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Contact: Sara Rosario Wilson
301-443-6245
media@nida.nih.gov

Contacto en Español: 301-594-6145

NIDA Speeds Transfer of Research Findings Into Clinical Tools *Treatment Products Announced At 2006 Blending Conference*

Seattle — Thousands of people in the United States seeking treatment for drug abuse will benefit from years of scientific research, thanks to new products announced today at the 2006 Blending Conference in Seattle, a meeting hosted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a component of the National Institutes of Health. The NIDA Blending initiative encourages the rapid integration of research findings into clinical practice.

The new portfolio of treatment products highlights the latest research findings on drug abuse topics, including addiction to opioid drugs (such as heroin and OxyContin), as well as techniques that modify behavior to enhance a person's commitment to stop abusing drugs. The new tools integrate PowerPoint slides, CDs, and bibliographies containing the most recent research findings. These products provide treatment professionals with resources that accelerate the adoption of science-based interventions into clinical practice.

“One of NIH's mandates is to expedite the dissemination of state-of-the-art research information into practice,” said NIH Director Dr. Elias A. Zerhouni. “These new products and the ongoing system to develop training modules is a cooperative effort to deliver new treatment options to patients in community-level clinical settings.

“It can take nearly two decades between the publication of research results and their implementation into clinical practice,” says NIDA Director Dr. Nora D. Volkow. “To reduce this gap we developed special teams to create these innovative tools. For the first time in history, these products are being made available at nearly the same time that the research results are published in peer-reviewed journals.”

The new tools have been created through 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.

To date, four Blending Teams have developed products. Two of them have developed training modules for treating addiction to opioid drugs with buprenorphine (a compound that can be delivered in the privacy of a doctor's office, which allows physicians to treat drug abuse and addiction in the same manner they treat people for other chronic illnesses, such as diabetes or high blood pressure). Another team has developed a program that instructs providers on how to transform required "paperwork" (assessments, forms, questionnaires, case notes, etc.) into clinically useful information—Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-limited (S.M.A.R.T.) Treatment Planning. The materials developed by this Blending Team provide a comprehensive structure for clinicians to organize a client's treatment record. The fourth team has developed treatment products to enhance the effectiveness of motivational interviewing, a technique designed to strengthen a person's commitment to change behavior.

Another Blending Team will soon complete a training product that will focus on the use of motivational incentives (low-cost reinforcements such as prizes, vouchers, and privileges) combined with biological screening (on-site urine screening), to promote higher rates of treatment retention and abstinence.

The new products and other information on the NIDA Blending initiative can be accessed at www.drugabuse.gov.

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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 ensure the rapid dissemination of research information and its implementation in policy and 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.

