



BRITISH COLUMBIA
CENTRE ON
SUBSTANCE USE

Annual Education and Clinical Activities Report

2024/25

24/25

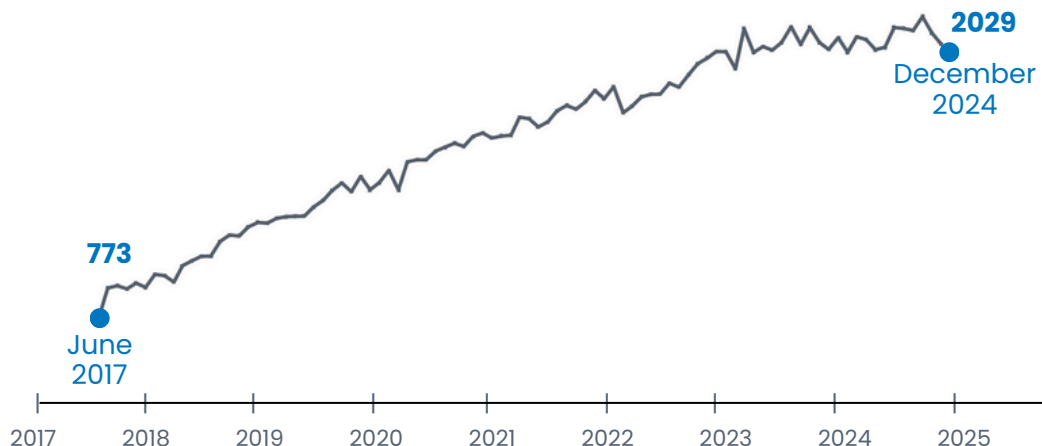
www.bccsu.ca/about ↗

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.

11,643 Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course completions

237 Fellowship program completions (expected by June 30, 2025)

1,854 Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program completions

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

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 2024/25, unless otherwise noted.

Visit program webpage [↗](#)

Interdisciplinary Addiction Fellowship Program



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.

19 Fellows trained in 2024/25

Employer Health Authority*

- FH: 1
- FNHA: 0
- IsLH: 4
- IH: 2
- NH: 0
- PHC: 2
- VCH: 7
- Out of Province: 4

Fellow Roles

- Nurse: 4
- NP: 1
- MD: 10
- SW: 4

*Fellows may be employed by multiple health authorities

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



Visit program webpage [↗](#)

Open to the public  CME accredited 

Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program



8.0 Mainpro+/MOC Section 3 credits **721** 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 [↗](#)

Open to the public  CME accredited 

Certified Practice Opioid Use Disorder (CP-OUD)

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

 BCCNM certified program



238 completions between February 2021 - March 2025

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, 238 RNs and RPNs have completed the BCCSU training to diagnose and treat opioid use disorder



Visit program webpage ↗



Addiction Care and Treatment Online Certificate



“ACTOC provides comprehensive and practical information that is designed for clinicians to access & implement efficiently

- Ming Chang, clinical pharmacist

For all health care providers

20.0 Mainpro+/MOC Section 3

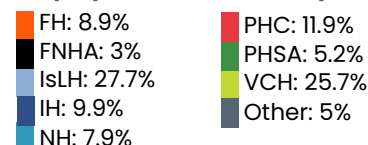
Addiction Care and Treatment Online Certificate (ACTOC) is an online, free, self-paced, CME accredited curriculum to **train health care providers to diagnose and treat patients with substance use disorders** using evidence-based treatments along a continuum of care.

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

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

2,200+ Online completions in 2024/25

Employer Health Authority



Visit program webpage ↗



BC ECHO on Substance Use Program



For all health care providers

5,400+ Podcast downloads

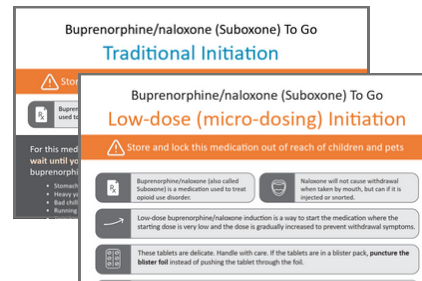
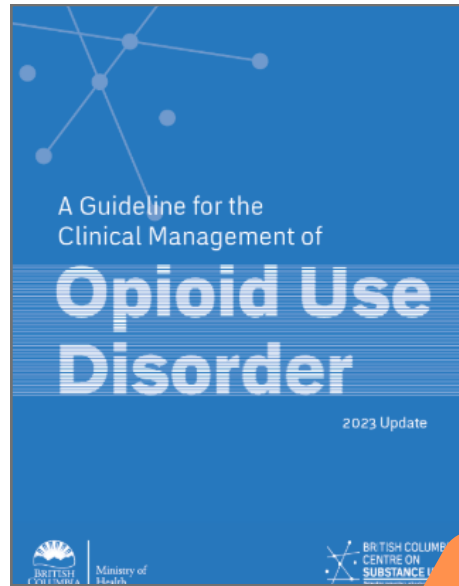
1,500+ ECHO session attendees
1,000+ New newsletter recipients added

