



National Institute on Drug Abuse
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NIDA HIGHLIGHTS BEST DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT APPROACHES AT BLENDING CONFERENCE

Translating Most Current Research Findings into Clinical Practice

The most difficult challenge in finding substance abuse treatment for a loved one is how to know which programs have a proven track record. That is just one of the topics being discussed today at the conference “*Blending Addiction Science and Treatment: The Impact of Evidence-Based Practices on Individuals, Families and Communities.*” Held at the Duke Energy Center in Cincinnati, the conference is hosted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a component of the National Institutes of Health. It is part of NIDA’s Blending Initiative, in which teams of experts create clinical tools based on the latest treatment research.

“It historically has taken almost 20 years for published research findings to be implemented into clinical practice,” said NIH Director Dr. Elias A. Zerhouni “The Blending Initiative Products are designed so that research-based drug abuse treatment approaches can be easily disseminated into the community, and consequently, more quickly benefit people who are often in desperate need.”

The Cincinnati meeting is the largest-ever Blending Conference, bringing together over 1000 leading addiction practitioners, health care providers, criminal justice professionals, researchers, and policymakers. Together they will explore how the latest findings from drug abuse research can fill the current gap between science and clinical treatment practices. Treatment providers will be introduced to new clinical tools that will in turn benefit thousands of substance abusers in the United States who are in need of help. The tools will also help families make more informed decisions about treatment programs.

Participants will learn about new treatment products that include:

MIA:STEP, a motivational interviewing assessment supervisory tool, tailored for clinical supervisors to train front-line treatment providers. It also includes a new package of tools designed to enhance patient engagement and retention.

“The Science of Treatment: Research Dissemination of Blending Team Products” CD Set. The printed CD inserts provide a brief overview of the NIDA research that led to the formulation of the Blending Team products, including training materials such as CDs, PowerPoint presentations, videos and other resources needed to facilitate the adoption of science-based interventions in community settings.

“Guide to Selecting, Evaluating, and Utilizing Evidenced-Based Practices.” To be released in Fall 2008, this product is designed to help consumers and practitioners determine whether a treatment practice is “evidence-based,” as well as whether an intervention is beneficial for specific populations and settings. It will include guidelines, frequently asked questions and an easy-to-use checklist. This year’s conference will include sessions to highlight evidence-based psychosocial interventions and practices for engaging resistant substance users.

“The exchange of information in the Blending Conference has multiple benefits,” says NIDA Director Dr. Nora D. Volkow.” Not only can we rapidly share the latest research with community treatment providers, but we also gain the benefit of their wisdom and experience in the clinical practice arena.”

The conference will also highlight the latest information on the role of stress in co-occurring psychiatric and substance use disorders; the link between traumatic brain injury and substance abuse; the impact of addiction on the family; the science of addiction and the brain; and treatment for special populations, including adolescents, women, African-Americans and patients with HIV.

Blending Products are created by Blending Teams, composed of NIDA researchers, community-based substance abuse treatment practitioners, and trainers from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network. Blending team products and more information on the NIDA Blending Initiative can be accessed at <http://www.drugabuse.gov/blending>.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world’s research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy and improve practice. Fact sheets on the health effects of drugs of abuse and information on NIDA research and other activities can be found on the NIDA home page at www.drugabuse.gov.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) — *The Nation's Medical Research Agency* — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary Federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.