

Substance Use Disorder Treatment

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Case Study: Substance Abuse Block Grant (SABG) Case File Reviews

States are required to assess and improve, through independent peer review, the quality and appropriateness of treatment services delivered by providers that receive funds from the SABG. The purpose of independent peer review is to review the quality and appropriateness of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services to support continuous quality improvement efforts.

Mercer has served as the independent peer reviewer for several years. In this role, Mercer has suggested enhancements to the chart review process and tool, created/updated an Access-based review tool, facilitated inter-rater reliability trainings for review staff, worked with State staff to obtain secure access to charts, performed reviews of 200 charts per review cycle, drafted reports for State feedback, and finalized reports.

During the intensive review process, Mercer has noted systemic trends and themes and offered suggestions for the State's consideration to support ongoing quality improvement throughout the year for their providers.

The Mercer team includes clinical subject matter specialists who bring exceptional expertise to the SABG review process. Mercer appreciates the value of incorporating individuals with diverse, direct clinical and recovery experience to support a true peer review approach. We leverage a multi-disciplinary team of licensed behavioral health clinicians and nurses with extensive direct clinical experience working within SUD withdrawal management/detoxification and treatment environments. Mercer's reviewers are knowledgeable of the interventions/services and the underlying theoretical approach to addiction treatment, and have requisite training to understand the cultural and environmental issues which could influence the quality of the services being provided.





Case Study: 1115 SUD Waiver Support

Medicaid 1115 SUD Demonstration Waivers authorize states to receive Federal Financial Participation for the continuum of services to treat addictions to opioids and other substances, including services provided to Medicaid enrollees with SUD receiving treatment in residential and inpatient facilities that meet the definition of an Institution for Mental Disease.

Mercer is currently engaged with numerous states providing a variety of consulting services, including:

- Support with waiver design, drafting, and submission
- Support with overall waiver implementation and management, including:
 - Development of required deliverables for CMS (e.g., Implementation Plan, Monitoring Protocol, quarterly/annual monitoring reports, and Mid-Point Assessment)
 - Management of data process including receipt of raw data, validation and calculation of required metrics
 - Support with monthly CMS project calls
 - Support with cross-agency collaboration and coordination
 - Development of SUD provider monitoring tools and processes
 - Serve as the Independent Evaluator and complete the Evaluation Design, Interim Evaluation, and Summative Evaluation

The Mercer team includes subject matter specialists with extensive clinical and policy SUD, CMS, and demonstration waiver experience, as well as statisticians, PhD researchers, and data analysts.



Case Study: Opioid Settlement Fund Planning and Strategy

Large settlement funds stemming from lawsuits against opioid manufacturers and distributors are being awarded to states. States must assess and decide how and where to distribute these funds into local communities. States want to address their most critical needs while also considering long-term sustainability of these targeted investments.

Mercer assisted one state with an in-depth, qualitative, objective process for identifying state needs and then developing and prioritizing recommendations for distribution of opioid settlement funds.

For this project Mercer reviewed dozens of state documents and reports in order to develop a Statewide Opioid Needs Assessment. Mercer used the Needs Assessment findings to offer over 90 recommendations that were responsive to both State legislative requirements and aligned with the Johns Hopkins best practice guidance on the use of settlement funds. Mercer presented drafts of the Needs Assessment and the recommendations to two State stakeholder groups inclusive of the state Attorney General, legislators, and State subject matter experts. Feedback from these meetings refined the assessment and the recommendations. Mercer provided stakeholders with a scoring tool tailored to the State's needs to objectively prioritize funding recommendations across important domains. The stakeholders prioritized the recommendations, which Mercer used in the development of the Statewide Plan for the distribution of settlement funds.

The Mercer team included professionals with experience in executive leadership positions at the state and private provider levels with both clinical and regulatory/policy expertise. We brought extensive experience in the assessment of broad state service delivery systems, with expertise in system-wide best practices for addressing the opioid epidemic. Mercer's experience working with high-visibility stakeholders to develop the needs assessment and plan for funding distribution was essential for creating a plan that was tailored to the State's needs and responsive to the community. Mercer's project management expertise facilitated on-time delivery of the high-quality needs assessment and statewide plan.

For more information

Visit our website at www.mercer-government.mercer.com to view our experience, services, and client feedback.

