Principles of Effective Drug Treatment

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has issued information for the community about drug addiction and the variety of effective approaches to drug addiction treatment. According to NIDA, there are thirteen (13) principles of effective treatment for the scientific research and clinical practice communities to consider. The principles outlined by NIDA include the following:

1. **No single treatment is appropriate for all individuals.**
2. **Treatment needs to be readily available.**
3. **Effective treatment attends to multiple needs of the individual, not just his or her drug use.**
4. **An individual’s treatment and services plan must be assessed continually and modified as necessary to ensure that the plan meets the person’s changing needs.**
5. **Remaining in treatment for an adequate period of time is critical for treatment effectiveness.**
6. **Counseling (individual and/or group) and other behavioral therapies are critical components of effective treatment for addiction.**
7. **Medications are an important element of treatment for many patients, especially when combined with counseling and other behavioral therapies.**
8. **Addicted or drug-abusing individuals with coexisting mental disorders should have both disorders treated in an integrated way.**
9. **Medical detoxification is only the first stage of addiction treatment and by itself does little to change long-term drug use.**
10. Treatment does not need to be voluntary to be effective.

11. Possible drug use during treatment must be monitored continuously.

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.

13. Recovery from drug addiction can be a long-term process and frequently requires multiple episodes of treatment.

NIDA has additional information and resources regarding comprehensive components of drug abuse treatment available at their website www.nida.nih.gov

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