



BRITISH COLUMBIA
CENTRE ON
SUBSTANCE USE

Annual Education and Clinical Activities Report

2023/24

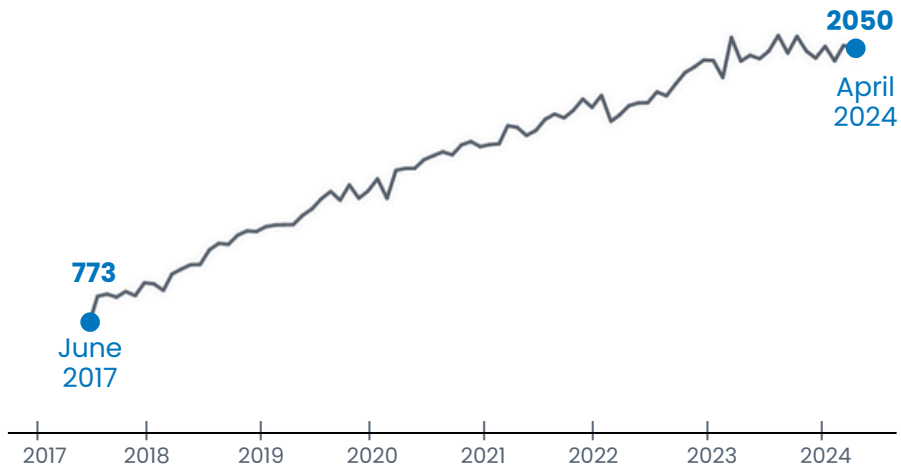
23/24

OUR WORK

The BC Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU) seeks to improve the integration of best practices across the continuum of substance use care through the collaborative development of evidence-based policies, guidelines, and standards. In addition to making significant strides in substance use research and clinical care guidance, BCCSU has firmly established itself as a leading organization in evidence-based education and training for addiction and substance use in BC and Canada.

BCCSU has developed valued relationships with academic institutions, regional health authorities, professional organizations, a wide range of health care professionals, and key stakeholders, such as people with lived and living experience (PWLE), the recovery community, the families and loved ones of PWLE, and community members.

OUR IMPACT IN BC



Number of BC Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) Prescribers

Note: OAT prescribers are clinicians with at least one dispensation from a prescription they have written for a given OAT drug in a given month. This indicator does not reflect all clinicians who wrote an OAT prescription.

9,366 Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course completions

217 Fellowship program completions (as of June 30, 2024)

1,636 Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program completions

From 2020 to 2023, the number of local health areas with critically low* OAT prescriber density was reduced from 48 to 20.

*Critically low is <20 prescribers/100K population

Since its founding in 2017, the BCCSU has partnered with clinicians, people with lived and living experience, family and caregivers, recovery-oriented service providers, and health systems partners to develop and deliver provincial and national clinical guidance and practice tools and online and in-person education and training.



TOP

[Visit program webpage ↗](#)

Interdisciplinary Addiction Fellowship Program



For all health care providers

12 month part-time curriculum

6 streams

20+ positions each year

The fellowship program trains physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, pharmacists, and researchers to recognize, treat, and support patients with substance use disorders.

Fellows also work closely with health care practitioners from other specialties to manage concurrent disorders.

24 Fellows trained in 2023/24

Employer Health Authority

- FH: 14%
- FNHA: 7%
- IsLH: 22%
- IH: 7%
- NH: 0%
- VCH: 43%
- Other: 7%

Fellow Roles

- Nurse: 7
- NP: 2
- Pharm: 2
- MD: 6
- Research: 4
- SW: 3

Fellows are trained in withdrawal management, in-patient addiction care, bed-based treatment, complex pain, and the physical and mental health issues that can accompany substance use and the impacts of prohibition.

OUR PROGRAMS

The BC Centre on Substance Use is dedicated to strengthening addiction medicine education across disciplines, academic institutions, and health authorities, and training the next generation of interdisciplinary leaders.

Statistics in this section are based on activities completed in fiscal year 2023/24, unless otherwise noted.

