



## Early Psychosis Foundations Training and Monthly Case Consultation Series

### About the STEP Learning Collaborative (STEP-LC)

The STEP Learning Collaborative (STEP-LC) is Connecticut's learning healthcare system for individuals experiencing recent onset schizophrenia spectrum disorders. STEP-LC is a public-academic collaboration led by Yale's Program for Specialized Treatment Early in Psychosis (STEP), in partnership with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Through statewide coordination, training, and consultation, STEP-LC works to transform access and care quality for all individuals experiencing recent onset schizophrenia across Connecticut.

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### Program Overview

This workforce development program includes a half-day **Early Psychosis Foundations Training** followed by a **monthly ECHO-style case consultation series**. The program is designed to support clinicians working in Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) and DCF-affiliated clinics who care for young people experiencing early psychosis, with a focus on schizophrenia spectrum disorders.

The overall training experience emphasizes practical, clinician-relevant learning, grounded in real-world practice and reinforced through ongoing, case-based consultation.

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### Who Should Participate

- Licensed clinicians working with young people experiencing early psychosis and schizophrenia spectrum disorders
  - Each LMHA is encouraged to designate **two clinicians** for consistent participation
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### 1) Early Psychosis Foundations Training

*(3 hours | Virtual – Zoom)*

The **Early Psychosis Foundations Training** provides clinicians with a practical, evidence-based foundation for working with young individuals experiencing schizophrenia spectrum disorders. The training focuses on how early psychosis commonly presents in real-world clinical settings and how clinicians can orient their work, especially in early sessions, to support engagement, stabilization, and recovery.

Content **integrates essential background knowledge with applied clinical decision-making**. Participants will review core features of schizophrenia spectrum disorders, the importance of

early detection and engagement, and the evidence base for coordinated specialty care (CSC). Using a phase-based framework and clinical vignette, the training highlights what clinicians can prioritize when individuals and families first present for care and how treatment goals evolve over time.

The Foundations Training also prepares participants for the ongoing STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO by introducing the consultation format, expectations for participation, and how foundational concepts will be revisited and deepened through monthly case discussions.

### **Early Psychosis Foundations Training**

**Date:** Thursday, May 14

**Time:** 10:00-1:00pm EST

**Format:** Virtual (Zoom)

**CME:** Free Yale CME / equivalent available

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## **Foundations Training: Content Overview**

### **A. Foundations of Schizophrenia and Early Psychosis**

- Syndromal features of schizophrenia and related primary non-affective psychotic disorders
  - Heterogeneity of outcomes and the role of early intervention
  - The critical period hypothesis and why timing matters
  - How early psychosis differs from more chronic phases of illness
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### **B. STEP Learning Collaborative: Transforming Access and Care in Connecticut**

- Burden of schizophrenia spectrum illness in Connecticut and the need for early intervention
  - Rationale for a coordinated, statewide approach to early psychosis care
  - Role of the STEP Learning Collaborative (STEP-LC) in transforming access and care through
  - How LMHAs and DCF-affiliated clinics fit into Connecticut's early psychosis system of care
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### **C. Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC): Evidence and Framework**

- Evidence for early intervention services and the CSC model
  - Core principles of coordinated, team-based early psychosis care
  - Phase-specific, recovery-oriented approaches for emerging adults and families
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## D. Phase-Based Early Psychosis Care: What to Do in Early Sessions

Using a clinical vignette, this section focuses on the question:

*“What are the primary clinical priorities when someone with early psychosis presents for care?”*

- Acute phase priorities: clarification, stabilization, engagement, safety, and early family involvement
  - Stabilization phase priorities: shifting goals beyond crisis management, supporting engagement and maintenance of stability gains
  - Recovery-oriented phase: broadening focus to functioning, identity, and goals
  - Recognition of non-linear movement between phases over time
  - How CSC elements show up across phases
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## E. Orientation to the STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO

- Overview of the ECHO model and session structure
  - Expectations for participation and case presentation
  - How Foundations Training concepts will be revisited and deepened through monthly case consultation
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## 2) Monthly STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO

### From Foundations to Practice: Ongoing Case-Based Learning

The Early Psychosis Foundations Training establishes shared foundations and a common clinical framework. Learning is then reinforced and deepened through the monthly STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO, where clinicians apply concepts to real cases from their own practice.

Through brief didactics and facilitated case discussion, the ECHO sessions **support ongoing learning, peer connection, and practical problem-solving** in early psychosis and schizophrenia spectrum care.

### Monthly STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO

*(Case Consultation Series | Virtual – Zoom)*

**When:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 12:00 PM

**Dates:** June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8, November 12, December 10

**Duration:** 60 minutes per session

**Format:** Virtual (Zoom)

**CME:** 1.0 Yale CME / session

### Session Structure

- Brief didactic (10–15 minutes) on a key early psychosis topic
  - Facilitated discussion of 1–2 participant-presented cases
  - Practical, peer-based learning grounded in real-world practice
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### **Participation Expectations**

#### **Participants are expected to:**

- Attend the Early Psychosis Foundations Training
  - Participate in the monthly STEP-LC Early Psychosis ECHO sessions
  - Periodically present clinical cases for discussion, with guidance and support from the STEP-LC team
  - Engage in facilitated, case-based discussion focused on applied clinical care for individuals experiencing early psychosis
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### **Facilitation**

#### **Training and monthly ECHO case consultation sessions are facilitated by:**

##### **Laura Yoviene Sykes, PhD**

Director, STEP Learning Collaborative  
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Yale School of Medicine  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

##### **Vinod Srihari, MD**

Director, Program for Specialized Treatment Early in Psychosis (STEP)  
Professor of Psychiatry, Yale School of Medicine  
Psychiatrist

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### **Contact**

Please submit your agency's participants by **Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>** to: [Nina.Levine@yale.edu](mailto:Nina.Levine@yale.edu)

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### **CME Information:**

If you are requesting CMEs, please see the [linked PDF](#) to ensure that you have created a [YaleCloud CME](#) account and paired your mobile phone, **prior** to the first session; 1.0 CME / equivalent credit will be awarded for each hour of synchronous session attended. A text code will be made available at the end of each session for you to submit your attendance to the Yale CME texting attendance number: 203-442-9435.