

2007 Annual Report

Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction



DASA Division of Alcohol
& Substance Abuse



September 1, 2007

Dear friends:

This was a watershed year for the Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction. The Council spent a significant amount of time educating legislators on the vital services we provide, ensuring a citizen voice on issues related to substance abuse and addiction is heard in government, that the public interest is well served, and that public funds are invested wisely. As individuals and as a Council, we know that one person can make a difference, in our homes, in our community, and in our Legislature.

The Council continues to strive to work more closely with counties and providers to improve the delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare services related to substance abuse and problem gambling. In the past year, we have also addressed the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse's strategic priorities, while carrying out our legislatively mandated responsibilities, and oversaw the annual peer review of treatment providers.

It has been a very exciting time to see both federal grants and expansion of state programs report results that have been even better than anticipated. The State Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG), Washington State Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (WASBIRT), and Access to Recovery (ATR) are just three of the programs that have improved the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Progress is being made in closing the treatment gap between those who need and qualify for services and those who actually receive it.

As the needs of clients become increasingly complex, so does the need for trained professionals to provide services. Workforce development has been a topic of discussion at each Council meeting this year. Workforce retention and cross-training, as well as efforts to recruit more professionals into the substance abuse prevention and treatment field will likely be on the Council's agenda for years to come.

Council members are working hard to educate themselves about the complex issues related to alcohol and other drug abuse and addiction and problem gambling, and are eager to share their expertise with others. We invite you all to step up to the task and get involved with the lives of children and young adults, with families and communities, with local government, and at the state level. The Council could use more individuals with diverse backgrounds, individuals who are in recovery, individuals who have medical or legal or business or educational experience. We could certainly make good use of your skills and knowledge on the Council. Please take this as an invitation to join us as we work to build healthier and more productive communities across the State of Washington.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sally Cassella". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Cassella, Chair
Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction

Our Mission

Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction

The Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction is established under RCW 70.96A.070, enacted in 1972. We are dedicated volunteer advocates who advise and recommend to the Department of Social and Health Services rules, policies, and programs that will benefit: individuals and their families with alcoholism/addictions; families and individuals in high risk environments; and the larger community.

The Council has a continuing interest in ensuring there is a full array of quality prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare services available to address alcohol and drug abuse and addiction and problem gambling.

Department of Social and Health Services

The mission of the Department of Social and Health Services is to improve the quality of life for individuals and families in need. We will help people to achieve safe, self-sufficient, healthy and secure lives.

Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse

The Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse promotes strategies that support healthy lifestyles by preventing the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and support recovery from the disease of chemical dependency.

Recommendations

To promote safer and more vibrant communities, and a healthier, more productive citizenry, the Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction makes the following recommendations:

1. We endorse the five strategic priorities set forth in the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse's (DASA) Strategic Plan 2007-2011, and urge all necessary steps be taken to support DASA in:

A. Closing the treatment gap between those who are eligible and in need of treatment and those who, because of financial constraints, actually receive it;

The Citizens Advisory Council is pleased by the Governor and Legislature's continued support of treatment expansion, which is resulting in substantial increases in services to low-income, Medicaid-eligible adults and youth. Treatment expansion is providing substantial savings resulting from reduced emergency room use, medical and psychiatric hospitalization and major medical services, and healthier and increasingly productive individuals and families in more vibrant communities.

B. Providing treatment alternatives to incarceration;

The Council applauds the Governor and Legislature's continuing efforts to expand treatment alternatives to incarceration under the Criminal Justice Treatment Account, and the increase in the number of county and tribal drug courts. Diverting individuals to treatment reduces the need for incarceration, prevents recidivism, and makes it possible for individuals to make a safe transition into the community.

C. Implementing common screening and assessment protocols for co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders and linking them with integrated treatment;

Improved diagnostic tools hold out the hope of providing better targeted, more effective treatment to individuals suffering from co-occurring disorders. The Council notes the significant efforts now being made to assist these individuals through the Integrated Crisis Response/Secure Detoxification and Integrated Case Management pilot programs.

D. Reaffirming its commitment to evidence-based, targeted prevention, and implementing efforts to combat underage drinking;

The Council is pleased by DASA's efforts in implementing the Strategic Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant to ensure prevention efforts are data-driven and outcome-based, and the targeting of underage drinking. Underage drinking is not only destructive to youth, families, and communities in the present, but increases the likelihood that youth will become serious alcohol abusers/alcoholics and/or become chemically dependent as adolescents and adults.

E. Implementing a program for the prevention and treatment of problem and pathological gambling, including the training of professionals in the identification and treatment of problem gamblers.

The Council supports new efforts to treat individuals and their families who suffer from problem/pathological gambling, and note that a very large proportion of problem/pathological gamblers also suffer from substance abuse and addiction.

