

Townhall

The Interplay Between Mental Health & The Spectrum of Addiction

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Town Hall Panel



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Current State

Prejudicial viewpoints heavily influence the way Americans view the employability of those with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

- Nearly 75% of people with SUD are in the workforce.
- One third of Americans know someone who is or has been addicted to opioids or painkillers.
- Shatterproof Addiction Stigma Index found that individuals were
 - Three times less likely to want that person as a coworker
 - 5.5 times less likely to have that person as a supervisor
 - Six times less likely to hire that person to do work for them
- Even if a person is in recovery
 - More than half of respondents indicated they would not be willing to have that person as a supervisor in the workplace.
- These beliefs make the public less willing to have someone with a SUD as a close personal friend (45.9%), a coworker (47.6%), a neighbor (45.4%), and as a family member (65.4%).

Interplay
between SUD
and Mental
Illness

The Spectrum of Addiction

Alcohol

- 60.0 million people (or 45.1%) were past month binge drinkers – highest among young adults
- Excessive alcohol use increases risk of stroke, liver cirrhosis, alcoholic hepatitis, cancer, and other serious health conditions

Tobacco

- 57.3 million people) used nicotine products used tobacco products or vaped nicotine) in the past month (2020 NSDUH)
- Leading cause of preventable death - lung cancer, respiratory disorders, heart disease, stroke, and other serious illnesses.

Opioids

- 9.2 million people misused opioids (heroin or prescription pain relievers) in the past year.
- An average of 128 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose

Marijuana

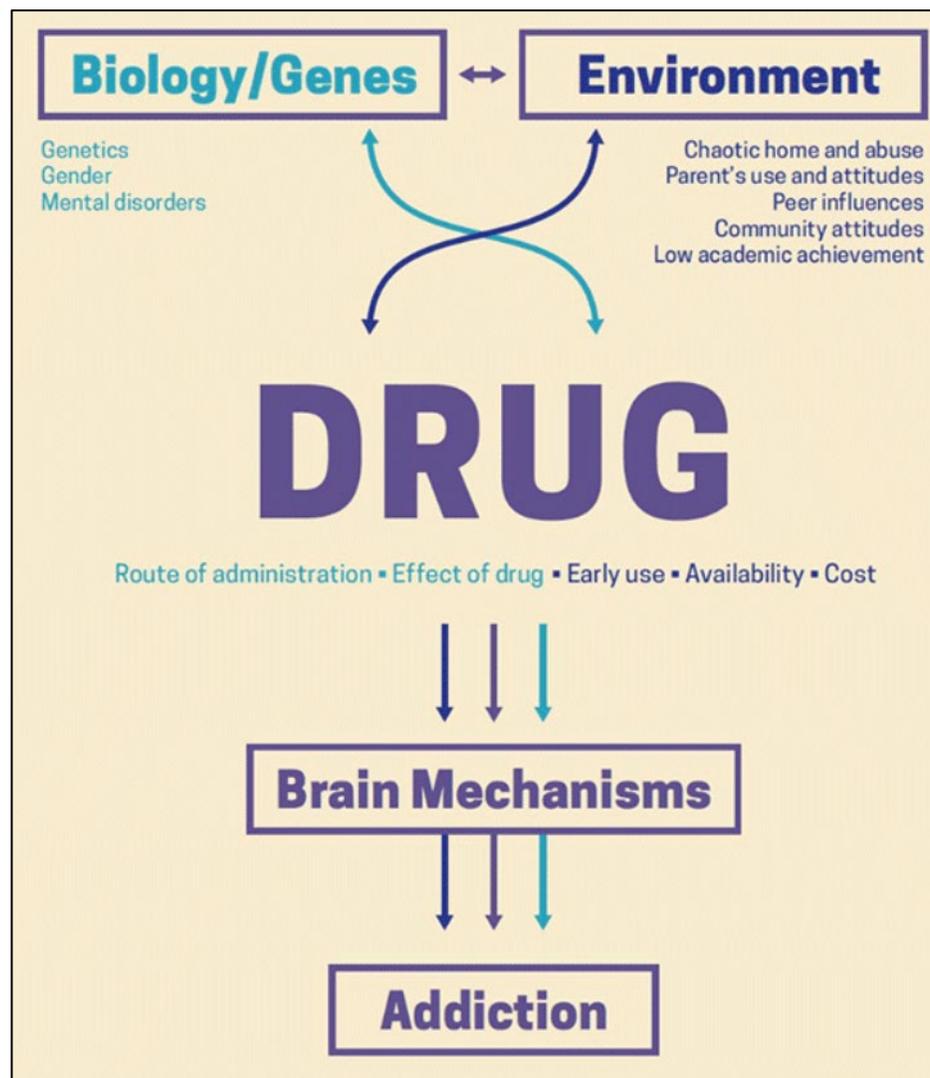
- Most commonly used illicit drug with 52.5 million people using it in the past year.
- Impairs judgment and distorts perception in the short term and can lead to memory impairment in the long term.