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

2 days of sessions **5** streams
60+ presenters

1,100+ attendees

The 2024 Conference brought together stakeholders across the province to share clinical expertise, lived experience, and the latest evidence relating to substance use.

humble approaches to substance use care and research that improves health and social outcomes for people who use substances.

The conference programming included research, clinical, and community-led streams that aimed to highlight evidence-based and wise practices, including culturally safe and

The theme was From Idea to Implementation: Putting Evidence, Experience, and Ways of Knowing into Action; it was held over 2 days where participants were able to attend in person and online.

The BCCSU has published guidelines on the clinical management of [opioid use disorder](#) and [alcohol use disorder](#). Each guideline assesses and synthesizes the existing evidence base to develop best practice recommendations.

The BCCSU also develops clinical guidance, protocols, and clinical tools to support clinical practice. In 2024/25, the following were published:

1. Acute Care

- Providing Care in Acute Care Settings
- Acute Care and OUD
- Managing Acute Opioid Withdrawal
- OAT Initiation
- OAT Maintenance
- Managing Acute Stimulant Intoxication and Withdrawal
- Co-occurring Substance Use Principles of Care

2. Psychedelic-assisted Therapy

- Background on Psychedelic-assisted Therapy
- Psilocybin
- Ketamine
- MDMA



TOP

24/7 Addiction Medicine Support Line

970 calls

Location	Role
FH: 152	Nurse: 257
FNHA: 8	NP: 85
IslH: 237	Pharm: 45
IH: 239	MD: 543
NH: 160	Other: 40
PHSA: 17	
VCH: 134	
Other: 23	



For clinicians providing substance use care

970 calls

36% 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 BC.

This service extends beyond clinicians and provides addiction medicine guidance to any addiction support staff calling from Indigenous communities within BC, including Indigenous urban centres.

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



For UBC students

386 attendees in the Integrated Curriculum Workshops

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.

26 attendees in the enrichment activities workshop

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
2 program completions
(by June 2025)

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 Professional Development

Contact bccsu_education@bccsu.ubc.ca about offering topic-specific continuing professional development sessions.

In 2024/25, BCCSU hosted:

- 4 webinars to promote the revised Opioid Use Disorder guideline, review OAT in the primary setting, and provide education on managing precipitated withdrawal.
- 3 continuing pharmacy professional development events on OUD practice updates.

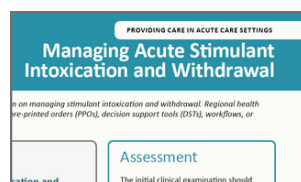
OUR RESOURCES

NEW IN 2024/25

The following resources were developed to support clinical practice across a range of substances and scenarios.

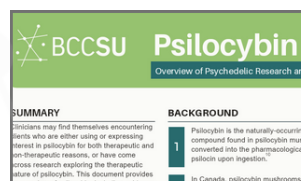
[Visit resource page ↗](#)

Acute Care Settings



This resource series includes 7 documents that provide advice on how to engage with and provide care in the acute care setting for people who use substances or have substance use disorder.

Psychedelic-assisted Therapy



This resource series contains 4 documents on psychedelic-assisted therapy.

[youtube.com/@BCCSU ↗](https://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/ ↗](https://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 ↗](https://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

WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2025/26

Lifetime Prevention Schedule Guideline on Substance Use

Screening: This guideline will offer recommendations on screening frequency, screening tools, and how to address a positive screen for primary care providers.

Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program:

Major content updates to the comprehensive education and training program for prescribing opioid agonist treatment.

iOAT Practice Update: Information to support optimization of iOAT and improve engagement and retention in treatment.

Best Practices in Benzodiazepine Prescribing in Primary Care:

Best practices for benzodiazepine prescribing in primary care, including indications for prescribing, when to offer and optimize non-pharmacologic first-line treatments, potential risks associated with long-term prescribing, and when deprescribing may be appropriate.

Managing Benzodiazepine Withdrawal in the Context of an Adulterated Opioid Supply

OUR PEOPLE

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