- 2. We urge continued support for the recruitment and training of chemical dependency professionals, both in enabling current treatment professionals to care for patients with increasingly complex needs, and to recruit new individuals into the profession. We applaud DASA's efforts in establishing the annual Treatment Institute, and renewed efforts in working with institutions of higher education.**
- 3. We commend DASA in successfully seeking out grant opportunities to enhance both planning and service delivery. Access To Recovery (ATR), Washington State Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (WASBIRT), and the State Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG) are all excellent examples of how new opportunities can extend the range and scope of alcohol and drug prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare approaches available to individuals and families in Washington State.**

Who We Are

The statute under which the Citizens Advisory Council operates requires that it be composed of not less than seven nor more than 15 members. The Council is mandated to be broadly representative of citizens who have been recipients of treatment for alcoholism or other drug addiction and who have been in recovery from chemical dependency for a minimum of two years. At least two-thirds of the Council's members should be former recipients of treatment and not be employed in any occupation related to chemical dependency. The remaining members are to be chosen for their demonstrated concern with alcoholism and drug addiction, and drawn from the business, organized labor, judiciary, and minority communities.

The Council continues to seek out qualified individuals who can contribute to our ongoing work, and invites interested individuals to contact us. (Contact information on back.)

Current Members

Sally Cassella (Chair) served as a chemical dependency counselor at the Grant County Alcohol and Drug Center and for Grant County Juvenile Services. She is actively involved in community groups and outreach in rural areas. Her professional career has been focused on families and parenting skills.

Grace Creasman teaches and supervises practicums for future chemical dependency professionals enrolled in the Alcohol/Drug Studies Program at Eastern Washington University. She has a strong interest in adult education and in alcohol/drug abuse prevention on college campuses.

Phillip Gonzales is a retired army veteran who works as an analyst for the Department of Social and Health Services. He is a member of the National Association for Education in Medicaid, the Many View One diversity team, and is active in the community promoting awareness and diversity in the workplace. His interest is in prevention among teenagers and substance abuse education for family members.

Dean Henderson is a retired stockbroker actively engaged in recovery from alcoholism. He tutors in urban Seattle elementary schools, and has a strong interest in prevention and treatment among school-based youth.

Robin Hopkins is a retired real estate appraiser who served for eight years on the National Board of the Recovery Ministries of the Episcopal Church. In recovery, he has a strong interest in the coordination of government-sponsored and faith-based efforts in the treatment of alcohol and drug addiction.

David McCallum (Vice Chair) is a retired member of the United Steel Workers of America. In recovery from alcoholism, he spent several years working with the employee assistance committee for his local union. He joined the Council because he knows treatment works.

Guy McMinds is a fisheries expert, and serves as natural resource advisor to the Quinault Indian Nation. A member of the Quinault Tribe, he served as a member of the State Incentive Grant Advisory Board, overseeing initiatives to reduce and prevent substance abuse among youth. He has adopted and raised several children affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects.

Laura Mithoug is a senior supervisor with the City of Seattle's Department of Transportation. She is actively engaged in recovery, and believes in the importance of substance abuse treatment for the entire family.

Gunthild Sondhi is a certified prevention professional, and is currently an adjunct professor within the Department of Social Work, Eastern Washington University, where she teaches suicide and substance abuse prevention. She retired as Spokane County Community Service Department's substance abuse prevention coordinator, but continues her work in the prevention field. Her passion and commitment earned her the 2001 Washington State Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Award.

Recent Accomplishments of the Citizens Advisory Council

This past year, the Citizens Advisory Council has continued our advocacy as an independent voice committed to ensuring the availability of quality alcohol and drug prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare services to all Washington residents. High points of our activity included:

- **Implementing the Strategic Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG)** – Two members of the Council serve on the SPF-SIG Advisory Council as the \$11.75 million SPF-SIG Grant is implemented. The four goals of the project are to: 1) Prevent the onset and reduce the progression of substance abuse, including underage drinking; 2) Reduce substance-related problem behaviors in communities; 3) Build prevention capacity and infrastructure at the state and community level; and 4) Infuse data into all processes of prevention program decisionmaking.
- **Sponsoring a Research Subcommittee** – The Council sponsors a Research Subcommittee of more than 70 members. Researchers are drawn from institutions across the Northwest to share their findings with each other, and to build the science base necessary to improve prevention and treatment outcomes.
- **Holding a Public Hearing on the Federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant** – The Council convened a public hearing on the annual federal Block Grant that funds prevention and treatment services in Washington State. Special interest was indicated in ensuring tribal needs for these services are being met.
- **Spearheading the Tribal Gathering** – The Council took a leadership role in planning the annual Tribal Gathering, attended by more than 200 individuals, including members of Washington's 29 sovereign Indian nations and four urban Indian organizations. The Gathering focused on building strategies aimed at preventing and reducing alcohol and drug use among tribal members.
- **Supporting the Use of Evidence-Based Treatment Practices** – The Council urged the Department of Social and Health Services to reserve the use of limited funds for treatment programs and practices that have proven their efficacy over time, and have demonstrated their effectiveness in helping individuals return to productive, drug-free lives.
- **Reaching Out to County Boards and Tribes** – The Council continues to reach out to county alcohol and drug administrative/advisory boards and Indian Tribes. The Council met with members of county boards across the state, and heard presentations from representatives of tribal programs so that the Council is in a better position to advocate for their needs.

