



Advancing Kidney Health

Through Optimal Medication Management

Advancing Kidney Health through Optimal Medication Management Learning and Action Collaborative (AKHOMM LAC)

The Collaborative Experience: Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What is the purpose of the AKHOMM LAC?

In recognition of the high risk for cardiovascular disease in individuals with metabolic and/or kidney disease, the American Heart Association recently defined Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic (CKM) syndrome. Providers have several medication classes that reduce the CV risk for individuals with CKM but access, education, and adherence assessment requires time and coordination between primary care, cardiology, endocrinology, and nephrology. This is why **AKHOMM** strongly advocates adding pharmacists to the multidisciplinary teams in primary care, cardiology, endocrinology, and nephrology. We believe that the pharmacist-provider partnership can achieve the following:

- Increase both patient and provider satisfaction by reducing stress and improving outcomes.
- Break down care silos in persons with CKD by shifting focus to CKM management through CMM.
- Provide meaningful, satisfying clinical careers for pharmacists while reducing the strain on overworked providers by decreasing the workload for each patient, allowing more CKD patients to be treated.
- Reduce Medicare costs by delaying or preventing expensive treatments like dialysis and kidney transplants.
- Drive positive social change by improving health in underserved communities disproportionately affected by CKM/CKD (e.g., African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Native American communities).

The AKHOMM Learning and Action Collaborative is a **16-month** experience that supports organizations (e.g., nephrology practices, health care systems, and kidney care companies) in their journey to better incorporate pharmacists into care teams, deliver highly effective medication management services, and create value propositions for long-term sustainability.

Q2: What will be the outcome of my organization's participation in the LAC?

Throughout the 16-month LAC experience, participating organizations will achieve the following:

- Complete the Introduction to Comprehensive Medication Management Course.
- Successfully implement (or expand) Comprehensive Medication Management services delivered by a pharmacist within your organization.
- Strategically plan and implement process improvement work to achieve organizational-specific goals related to improving the health and well-being of patients with CKD. Specific goals will be relevant to the individual organization and align with the quintuple aim (i.e., improving quality of care and patient outcomes, decreasing cost of care, improving patient experience, improving provider and care team experience, and improving health equity).
- Demonstrate the value of Comprehensive Medication Management services to optimize patient care delivery for patients with CKM and create sustainable practice models.
- New connections with other organizations within the LAC also seeking to advance CKM health through optimizing medication management. This connection fosters constructive feedback, shared learning, and collaboration to accelerate program development.

Q3. What is the length of the AKHOMM LAC?

The AKHOMM LAC is divided into two unique phases over 16 months, covering program design, development, and implementation.

- The first phase is **four months** long, focusing on the fundamentals of program design, Comprehensive Medication Management (CMM) service delivery, and quality improvement methodologies, including goal setting and measurement strategy development. Participating organizations leave the first phase having built a strong foundation for their program.
- The second phase is **twelve months** long and focuses on program implementation. This includes delivering CMM services, CMM program improvement focusing on CKM health-specific goals, capturing outcomes on key performance indicators, applying QI strategies to improve performance, and articulating the program value proposition to drive sustainably.

Leveraging extensive experience running Learning and Action Collaboratives throughout the nation, the AKHOMM Leadership team has chosen this 16-month format to ensure each participating organization has the time needed to develop and commit to the design of their program before implementation.

Q4. What support services do organizations receive in the AKHOMM LAC?

Organizations that join the AKHOMM LAC can take advantage of a diverse set of support services. Here are the five “core” services.

- 1. Implementation Coaches** – Each organization will have a dedicated implementation coach. Coaches connect with organizations through regular coach-team calls (biweekly in phase one and monthly in phase two). Coaches support organizations in the following ways:
 - a. Pacing and documenting team progress throughout the 16-month journey,
 - b. Applying the concepts learned within the LAC,
 - c. Assisting in building quality improvement processes to reach organization-specific goals.
 - d. Providing feedback on team deliverables.
- 2. Field Experts** – All organizations will have access to subject-matter experts in CKD, CKM and CMM. Field experts will be available to advise regarding organization-specific program development, including goal-setting, and will host topic-specific webinars focusing on the specific needs of participating organizations.
- 3. Education and Training** - A series of online educational opportunities will be available. Topics include Comprehensive Medication Management program introduction (Philosophy of Practice, Patient Care Process, Practice Management), CKD and nephrology-focused best practices, and established quality improvement methods (readiness assessment, implementation team formation, goal setting, measurement strategies, plan-do-study-act cycles, etc.)
- 4. Tool and Resources** – Organizations will have access to various program tools, including project management, quality improvement, and performance tracking resources. Many of these tools are designed specifically for the AKHOMM LAC.
- 5. In-Person and Virtual Pacing Events** – Over the 16-month LAC, **ten virtual** and **one in-person** “Pacing Events” will be held. These events foster connections to other organizations within the LAC with similar goals, allowing participants to share “what’s working,” collaborate on addressing barriers, and celebrate successful performance.

Q5. Who within an organization is required to participate?

Organizations have the flexibility to build implementation teams that best meet the needs of their program goals. Team size and structure will vary between organizations. The AKHOMM LAC does require the following:

- A pharmacist on the team.
- A dedicated interdisciplinary team with a lead accountable for team performance and coordinating efforts.
- A provider champion and liaison to clinic leadership.
- Commitment from organizational leadership to the team participation in the LAC
- A team's commitment to working closely with their assigned coach and engaging in LAC events and activities.

Outside of these requirements, the organization can staff the team as they see fit.

Q6. How much time is required for participating organizations?

The average time required for LAC-specific activities is approximately 5-7 hours monthly. This will vary depending on how many members an organization has on its implementation team. The activities contributing to this commitment include coach-team meetings, pacing events, training, and performance tracking. This estimate doesn't include the time the organization invests in implementing its program (actual patient care/service delivery) and does not include the in-person event.

Q7. Are there performance measurement requirements?

Organizations have the flexibility to track the performance measures most relevant to their specific program. The AKHOMM LAC does require the following:

- Tracking Medication Therapy Problems, as defined by the Pharmacy Quality Alliance.
- The development of a measurement strategy, including tracking quantifiable performance toward achieving an organization-specific goal.
- A commitment to tracking monthly process and outcomes measures and sharing performance with the LAC during collaborative events.
- A commitment to develop a team performance story about challenges, reducing barriers and successes that can be shared with other collaborative participants.

Q8. What does it cost to join the AKHOMM LAC?

As this is our first round of the AKHOMM LAC, the fee has been waived. All teams are required to pay for travel to the milestone meeting(s) as well as contribute the staffing resources required to participate.