Emerging Trends in Substance Misuse:

- **Methamphetamine** – Overdose deaths quadrupled from 2011 to 2017. Mood disturbances, hallucinations, and paranoia.
- **Cocaine**—Overdose deaths increased by 1/3 from 2016 to 2017. In short term, increases blood pressure/restlessness/irritability. In long term, heart attacks, seizures, and abdominal pain.
- **Kratom**—825,000 people. Tropical plant that can have psychotropic effects by affecting opioid brain receptors. It is currently unregulated and has risk of abuse and dependence. Health effects include nausea, itching, seizures, and hallucinations.

Science of Addiction

- Risk Factors
- Biology
- Environment



Addiction Support

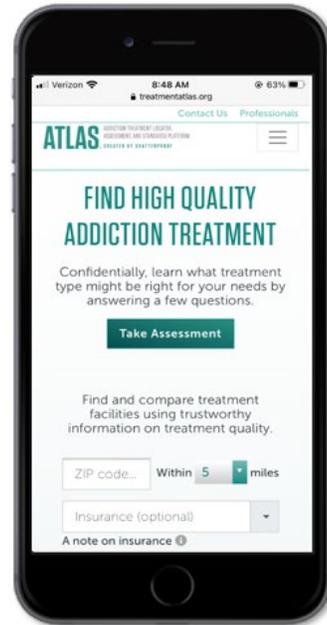
- Quality of care
- Employer's role
- Identify quality providers
- Equity
 - Accessible and equitable resources
 - Frontline workers (use text messages, campaigns, rewards, home mailers, incentives)
 - Cross referral

Transforming Addiction Treatment

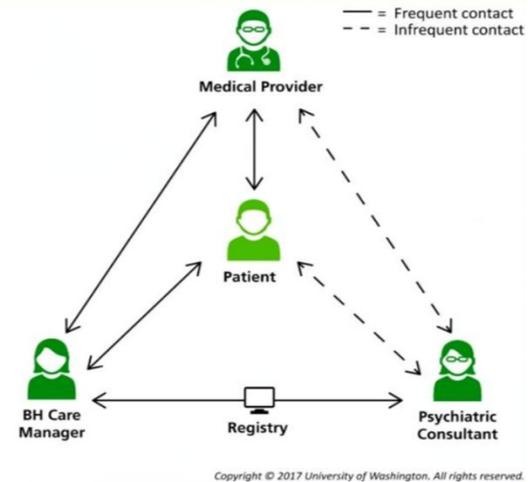
National Standard of Care

1. Routine screenings in every medical setting
2. A personal plan for every patient
3. Fast access to treatment
4. Long-term disease management
5. Coordinate care for every illness
6. Behavioral health care from legitimate providers
7. Medication for addiction treatment
8. Recovery support services beyond medical care

Guidance to Quality Treatment



Improving Payment and Coverage



Educating Medical Professionals

The MATE Act passed Congress! (Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment)

This will require medical providers to receive training on how to treat patients with substance use disorders.

Working towards policy change like the MATE Act will push for access to better universal care to those with SUD.

Employer Challenges

- Eliminating stigma
- COVID and work from home (addressing isolation)
- Accommodation – Meet people where they are
 - Have a solid return to work program
 - Policy changes (flexible schedules, MH sick day)
 - Flexible policies that support recovery plan
- Invest in resources & strategies
 - Help employees using Evidenced Based Strategies
 - Train managers to identify signs of specific SUD
 - Access to care/Equity of care
 - EAP data
- Compliance with MH Parity Act

Additional Considerations

- Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)
- Digital therapeutics
- Coverage Education
- Quality of care

Support for Caregivers

- Role of family
- Expanding EAP services for family(include spouse and children)
- Adequate PTO for employees to take to support family
- Create a stigma free workplace
- Create recovery workplaces
- Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Michigan, California, Georgia

Employer Checklist

- Coverage – addressing medical and drugs, payment issues, recovery plans, return to work
- Policy changes - family, return to work, flexible schedules, MH sick day
- Data - EAP
- Education
- Manager training
- Tools and resources
- Quality of care – providers
- Equity of care – accessibility to therapists/clinicians that look like me

Discussion



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Upcoming Webinars and Events

2023 Leadership Summits

June 28 -29



Recent webinar recordings now available:

Recognizing Implicit Bias and Using Data to Overcome It

Immune Fitness and Vaccination: Overcoming Misinformation and Trust Issues

