NIDA Launches New Drug Treatment Publication

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has launched a new criminal justice publication entitled “Principles of Drug Abuse Treatment for Criminal Justice Populations.” In this new resource for the treatment community, research-based principles of successful treatment of drug abusers who have entered the criminal justice system are outlined. These principles include:

1. Drug addiction is a brain disease that affects behavior.

2. Recovery from drug addiction requires effective treatment, followed by management of the problem over time.

3. Treatment must last long enough to produce stable behavioral changes.

4. Assessment is the first step in treatment.

5. Tailoring services to fit the needs of the individual is an important part of effective drug abuse treatment for criminal justice populations.

6. Drug use during treatment should be carefully monitored.

7. Treatment should target factors that are associated with criminal behavior.

8. Criminal justice supervision should incorporate treatment planning for drug-abusing offenders, and treatment providers should be aware of correctional supervision requirements.

9. Continuity of care is essential for drug abusers reentering the community.

10. A balance of rewards and sanctions encourages prosocial behavior and treatment participation.

11. Offenders with co-occurring drug abuse and mental health problems often require an integrated treatment approach.

12. Medications are an important part of treatment for many drug-abusing offenders.

13. Treatment planning for drug-abusing offenders who are living in or reentering the community should include strategies to prevent and treat serious, chronic medical conditions, such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C, and tuberculosis.

For further information regarding this or other articles, please contact Dr. Karen Kuehn Howell at the Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development Project, Emory University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, 1256 Briarcliff Rd. NE, Suite 309W Atlanta, GA 30306. You can also phone us at 404 712-9829 or visit our website at www.emory.edu/MSACD

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