

Best Practices conference is a big success

The Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse recently completed its successful 7th Annual Best Practices conference in Austin, February 18-20. The conference was co-sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and the Gulf Coast Addiction Technology Transfer Center.

This year's conference was the third that followed the CSAT National Treatment Plan initiative and encompassed speakers from across the United States. The conference opened with TCADA Executive Director Dave Wanser speaking to providers about how TCADA's service delivery plan and the National Treatment Plan parallel each other and how that translates into services in Texas. Afterward, Ms. Melody Heaps, one of the original steering committee members for the National Treatment Plan, gave a rousing speech on what the National Treatment Plan is all about.

One of the highlights was the Wednesday breakfast plenary with Mr. Charles Curie, who heads the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Another feature was the closing keynote by Dr. Westley Clark, head of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

The conference was full of speakers that emphasized the need for substance abuse prevention and treatment professionals to focus on research-based best practice strategies in their organizations. Speakers, such as Dr. John Rolf from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Dr. Tom McLellan from the Treatment Research Institute and Dr. Betty Tai, Director of NIDA's Center of Clinical Trials Network, reinforced the themes of the National Treatment Plan and the importance of using research-based methods for preventing and treating alcohol and drug diseases.

The conference included over three hundred participants. Special thanks are extended to the Association for Substance Abuse Programs for their assistance with this conference.