

New partnership seeks evidence-based care for co-occurring disorders

by Gary A. Enos, Editor, *Addiction Professional*

Addiction professionals have long been told that clients presenting with co-occurring addiction and mental health disorders constitute the expectation, not the exception. Yet translating that awareness into the provision of truly integrated treatment poses a constant challenge. A newly launched collaboration that will be promoted at this year's NCAD meeting brings together an impressive list of organizations seeking to promote evidence-based, integrated treatments for the large proportion of clients with a dual diagnosis.

Focus on Integrated Recovery kicked off this month with the launch of a website of facts and resources for professionals (www.integratedrecoverynow.org). The campaign will share information with the intent of laying the foundation for clinically focused efforts that would include scopes of practice for clinicians treating individuals with co-occurring disorders, as well as professional development opportunities for administrators, clinical supervisors and clinicians.

The seven initial partners in the Focus on Integrated Recovery campaign are: Hazelden; NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals; the National

Association of Addiction Treatment Providers (NAATP); the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA); the New Hampshire treatment organization WestBridge; the Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Council; and the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. Other partners are expected to join the effort.

"Evidence-based integrated treatment of co-occurring disorders—addressing both disorders in one setting, at one time, by one treatment team—is the most effective approach out there in terms of costs and, most importantly, rates of recovery," says Cynthia Moreno

Tuohy, NAADAC's executive director.

NAADAC plans to make a formal announcement of the campaign at NCAD this week. In addition, the partnership was discussed in a Sept. 14 webinar sponsored by Vendome Group that shared resources to help treatment organizations become fully integrated providers of care.

It is estimated that today, only about 2 percent of individuals with co-occurring disorders receive evidence-based integrated treatment, with 50 percent receiving no treatment at all. Federal data

indicate that nearly three 3 of every 4 jail detainees have co-occurring substance use and mental health problems, and even in the general treatment population, the prevalence of co-occurring disorders is believed to be about one-half.

Integrated treatment under one roof and with one treatment team involves not designating any presenting disorder as "primary," but instead treating all disorders as one unit that is causing dysfunction in the patient.

