

## PRINCIPLES FOR TREATMENT SERVICES

Substance abuse treatment services provided under the Los Angeles County Proposition 36 program administered by the Alcohol and Drug Program Administration (ADPA) will be based upon the following working principles:

### *Effective Treatment*

Treatment services for alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems provided under the Los Angeles County Proposition 36 program will be based on the following basic overarching research-based principles of effective treatment identified by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA, 1999):

1. **No single treatment is appropriate for all individuals.** Matching treatment settings, interventions, and services to each individual's particular problems and needs is critical to his or her ultimate success in returning to productive functioning in the family, workplace, and society.
2. **Treatment needs to be readily available.** Because individuals who are addicted to drugs may be uncertain about entering treatment, taking advantage of opportunities when they are ready for treatment is crucial. Potential treatment applicants can be lost if treatment is not immediately available or is not readily accessible.
3. **Effective treatment attends to multiple needs of the individual, not just his or her drug use.** To be effective, treatment must address the individual's drug use and any associated medical, psychological, social, vocational, and legal problems.
4. **An individual's treatment and service plan must be assessed continually and modified as necessary to ensure that the plan meets the person's changing needs.** An individual may require varying combinations of services and treatment components during the course of treatment and recovery. In addition to counseling or psychotherapy, the person at times may require medication, other medical services, family therapy, parenting instruction, vocational rehabilitation, and social and legal services. It is critical that the treatment approach be appropriate to the individual's age, gender, ethnicity, and culture.
5. **Remaining in treatment for an adequate period of time is critical for treatment effectiveness.** The appropriate duration for an individual depends on his or her problems and needs. Research indicates that for most individuals, the threshold of significant improvement is reached at about three months in treatment. After this threshold is reached, additional treatment can produce further progress toward recovery. Because people often leave treatment prematurely, programs should include strategies to engage and keep persons in treatment.
6. **Counseling (individual and/or group) and other behavioral therapies are critical components of effective treatment for addiction.** In treatment, individuals address issues of motivation, build skills to resist drug use, replace drug-using activities with constructive and rewarding nondrug-using activities, and improve problem-solving abilities. Behavioral therapy also facilitates interpersonal relationships and the individual's ability to function in the family and community.
7. **Medications are an important element of treatment for many patients, especially when combined with counseling and other behavioral therapies.** Methadone and levo-alpha-acetylmethadol (LAAM) are very effective in helping individuals addicted to heroin or other opiates stabilize their lives and reduce their illicit drug use. Naltrexone is also an effective medication for some opiate addicts and some persons with co-occurring alcohol dependence. For persons addicted to nicotine, a nicotine replacement product (such as patches or gum) or an oral medication (such as bupropion) can be an effective component of treatment. For persons with mental disorders, both behavioral treatments and medications can be

- critically important.
8. **Addicted or drug-abusing individuals with coexisting mental disorders should have both disorders treated in an integrated way.** Because addictive disorders and mental disorders often occur in the same individual, persons presenting for either condition should be assessed and treated for the co-occurrence of the other types of disorder.
  9. **Medical detoxification is only the first stage of addiction treatment and by itself does little to change long-term drug use.** Medical detoxification safely manages the acute physical symptoms of withdrawal associated with stopping drug use. While detoxification alone is rarely sufficient to help addicts achieve long-term abstinence, for some persons it is a strongly indicated precursor to effective drug addiction treatment.
  10. **Treatment does not need to be voluntary to be effective.** Strong motivation can facilitate the treatment process. Sanctions or enticements in the family, employment setting, or criminal justice system can increase significantly both treatment entry and retention rates and the success of drug treatment interventions.
  11. **Possible drug use during treatment must be monitored continuously.** Lapses to drug use can occur during treatment. The objective monitoring of a person's drug and alcohol use during treatment, such as through urinalysis or other tests, can help the person withstand urges to use drugs. Such monitoring also can provide early evidence of drug use so that the individual's treatment plan can be adjusted. Feedback to persons who test positive for illicit drug use is an important element of monitoring.
  12. **Treatment programs should provide assessment for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases, and counseling to help patients modify or change behaviors that place themselves or others at risk of infection.** Counseling can help individuals avoid high-risk behavior. Counseling also can help people who are already infected manage their illness.
  13. **Recovery from drug addiction can be a long-term process and frequently requires multiple episodes of treatment.** As with other chronic illnesses, relapses to drug use can occur during or after successful treatment episodes. Addicted individuals may require prolonged treatment and multiple episodes of treatment to achieve long-term abstinence and fully restored functioning. Participation in self-help support programs during and following treatment often is helpful in maintaining abstinence.

### Service Delivery

AOD treatment services under the Los Angeles County Proposition 36 program will be characterized by the following basic overarching principles of effective service delivery for County residents:

### Community-based

AOD treatment services will be provided by State certified or licensed programs with established records of effectively and efficiently providing such services in local communities.

### Continuum of treatment services

AOD treatment services will be provided using a continuum that offers a full range of approaches to address the dynamic nature of an individual's recovery process. Services will be designed to offer participants flexibility to increase or decrease intensity according to the individual's treatment progress and to address changes in individual situations in an expeditious manner.

### **Accessible**

The physical configuration and location of facilities in which AOD treatment services are provided must be accessible for all eligible participants. Facilities must be positive, supportive recovery environments and not present physical barriers to participants for engaging in recovery activities. Facilities must be located at sites that participants can conveniently reach using either private or public transportation.

### **Culturally and linguistically appropriate**

AOD treatment services must be provided using approaches that appropriately and respectfully address each participant's gender, cultural practices and values, and sexual orientation. Services must be available in English and also in other languages for participants who cannot communicate in English.

### **Collaborative and cooperative partnership between Courts, Probation, and AOD treatment agencies**

The effectiveness of AOD treatment services for Proposition 36 program participants is critically dependent upon a strong partnership with the Courts, Probation Department, and criminal justice agencies. The Proposition 36 program continues the successful relationship between these entities developed through collaborative initiatives such as the Los Angeles County Drug Court Program.

### **References**

National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide*. National Institutes of Health. October 1999.