

# Project ECHO



**Support HF 1634/SF 2486, which provides \$1.5M per year to Hennepin Healthcare to continue current ECHOs and add additional programs to serve our diverse communities.**

Project ECHO is designed to transform how providers treat their patients through shared clinical knowledge that improves access to quality health care across the state. ECHO has been used to improve health care outcomes in countless disease areas, from diabetes, hepatitis C, perinatal health and substance use disorder.

## **What is Project ECHO\*?**

**Project ECHO was founded at the University of New Mexico in 2003 to address disparities in hepatitis C care across the state’s rural and remote communities. Inspired by the way clinicians learn from medical rounds during residencies, the ECHO Model® has evolved into a learning framework that applies across disciplines and specialties for sustainable and profound change. The program:**

- Links a set of medical experts/specialists from a “Hub” to healthcare providers or teams “spokes” (typically providers in rural or underserved areas, or primary care providers who do not have specialized training in treating a particular illness in any community via Zoom.
- During an ECHO session, participants present real (anonymized) cases to the specialists—and each other—for discussion and recommendations. Participants learn from one another, as knowledge is tested and refined through a local lens.
- Community providers develop the knowledge and expertise to manage their patient population.
- Each hour-long session includes a mix of didactics and case discussion.
- All healthcare professionals are welcome.

\*A continuation and expansion of Project ECHO is included in the Governor’s budget recommendations.

## Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) evaluation of ECHO programs for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD):

MMB studied the causal impact of ECHOs on teaching providers to appropriately provide medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) which is the most evidence-based treatment for SUD when paired with counseling and the most effective way to reduce overdoses. Their findings suggest:

- ECHO was highly effective at increasing capacity for providers to treat patients using MOUD.
- Continued and expanded use of Project ECHO can be one important tool—in a robust continuum of care—to mitigate the harm of opioids on our communities.

## Past and Present Project ECHO Experience

Hennepin Healthcare is an accredited Project ECHO site in Minnesota that has been hosting ECHO activities since March 21, 2018, when we were designated a hub by the University of New Mexico's ECHO Institute. All Project ECHO leads at Hennepin were trained at this ECHO Institute. We were the site of the first Project ECHOs in Minnesota and today we remain the site with the most ECHO Programming and highest participant count. There are four active Project ECHOs taking place at Hennepin Healthcare.

	Start date	Sessions to date	Unique Participants	Clinics Represented	Unique Zip Codes
Integrated Opioid and Addiction Care ECHO	3/2018	171	1096	282	178
Minnesota Viral Hepatitis ECHO	11/2019	75	170	64	46
Midwest Tribal ECHO	12/2019 - 11/2021	44	242	107	76
Upper Midwest Collaborative Covid 19 Nursing Home ECHO *	11/2020 - 09/21	weekly	Data protected by AHRQ	~200 nursing homes	Data protected by AHRQ
Perinatal Substance Use ECHO	4/22	16	212	90	71
Race Equity and Opioid Use ECHO	8/22	5	103	49	36
All ECHOs		325	1794	393	245