Fuglestad, SOAR Processor
Sulzbacher Center
Jacksonville, Florida

March 8, 2023



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Sulzbacher History



- Sulzbacher opened its doors in December of 1995 as the I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the homeless in response to the increase of homelessness in Jacksonville and nationwide.
- The agency was founded by three groups, the City of Jacksonville, a group of area businesses, and the United Way of Northeast Florida.
- Sulzbacher was founded on the premise that people experiencing homelessness need and deserve more than just a meal and a bed to end their homelessness.

Sulzbacher Overview



- Sulzbacher provides a continuum of care approach, addressing all aspects of homelessness including housing, income, and health care.
- Over more than two decades since the agency opened, the services have grown to include street outreach, primary health, behavioral health and dental care for all ages, permanent housing, job placement, and early learning.



Healthcare Services

- Primary care, Dentistry, Vision care, Psychiatry, and Addiction Medicine
- 4 locations & street outreach teams
- Free medication to bridge patient assistance programs (PAPs) to those who qualify
- Adult and Pediatrics
- School-based Clinic, Medical Respite Facility, Mobile Health Unit





Hope Team

2021-2022

Street Psychiatry
performed 65 new
evaluations, 131
follow up visits

- Homeless Outreach Project Expansion (HOPE)
- Medical & psychiatric outreach
- Distributes clothing, blankets, food, water, and basic hygiene items
- Case Management
- Job Placement & Training, e.g., Education, High School Equivalency, Early Learning Center, After School Program
- Urban Rest Stop

Housing Services

Each night, Sulzbacher is home to 400+ Men, Women, and Families with Children

Sulzbacher Downtown

Emergency Housing,
Medical Respite, Veterans Dorm
and Rentals for Men

Sulzbacher Village

Emergency Housing, Veteran's
Dorm and Affordable Housing for Women and
Families with Children

Scattered Site Housing

Manage over 200 Apartments in Duval



SOAR Program at Sulzbacher

Developing and
Sustaining
Partnerships with
Medical Staff

- Since 2018, Sulzbacher in partnership with LSF Health systems has provided SOAR case management services in collaboration with:
 - Psychiatrists,
 - Psychiatric Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioners (APRNs),
 - other physicians and specialists.

Benefits of Collaboration with Medical Staff

- Medical provider available to sign Medical Summary Report.
- Able to provide updated psychiatric evaluations and medical records
- Prescribe psychiatric medications
- Complete paperwork to assist applicants with obtaining representative payee services
- Avoid Social Security scheduling consultative examinations
- SOAR case worker can advocate for applicants



SOAR Partnership with Psychiatrist

SOAR Case Worker

- Creates treatment plan from applicant input which addresses medical, financial, and housing needs
- Completes assessment and case management notes
- Links applicant to least restrictive housing placement
- Schedules and transports to medical/behavioral health appointments
- **Promotes medication compliance***

Psychiatrist

- Able to travel with outreach staff to meet SOAR clients on the street, at shelters, etc.
- **Able to prescribe long-acting psychiatric injectables to promote long-term stability***
- Obtain medications through patience assistance program until clients are approved for benefits



Long-Acting Injectable Antipsychotics (LAIs)

- When comparing oral v. LAI: LAIs were associated with:
 - 44% fewer suicide attempts
 - 37% fewer all-cause hospitalizations
 - 48% fewer psychiatric hospitalizations for psychiatric disorders
 - 12% reduction in hospitalizations for cardiovascular diseases
 - 14% reduction in extrapyramidal symptoms
- LAIs can be used for treating schizophrenia spectrum and bipolar disorders to improve medication adherence

Treatment Plan Support: Long Acting Anti-Psychotic Injectables

Pros

- Applicants don't have to remember to take a pill(s) each day
- Helps reduce mental health relapses and hospitalizations
- May reduce arrests and repeat episodes of homelessness
- May be administered every 30 days or 90 days

Cons

- Expensive
- Applicants must be willing to receive an injection
- Possible negative side effects
- Applicants may feel they are getting better on their own and discontinue

Conversation
with Richard,
SOAR
Beneficiary

Richard's Video: Support
System to Peers and SOAR
Promoter!



Presenter Contact Information

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SOAR Medical Collaborations in Milwaukee

Brandy Lewis

SOAR Program Manager/SOAR Local Lead

Outreach Community Health Center

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

March 8, 2023



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Introduction to Outreach Community Health Centers



History

- Founded as “Healthcare for the Homeless” in 1982
- Became Outreach Community Health Centers in 2011 after becoming a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

Mission Statement

- Promoting health and wellness to all individuals that we serve.

Vision

- Striving to be your trusted community health center by offering quality, integrated care and services that address social determinants of health.

Clinical and Community Services

- While our foundation is built primarily on providing services to those who are experiencing homelessness, we have expanded our services to fit the needs of the community we reside in to include both clinical and community services.



Services Provided

Clinical

- Primary Care Services (including dental and podiatry)
- Full Behavioral Health Services
- On-Site Pharmacy

Community

- 3 Tiers of Case Management
- Street Outreach/Housing
- Benefit Acquisition, e.g., **SOAR Case Management**

Collaborating with Medical Providers

We're often asked
what are the biggest
advantages to having
onsite medical
providers?

More importantly, having
providers that know about
SOAR and understand SOAR is
invaluable!



SOAR at Outreach Community Health Centers

External Referral Sources

- Shelters
- Social Service Agencies
- Workforce Development Programs
- Milwaukee County

Internal Referral Sources

- Street Outreach/PATH Program
- Case Management Programs, e.g., Targeted case management
- Walk-Ins
- Milwaukee County Access Clinic
- Our Behavioral Health Department

Tips for Collaborating with External Medical Providers

- It can be difficult to spread the word when you don't have any contacts.
 - Be sure to include a cover letter with your medical records requests that briefly explains the SOAR Program and your work.
- Utilize Medical Assistants by providing them general information about the SOAR Program.
 - They have greater access to your applicant's clinicians, and they can assist with obtaining signatures.

Collaborating With Medical Providers (Advantages)

- If the medical provider is aware of SOAR (and understands its benefits) we can consider them as a part of the clients “care team.”
 - This makes them readily available to sign Medical Summary Reports (MSRs), and complete other medical provider forms if necessary.
- There are medical providers who only include enough information to document for “billing” purposes, so we have been able to advocate for more detailed notes on behalf of the people in our program.
- With a Release of Information (ROI) in place, we can share information regarding applicants whom clinicians may not be aware of.

Conversation
with Rachel,
SOAR
Beneficiary



Presenter Contact Information

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Questions and Answers

Please type your questions into the Q&A box.



Additional Resources

- [What Medical Providers Need to Know About SOAR](#)
- [Understanding and Documenting Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders for SOAR Claims](#)
- [SOAR Critical Component: Collecting Medical Records](#)
- [SOAR Critical Component: The Medical Summary Report](#)
- [SOAR Tools and Worksheets](#)



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