



Addiction Treatment and Recovery Services Good for Oregon's Health Care System

Addiction and recovery services are a critical component of a comprehensive health care system that seeks to contain costs and improve population health in Oregon. In 2006, untreated substance use disorders cost the state an estimated \$506 million in medical costs (ECONorthwest).

Addiction treatment is a solution that will help make Oregon's health system transformation affordable.

- Addiction contributes directly to diseases and chronic conditions. Heavy drinking, for example, contributes to illness in each of the top three causes of death: heart disease, cancer and stroke. Each year, nearly 2,000 Oregonians die as a result of diseases caused by alcohol and drug use. Hundreds more die from alcohol- and drug-related accidents and injuries, suicides and overdoses.
- Addiction complicates chronic illnesses and is strongly correlated with difficulty in treating another disease or illness. In an Oregon Health Authority study of long-term addiction treatment outcomes, 45 percent of those enrolled in the study reported having a chronic medical condition.

- Health care self-management is often poor among people living with untreated addiction. Many people with untreated addictions fail to fill prescriptions or obtain laboratory tests, skip doctors' appointments or do not follow prescribed care.

A 2011 analysis of 703 Oregon Health Plan clients who accessed addiction treatment showed physical health care costs billed to OHP declined an average of **\$3,603** per person in the year following entry into treatment as compared to the previous year. This projects to more than **\$2.5 million** saved for the sampled group alone.

Drug-free births

Approximately 300 babies are born each year in Oregon to women accessing publicly funded addiction treatment and recovery services. Drug-free births save lives and money: For each drug-exposed infant born in Oregon, hospital costs due to withdrawal symptoms range from \$5,680 to \$8,520. Neonatal intensive care costs are \$25,700 to \$300,000.



Oregon's addiction treatment gap is real

An estimated 300,000 Oregonians have a diagnosable substance use disorder.

Roughly 18 percent of those needing addiction services access treatment.

More than 40 percent of those who try to get help experience barriers related to cost or lack of insurance.

A 2006 review of medical expenses of Washington Medicaid clients who received addiction treatment noted these health care savings every month:

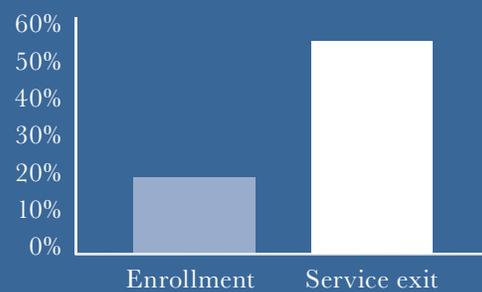
- \$170 for individuals accessing inpatient treatment;
- \$215 for individuals accessing outpatient treatment;
- \$230 for individuals accessing methadone treatment.

A California study found that total medical costs for a group of men who participated in outpatient treatment declined by 26 percent, including a 39 percent drop in emergency room visits.

Much like diabetes, heart disease and asthma, addiction is a chronic, relapsing disorder. Addiction recovery requires

management across the lifespan. When people are involved with peer-driven support groups, secular or faith-based recovery supports and other recovery support systems during and following treatment, they are more likely to stay clean and experience long-term recovery. People accessing addiction treatment in Oregon are significantly more likely to make use of recovery support systems.

Use of recovery support groups



For more information, visit
www.oregon.gov/OHA/addiction

Contact the Addictions Program at 503-945-5763 or by e-mail at omhas.web@state.or.us.



ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION
Addictions Program

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