



## Advancing an Integrated Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Training Curriculum in Bay Area Graduate Programs

The Greater Bay Area Mental Health and Education Collaborative will partner with Zellerbach Family Foundation to create substance use disorder (SUDs) treatment curriculum for graduate programs in behavioral health.

Currently, graduate students in counseling, psychology and social work have designated substance use treatment courses. Many graduate programs have increased the units of these SUD courses in response to legislation requiring increased training on SUD-related topics, but for most graduate students, this is where formal SUD training ends in graduate school.

Increasing the amount of units is useful for greater student exposure to SUD topics, but having a longer course doesn't allow for the integration of SUD treatment issues into all aspects of clinical care.

Recognizing the importance of integrated mental health and substance use disorder treatment, the Zellerbach Foundation is funding The GBA Collaborative to create additional SUD curriculum "units" which can be inserted into all variety of graduate courses.

The SUDS Graduate Curriculum will first involve creating individual courses on alcohol and drug related topic areas that can be inserted into required graduate training programs. For instance, substance use and systems treatment issues might be a topic for a class in a couples and family treatment course for marriage and family therapists. Substance use assessment, including the Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) could be one class in a clinical assessment course for social workers.

The units to be developed will be informed by a needs assessment completed through a thorough review of the current curriculum as well as interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders such as faculty, students, county and county-contracted providers in addition to consumers and family members. Projected industry trends will also be taken into consideration.

The courses will soon be under development, followed by a promotional campaign introducing the units to graduate faculty in the Bay Area. The impact of the coursework on student alcohol and drug treatment awareness will be assessed and further development and dissemination of SUDs curriculum will be recommended at the completion of this project.

The development of a SUDs curriculum intends to prepare a more responsive and capable behavioral health workforce through effective and relevant alcohol and other drug treatment education - an important step in creating an integrated healthcare system.

