

**Project: "International Symposium on Continuing Education in the
Substance-Dependence Field" 31 August, 1 + 2 September 2005, Berne**
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| <i>Aspects of continuing training</i> | <i>Questions</i> |
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| 1. System / structure | <p>1.1 Is there systematic provision of continuing education in the substance-dependence field? If so, what does the system consist of (players, providers, offerings) and what are its interrelationships and limits (interfaces)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is not a systematic provision of continuing education in the United States in the substance-dependence field. ➤ Each discipline has its own professional association(s) which provide certification after fulfillment of educational, practice, and examination requirements. These associations also approve, monitor, and accept educational sponsors and courses that qualify for certification. ➤ Examples of professional associations providing substance dependence certification include: American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA), The Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC), International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium/Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse, Inc. (IC&RC). The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) provides a specialized certification in Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs and the American Psychological Association (APA) has a Certificate of Proficiency in the Treatment of Alcohol and Other Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders. (See the ATTC's "Certification Info" area of their Web site at www.nattc.org for a more detailed listing). ➤ States also recognize and require certain certification for employees working for state funded treatment programs. These requirements are often in association with the predominant professional association in the field. <p>1.2 Is the system directed in any way? If so, by whom (government, administration, NGOs, professional associations) and how (national or international coordination, financial support, setting of standards, educational policy goals, recognition and certification of qualifications acquired)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The system is directed by the professional associations themselves, often through boards that set standards of education, experience, and the assessment of knowledge through examinations. ➤ The government has published a document providing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of professional practice in the addictions (<i>Addiction Counselor Competencies: The Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes of Professional Practice, CSAT's Technical Assistance Publication (TAP) #21</i>). ➤ States have begun developing standards based on this publication but it is not mandated or nationally adopted. |

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| | <p>1.3 What is the status of continuing education in the professional substance-dependence field and to what extent does it enhance the professionalism of the field?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Professionalism is enhanced by continuing education in the field due to the attainment of higher levels of certification, which often equate to higher levels of pay and employment. <p>1.4 Where financial support is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is such support oriented entirely or predominantly to the offering or also to demand, e.g. in the form of educational vouchers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Most continuing education in the United States is self-pay. ➤ Government supports the continuing education needs of substance abuse counsellors and others by funding organizations and programs to provide the education. One example is the Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) Network (14 Regional Centers and a National Office) that are predominately University and college based programs providing continuing education directly or developing curriculum and training presenters. ➤ Government also encourages certification and educational attainment of substance abuse staff through funding requirements and stipulations of treatment agencies. • Are structures and/or programmes supported? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ATTC Network is funded by the Federal government. Other education/training providers may receive Federal/state funds; funding from foundations; and/or are sustained through membership dues and fees for courses. |
| 2. Form | <p>2.1 In what form is continuing education provided?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off the job: seminars, courses, curricula • on the job: training, job rotation • near the job: project work, quality circles, E-learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Programs in the U.S. use all the above types of continuing education. ➤ Through the Internet and distance education, more and more front line workers are able to access education once inaccessible due to locations of education entities. (See the ATTC's distance education Web site at www.addictioned.org for more information). <p>2.2 Is there formal regulation of the courses provided and do they satisfy formal standards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Most professional organizations provide approval to educational organizations that develop and deliver courses. These organizations, colleges, or Universities then have approval of that organization so that courses may count toward the certification standards set by the professional organization. ➤ The boards of professional organizations dictate the types of courses necessary for certification and the numbers of courses needed on specific |

topics.

- Some states provide certification standards and requirements of specific courses.
- Again, TAP 21, "The Competencies" provides a standard.

2.3 At what level of the national educational system are the courses and curricula positioned (according to the International Standard Classification of Education ISCED)?^{1]}

- See attachment: International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).
- Most continuing education provided in substance abuse field is positioned at level three and above.
- Many times entry level counselors have only level three or upper secondary education (high school) or level four (post-secondary non-tertiary education) They can become certified by taking courses. They would be considered "entry level" counselors.
- Courses are also offered for counselors who are in level 5A or 5B, (first stage of tertiary education) who have completed college and are looking for professional certification and or enhancement of knowledge and skills.
- Continuing education is also provided for professionals at level 6 (second stage of tertiary education) with medical degrees and doctorates who attend continuing education courses to update skills and knowledge and to attain or maintain certification with their prospective professional associations.

2.4 Do the qualifications thus acquired affect salary and/or employment?

- Yes. Many jobs require a certain level of certification and generally salary is higher for the higher levels of education and certification.
- According to recent workforce survey's for substance abuse counselors, level of education, specifically, a master's degree and being credentialed, appeared to lead to higher salaries. See attached workforce survey: *Report on the State of the Substance Abuse Treatment Workforce in 2002: Priorities and Possibilities*.