Health Authorities

- FH = Fraser Health Authority
- FNHA = First Nations Health Authority
- IsLH = Island Health Authority
- IH = Interior Health Authority
- NH = Northern Health Authority
- PHC = Providence Healthcare
- PHSA = Provincial Health Services Authority
- VCH = Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
- Other

Roles

- Nurse
- NP = Nurse Practitioner
- Pharm = Pharmacist
- MD = Physician
- Research
- SW = Social Work
- Other



TOP

[Visit program webpage ↗](#)

Open to the public

CME accredited

Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program



“Phenomenal, comprehensive course with practical skills that I have applied to my practice in primary care”.

- Jessica Loucks, pharmacist

For all health care providers

8.0 Mainpro+/MOC Section 3 credits

621 Online completions

POATSP is the only training pathway in BC for MDs and NPs to prescribe opioid agonist treatments (OAT) and injectable opioid agonist treatment.

There are three components in the program: 1) online course, 2) workbook, 3) in-person preceptorship.

Across the province, 222 BCCSU OAT preceptors support learners to consolidate and apply their early learning, and successfully complete their training.

The online course is free and available to anyone interested in learning about opioid use disorder care. The online course is eligible for 8.0 Mainpro+ credits.

[Visit program webpage ↗](#)

CME accredited

Certified Practice Opioid Use Disorder (CP-OUD)

for **Health Authority-affiliated** Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs)

BCCNM certified program



For RNs and RPNs

193 completions between February 2021 - March 2024

BCCSU is the authorized training provider for Certified Practice Opioid Use Disorder, a designation for registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses in BC that enables an expanded scope of practice to diagnose opioid use disorder, order certain diagnostic tests and prescribe opioid agonist treatment.

There are three components to the education and training pathway for prescribing OAT medications (POATSP: Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses online course, workbook, and preceptorship).

Since February 2021, 193 RNs and RPNs have completed the BCCSU training to diagnose and treat opioid use disorder

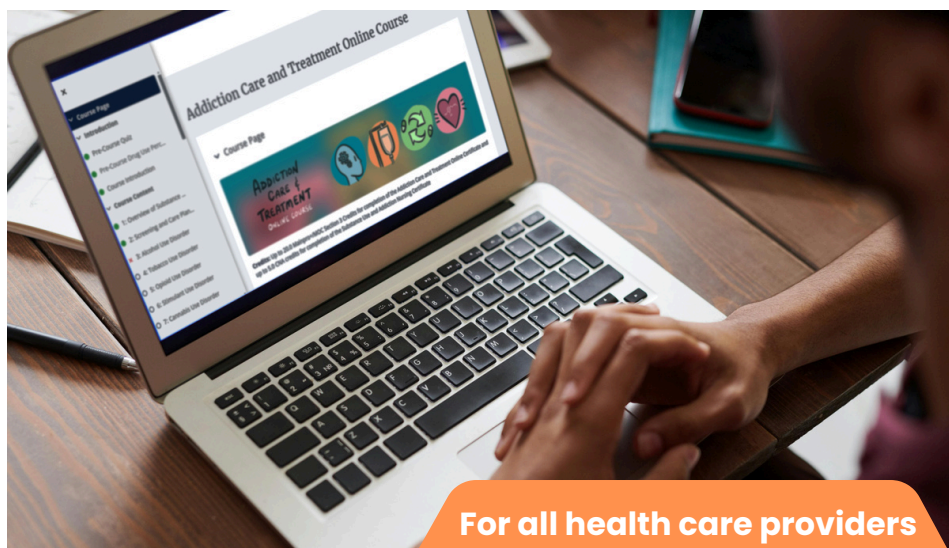


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Visit program webpage ↗



Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course



For all health care providers

20.0 Mainpro+/MOC Section 3 **1,700+** Online completions in 2023/24

Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course (ACTOC) is an online, free, self-paced, CME accredited curriculum to **train health care providers to diagnose and treat patients with substance use disorders** using evidence-based treatments along a continuum of care.

This course is designed for health care providers, but it is also open to the general public.

Anyone interested in learning about substance use disorders is encouraged to register for this course.

