

What Do Physicians in Training
Need to Know About SUDs and
How Will They Learn It?
The COPE Initiative

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Disclosure

I have no actual or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.

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What is COPE?

COPE is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving patient care and the public health by ensuring that all future physicians know how to prevent, identify, and provide specialty-appropriate interventions for patients who use tobacco or illicit drugs, or who engage in unhealthy use of alcohol or non-medical use of prescription medications.

COPE's History

COPE was formed in 2009 to sustain and enlarge on the accomplishments of a series of White House Conferences on Medical Education in Substance Abuse, which were held in 2003, 2006, and 2008 by the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the Executive Office of the President.

COPE's History (cont'd.)

Having grown steadily since its founding, COPE recently joined the **Mid-Shore Community Foundation (MSCF)**, a 501(c)(3) public charity and one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the U.S.

Rationale for COPE's Work

Achieving COPE's goals would ensure that patients who are at risk for or experiencing SUDs would benefit from early identification and appropriate intervention, regardless of where they connect with the health care system, thus improving the patients' quality of life and the overall public health.

COPE's Current Activities

- COPE is engaged in a number of activities and programs in pursuit of its goals, as described in the meeting handout and as we will discuss briefly.
- These activities are made possible by the active engagement of medical school faculty and other experts in meetings like this one and as members of COPE Working Groups.

Current Activities (contd.)

Today, we'll consider four COPE initiatives:

1. Gathering information through the *COPE Medical School Curriculum Survey*.
2. Hosting *regional meetings* to bring together faculty and others with expertise in SUDs.
3. Supporting efforts to define *core competencies* related to SUDs.
4. Communicating with faculty and other interested parties through an *e-Newsletter*.

Activity: Curriculum Survey

The COPE **Medical School Curriculum Survey** is designed to identify the current state of teaching about SUDs at allopathic and osteopathic medical schools across the Nation, as well as to gather information about resource needs, teaching strategies, and tested resources that may be helpful to faculty at other medical schools.

Curriculum Survey (contd.)

The survey contains 13 questions, 11 of which ask whether certain subjects are part of the curriculum at the respondent's medical school and, if so, how and when those subjects are taught.

The survey also asks respondents to identify trusted and/or frequently used sources of information about SUDs, as well as topics on which more resources are needed.

Curriculum Survey (contd.)

Analysis of the 84 survey responses received to date finds that just more than **half** of respondents report that their school's curriculum includes instruction in safe prescribing of opioids for chronic pain, or identification and treatment of opioid use disorders.

Addressing this deficit is an urgent priority!

Activity: Regional Meetings

- An important step in that direction involves the **COPE Regional Medical Education Summits**, co-sponsored by SAMHSA.
- The Summits bring together medical school faculty and administrators, as well as addiction experts and public officials, to reach consensus on strategies and priorities for improving medical education about SUDs and related disorders.

Regional Meetings (contd.)

- To date, COPE and SAMHSA have held meetings in 5 HHS Regions, involving representatives of 80+ medical schools.
- COPE views these meetings not as “one off” events, but as the beginning of an ongoing collaboration with participants.

Regional Meetings (contd.)

- The two most recent meetings, in HHS Regions V (Great Lakes States) and IX (West Coast) had a special focus on medical education related to opioid prescribing, misuse and overdose.
- Three more Regional Meetings are being planned for 2018.

Activity: Core Competencies

COPE volunteers are building on work done by public- and private-sector organizations to identify the knowledge and skills regarding SUDs and related disorders that every student should acquire by the time he or she graduates from medical school.

There is an urgent emphasis on competencies related to opioid prescribing and opioid use disorders.

Core Competencies (contd.)

COPE also is assisting specific projects to define core competencies related to opioids that are sponsored by State governments and private-sector organizations.

Our assistance includes providing relevant documents collected by COPE and recommending experts in particular areas of interest.

Core Competencies (contd.)

Results will be disseminated through the **COPE Online Resource Center** and reported in the COPE newsletter, *Addiction Education News*.

(All supporting documents used to identify core competencies also will be available in the Online Resource Center.)

Activity: e-Newsletter

COPE's bimonthly e-newsletter, ***Addiction Education News***, offers concise reports on developments in research, policies and programs that affect medical education about SUDs.

The January-February 2018 issue will focus on ***new data and resources related to the opioid crisis.***

e-Newsletter (contd.)

The newsletter welcomes information submitted by readers about activities at their medical schools, as well as other developments with the potential to affect medical education.

We also welcome suggestions or requests regarding topics to be addressed in future issues.

e-Newsletter (contd.)

- Subscriptions to **Addiction Education News** are available at no cost.
- Simply register at the COPE website (www.cope-assn.org) or contact Bonnie Wilford at the COPE National Office at 410-770-4866.

Other Activities

In addition to the four activities I've described, other COPE initiatives include:

- Creation of **Medical Education Toolkits** and other teaching resources.
- Recruiting one or more **“Champions of Change”** at every osteopathic and allopathic medical school in the U.S.
- A **Student Resilience Project** to develop more helping resources and policies for medical students at risk for, or experiencing, an SUD.

COPE Needs Your Help!

- We look to you to share information *with* COPE and *about* COPE.
- We welcome your participation in COPE meetings and as volunteers in Working Groups.
- We are about to begin recruiting volunteers to participate in a new SAMHSA grant that involves teaching medical students about MAT for opioid use disorders.

As a Next Step . . .

We ask for your help in encouraging New York State medical schools to complete the COPE curriculum survey. **Please send us contact information for colleagues at any NYS medical school who may be willing to complete a survey.**

To date, we've received completed surveys from 4 NYS medical schools, but we need more.

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We Want to Hear from You!

- Please feel free to reach out to me or any of our Board members with questions, suggestions, or requests.
- Bonnie Wilford: 410-770-4866 or BBWilford@aol.com

Questions or Comments?