

ADDICTION IS A DISEASE.  LET'S TREAT IT THAT WAY.

## CLOSING THE ADDICTION TREATMENT GAP

RIGHT NOW AN ESTIMATED 23 MILLION AMERICANS SUFFER FROM ADDICTION AND NEED TREATMENT; SADLY, ONLY ONE IN 10 OF THEM (2.4 MILLION) GETS THE TREATMENT THEY NEED. LACK OF INSURANCE, INADEQUATE INSURANCE COVERAGE, AND INSUFFICIENT PUBLIC FUNDS ARE CHIEF AMONG THE MANY REASONS FOR THIS GAP.



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

**The Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap (CATG)** initiative seeks to ensure that all people who need treatment have access to quality addiction treatment services. The initiative aims to bridge the treatment gap through three strategies: broadening **INSURANCE COVERAGE**, increasing **PUBLIC FUNDING**, and achieving greater **PROGRAM EFFICIENCY** and **QUALITY**.



**INSURANCE:**

The diagnosis and treatment of addiction must be recognized as a health/medical condition and covered in all existing and future public, semi-public, and private health plans.



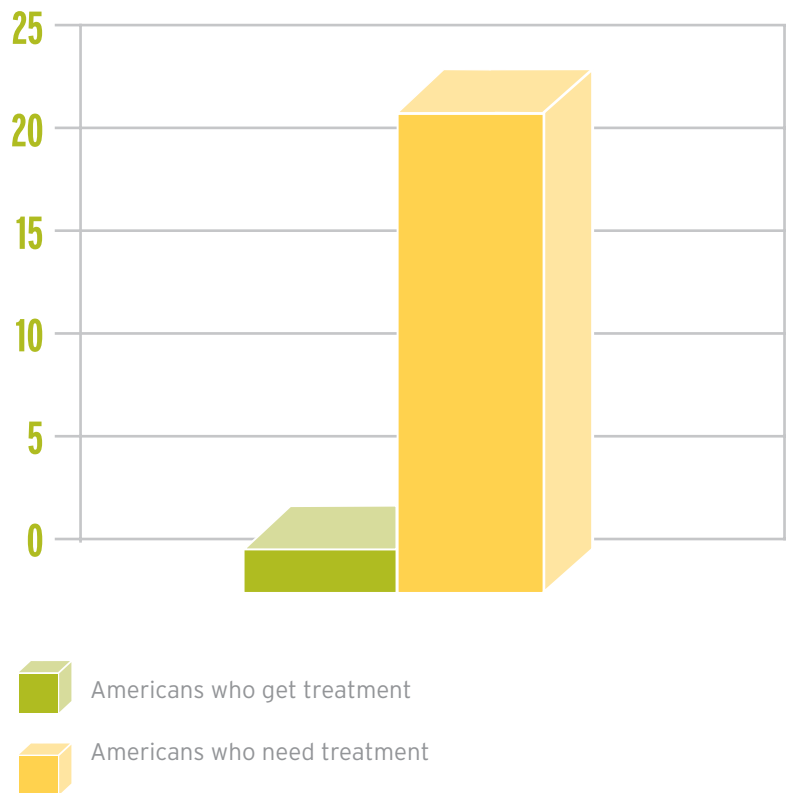
**PUBLIC FUNDING:**

Until universal health care coverage provides treatment for all Americans, public as well as private appropriations should be expanded to pay for treatment.



**PROGRAM EFFICIENCY AND QUALITY:**

Existing resources will reach more people if we improve quality and the procedures that engage, integrate, and retain individuals in treatment.



