

EPI-NC NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023



WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS ISSUE:

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- **Making an Impact!**
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FEP SYMPOSIUM RECAP

Happy Fall! Thank you again for taking the time and traveling to attend our 4th Annual North Carolina FEP Symposium. We appreciate hearing your feedback so we can work to improve the experience and learning year after year. One key take away was hearing how much everyone enjoyed meeting each other, sharing stories, and connecting over the vital work we do. We are committed to organizing an annual symposium to unite everyone and keep the connection, communication, and collaboration going all year!

TRAINING AND EDUCATION OFFERINGS COMING IN 2024

Coordinated Specialty Care in NC is growing! With our expanded services, we strive to update and evolve our knowledge to provide best practices to all our young people. We are excited to announce that we will be offering training for all our team members! Our goal for 2024 is to provide the resources and assistance to ensure each CSC team member is supported in using evidence-based practices. Our aim is to increase collaboration across the teams, as we all learn from each other and share knowledge.

Mark your calendars! We are excited to announce the dates for the IRT training: **January 24th and 25th**. This is a great opportunity to learn evidence-based skills and incorporate these techniques into the team approach.

To facilitate improved connection throughout the year, we are excited to announce that we are working towards developing a **North Carolina FEP Project ECHO**. Project ECHO uses videoconferencing to build virtual communities of practice and supports professionals learn and share best practices with each other. This will be an opportunity for all clinic members to come together to learn from experts and discuss cases. If you are interested in learning more about Project ECHO, please visit their [website](#).

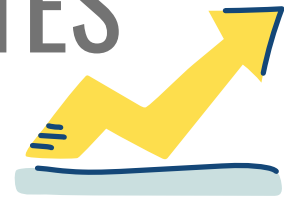
The Guiding Principles of Project ECHO are:

- **Equity in outcomes across underserved populations**
- **Democratization in the implementation of best practices (through guided practice, in an “all teach, all learn” environment)**
- **Empowering clinicians at the front line**

For this to be a success, we would really like your input! The conference calls will include presentations on a clinically relevant topic, followed by discussion, and then a case presentation and consultation – led by our FEP clinics. **Please vote for ideas for the topical presentations [here!](#)** If you are interested in being part of the planning committee, please reach out to Felice_Reddy@med.unc.edu. We are excited to offer this great learning community to our state and feel confident this will help us expand knowledge, learn from each other, and ultimately provide better care. More to come regarding our start date, syllabus, and schedule.



HORIZONS UPDATES



The Horyzons Community is Growing!

As you know, Horyzons is an online social media platform for young people experiencing psychosis in North Carolina. The platform is peer-led and includes opportunities for users to meet and develop a social network of people with similar lived experiences. In addition, users have access to interactive therapeutic content to aid in the recovery process. So far, we have 14 clients engaging with each other on the platform. It has been wonderful to see peers from each clinic engaging clients on Horyzons and liaising with the clinical moderators to make Horyzons a warm, welcoming, and supportive space for all users.

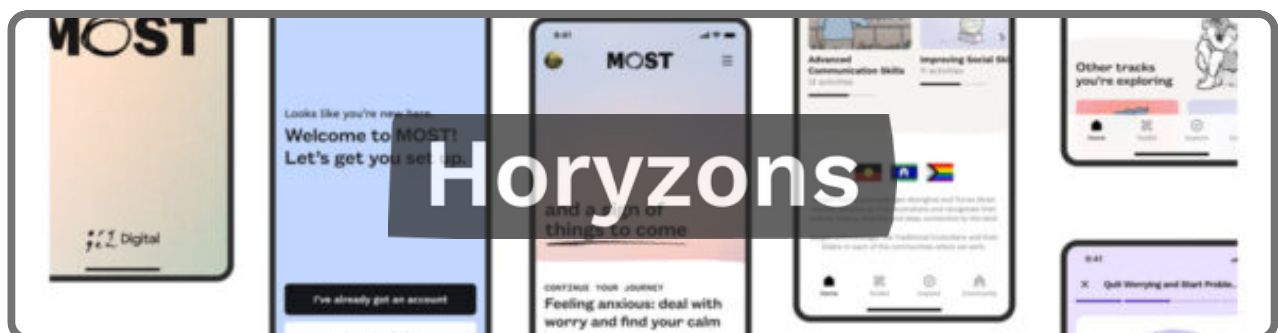
If you work with any clients that would like to join the Horyzons community, please let us know by completing the [online referral form](#) or sending an electronic copy of the referral form to Liz Fraser at erfraser@email.unc.edu.

Horyzons materials have been added to the [EPI-NC website](#) to facilitate access to resources without the need to search an inbox or shared drive.

Resources available on the website include:

- Overview of Horyzons
- Eligibility criteria
- Information about the referral process
- Other clinician-specific resources (e.g., Horyzons cheat sheet that describes the kinds of therapy content clients can access on the platform)

Finally, **we would love to hear about your experience** integrating Horyzons at your practice. We want to understand how research translates into practice, including addressing any barriers and promoting strategies that work well in each clinic. We will contact you individually to gauge your interest in completing a brief survey and being compensated for your time!



COMING SOON: NC HeAL



NC Healthy Active Living

The NC HeAL wellness program is coming very soon!
[Click here](#) to view the NC HeALs Brochure.

Please welcome National Board-Certified Health and Wellness Coach **Carrie Gregory** who has just joined the NC HeAL team! She has over 10 years of experience helping clients be their healthiest selves. She will meet virtually one-on-one to collaborate with clients by assisting them in identifying lifestyle goals and action plans they want to work on. She will support them as they work towards these goals by identifying and overcoming obstacles and encouraging them with unconditional positive regard. The coaching process enhances activation and motivation to change by aligning health-related goals with the client's strengths and personal values. [Click here](#) for a brief video in which Carrie describes her role as a health coach.

Common goals can be to drink more water and less soda, find an enjoyable physical activity, cut down on or quit vaping, and many more. The Health Coach will provide practical resources to clients, including local information on accessing food pantries, local trails, gym membership discounts, Fitbit, cookbooks, and more.

People with psychotic illness have much shorter lifespans than those without psychosis, most often due to cardiovascular and other preventable diseases. If we address the modifiable risk factors of sedentary behavior, poor nutrition, and smoking early in their illness, we hope to add years of vitality!

This **FREE program** is available to any client active in your clinic who is agreeable to meeting with the coach to address one or more lifestyle goals. To refer clients, complete the pdf of the [NC HeALs referral form](#). For more information and/or to submit a referral form please email ncheal@med.unc.edu

NC CSC IS MAKING AN IMPACT!

240

First Episode Psychosis
clients served from
October 2022 - October 2023

922

Peer support sessions provided

2,129

Medical management visits
provided

2,690

Therapy sessions provided

1,034

Supported employment and
education
sessions provided

20

Counties served
across North Carolina 4.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Welcome WeCare2!

WeCare2 stands for **Western Carolina Early Episode Psychosis Program**. The goal of WeCare2 is to improve an individual's ability to live independently, building healthy and enjoyable relationships and to succeed in work or school.

WeCare2 provides outpatient therapeutic services and support to the individual and their family to **promote hope, healing, and achievement of life goals through a recovery-based approach**. WeCare2 serves Mitchell, Yancey, and Burke counties.

WeCare2 Clinical Team Members:

Meghan Graham, LCSW Clinical Director, MCHP
Ivy Stafford, SEE/IPS

Amelia Anglin, LCSW, LCAS Individual/Family
Therapist

Tiffany English, LCMHC, LCAS Individual/Family
Therapist

Autum Wallen, LCSW Clinical Director, MAHEC
John Nicholls, MD, DFAPA Supervising Psychiatrist

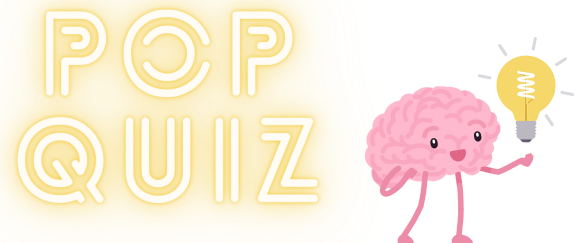
WeCare2 celebrated the **opening of the new clinic on August 8, 2023**, and have had 5 patients referred internally since opening the clinic doors. WeCare2 anticipates more growth as the marketing team gears up for supporting external referral sources.



2024 FEP SYMPOSIUM

Thank you for the feedback regarding dates and location.

The 2024 symposium will be held in **March and located in Wilmington...** more information to come!



Which of the following best describes Project Echo?

- a) A simple way to get continuing education credit
- b) An opportunity to come together to learn from experts and each other
- c) A program to improve community outreach efforts



Email your answer to EPI_NC@unc.edu for a chance to win a prize!