Overseeing Annual Peer Review

The federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant administered by the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse requires an annual peer review of 5% of treatment providers who receive funding. This process is overseen by the Council. This year, Council members made several on-site visits, and shared perspectives with reviewers.

This year's review noted the continued trend of providers increasing their capacity to treat individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders by collaborating, or in some cases, co-locating with mental health providers. Providers work creatively with workforce shortages by recruiting American Indian and Hispanic individuals in recovery, while those programs with stabilized workforces notice the increase in productive clinical time due to reduced training and orientation tasks. Providers are training staff in evidence-based practices while at the same time recognizing that the therapeutic relationship is often what keeps patients in treatment long enough to benefit from those practices.

The Council made a series of recommendations to support the chemical dependency treatment workforce. There is a continuing need for counselor training in the use of American Society of Addiction Medicine Patient Placement Criteria. In addition, counselors need additional training in working with patients with mental health problems, and in developing follow-up plans and procedures for patients post-discharge. The Council noted that certification of counselors by the Department of Health is both inconsistent and cumbersome, and steps need to be taken to improve the process. Low wages make it difficult to attract new chemical dependency professionals to the field and to retain experienced ones. This need might be addressed through increasing reimbursement for publicly funded services. Finally, the Council recommended that DASA continue to work with other state programs to improve the availability of transportation for patients in treatment.

Council Development

During the past year, the Citizens Advisory Council continued to make significant strides in furthering its own development. These include:

- Keeping apprised of issues related to chemical dependency prevention and treatment workforce development. Information was presented to the Council by DASA staff, the Department of Health, and the Northwest Educators Association. In addition, the Council received information on a survey of chemical dependency professionals and program administrators on the current state of addiction treatment.
- Incorporating educational presentation as a regular feature of Council meetings. In the past year, there were presentations on: the Mental Health Transformation grant; the new Network for the Improvement of Addiction Treatment (NIATx) grant; the tribal agreement on the use of a portion gambling profits to fund prevention, intervention, and treatment for individuals with gambling problems and their families; and on legislation for the Department of Corrections to provide expanded treatment for individuals being released from incarceration.
- Sponsoring member attendance at training and outreach activities. In the past year, these included: the annual Treatment Institute; the Tribal Gathering; and the annual Prevention Summit.
- Nurturing strong, supportive, collaborative relationships with DASA staff, and expanding our understanding of the legislative and budgeting process.
- Having members attend local county alcohol and drug administrative/advisory board meetings, and extend their involvement in diverse substance abuse-related activities to increase their knowledge and expertise.

Future Council Initiatives

The Citizens Advisory Council is planning initiatives in a number of areas:

- To place the Council in the forefront of advocating for continued chemical dependency treatment expansion, and increasing awareness among local governments, local elected officials, and legislators about the benefits that result from the delivery of culturally appropriate, evidence-based substance abuse prevention and treatment services;
- To work with the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, local communities, providers, and institutions of higher education to attract and retain professionals to and in the chemical dependency field, and further dialogue about steps necessary to address the shortage of chemical dependency professionals;
- To expand advocacy for evidence-based prevention strategies, including increased emphasis on underage drinking;
- To continue to advocate for a compassionate and equitable policy related to drug offenders, with a strong emphasis on alternatives to incarceration including drug courts and on the provision of quality alcohol and drug prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare services;
- To participate in efforts to bridge the gaps between research, policy, and practice, and sponsor a Prevention Research Subcommittee;
- To promote efforts to prevent problem and pathological gambling, and provide treatment to individuals and families in need of it;
- To expand working relationships and ongoing dialogue with representatives of Indian sovereign nations as we work together building alcohol- and drug-free communities;
- To invite members of local alcohol and other drug administrative/advisory boards to address the Council at its meeting across the state regarding local concerns and initiatives; and
- To review county six-year plans, and, together with communities, the Association of County Human Services, service providers, and DASA, build consensus on shared goals, priorities, and strategies to address alcoholism and other drug abuse and addiction and problem gambling.

Join Us!

The Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction is always looking for individuals who can contribute to our ongoing work of advising the Department of Social and Health Services regarding the provision of quality substance abuse-related services, and working with communities to reduce the impact of alcoholism and other drug addiction.

For more information, please contact:

Sally Cassella
Citizens Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction
720 South Catalpa Street
Moses Lake, WA 98837-2810
(509) 765-3789
e-mail: golfduke@msn.com

or

Doug Allen
Washington State Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse
PO Box 45330
Olympia, WA 98504-5330
(360) 725-3700
or (toll free) 1-877-301-4557
e-mail: allende@dshs.wa.gov