



NH-ME LEND

P R O G R A M

Navigating Distance and Technology: Successfully Engaging LEND Trainees from New Hampshire and Maine in a Synchronous Online Team-Based Learning Environment

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About the New Hampshire-Maine LEND (2016-2021)

The New Hampshire-Maine Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Program (NH-ME LEND) is a partnership among three universities in two rural states, New Hampshire and Maine, with 26 faculty representing 16 disciplines and 23 long-term trainees each academic year.

300 Hours of Interdisciplinary Training

LEND trainees complete 300 hours of interdisciplinary training: 100 hours of leadership training; 100 hours of interdisciplinary clinical training; and 100 hours of formal didactic training.



Team-Based Learning Adopted in 2013

In 2013, the NH LEND adopted team-based learning (TBL) as the instructional method to guide the implementation of the curriculum and training content within the LEND seminar. TBL strategies emphasize active learning and application of new knowledge. TBL supports the effective use of technology, including the use of web-based learning modules, and maximizes face-to-face time, allowing faculty to coach and guide the trainees' learning.

Teaching Modalities

Lectures, readings (including critical review of evidence-based research), self-assessments, didactic assignments, the use of AUCD web-based materials, and dialogue (case-based and reflective).

Positive Impact of Technology

Didactic training utilizes Canvas as its web-based course management system. Social networking tools are utilized to build an active, engaged community. Video conferencing capabilities at UNH and UMaine allow trainees to attend weekly seminars collaboratively in real time in classrooms at their respective universities.

Successes in Navigating Distance and Technology Since 2011

1. Explored and expanded our knowledge and adapted our use of technology tools and platforms to improve the learning experience for our trainees.
 - Year 1: Polycom to connect NH and ME for seminar; Blackboard (BB) through UNH for course content; and WebEx for meetings.
 - Years 2 through 4.5: Added Adobe Connect Pro to project course content in NH and Maine; continued with Polycom, BB (UNH) for seminar; and WebEx for meetings.
 - Years 4.5 through 6: Changed from Polycom to Zoom. Discontinued use of Adobe Connect Pro and WebEx. Continued with BB (until UNH switched to Canvas).

2. Simultaneously modified our classrooms to complement the technology in our learning environment:
 - UNH: changed from stationary desks in rows to a room with desks that can be arranged in a horseshoe for lectures or grouped together for team work. Faculty can now look directly at the screen to see the Maine classroom as well as the trainees in their classroom. Several speakers/microphones were added to improve audio quality for all. A technology student was hired to operate the camera as well as monitor for sound and video quality.
 - UMaine: changed from stationary tables to small tables that can be rearranged depending on the size of the group. This change allows UMaine to use one of two large screens in the classroom to display content, rather than several individual laptops.
3. Utilized technology to support TBL as our instructional method:
 - Current technology (Zoom, primarily) supports team work, a major component of TBL, by allowing team members to collaborate in-state or between states, as needed.
 - In Zoom, trainees can be assigned to breakout rooms to collaborate on case application exercises. iPads or laptops are utilized for breakout work.
 - LEND faculty conduct lectures and attend seminar through Zoom from remote sites.
 - LEND faculty at UNH and UMaine serve as seminar leads and content experts each week.
 - Canvas is used to organize course content by module, including readings, video and films. The Canvas media room contains video recordings by trainees and faculty.
 - The technology enhances our audio and video capabilities so we can open the floor in each state for questions, discussions, and to report out on case-based application exercises.
4. Infused technology into all components of the LEND program.
 - Weekly didactic seminar
 - Clinical Core (clinical training session, orientations, meetings with clinical partners)
 - Leadership Core (meetings with leadership placement mentors and partners, monthly leadership intensive sessions)
 - Training Director (UNH) and Training Coordinator (UMaine) meetings (weekly)
 - Mentor meetings (trainee and faculty mentor)
 - NH-ME Management Team meetings (bi-weekly)
 - Leadership Intensive planning meetings
 - Team-Based Learning team meetings
 - Faculty team meetings (monthly)
 - Advisory and Executive Committee meetings (annual)

Challenges in Navigating Distance and Technology

We have identified several key challenges of navigating distance and technology including: 1) implementing a training program that relies heavily on technology; 2) keeping up with technology in an ever changing, fast-paced world; 3) having a technology support system in place to troubleshoot issues and support faculty; and 4) having the financial resources available to support technology needs.

For more information, please contact lead presenter, Susan Russell, Associate Director CCIDS/UCEDD and NH-ME LEND Training Coordinator at srussell@maine.edu

The NH-ME LEND Program is supported by a grant (#T73 MC 00024) from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and administered by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD).