

CSAP's Central CAPT

Service to Science Regional Academy Frequently Asked Questions

April 11, 2006

Who is Central CAPT and how did my program come to your attention?

“Central CAPT” stands for the “Central Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies.” We are one of five regional centers funded by the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). CSAP is part of the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Central CAPT is administered by the Minnesota Institute of Public Health (MIPH) under a contract with CSAP. MIPH is a not-for-profit (501 C-3) corporation located in Mounds View, Minnesota.

Our mission is to bridge research and practice in the field of substance abuse prevention. We do this by providing technical assistance and training, primarily by working with state agencies responsible for prevention.

Central CAPT was formed in 1997 because CSAP recognized the distance between the federal government and those who work in the field of substance abuse prevention. They set up five technical assistance and training Centers around the country to help close this distance. Central CAPT serves the central region, which includes ten states and the Red Lake Nation.

The ten states in our region are North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia.

We asked each state agency and the agency in the Red Lake Nation responsible for substance abuse prevention to nominate a program to attend the Academy. We received their nominations and then extended invitations to these programs.

What is Service to Science? What is this Academy?

The Service to Science initiative is designed to help programs become more evidence-based (sometimes called “research” or “science-based”). CSAP and various States have placed increasing emphasis on the use of evidence-based programs. However, they also recognize that many local programs may not have the ability to demonstrate effectiveness or outcomes. This could be due to a variety of factors, including a lack of resources or knowledge about evaluation. Therefore, CSAP established a Service to Science

initiative, and they have asked the CAPTs to help programs become more knowledgeable about program evaluation and offer technical assistance on evaluation.

What is the format for the Academy? How will it actually be run?

A draft agenda for the Academy is attached. We will spend 1-1/2 days together. On the first day, we will show you our approach to evaluation, including logic models and how to create an evaluation plan. We have found that even sophisticated programs often lack a logic model, or if one exists, it may need updating. And we strongly recommend that all programs have an evaluation plan.

We will then share with you some basic information about the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP). Some of you may be interested in applying to this registry, but even if you are not, the criteria used by this registry is based on scientific principles that many programs can use to improve implementation and evaluation.

After this time together, your program will meet for one-on-one technical assistance with your consultant. You will have several hours to do that on the first day, and the entire next morning will be devoted to this as well.

We'll adjourn after lunch on Day 2, because many of you have afternoon flights and need time to get to the airport.

What materials should I bring?

We requested materials from you about a month ago, and for those of you who sent them, these have helped us become familiar with your program and evaluation. If the following were not included, or if you have not sent materials yet, please send us:

- Program description
- Evaluation plan
- Logic model
- Evaluation results
- Instruments (surveys, interview questions, focus group protocols, etc.)
- Evaluation reports

If, later on, you think of something that would help us better understand your program, please feel free to bring that to the Academy itself.

Can I send these materials in advance?

Yes. If you would like to send these materials in advance of the Academy, please send them to Sherri Lincoln at the following address:

Sherri Lincoln
Minnesota Institute of Public Health
2720 Highway 10
Mounds View, MN 55112

Sherri will forward them to the consultant assigned to work with you. The more they can read materials in advance versus on site, the better prepared they will be to help you.

Or, if the consultant to whom you have been assigned contacts you directly, you may prefer to send them directly to that person. Please do whatever is most convenient to you.

With whom will I be working and how was that person assigned to me?

Eleven programs will be represented at the Academy, one for each of the ten states in our region and the Red Lake Nation. Each program will work primarily with one staff person or consultant. In addition, that person may draw on someone else for specific expertise.

The persons staffing this Academy all have evaluation experience. As individuals, they have specific strengths; for example, some have strong quantitative and statistical skills. Others have expertise in qualitative methods, research design, logic models, etc. We have encouraged them to use one another as resources to best serve your program.

Some of them are Central CAPT staff; some are consultants we've hired especially for this Academy. For ease of communication, we'll refer to all of them as "consultants."

The consultants were assigned in the following manner: Upon receipt of all program materials, three Central CAPT staff reviewed them. We discussed the programs and assigned them to consultants based on our knowledge of each program and consultant expertise. We then sent each set of program materials to their assigned consultant, who reviewed them as well. On April 7th, we met as a large group to finalize the assignments.

We have given your contact information to your assigned consultant and invited that person to contact you directly if they have questions about the material they received.

Will there be any follow-up technical assistance available after the Academy?

We have planned for up to eight additional hours of consultation for work with your program after the actual Academy.

Is there additional funding available for evaluation? Will this be part of the Academy?

Programs that attend this Academy are eligible to apply for mini subcontracts. Last year, these were in the amount of \$30,000 each. This is a competitive process and is administered by CSAP through a separate contract, not through Central CAPT. We will provide you with information about this opportunity for additional funding at the Academy.

Will the results of the technical assistance be reported back to my State or anyone else?

We will conduct a paper-and-pencil evaluation at the end of the Academy. We will report these results only in aggregate form. We will report back to CSAP and the states, using general statements, the nature of the technical assistance provided and how programs utilized this technical assistance. We will not identify individual programs in this process.

I noticed on the agenda that you want me to introduce my program. What should I say and how long do I have?

You'll have five minutes to introduce your program. With eleven programs, that will take an hour. Please select one person to say a few sentences that briefly describe your program, where you're from, and who you've brought along. We'll have more time to get to know each other during meals and in the evening.

What is the dress code for the Academy?

Business casual.

One word of caution, though: We'll be meeting in a hotel, and that automatically means it won't be possible to regulate meeting room temperatures to fit everyone's personal preference. So, even though it is summer, please bring a sweater or other outerwear to ensure your comfort.

What if I have additional questions?

If you have questions about logistics, please call Sherri Lincoln or e-mail her at slincoln@miph.org. If you have questions about the content of the Academy, please call Vanessa Kittelson or Anu Sharma. We can all be reached at 763-427-5310 or 1-800-782-1878. Our e-mail addresses are vkittelson@miph.org and asharma@miph.org, respectively.