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NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

PROVIDENCE, RI, January 23, 2015—A national coalition of healthcare organizations has designed a unique and innovative training and mentoring program that gives primary care providers (PCPs) direct access to clinical experts who can answer questions on safe and evidence-based use of opioids for the treatment of chronic pain and how to treat addictions.

With the dearth of dedicated pain clinics, primary care providers are often on the forefront of treating patients with chronic pain—practitioners who also recognize the country is in the midst of an opioid overdose epidemic (more than 22,000 people died in 2012 from prescription drug overdoses, according to the Centers for Disease Control).

The Providers Clinical Support System for Opioid Therapies (PCSS-O) is a national training and mentoring project developed to give support to healthcare providers who need more information on the safe and effective use of opioids for treatment of chronic pain, as well as the treatment of opioid use disorder.

 “The PCSS-O mentoring program has helped thousands of healthcare providers use evidence-based practices in prescribing opioids,” said Kevin Sevarino, MD, PhD, American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (AAAP) and Medical Director for PCSSO project. AAAP is the lead healthcare organization for this project. “Many of our clinical experts are addiction specialists and pain specialists. PCPs are often confronted with complex cases that require the type of expertise that simply hasn’t been readily available to until now.”

PCSS-O Colleague Support Program offers three levels of mentoring:

* **Ask a Colleague** is a simple and direct way to receive an answer related to opioids and pain management. This facet of the opioid therapies training is designed to provide a prompt response to simple practice-related questions.
* **Brief Mentoring** is designed to provide individualized, one-on-one guidance to discuss specific questions and how to handle complex clinical situations involving prescribing opioids and opioid addiction.
* Finally, the **In-Depth Mentoring** program is similar to a traditional academic mentoring arrangement where a relationship is expected to last over period of time with regular scheduled interactions to discuss ongoing topics and concerns in treatment.

To find a clinical expert, PCPs simply go to the PCSS-O website ([www.PCSS-O.org](http://www.PCSS-O.org) ) and complete a simple form. All mentor requests are vetted by addiction/pain professionals who match the PCP to the proper clinician. Providers can also request a specific mentor from a mentor directory, but the assignment is based on availability of mentors.

PCSS-O is part of a federal program developed as a result of the opioid overdose epidemic. The program is funded by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Thirteen healthcare organizations formed a coalition, and provide myriad trainings to a wide range of healthcare providers, including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, dentists, pharmacists, and others.

Coalition members include: American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry ; Addiction Technology Transfer Center – Network Coordinating Office; American Academy of Neurology; American Academy of Pain Medicine; American Academy of Pediatrics; American College of Physicians; American Dental Association; American Medical Association; American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine; American Psychiatric Association; American Society for Pain Management Nursing; International Nurses Society on Addictions; and Southeastern Consortium for Substance Abuse Training.

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (AAAP) is the professional membership organization for learning and sharing the art and science of Addiction Psychiatry research and clinical treatment.