



**National Association of
State Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Directors, Inc.**

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KEY NASADAD POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2005

- **Strengthen State Substance Abuse Systems and the Office of the Single State Authority (SSA)**
- **Expand Access to Prevention and Treatment Services**
- **Implement an Outcome and Performance Measurement Data System**
- **Ensure Clinically Appropriate Care**
- **Effective Policies Related to Co-occurring Populations**

Scope of the Addiction Problem

Addiction is a distinct primary disease that has a devastating impact on our country. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), approximately 22 million Americans suffered from substance use disorders in 2003. Left untreated, addiction can lead to death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs combined to take the lives of 530,000 Americans in 2000. The economic impact of addiction is also staggering. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) estimated that alcohol and drug abuse cost the U.S. \$250 billion in one year.

Service Delivery Gap

Despite the reach of substance use problems, approximately 3 million persons received treatment for their disorder in 2003 – leaving an estimated 19 million Americans without lifesaving services. The majority of Americans requiring but not receiving treatment did not believe they needed treatment. We also know that for adults seeking treatment, the number one reason why they can not access services is cost and insurance barriers. Whether it's denial or stigma; a lack of resources or lack of capacity – far too many Americans remain without the services they need.

“When you start looking at the data, it becomes abundantly clear that many of our most pressing public health, public safety, and human services needs have a direct link to substance use disorders.”

Mr. Charles Curie, Administrator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Recovery is Real

Research shows that addiction prevention and treatment services are effective. A review of outcome studies revealed that treatment reduced weekly cocaine use by approximately 70%; reduced weekly heroin use by approximately 70%; reduced heavy drinking by over 52%; and reduced criminal activity by as much as 80%. Relapse rates for treatment of alcohol, opioids and cocaine are less than those for hypertension and asthma – and equivalent to those of diabetes – all chronic conditions. We also know prevention works. Federally funded “high risk” youth programs yield reduced rates of substance use. And, for each dollar invested in prevention, we save up to \$20.00 in return. Finally, addiction should be viewed along a continuum. Research shows that proven treatment and prevention strategies also include important recovery support services, such as stable employment and housing.

Vital Role of State Substance Abuse Directors

State substance abuse directors, also known as Single State Authorities (SSAs), have the front line responsibility for managing our nation's publicly funded substance abuse system. SSAs have a long history of providing effective and efficient services – with the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant serving as the foundation of these efforts. State Directors also provide leadership to continually improve the quality of care; expand access to services; improve client outcomes; increase accountability and nurture new and exciting innovations.

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With input from the membership, the NASADAD Board of Directors set the Association's policy priorities for 2005. These priorities include:

Strengthen State Substance Abuse Systems and the Office of the Single State Authority (SSA)

- Educate the public and decision makers regarding the critical role of the SSA
- Ensure that SSAs are partners in activities impacting addiction

Expand Access to Prevention and Treatment Services

- Educate decision makers on the benefits of adequate federal resources
- Educate stakeholders about return on investment that accompanies prevention and treatment
- Promote policies that create incentives for improved performance

Implement an Outcome and Performance Measurement Data System

- Work to implement a data system that reports a core set of performance measures
- Promote the notion that accurate and meaningful data is needed to help shape State planning and policy decisions

Ensure Clinically Appropriate Care

- Educate decision makers on the effectiveness of prevention and treatment
- Promote the benefits of competent care – including the creation of individualized assessment and prevention/treatment plans by qualified staff

Promote Effective Policies Related to Co-occurring Populations

- Educate stakeholders on the flexibility already provided to States under the current statute governing the use of SAPT Block Grant funds for populations with co-occurring disorders
- Inform the public on access, quality and outcome data regarding co-occurring populations

CONGRESSIONAL OUTLOOK

Early reports from Capitol Hill indicate that the 109th Congress may consider a number of initiatives related to addiction prevention and treatment. These issues could include:

Prisoner Reentry: A bill to help strengthen prisoner reentry efforts - building on legislation first unveiled last year. Coupled with the release of a re-entry report by the Re-Entry Policy Council, an initiative coordinated by the Council of State Governments (CSG), prisoner re-entry will be a hot topic.

Underage Drinking: Legislation to address underage drinking could see action.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs: A bill to create a grant program to help all states establish Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs may also be considered.

Other Initiatives: Congress may also consider legislation regarding methamphetamine prevention and treatment, SAMHSA reauthorization, drug impaired driving, and other issues.

"The Committee...continues to express its strong support for preserving the current Block Grant ... as the foundation of our publicly funded substance abuse system in every State and territory in the United States. The Committee remains very concerned with any effort that could erode the strength of this vital funding stream. "

*Senate Committee on Appropriations,
Report 108-345, July 2004*



NASADAD's mission is to promote effective and efficient State substance abuse service systems.

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