

Comprehensive Plan Strategies

Expand Equitable Access to EBP treatment options:

- Ensure all SUD specialty providers offer medications for SUD (MSUD) or demonstrate coordinated access, supported through consistent standards and reimbursement models across payors.
- Expand access to MSUD in carceral settings, treatment services provided in collaboration with drug/specialty courts, and via EMS/Bup pilot scaling.
- Address CCO and regulatory inconsistencies by aligning oversight mechanisms and adopting value-based payment models.
- Prioritize systemic implementation of common assessment tools to increase ease of access to care.
- Ensure stability and growth of treatment services that delivery culturally specific and place-based care.

Ensure Timely Access to the Appropriate Level of Care at All Entry Points:

- Ensure that providers, payors and state agencies are utilizing common frameworks to understand wait times for both identification of needed level of care, and the start of appropriate services.
- Create baseline wait time data and transparent public reporting on access metrics.
- Expand 24/7 access to withdrawal management services statewide.
- Improve referral systems to ensure individuals move from referral to care without gaps.

Facilitate Improved Transitions Throughout the Treatment and Recovery Journey:

- Expand use of cross-system care coordination protocols to increase seamless transitions and consistent warm handoffs.
- Develop and adopt standard discharge and transition planning practices aligned with patient-defined goals.
- Create metrics and systems to track transitions across programs, including between ASAM levels and Payors.

- Prioritize high-need populations (e.g. rural, justice-involved, co-occurring) in transition planning with culturally appropriate wraparound supports.

Drive Quality and Accountability Across All Components of the Treatment System:

- Develop shared quality metrics across systems that include access, retention, outcomes, and patient experience.
- Build technical assistance and funding supports for smaller and rural providers to participate in reporting and QI systems.
- Modernize oversight processes and reduce redundant audits; align with incentives and provider capacity.
- Coordinate with ROADS/APAC teams to generate and return actionable insights to providers for system improvement.

Draft Questions

1. Access to Care & Timeliness

- How long do clients typically wait for each level of care (WM, residential, outpatient, MAT, detox)?
- What factors most commonly delay client access to services?
- Which populations experience the longest delays or difficulty accessing care?
- What external systems (CCOs, hospitals, courts) create access bottlenecks?
- How do transportation, geography, and telehealth limitations affect access?
- Which substances or treatment needs (benzos, kratom, DXM, etc.) have the weakest access pathways?
- What changes would most significantly reduce waitlists or delays?

2. Transitions of Care & Continuity

- At which points in the continuum do clients most frequently fall through the cracks?
- How effectively do providers coordinate discharge and step-down planning?
- What challenges arise in transitions for people with complex medical, cognitive, or physical needs?
- How well are clients supported when leaving residential or WM and returning to community settings?
- What transition challenges occur for AICs/YICs upon release?
- What partnerships or supports are needed to strengthen care continuity?
- What makes it most difficult to transition clients out of higher-level care when clinically ready?

3. Case Management, Care Coordination & Referrals

- What are the main pain points in referral processes across the continuum?
- How effectively do agencies communicate during transitions?
- What partnerships support strong coordination—and where are the gaps?
- How difficult is it to place clients with high acuity or complex legal histories?
- Do providers understand and use local harm-reduction resources?

- Where does competition among agencies undermine collaboration?
- Which referral pathways need clearer guidance, standardization, or partners?

4. Service Capacity & Program Availability

- What program types or service levels are most limited in your region?
- Which client profiles (legal, behavioral, diagnostic) are most frequently declined?
- What factors drive treatment bed shortages or reduced availability?
- Are programs capping the number of high-risk or complex clients they accept?
- What gaps exist for youth, co-occurring disorders, eating disorders, or complex medical needs?
- How do rural or frontier conditions affect program availability and sustainability?
- What services are missing entirely from your local continuum?

5. Workforce, Staffing, Credentialing & Retention

- What staffing shortages most affect service quality or client access?
- Which positions are most difficult to recruit and retain?
- What credentialing or licensing barriers affect service delivery or delays?
- How prepared are new staff entering the SUD field?
- What supports or incentives would most effectively improve retention?
- How does compensation impact your ability to maintain a qualified workforce?
- What burnout factors are most significant for your staff?

6. Treatment Effectiveness & Models of Care

- Which treatment practices or EBPs work well for your population?
- Which practices are most difficult to sustain (training, staffing, billing, rural factors)?
- What treatment practices should be expanded, reduced, or redesigned?
- How effectively are harm-reduction approaches integrated into care?
- How do you treat clients using emerging or complex substances (kratom, DXM, benzos, ketamine)?
- How does your organization respond when a client is 'not a good fit'?

- What innovations would most improve treatment effectiveness?

7. Co-Occurring Disorders & Specialty Populations

- What co-occurring capacity does your program currently have?
- Which diagnoses or acuity levels result in declined referrals or limited acceptance?
- How do programs handle emerging neurocognitive issues or cognitive decline?
- What gaps exist for SPMI, IDD, or dual-diagnosis clients?
- Are youth-specific services sufficient in your region?
- What supports are needed to serve medically or physically complex clients?
- How does legal involvement affect your ability to serve co-occurring clients?

8. Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) & Client Complexity

- What SDOH needs most impact recovery or engagement (housing, food, employment)?
- How do medical conditions (wound care, disability) impact access or placement?
- How do legal histories or court involvement create access barriers?
- What community resources are missing that could support stabilization?
- How often do programs exclude clients due to behavioral history?
- What supports would improve outcomes for high-complexity clients?
- What partnerships need strengthening to support SDOH needs?

9. Policy, Regulation, Funding, Payers & Administrative Burden

- Which payer or CCO policies most restrict effective treatment?
- Which OARs create barriers or conflict with ASAM or clinical judgment?
- What documentation requirements are most burdensome?
- What funding structures undermine your ability to serve high-needs clients?
- What policy changes would produce the biggest improvement in outcomes?
- What unintended consequences result from current payer or regulatory rules?
- How well do VBP arrangements work for your program?

10. Technology, Data, EHR & Telehealth

- How effectively does your EHR support clinical practice and reporting?
- Which documentation requirements reduce time for direct care?
- How well does your organization share data with other providers or systems?
- How has telehealth affected client access and engagement?
- What technology training do staff need to work more effectively?
- What tools or platforms would improve coordination across agencies?
- What technology limitations particularly affect rural/frontier areas?

11. Equity, Inclusion & Cultural Responsiveness

- Which communities face the greatest barriers to equitable access or retention?
- How effectively does your program provide culturally responsive care?
- What challenges exist in scaling culturally specific services?
- How do stigma or bias affect treatment engagement or pathways?
- How do you address culturally influenced 'challenging behaviors' without exclusion?
- Are underserved populations receiving adequate support?
- What changes would most improve cultural equity and inclusion?

12. High Insight Systemwide Questions

- What causes the greatest frustration for providers?
- What causes the greatest frustration for clients?
- What keeps clients from staying engaged in treatment?
- What tasks consume significant time without improving outcomes?
- What is the biggest unmet need in the current system?
- If you could change one system-level issue immediately, what would it be?
- What does 'success' look like in your community that statewide metrics miss?