2023 ACE TA Center Needs Assessment Results

Building Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Recipient Capacity to Engage People with HIV in Health Care Access

From January to March 2023, the ACE TA Center invited Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) recipients and subrecipients to share their successes and challenges in helping people with HIV get enrolled in health coverage including Medicare, Medicaid, Marketplace and other individual insurance.

The 2023 ACE TA Center Needs Assessment also gathered information related to Medicaid unwinding and provided an opportunity to understand how this process has impacted their capacity to keep clients engaged in health coverage.

Key Findings

1 Training and TA needs of RWHAP recipients and providers continue to evolve across health care coverage options.

2 RWHAP providers are looking for more state-level guidance to support people with HIV through Medicaid unwinding.

3 ACE resources, particularly Medicare-focused resources, continue to be a highly utilized and valued resource.
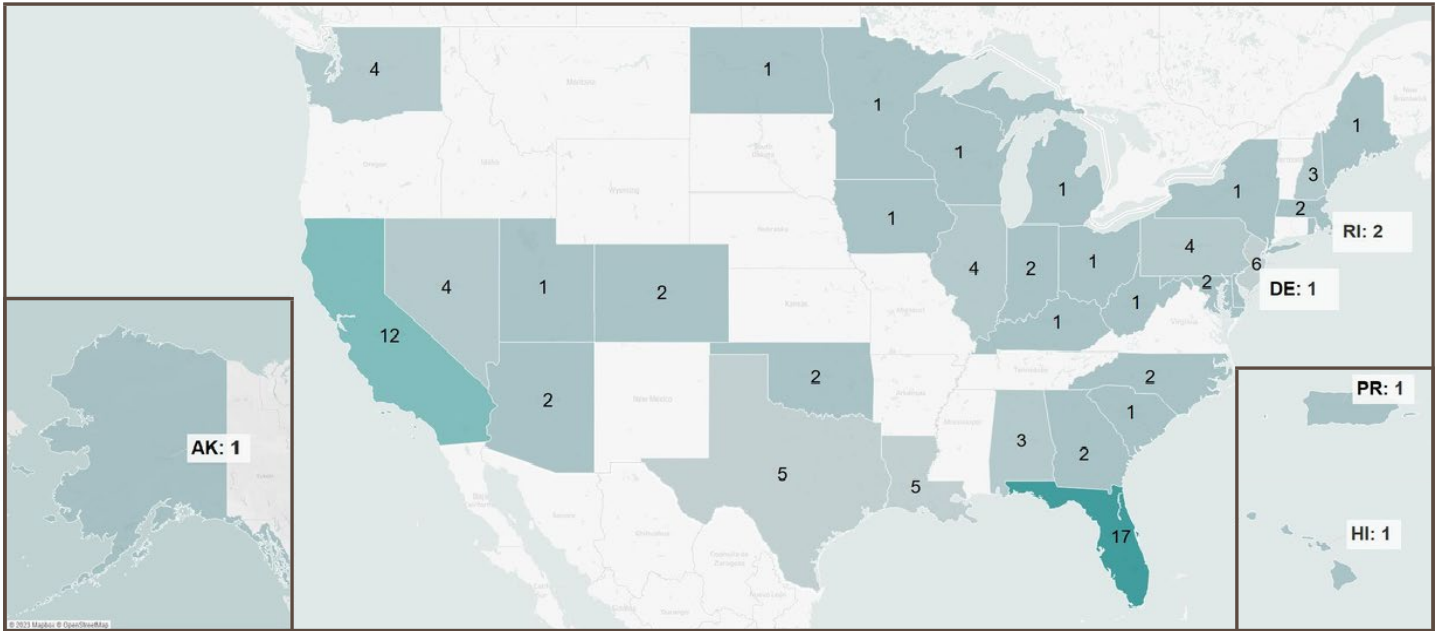
The Access, Care, and Engagement TA Center (ACE) Technical Assistance (TA) Center builds the capacity of the RWHAP community to navigate the changing health care landscape and help people with HIV to access and use their health coverage to improve health outcomes. For more information, visit: www.targethiv.org/ACE

Who Responded?

