

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER: IMPACTING THE OPIOID CRISIS THROUGH THE VCU VIRGINIA OPIOID PROJECT ECHO

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Background

- Opioid-related overdose and death in the Commonwealth of Virginia have increased at an alarming rate. As per Virginia Department of Health (VDH) more than 1400 individuals died in the year 2017 related to opioid misuse, overuse, and addiction.
- One of the drivers to this public health epidemic includes incomplete care continuum and a lack of healthcare providers for providing best practices of opioid case management, prescribing, and dispensing.
- ECHO as part of the Solution: The Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (Project ECHO) provides knowledge exchange from specialists and subspecialists to enables primary care providers and clinicians to deliver best practice care for complex conditions like opioid use disorder.

Purpose

To impact the opioid crisis through the Project ECHO telementoring model to create access to high-quality specialty care and knowledge in local communities throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, especially to underserved areas.

Methods

- The VCU Opioid Project ECHO has required VCU in partnership with VDH to take the lead in attending ECHO Institute training, developing the curriculum, recruiting subject matter speakers, creating didactic presentations, recruiting case study presenters, soliciting feedback from participants, quality improvement, crafting multiple marketing materials, tracking metrics, and providing ongoing support for program development.
- Our first set of ECHO sessions were held from May 2018 to June 2018 as bi-weekly, 2-hour sessions, which transitioned to 1.5-hour clinics beginning November 2018 and onward, after evaluating for efficiency and effectiveness. Since launch, the Virginia Opioid Project ECHO has delivered 13 ECHO sessions

Results

Table 1 VCU Virginia Opioid Project ECHO Performance and Outcomes May 2018- Feb 1, 2019

Number of Project ECHO Sessions	13
Number of Participants	256
Number of Unique Participants	133
Percentage of repeat participants	>50%
Average number of external participants per session	20
Average number of participants per session including hub	26
Number of Health Centers/Clinics who have participated	65
Number of Continued Education Credits Claimed	121
Number of Speakers and Subject Matter Experts engaged	9
Changes in your practice	33%
Virginia Region Represented	Southwest Virginia, Northeast Virginia, Central Virginia and Southeast Virginia (see Fig 1)
Types of participants	Multidisciplinary MD, PhD, LPN, RPh, RN, EMS, NP, PA, MSW, and others

Discussion

- More than half of our participants are repeat participants underscoring high satisfaction, community engagement and perceived benefit.
- Respondents who participated in VCU Virginia Opioid ECHO sessions consistently rated their opioid related knowledge and skills confidence at a higher level as compared before attending the session.

- When asked “Have you made any changes in your practice because of participation in the Virginia Opioid Addiction ECHO”, 33% of respondents replied “Yes”; giving examples of implemented change and improved clinical practice.
- Most of our participants are from regions that have been impacted heavily by the opioid epidemic such as Southwest Virginia, Northeast Virginia, Central Virginia and Southeast Virginia.

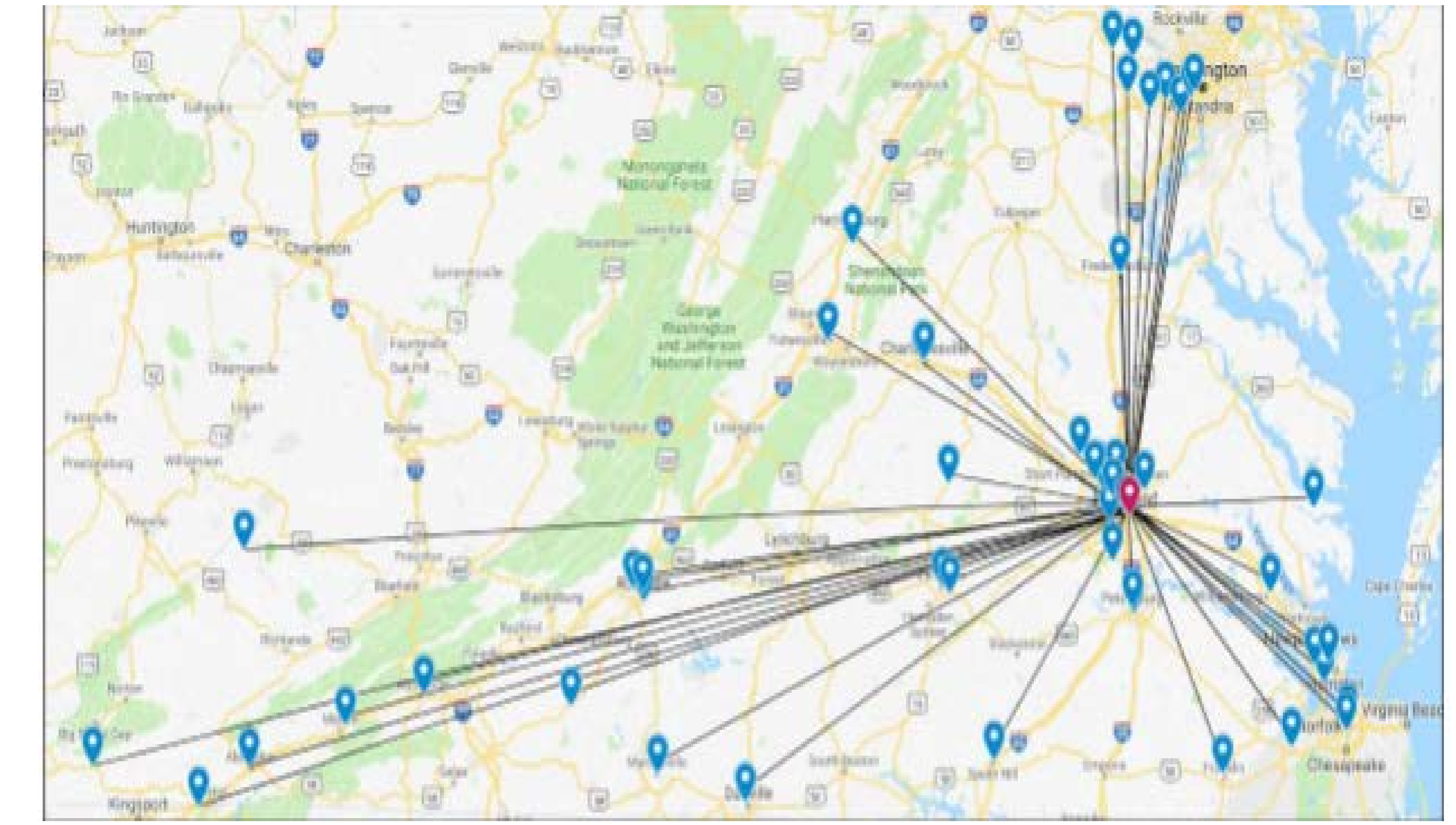


Figure 1: VCU Opioid Project ECHO Community Participation & Impact

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