AN OVERVIEW OF TREATMENT MODELS

The 12-step Programs:

Self-led groups that focus on the individual’s achievement of sobriety. These groups are independent, self-supported, and are not aligned with any agency or program.

- Individuals are united by working on their common 12-step program. By meeting and talking together, they are able to stay sober and lose the compulsion to use alcohol or other drugs.
- The focus of this modality is on dealing with problems “one day at a time.”
- Twelve steps refers to the steps toward recovery, which were written in 1935 by two recovering alcoholics.

Advantages:
- Readily available; free; and focuses on fellowship with persons in similar situations, spirituality and self-responsibility. It is not affiliated with any professional organization.

Disadvantages:
- No leader; no feedback; not always helpful to individuals who are unable to stop use; no sense of safety or control for some individuals; not always enough in and of itself.

Profile of persons most suitable for this type of treatment:
- Persons willing to stop abusing substances, open to peer support, and accepting of spirituality.

Length of time:
- No time limit

Outpatient Counseling/Psychotherapy:

Counseling is an important aspect of the recovery continuum for many chemically dependent people. Psychotherapy also may be part of a treatment program—whether it is a residential or outpatient program.

- Psychotherapy is a technique for treating those with mental health or substance abuse disorders.
• The process involves helping the participant to identify problematic behaviors and/or feelings to address and resolve these conflicts.

• In dealing with chemically dependent individuals, the first goal of counseling is complete abstinence from all chemical substances. Others goals can be formulated with the client and typically include: a commitment to therapy, willingness to attend a 12-step/self-help group (AA, NA, etc.), possible involvement in therapy groups, avoiding acquaintances who are involved with drugs, staying out of bars and other places that send triggers for relapse, developing healthy life-styles (eating, sleeping, exercising), developing new support networks of friends who are drug free, taking healthier risks, and addressing self-esteem, personal, or family issues.

Advantages:
• Highly focused on the individual; many style variations; flexibility in how therapy may be delivered; greater patient acceptability; less resistance from the individual; and less disruptive to the individual’s job and family life (if conducted in an outpatient setting).

Disadvantages:
• If the therapist doesn’t address chemical dependency as a primary issue, other gains made in therapy are not likely to be sustained.

Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:
• Verbal, motivated persons who want to deal with addiction issues.

Length of time:
• Short- and long-term; however in general, it is three to six months or longer. It usually includes one session per week for one hour in an outpatient setting. In residential programs, counseling is usually incorporated into the program several times a week for the duration of the program.

Day and Evening Treatment Programs:

The day and evening treatment model is similar to inpatient rehabilitation, but the patients return to their homes at the end of the day or night. This approach is designed for patients who have healthy family supports and can exercise some control over their compulsions to use AOD.

• Patients who have a job, are in school, or have child care responsibilities, often prefer this approach.
- This model is less expensive than inpatient programs and is the model preferred by many insurance companies.
- Family support and involvement is a central component of this model.

**Advantages:**
- It is similar to inpatient models, except that the person sleeps at home. It is cheaper, more convenient, more flexible, and more intense and comprehensive than just outpatient counseling. Persons are able to integrate new skills within their daily life and discuss them with professionals and peers. It integrates family components and enables mothers and fathers to continue parenting roles with their children.

**Disadvantages:**
- It is easy for people to relapse, and persons can be more tempted to drop out of treatment after relapse occurs.

**Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:**
- If addicted, the individual must be highly motivated and able to control impulse to use. They must have a high level of family and social support in order to succeed.

**Length of Time:**
- Two to four weeks most commonly; however this can vary depending on the program.

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**Detoxification Programs:**

*Detoxification* can take place in an AOD-treatment setting, in a general hospital, or in a “specialty hospital.”

- The length of time a person may be hospitalized varies from five days to over 30 days, depending on such factors as the level of the patient’s AOD use, the philosophy of the program, the capability to transfer the patient to another program and/or setting, health insurance, etc.
- After patients complete the medical detoxification, they should continue in their treatment, in either an inpatient or outpatient setting.

**Advantages:**
- Medical staff evaluate patients thoroughly. Substance abuse consumption ceases immediately. Detoxification can facilitate ongoing rehab/drug-free treatment.
Disadvantages:
- It is short-term and only focuses on medical issues. The person is not always aware of the need for more complete treatment.

Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:
- Persons who are physiologically dependent on a substance, where compulsion to use is uncontrollable. Also suitable for persons who have severe medical or psychiatric complications that require medical supervision during withdrawal.

Length of Time:
- Can be as short as three days; with the average being five to seven days. This is often used in conjunction with the beginning of inpatient treatment.

**Intensive, Short-term Inpatient Programs:**

*Intensive, short-term inpatient programs* have proliferated in recent years. These 28-day programs usually rely heavily on the 12-step philosophy.

- Private programs are quite expensive and public programs have long waiting lists.
- These programs are often used as an adjunct to detoxification programs.
- This approach is most effective for highly motivated clients with strong support networks in place. It is less effective with clients with multiple problems and long-standing AOD addiction.

Advantages:
- A comprehensive approach includes detox, and the time commitment is more manageable than other options. It uses the disease model as a basis and relies upon 12-step programs.

Disadvantages:
- Private programs are quite expensive, and public programs can have long waiting lists. Due to the short nature of the program, oftentimes, family members are not involved during treatment.

Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:
- Persons who have not succeeded in less intensive settings such as self-help, outpatient treatment, or day treatment.

Length of Time:
- Usually 28 days, with the first five to seven days possibly being spent in detox.
**Therapeutic Communities:**

The **therapeutic community model** of treatment takes much longer than many other inpatient programs. It is not unusual for residents to be involved for over a year.

- Many of these programs are community-based and are administered by not-for-profit agencies.
- This approach is most appropriate for the hard-core addict.
- The most common drug of choice of the people entering this type of program today is either heroin or crack.
- These programs typically employ recovering addicts in various capacities to serve as role models in living a drug-free life-style.

**Advantages:**
- This model has a longer-term focus (up to 18 months). It is individual-focused therapy with other addicts. It is very confrontive in nature, breaking through denial quickly. Ex-addicts are often used as part of the helping process. It focuses on making changes in life-style.

**Disadvantages:**
- The length of therapy can make it difficult to complete, and it is often not flexible enough to meet individual or family needs. There are often long waiting lists.

**Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:**
- Persons who are willing and able to be in long-term treatment and participate in a group living situation. It is helpful to persons who have multiple problems or stresses in addition to the dependency.

**Length of Time:**
- Average stay is 12-18 months, with some programs attempting to reduce the stay to nine months.

**Halfway Houses:**

_A halfway house_ programs help residents transition back to society after completing a treatment program. They are often affiliated with an inpatient treatment center.

- These programs focus on rebuilding basic living skills such as those needed for job searching, money management, and proper nutrition, as well as recovery from chemical dependency.
• Program length varies, but six months to one year is typical.

• The typical client is one with little external support, a chronic chemical dependency problem, and failed past efforts at recovery.

Advantages:
• It is useful for those who do not have effective support systems and are in need of a variety of skills. The programs teach individuals independent-living skills and help coordinate educational and job training.

Disadvantages:
• It is often difficult to get admitted unless someone is released directly from a detox or inpatient program. Long waiting lists are common.

Profile of Persons Suitable for this Model:
• It is most advantageous for persons who need to build coping or other skills and have limited resources. Persons who have made many attempts at recovery but have had only limited success in preventing relapse may also benefit from this.

Length of Time:
• This varies greatly; however six to 12 months is the average.