

**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration**  
**LOCUS Training Update FAQ**  
**November 18, 2020**

**What did LOCUS basic training look like in the past?**

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration (BHDDA) funding of the LOCUS implementation project across the State of Michigan initially focused on providing live 2-day training offered by LOCUS master trainers. These trainers were from Deerfield, in partnership with the American Association of Community Psychiatrists (AACP), the original developers and owners of the LOCUS. These trainings served as an initial “train-the-trainer” for organizations to bring LOCUS training in house. This MDHHS/BHDDA strategy was designed to promote sustainability of LOCUS training over time.

**Why is the training strategy changing?**

Deerfield merged with Journey Health in early 2020 resulting in a new partnership with AACP, and seeking a national consistent approach to LOCUS training. Coupled with the COVID 19 pandemic, this new approach focused on basic LOCUS training using a virtual platform.

**What does this mean for Michigan?**

Live 2-day training will no longer be funded in Michigan. Instead, MDHHS/BHDDA has arranged for access for all Michigan public behavioral health organizations to a new 3-hour virtual basic LOCUS training. The cost for this access to training is being funded through BHDDA’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) federal adult mental health block grant. Training is offered multiple times weekly as a live webinar.

It is expected that ALL organizations within the publicly funded behavioral health care system in Michigan will access their LOCUS basic training through this new approach. This means organizations should no longer provide basic LOCUS training to their employees in-house. This does not preclude organizations from doing other LOCUS training such as supplemental training to the online basic LOCUS, refresher, advanced skills, skill enhancement and competency assessment, or other training to meet individual organizational needs.

**How do I access the new training?**

Organizations will sign their employees up via the Journey Health website at [www.locusonline.com](http://www.locusonline.com). MDHHS/BHDDA has worked with Journey Health to establish a code system for each organization in Michigan. These codes are known to the Journey Health registration staff and allow for free access for your employees. (Please refer to email to PIHP and CMHSP CEO's from MDHHS dated 10/20/20) If you don't know your organization's code you may reach out to [sales@locusonline.com](mailto:sales@locusonline.com) to request them. It is requested that staff registration be completed by designated individuals within your organization. (This code should not be shared).

### **What about manuals?**

With the current contract all organizations have access to the digital LOCUS tool, including the LOCUS Training Manual. Hard copies of the manuals will be phased out over time.

### **What about our existing training and trainers?**

It is important to note that the new online training does not include reliability practice and verification. Organizations will need to rethink the role of their LOCUS trainers as this new process unfolds. It will be important for organizations to develop and implement a mechanism for initial and ongoing reliability competency assessment. Organizational trainers will have a role in follow up training as well as advanced skill training and honing employee skills. Sustainability over time continues to be very important.

MDHHS/BHDDA will continue to support specialty training across the state such as Enhancing your LOCUS skills, Quality and Outcomes Management with the LOCUS and new webinars with focus on specific skill sets. These will be offered both virtually and live moving forward.

### **Will LOCUS Michigan Fidelity and Assistance Support Team (MiFAST) visits be affected?**

LOCUS MiFAST visits will continue to be offered virtually and live (as guidelines permit). We anticipate that slight adjustments will be made to the MiFAST tool to accommodate the new training process.

### **What if I have any questions regarding this change?**

Questions can be directed to the MDHHS/BHDDA LOCUS consultants Jean Pfaendtner at [pfaendtnerj@gmail.com](mailto:pfaendtnerj@gmail.com) and Jasmin White at [jazzimac0315@gmail.com](mailto:jazzimac0315@gmail.com). The LOCUS consultants will continue to work with the public behavioral health system throughout this transition and moving forward.

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