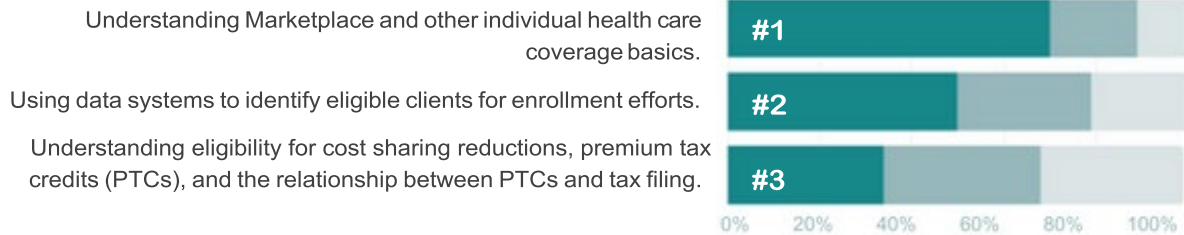## Total Responses by State

Total Responses by Organization and Role

Organization \ Role	Program Director/ Manager	Case Manager	Other	Social Worker	Benefits/ Enrollment staff	Case Management/ Client Services Coordinator	Executive Director	Clinical Director	Clinical Quality Management Staff	Clinical Staff
Health Department	8%	3%	4%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Hospital or University-Based Clinic	4%	4%	2%	5%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Other Community-Based Organization or Health Center	26%	11%	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Substance Use Disorder Treatment Center	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%

Findings

Finding #1: Training and TA needs of RWHAP recipients and providers continue to evolve across health care coverage options.
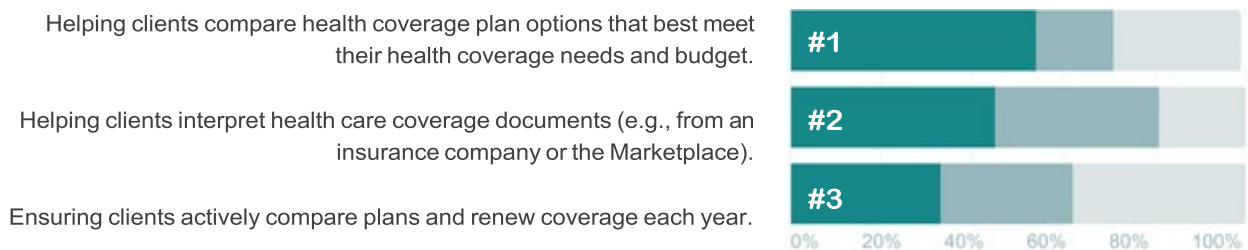
"Understanding health coverage basics continues" to be the #1 training/TA need, followed by "using data systems".

Understanding Marketplace and other individual health care coverage basics.

Using data systems to identify eligible clients for enrollment efforts.

Understanding eligibility for cost sharing reductions, premium tax credits (PTCs), and the relationship between PTCs and tax filing.

| | #1 |
| #2 |
| #3 |

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Using data systems for enrollment is re-emerging as a training/TA need, with health departments (Part A and B) and Medicaid expansion states ranking it as a #1 training/TA need.

"I think it boils down to establishing real time data systems that are interoperable - and the ability to catch things in real time. Particularly insurance transitions as one is aging or about to lose their private coverage." – RWHAP Part B Recipient, Program Director

"Helping clients compare health coverage plan options" ranks among the highest needs for supporting clients with the enrollment process.

Helping clients compare health coverage plan options that best meet their health coverage needs and budget.

Helping clients interpret health care coverage documents (e.g., from an insurance company or the Marketplace).

Ensuring clients actively compare plans and renew coverage each year.

| #1 |
| #2 |
| #3 |

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

For health department respondents, identifying primary care and specialty providers were another highly-ranked need.