Nurses are eligible to receive 5.0 Canadian Nursing Association credits and the Substance Use Addiction Nursing Certificate (SUANC) for completing 5 core modules in ACTOC

Visit program webpage ↗



BC ECHO on Substance Use Program



For all health care providers

8,000+ Podcast downloads **1,100+** ECHO session attendees **3,600+** Newsletter recipients

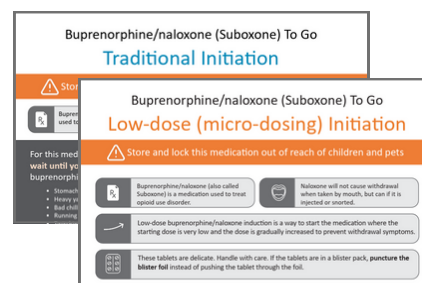
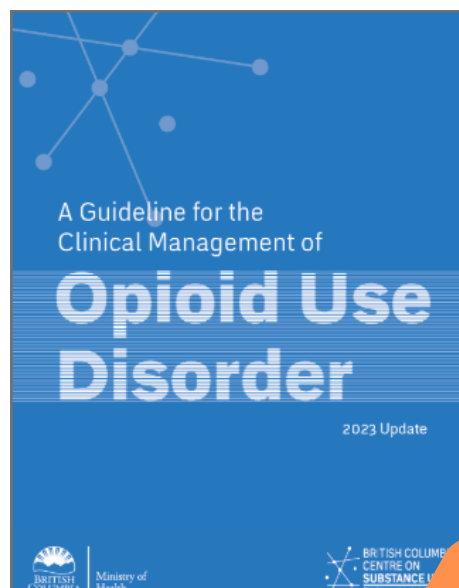
The BC ECHO on Substance Use is a provincial community of practice that builds healthcare providers' capacity to treat and manage substance use disorders through monthly, virtual and CME accredited Project ECHO sessions; monthly newsletters highlighting SUD-related events, resources, and updates; and the Addiction Practice Pod podcast.

The ECHO session and podcast episode topics are targeted toward primary care physicians and nurse practitioners; however, anyone who supports individuals with substance use disorder(s) and their families are encouraged to attend and listen. ECHO session lectures are also available via YouTube for asynchronous learning.





Clinical Care Guidance



For all health care providers

BC Substance Use Conference



For all health care providers

3 days of sessions **2** streams
16 sessions **40+** speakers

579 attendees

Each year, the BC Substance Use Conference brings together clinicians, researchers, policymakers, community experts, people with lived and living experience of substance use, and families and caregivers for dialogue and knowledge-sharing on the best evidence-based approaches to substance use, addiction, and drug policy.

The 2023 conference theme was “The Challenge of Change”. A wide range of topics were covered, including:

- Addressing burnout and compassion fatigue
- Rural and remote innovations in care
- Workplace support of employees experiencing substance use disorders
- Building recovery communities

The BCCSU has published guidelines on the clinical management of [opioid use disorder](#) and [alcohol use disorder](#). Each guideline summarizes evidence of moderate-to-high quality to develop best practice recommendations.

The BCCSU also publishes clinical guidance based on the best available evidence and clinical expertise and are meant to supplement established, evidence-based clinical guidelines. Clinical guidance published in 2023/24 include:

- **The 2023 update to A Guideline for the Clinical Management of Opioid Use Disorder**
- **Bupe-to-Go:** A suite of documents covering traditional induction and low-dose (micro-dosing) Induction
- **Prescribed Alternative Clinical Protocols on Fentanyl and Sufentanil:** Supporting material to help clinicians remember key messages of recent practice changes from guidelines or practice updates.
- **helpwithdrinking.ca:** A website offering evidence-based, practical, and easy-to-use information for clinicians and patients.



TOP

Visit resource webpage ↗

24/7 Addiction Medicine Support Line

1031 calls

| Location | Role |
|-----------|------------|
| FH: 273 | Nurse: 161 |
| FNH: 10 | NP: 106 |
| IslH: 242 | Pharm: 44 |
| IH: 226 | MD: 694 |
| NH: 101 | Other: 26 |
| PHSA: 15 | |
| VCH: 140 | |
| Other: 24 | |



For clinicians providing substance use care

43% of the calls occurred after hours (when no other services are available)

The 24/7 Addiction Medicine Clinician Support Line provides telephone consultation to physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, midwives, and pharmacists who are involved in addiction and substance use care and treatment in British Columbia. Community support workers in Indigenous communities are also eligible.