2.5 What agreements (time, costs) do professionals in this field have with their employers with regard to participation in continuing education?

- Arrangements are individually negotiated on an agency-by-agency basis. There is not a standard agreement nor is there a recommended approach.
- There are no national standards for costs and time agreements between professionals and their employees.
- Few states have requirements in their funding stipulating employee time-off for continuing education.
- Many organizations encourage continuing education by allowing time away from work to attend courses or by providing on-site courses.
- Professionals are encouraged to take distance education courses on their own time by agencies offering higher pay and job advancement for higher education/certification attainment.

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| 3. Content | <p>3.1 Are there national guidelines (general concept) as a reference point for the content of continuing education programmes that are under development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are no formalized guidelines. National guidelines are indirectly provided by governmental research agencies such as DHHS, SAMHSA, NIDA, and NIAAA. ➤ These agencies often direct educational agencies to create programs using research findings. This is often done by providing funding for the education. ➤ TIPs, TAPs ➤ The government has also published “TAP 21, The Competencies” but there are no national guidelines about its use. ➤ NAADAC, IC&RC, and individual states have standards that may or may not be based on “TAP 21, The Competencies”. ➤ Professional organizations internally generate guidelines for the content of continuing education programs through educational requirements. <p>3.2 How does the circular process of defining needs, developing programmes and evaluating results, and vice versa, take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On a case-by-case basis. Professional associations and individual states define their own needs, develop programs and evaluate results individually. ➤ Nationally, government agencies define needs based on current practice versus research findings. Programs are then developed and piloted to test research in areas of the country with specific populations. Grants are provided for research on these programs. Positive research results in more replication and funding provided for more programs. ➤ Treatment Improvement Exchange ➤ Practice Improvement Collaboratives <p>3.3 How does knowledge transfer between vocational training (theory), research, practice and continuing education take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Various modes including: clinical supervision, formal coursework through a college or University, education organizations, testing, on the job training. ➤ The government funds formal programs to link research into practice or science into service. The ATTC's are one of many agencies charged to do this. <p>3.4 Are programmes developed on an occupation-specific or a cross-occupational basis (inter/multidisciplinary or inter/multiprofessional)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This depends on the topic. Most programs are occupation specific. ➤ General topics such as the basics of addiction, and the like are often cross-occupational. <p>3.5 Which of the occupational groups active in the care and treatment of addicts has the implicit or explicit "lead", in terms both of their work with addicts and in continuing education?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Depends on the provider and service provided. |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are far more counselors treating addicts than any other discipline in the field. ➤ Counselors also require more continuing education than other fields because there haven't traditionally been programs offered specifically to addiction counseling in formal education. |
| 4. Quality | <p>4.1 Does continuing education (whether individual courses, curricula or programmes) and/or institutionalized continuing education providers have to satisfy quality requirements, and who defines these requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The professional organizations that approve course providers basically define quality. ➤ Often course providers are colleges and Universities that are subject to high quality standards. ➤ Often the education quality requirements come in the form of the people creating the courses and those delivering it. ➤ Evaluation is often conducted as a pre and post to evaluate educational attainment and satisfaction with courses. ➤ Some programs are heavily evaluated if funding is provided to do so. <p>4.2 By whom and how is the quality of continuing education evaluated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no national oversight entity. ➤ Third party evaluators, self-evaluations. <p>4.3 On what level(s) is the evaluation of continuing education focused (after Kirkpatrick, 1987)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction: How satisfied are the participants with the training programme? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-assessment as to their satisfaction with content, delivery, surroundings, and the like. <p>Pre and post</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcome: To what extent did the participants extend their knowledge and skills and change their values (as measured by tests or other procedures)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-reporting as measured by questionnaires. <p>Pre and post</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour: To what extent did the participants' learning affect their behaviour at work (transfer of learning to the workplace)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-reporting as measured by questionnaires. • Results/effects: Have the desired effects of the participants' participation in the further training been displayed at the team/institution level and how were they demonstrated? What was the cost/benefit ratio? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no national requirement to conduct outcome evaluations. |

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| 5. Trends | <p>What are the challenges, opportunities and risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• which affect continuing information and which you would like to see addressed in the symposium, regarding the future of professional care and treatment of addicts in particular□ Workforce development□ Aging of the Workforce□ Experiential history of substance abuse counselling versus more traditional university education and degrees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• and continuing education in the substance-dependence field in general, independently of the care and treatment of addicts? |
| 6. Input | <p>What specific know-how can you contribute to the symposium (knowledge, skills, literature, tools, documentation)?</p> <p>Years of experience and all the training and technical assistance materials available through SAMHSA and its Addiction Technology Transfer Centers (ATTCs) – at www.samhsa.gov or www.nattc.org</p> |