Findings

Finding #1 (cont'd)

Providing "culturally responsive and age-appropriate" enrollment support was the highest-ranked training and TA need related to Medicare and Medicaid enrollment.

Building staff capacity to provide culturally responsive and age appropriate Medicare and Medicaid enrollment support.

Establishing a process to routinely screen clients for eligibility.

Determining client eligibility (e.g., based on age, disability) for Medicare, including dual eligibility for Medicaid and Medicare.
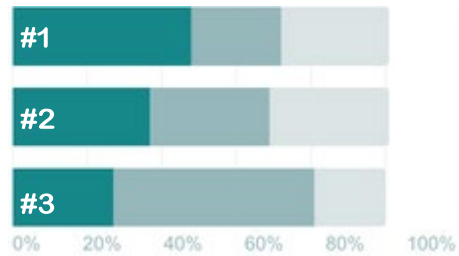

Subrecipients feel their external enrollment partners have a high capacity to provide culturally responsive enrollment assistance.

Respondents ranked "helping clients compare and choose" the best Medicare plan options highly, as an important area where their programs need training and TA.

Helping clients compare and choose between Original Medicare (Part A+B) and Medicare Advantage (Part C), with or without prescription drug coverage.

How and when clients should transition to Medicare from another form of health coverage, such as Marketplace, Medicaid, employer-sponsored insurance, etc.

Assisting clients with changing Medicare plans during an Open Enrollment Period.
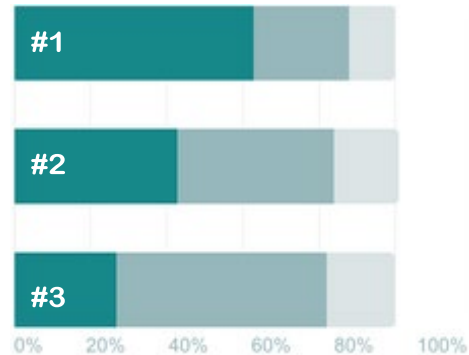
Medicare navigation continues to be challending for many recipients and subrecipients. This includes helping clients transition to Medicare, compare plan options, and find a Medicare plan that fits their coverage needs.
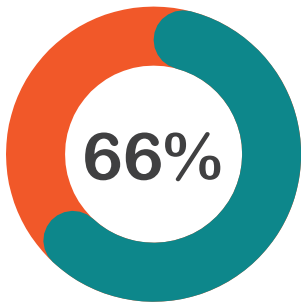
Findings

Finding #2: RWHAP providers are looking for more state-level guidance to support clients through Medicaid unwinding.

Direct service capacity to support clients through Medicaid unwinding:

State-level guidance

66%

66% of respondents reported **low to moderate capacity** for understanding their state Medicaid programs' plans and guidance related to Medicaid unwinding.
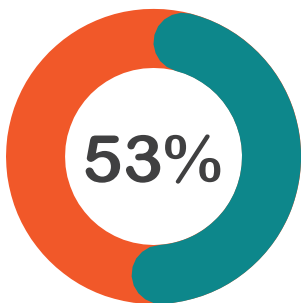
> "We need more info from [states] about the unwinding process."
> — RWHAP Part B Subrecipient, Executive Director

> "What can we do about clients not informing their case worker when they lose coverage as we are not informed by the state systems?"
> — RWHAP Part B Subrecipient, Local Health Department Case Manager

### Capacity to support clients losing Medicaid coverage

53%

53% of respondents reported **low to moderate capacity** for supporting clients' coverage to enroll in other coverage options, if they are no longer eligible for Medicaid.

> "Knowing how many of our clients will actually be affected and prepared when the Public Health Emergency lasted 2 years. It's hard to say who will be kicked off and who will stay."
> — RWHAP Part B Subrecipient, Case Manager

Retention in HIV care

44%
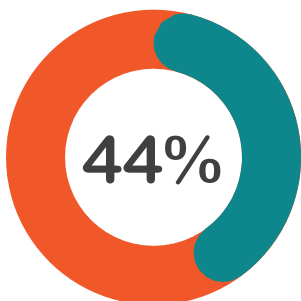
44% of respondents reported **high capacity** to help ensure clients with Medicaid coverage are retained in HIV care through the unwinding process.