The Support Line will connect these health care providers to an Addiction Medicine Specialist with expertise and knowledge from diverse settings (including emergency, acute, and community care). Specialists can support with screening, assessment, treatment, and management of substance use and substance use disorder(s), as well direct callers to other resources.

Partnership with UBC Health

“The partnership between BCCSU and UBC Health demonstrates a shared commitment to reducing substance use stigma, advancing education and supporting more collaborative and inclusive approaches to care for people who use substances.”

- Carrie Krekoski,
Assistant Director, Education, UBC Health

For UBC students

4 workshops
17 health professional programs

500+ participants

The UBC Health and BC Centre on Substance Use partnership provides health professional students with education in substance use and addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to support people who use substances.

Through a variety of initiatives, including the Substance Use and Addiction Lunch & Learn Webinar Series, UBC Health provides accessible, evidence-based, foundational substance use and addiction education with tangible takeaways that can be utilized to improve the care for and treatment of people who use substances.



Visit program webpage [↗](#)

UBC Enhanced Skills in Addiction Medicine Training Program



For physicians

1-year training program
1 program completion

This postgraduate training is tailored specifically to meet the objectives of individual residents. Trainees will develop enhanced skills in addiction pharmacotherapy (e.g., alcohol relapse prevention, opioid agonist treatment), inpatient and outpatient

12-week training program
5 program completions

withdrawal management, evidence-based addiction treatment, and chronic pain management.

In addition to strong clinical skills training, opportunities to develop research and leadership skills are also available and encouraged.

COLLABORATIONS & OUTREACH

BCCSU develops its education and training programs in collaboration with diverse partners including clinicians, operational leads, people with lived and living experience, family and caregivers, and government stakeholders.

In addition, the development process involves multidisciplinary expertise, including addiction medicine, primary care, nursing, pharmacy, psychiatry, social work, research, and Indigenous health.

The BCCSU strives to support health care providers in all regions of the province through education, clinical care guidance, and the 24/7 Addiction Medicine Clinician Support Line.

Continuing Medical Education

Contact bccsu_education@bccsu.ubc.ca about offering topic-specific continuing medical education sessions.

In 2023/24, BCCSU hosted:

- 5 webinars to promote the revised Opioid Use Disorder guideline. Sessions covered specific topics for rural/remote clinicians, CP-OD nurses, and pharmacists. Over 900 clinicians attended the sessions.
- 4 sessions for clinicians on prescribed alternatives.
- 1 session on alcohol use disorder.

OUR RESOURCES

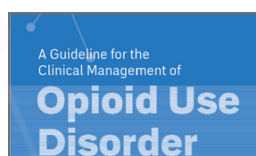
NEW IN 2023/24

[HelpWithDrinking.ca](https://helpwithdrinking.ca) ↗



This website houses practical, easy-to-use information for clinicians who are supporting patients who use alcohol. The site provides step-by-step instructions aligned with the clinical guideline recommendations. The site also houses accurate and evidence-based information for patients.

bccsu.ca/opioid-use-disorder



The 2023 update to A Guideline for the Clinical Management of Opioid Use Disorder provides updated recommendations and guidance on providing care to people with opioid use disorder. It includes updated guidance on dosing and titration, missed doses, take-home doses, and urine drug testing.

youtube.com/@BCCSU ↗

BC ECHO on Substance Use Playlist



The BC ECHO on Substance Use YouTube playlist features evidence-based lectures by addiction medicine and primary care physicians, providing clinical guidance for healthcare providers.

bcechoonsubstanceuse.ca/podcasts/ ↗

Addiction Practice Pod Podcast



As the podcast of the BCCSU, Addiction Practice Pod offers practical guidance for BC healthcare providers on substance use care, featuring journalist David P. Ball and rotating clinical co-hosts.

bccsu.ca/24-7 ↗

24/7 Addiction Medicine Support Line



778-945-7619 is a support line that connects health care providers to an Addiction Medicine Specialist with expertise and knowledge in addiction medicine (including emergency, acute, and community care).

[Resource page](#) ↗

Preceptor's Corner



Resources on this page support preceptors in the training and mentoring of new prescribers of OAT medications (physicians, nurse practitioners, and RNs, and RPNs) who are in the education pathway to become opioid use disorder certified (CP-OUD).



TOP

OUR PEOPLE

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