



ASAM The Voice of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Addiction Medicine

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ASAM Partners with Top Addiction Organizations to Transform Medical Education and Bring Substance Use Disorder Curriculum to Medical Students

For Immediate Release

Chevy Chase, MD – June 30, 2014 – The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), a professional society representing over 3,000 physicians and associated professionals is partnering with MedU, an organization focused on providing virtual patient cases for medical education along with the Hazelden-Betty Ford Foundation (HBFF), and the Treatment Research Institute (TRI) to produce the *Course on Addiction and Recovery Education (CARE)* available starting July 2014.

To decrease the large disparity in proper substance use disorder training in medical schools, MedU has developed a web-based course for medical students comprised of 12 video modules and 3 virtual patient cases. Each lesson is devoted to an important topic in addiction and substance use disorders and is presented by a nationally renowned expert in the field.

"Health care practitioners in every medical specialty treat patients who have Substance Use Disorders," ASAM Board and Medical Education Council member, Mark P. Schwartz, MD, FASAM, FAAFP noted. "The CARE program will be a valuable starting point for medical students to learn to identify, treat and refer patients with the disease of Addiction."

Dr. Schwartz and ASAM President-Elect, R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, MD, FASAM, have played a key role in helping MedU populate their courses with actual patient scenarios. "These new training courses are aligned with ASAM's mission to improve the quality of addiction treatment, and the first step to accomplishing that is to make sure students are more experienced with different addictions and the basic ways to diagnose and prevent further escalations." Dr. Goldsmith added.

Creation of an Online Medical School Course

There is currently no standard course on substance use disorders and very few medical schools have the faculty or resources to develop a quality course on their own. To meet this need, MedU developed a web-based course for medical students comprised of 12 video modules and 3 virtual patient cases. Each lesson is devoted to an important topic in addiction and substance use disorders and is presented by a nationally renowned expert in the field. Each interactive virtual patient case presents a common clinical scenario to bring the content of the videos to life.

These modules are designed to be flexible, either used together as a course or as stand-alone segments that are part of other medical courses. The course is targeted at medical students, and the modular design allows for integration at any point in the medical school curriculum.

“There is a widely recognized need for substance use disorder education in medical schools. Properly trained physicians could not only better serve the most seriously addicted patients, but they could also significantly improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of general healthcare by identifying and intervening with lower severity substance use problems that so often co-occur in the patients with chronic illnesses, injuries and other conditions. This course is a huge step forward in advancing medical education on addiction. Potentially thousands of individuals with substance use disorders will benefit and receive proper recommendations from their physician and receive the help they badly need through this important initiative.” – Joseph Skrajewski, MA, MFT- I, Director of Medical Education at the Betty Ford Center, a part of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation.

Healthcare is changing. Healthcare education must accelerate that change, and with ASAM's involvement and partnering with top medical and research organizations this is a giant step towards solving the nation's most vexing health care challenges and creating more well-prepared providers.

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Addiction is a chronic brain disease and there are treatments available to help patients. The [American Society of Addiction Medicine \(ASAM\)](#) is a national medical specialty society of over 3,100 physicians and associated health professionals. Its mission is to increase access to and improve the quality of addiction treatment, to educate physicians, and other health care providers and the public, to support research and prevention, to promote the appropriate role of the physician in the care of patients with addictive disorders, and to establish Addiction Medicine as a specialty recognized by professional organizations, governments, physicians, purchasers and consumers of health care services and the general public. ASAM was founded in 1954, and has had a seat in the American Medical Association House of Delegates since 1988.



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For more information about the [American Society of Addiction Medicine \(ASAM\)](#)

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For more information about [Med-U](#)

MedU advances medical education through collaborative development, maintenance, and research of innovative and comprehensive computer-assisted instruction programs.

MedU is the leading provider of virtual patient cases for medical education. MedU is more than virtual patient cases – it is hundreds of medical educators and students engaging across disciplines to bring continuous innovation in medical education directly to learners and colleagues. The proven leader in online medical education:

- 90% adoption by North American medical schools

- Five core disciplines
- Over 29,000 new students and 1 million cases completed annually
- 130 virtual patient cases

The broad reach of MedU enables MedU to begin tackling important issues in health care education and population health. The MedU platform makes it easy for medical schools and students alike to access cross-disciplinary course content, assessment tools, and learning analytics.



For more information about the [Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation](#)

Hazelden: Changing lives. Every Day.

Hazelden, a part of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, helps individuals, families, and communities struggling with alcohol abuse, substance abuse, and drug addiction transform their lives. Our locations across the United States help people at all stages of the treatment and recovery process, supporting them with our Twelve Step-based model that is the modern standard for addiction treatment and recovery services.



For more information about the [Treatment Research Institute \(TRI\)](#)

TRI is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to translating research into improved policies and programs.