In addition to national advocacy efforts, the CATG initiative has selected eight sites across the United States to demonstrate model approaches to achieving these three strategies. These sites include advocacy groups, a state government agency, a teaching hospital, and a university research center. Each group is receiving \$600,000 over three years.\*

<sup>1</sup> "Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem," Feb. 2001. <http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/SubstanceAbuseChartbook.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> "Care of Adults With Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in U.S. Community Hospitals," 2004. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2007. HCUP Fact Book 10. AHRQ Publication No. 07-0008. <http://www.ahrq.gov/data/hcup/factbk10/>

<sup>3</sup> "The NSDUH Report: Illicit Drug Use among Persons Arrested for Serious Crimes," Dec. 2005. <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/arrests/arrests.htm>

# ABOUT THE GRANT RECIPIENTS:

With an estimated 10 percent of New Yorkers suffering from addiction, the **Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State** is working with 200 addiction treatment and prevention programs and 19 coalitions to increase the state funding for treatment for low-income residents. The project also aims to shift dollars from inpatient services to community-based treatment.

**The Arkansas Department of Human Services - Division of Behavioral Health Services**, is a state agency that provides substance abuse treatment and prevention services statewide. With only 5 percent of Arkansas' nearly 270,000 residents who need treatment receiving it, the project seeks to increase state appropriations for treatment and to better coordinate purchasing practices among state agencies that provide treatment services.

**Community Advocates**, a **Milwaukee** advocacy group serving low-income families and individuals, seeks to increase treatment benefits from private health insurance and Medicaid, which currently limits benefits. Responding to the estimated 82,000 Milwaukee residents who need treatment but haven't gotten it, the project also seeks to better coordinate how public agencies purchase treatment services.

**The Miriam Hospital**, a teaching hospital, is located in **Rhode Island**, a state with a high rate of drug dependency but a low rate of treatment - 9 to 12 percent of those who need treatment get it. In coordination with the mayor and other key stakeholders, the project advances efficiency, financing and advocacy reforms. The project is working to move treatment from costly hospital emergency departments for addiction-related issues to community-based care, with the goal of using the cost savings from Medicaid, insurance and unreimbursed care dollars, to expand addiction treatment.

**The National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence - New Jersey** and **The Nicholson Foundation** - an advocacy organization that works to prevent and treat alcohol and drug addiction in New Jersey and a foundation that works to improve outcomes for children and families in Essex County - are looking to assist the more than 90 percent of New Jersey residents who need treatment but have not gotten it. The project seeks to expand Medicaid to cover outpatient treatment and to increase access to people who need treatment and are eligible but not enrolled to receive these services.

**New Futures**, a nonprofit advocacy group, works to reduce alcohol and drug problems in New Hampshire, where only 6 percent of those who need treatment get it. The project engages an advocacy and communications campaign to support the use of Medicaid for addiction services and to expand services for adolescents who need treatment.

**Tarrant County Challenge**, a nonprofit that works to prevent drug and alcohol addiction in Tarrant County, Texas, (which includes Fort Worth) seeks to expand Texas' Medicaid plan to cover outpatient addiction treatment. With hundreds of thousands of Texans failing to get adequate addiction treatment, the project also seeks a \$30 million annual increase in state appropriations to provide treatment for Texans not covered by public or private insurance.

**The University of Puerto Rico Center for Evaluation and Sociomedical Research** conducts applied research informing health and social policy in Puerto Rico, where only 8 percent of those who need treatment receive it. The project seeks to obtain additional appropriations to expand treatment for those who currently do not receive it and ensure that inmates who began treatment in prison receive it after they are released.

**The eight grantees were selected based on a competitive, rigorous selection process. Each proposal was evaluated by a panel that included national experts in addiction treatment, advocacy and financing.**

Investments in addiction treatment hold the potential to impact every aspect of our society - families and communities suffer when addiction is not treated, health care costs escalate, crime goes up and these costs are avoidable. CATG is a \$10 million national program of the Open Society Institute (OSI). OSI encourages other foundations to invest in the initiative.

For more information on the initiative, please visit [www.treatmentgap.org](http://www.treatmentgap.org), or contact [treatmentgap@sorosny.org](mailto:treatmentgap@sorosny.org)



**THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE**, a private operating and grant making foundation, works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve its mission, OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. OSI works in over 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as in the United States.

\*In addition to the funds provided by OSI, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is co-funding the NH site, the New Jersey Health Initiatives program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is co-funding the NJ site, and several other sites bring matching funds from regional donors.

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