

CLOSING THE ADDICTION TREATMENT GAP

Addiction is a disease. Let's start treating it that way.

CLOSING THE ADDICTION TREATMENT GAP INITIATIVE

Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG) is a \$10 million national program of the Open Society Institute designed to create an awareness of—and increase resources to close—an alarming substance use treatment gap. The Miriam Hospital is one of eight grantees participating in the CATG. The initiative aims to mobilize public support for expanded treatment by increasing public funding and broadening insurance coverage.

Right now, an estimated 23 million Americans suffer from drug and alcohol addiction and need treatment. Currently, only 1 in 10 Americans who need drug and/or alcohol addiction treatment receive it, leaving 21 million people without these critical services. Of those actively seeking treatment, 36% could not get it because they lacked health insurance or could not afford it. (SAMHSA 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH))

WHY SHOULD WE CLOSE THE GAP?

Alcohol and drug addiction is a health condition and requires treatment in the same way that other chronic diseases necessitate medical care. Beyond the health care needs of these individuals, untreated addiction is costly to all of us—our workplaces, families, and communities bear the burden of addiction. Without treatment, addiction can lead to lost productivity, broken families, crime, costly incarceration, and even death. An investment in treatment would yield a total savings ratio of up to 12 to 1 in treatment costs. (NIDA, Infofacts)

THE COSTS OF UNTREATED ADDICTION

- Drug addiction alone costs the American economy more than \$180 billion every year. Adding in the costs of alcohol addiction and the costs reach several hundred billion. (NIH, NIDA infofacts)
- Nationwide, more than 1.7 million emergency department visits a year are associated with drug use and one out of every 14 hospital stays – an estimated 2.3 a year – are related to substance use disorders. (SAMHSA DAWN report 2006; AHRQ 2004)
- 20% of deaths in America every year are addiction-related (100,000 from alcohol related deaths and 20,000 from illegal drug-related deaths). (Health affairs, 2005)
- More than 75 percent of reported domestic violence incidents occur while the attacker is under the influence of drugs and alcohol. (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2001)
- 6 million children live with at least one parent who abuses alcohol or other drugs. (SAMHSA, 2003)
- States spend \$5.3 billion in child welfare costs related to substance use. (NCASA at Columbia University, 2001) Two thirds of child maltreatment cases involve substance use. (HHS, 1999)
- Lost productivity due to alcohol use alone cost businesses more than \$130 billion a year. (ADPANA, 2005)

CATG GOALS

- Increase public understanding that addiction is a disease;
- Expand access to evidence-based, high quality addiction treatment;
- Expand public and private funding and insurance coverage for those who need addiction treatment, but who cannot afford it; and
- Achieve greater treatment efficiencies in the health system.

Contact the Rhode Island Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG) Coalition

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For full citations to these facts and more information, please go to www.closethegapri.org