

The Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center's response to a global pandemic to meet consumer needs for Whole Person Care in Alameda County

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Introduction

Alameda County Care Connect (Care Connect) is a county-wide initiative to improve access to services for three groups of Medi-Cal eligible residents: high utilizers of emergency services, chronically ill, and homeless individuals. This six-year (2016-2022) Whole Person Care pilot coordinates primary care, behavioral health, housing and other providers for these populations.

UCSF's Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center (PAETC), in partnership with Community Health Center Network and their expertise in clinical trainings, comprise the Skills Development Unit (SDU) which is the training and capacity-building arm of the Care Connect initiative. The SDU adapted our expertise in adult learning, training modalities and community health to implement a training plan that increased skills, knowledge, and capacity of county providers to work effectively with these communities. On March 17th, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place mandate, the SDU postponed in-person trainings and adapted a new virtual training strategy. The SDU established new transformative partnerships with Health Care for the Homeless, the 100 & Beyond housing services initiative, and with COVID-19 clinicians.

Methods

The SDU postponed in-person trainings and adapted a virtual strategy. With this pivot, the SDU maintained quality while expanding breadth and reach of the program. Between period 1 (3/1/19-2/28/20) and period 2 (3/1/20-2/28/21), the SDU training cache grew to include COVID-19 trainings such as PPE training, Cultural Humility & COVID-19, and COVID-19 updates like the 'State of the Pandemic in Alameda County: COVID-19 Conversations on Vaccines, Variants, and More.'

The pandemic also pushed the SDU to establish other trainings to address emergent topics related to COVID-19 such as provider self-care (SDU established several self-care, stress reduction, and a training series for everyday mental health during the pandemic) and housing services trainings (new legal protections for tenants and for immigrant tenants). Further, we helped organizations build their own online training infrastructure with technical assistance, one-on-one individualized trainings, and with trainings to increase virtual learning engagement such as Group Facilitation in the Virtual World and Jamboard 101.

The SDU addressed these emergent training needs while maintaining our pre-COVID training streams: Consumer Engagement Skills and Sector Knowledge. Consumer (patient and client) engagement skills, such as Motivational Interviewing and Trauma Informed Care, are core competencies for providers to increase coordination of care and to encourage patient engagement, empowerment, and self-efficacy. The sector or field knowledge includes knowledge of resources, eligibility requirements, referral processes, and client expectations of eligible services to promote and maximize appropriate, available and tailored resources. Knowledge in public benefits, housing resources, and primary care are some examples of these trainings SDU continued to offer during the pandemic.

Outcomes

Monthly participation increased by 67% during the pandemic from 83 to 139 participants per month (see Fig. 1). Without classroom size and travel restrictions, SDU was able to scale up the number of trainings and ease capacity limits.

Participants were given a post-training evaluation and asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 5 the quality of the training before and after the training. During the pre-COVID period 1, the average quality of trainings were rated 4.59 out of 5 while participant ratings during the COVID period 2 were 4.46 (see Fig. 3). The usefulness of the trainings slightly increased from 4.18 pre-COVID to 4.24 during the pandemic (see Fig. 3). As with the quality of training for the Consumer Engagement skills training, the ratings on usefulness of these trainings experienced a slight dip, whereas ratings on the usefulness and quality of trainings for the Sector Knowledge experienced a slight increase.

Was the Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center successful in its training response to the global pandemic for Alameda County's Whole Person Care pilot?

Yes, our adult learning techniques were successfully applied to virtual trainings, emergent topics were addressed, and participant ratings remained consistent with pre-COVID in-person trainings.

Figure 1 Average Number of participants and Events per Month

	Average Number of Participants per Month	Average Number of Events per Month
Pre-COVID (Period 1)	83	3.67
COVID (Period 2)	138.92	5.17

Figure 2 Number of Training Participants by Month

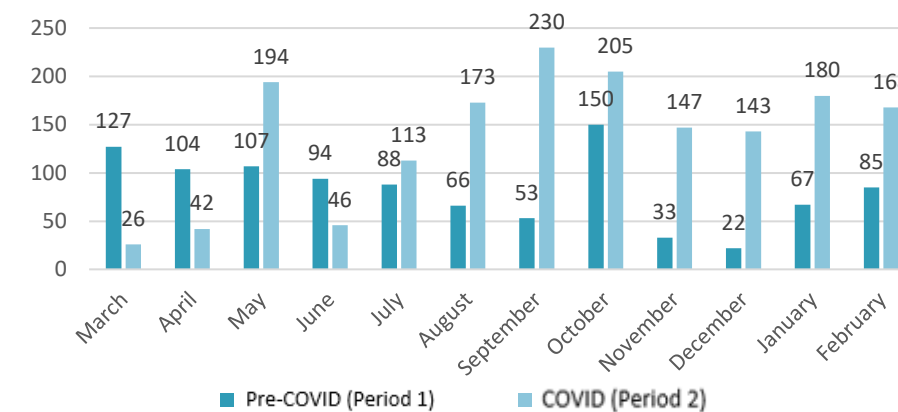
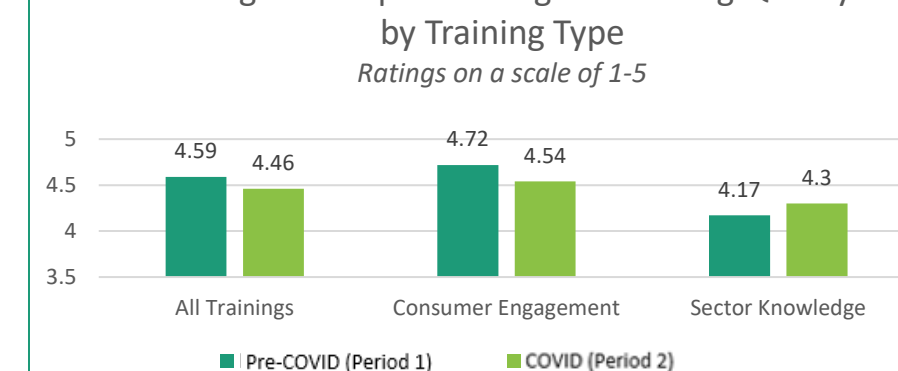
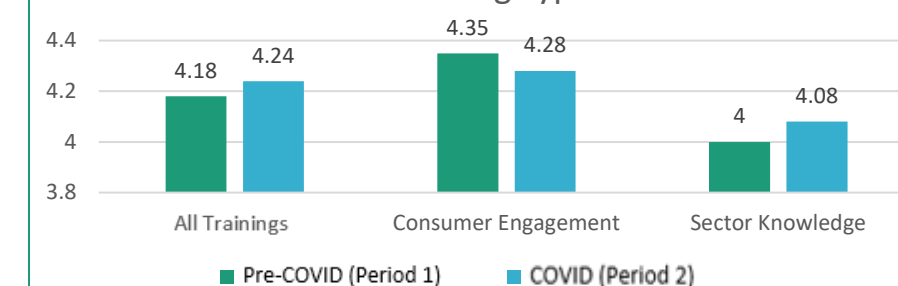


Figure 3 Average Participant Ratings of Training Quality by Training Type



Average Participant Rating of Usefulness by Training Type



Feedback survey comments

"Great training. (This was my) 1st time taking (a web-based) quiz and breaking out into groups in an online training. Wow, amazed me that it was possible. Well facilitated."

-Empathy Effect participant

"Though I strongly prefer in-person meetings, this online course was very effective because of the activity quiz, the visuals, and the presenter's cadence. She spoke slowly and clearly which was helpful and in a way I think I might have been more focused in this online format."

-Mental Health & Self-Care participant

"Just a huge thanks for taking the time and effort to train staff during this crisis and give them the tools and knowledge they need to protect themselves and our clients."

-COVID, Safety & PPE participant

