

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW ANALYSIS LOOKS AT “ADDICTION TREATMENT TODAY AND TOMORROW” AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

(Washington, D.C., March 17, 2015)...“Each year substance use disorders have a tangible impact on the societal and economic well-being of the United States,” notes a new report from Dobson DaVanzo & Associates, LLC (Dobson | DaVanzo), developed for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). The full report, titled “Addiction Treatment Today and Tomorrow: Implications and Policy Recommendations,” is available at www.naphs.org.

NAPHS commissioned Dobson | DaVanzo, an independent healthcare policy and economics consulting firm, to define the substance use disorder population and to appraise existing policies regarding the coverage, funding, and delivery of addiction treatment. Findings are based on a focused review of the relevant literature, as well as information gleaned from a series of informant interviews with clinical, policy, and other substance use experts.

The report notes that transformative policies (namely, the federal *Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act* (MHPAEA) and the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) have sought to improve patient access to treatment by reforming prior insurance coverage restrictions. Yet significant coverage gaps persist.

To better respond to the needs of individuals with substance use disorders, the Dobson | DaVanzo analysis makes several policy recommendations, including:

- Full implementation of the federal MHPAEA and the ACA laws;
- Coverage of benefits and services across the full continuum of care;
- Focus on long-term patient engagement and the treatment of substance use disorders as chronic diseases;
- Modification of the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion;
- Modernization of Medicare (to cover a full range of benefits, including residential treatment services);
- Better integration of addiction treatment with existing behavioral health and medical care systems; and
- More research to collect national outcomes measures, with abstinence being just one of many outcomes that indicates a given treatment’s effectiveness (e.g., improved health status and improved productivity).

“To make informed policy choices, it’s important to understand where we are today,” said NAPHS President/CEO Mark Covall in releasing the report. “This report gathers important baseline information and projections to help both policymakers and those who work in the addiction treatment field.”

“We hope that this policy paper will help inform the development of policies that will enable the nearly 23 million Americans over age 12 who struggle with substance use conditions to access to the right care at the right time,” added NAPHS Addiction Treatment Committee Chair Jerry Rhodes of Acadia Healthcare. “Right now, only about 10 percent of those in need get help. As the report notes, treating substance use disorders has been shown to save lives, communities, and money.”

ABOUT NAPHS

The National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. Its members are behavioral healthcare provider organizations that own or manage more than 800 specialty psychiatric hospitals, general hospital psychiatric and addiction treatment units and behavioral healthcare divisions, residential treatment facilities, youth services organizations, and extensive outpatient networks. The association was founded in 1933.

ABOUT DOBSON | DaVANZO

Dobson DaVanzo & Associates, LLC, (Dobson | DaVanzo) is a healthcare economics consulting firm based in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Their expertise includes Medicare and Medicaid claims analyses that employ cutting edge statistical modeling techniques, as well qualitative and quantitative research methodologies used to evaluate healthcare policies and their impact on various stakeholders. The work of the principals has influenced numerous public policy decisions and appears in legislation and regulation. Dobson | DaVanzo researchers have provided testimony to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), and the U.S. Treasury, as well as before members of Congress, state legislatures, and numerous stakeholder groups.

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