> "[Through Medicaid unwinding], managing the data systems well - with high volume and a high churn of those on/off Medicaid - [is] hard to manage and be proactive."
> — RWHAP Part B Subrecipient, Program Director

Findings

Finding #2 (cont'd)

Challenges and Technical Assistance needs related to Medicaid unwinding

① **Lack of knowledge and understanding:**
- Uncertainty about the impact of unwinding, including how many RWHAP clients will be impacted and who those people are.
- Staff need stronger knowledge of Medicaid and Medicare programs.

② **Challenges communicating with clients:**
- The magnitude of this undertaking (e.g. how many clients need to be contacted) itself poses challenges.
- People who have not yet successfully [been] maintained in care.

③ **Lack of adequate training and education to support clients to stay covered:**
- Programs are by the continued need to onboard and train new staff that have not done enrollment work before.
- Staff who are Certified Application Counselors are in very high demand.

④ **Navigating the complexity of systems and data management:**
- Lengthy state redetermination processes result in uncertainty for clients.
- High level of churn on/off Medicaid makes it difficult to for programs to be proactive.

⑤ **Assuring assistance with transition and continuity of care:**
- Concerns related to program capacity to meet the needs of clients impacted by unwinding.
- Questions about how to best develop and implement a plan to ensure continuity of services.

Findings

Finding #2 (cont'd)

RWHAP recipients and providers continue to navigate high staff turnover.
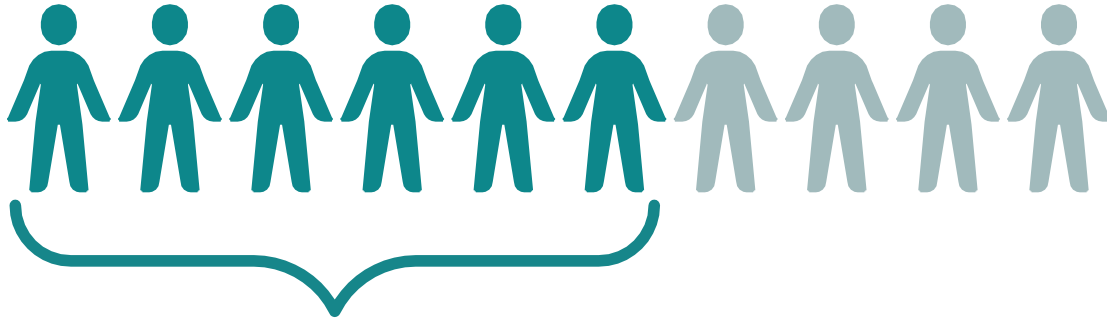
66% of respondents agreed that staff turnover has impacted their program's ability to support clients in accessing and maintaining health coverage.

Top organizational challenges experienced due to staff turnover:

1. Meeting demand for training new staff on Marketplace eligibility and enrollment.
2. Covering day-to-day tasks to assist clients in accessing, using, and maintaining health coverage.
3. Maintaining institutional knowledge and capacity.

Finding #3: ACE resources, particularly Medicare-focused resources, continue to be highly utilized and valued.

Which ACE TA Center tool(s) did you use?

Tool	Percent
The Basics of Medicare for RWHAP Clients	34%
Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage	24%
Financial Help for Medicare	15%
My Health Insurance Works For Me - Enrollment Poster Series	11%
Account Tune-Ups: Getting Ready for Marketplace Open Enrollment	9%
LAI ART: Coverage and Cost-Sharing Considerations for RWHAP Clients	5%
Other	1%

73% of respondents used an ACE resource related to Medicare.

> "[Our enrollment team] are also grateful for your Medicare training and documentation they use [and] share with clients."
>
> – RWHAP Part B Recipient, Program Director