Surgeon General’s Report

January 17, 2017

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Substance Use, Misuse and Addiction – Terms

• **Use** – Any use of any substance
  – Driven largely by market forces

• **Misuse** – Use that can harm self or others
  – Driven by consequences

• **Addiction** – Compulsive use
  – Driven by genetic and brain changes
Process for development of the Report

• Development of this Report was overseen by the SAMHSA and the Office of the Surgeon General.
• Contributors, editors, and reviewers included internal subject matter experts from across the Department of Health and Human Services.
• External experts from academia and private research institutions also contributed to the report.
• Report based on the best available evidence.
Introduction and Overview of the Report

• Describes the extent of the substance use problem in the United States. Also describes the purpose, focus, and format of the Report, as well as key terms, concepts, and perspectives.

• Chapter Headings
  – The Neurobiology of Substance Use, Misuse, and Addiction
  – Prevention Programs and Policies
  – Early Intervention, Treatment, and Management of Substance Use Disorders
  – Recovery: The Many Paths to Wellness
  – Health Care Systems and Substance Use Disorders
  – Vision for the Future: A Public Health Approach
The Neurobiology of Substance Use, Misuse, and Addiction

• Addiction is a chronic brain disease with potential for recurrence and recovery.
• Describes the three main circuits in the brain involved in addiction, and how substance use can “hijack” the normal function of these circuits.
• Understanding this transformation in the brain is critical to understanding why addiction is a health condition, not a moral failing or character flaw.
Prevention Programs and Policies

• Describes a range of programs focused on preventing substance misuse including universal prevention programs that target the whole community as well as programs that are tailored to high-risk populations.

• Also describes population-level evidence-based policies that are effective for reducing underage drinking, drinking and driving, spread of infectious disease, and other consequences of alcohol and drug misuse.
• Describes the scientifically-proven clinical activities that are used to identify people who have a substance use disorder and engage them in treatment.

• Also describes the range of medications and behavioral treatments that can help people successfully address their substance use disorder.
Recovery: The Many Paths to Wellness

- Describes the construct of recovery as well as the number of people in recovery.
- Describes the growing array of effective services and systems that provide recovery support and the many pathways that make recovery possible, including treatment, recovery support services, and/or mutual aid.
Health Care Systems and Substance Use Disorders

• Explains why integrating general health care and substance use services can result in better outcomes.
• Describes policies and activities underway to achieve that goal.
• Discusses recent legislation that requires healthcare plans to offer substance use disorder services equitably with other health conditions.
• Innovative delivery system reforms and models of care coordination are also discussed, as well as the different financing systems that cover substance use disorder services.
Vision for the Future: A Public Health Approach

• Provides concrete, evidence-based recommendations on how to reduce substance misuse and related harms in communities across the United States.

• This chapter distills the findings in the previous chapters into five general findings and top line messages.

• Implications for policy and practice are discussed for each finding.

• Outlines the role of specific stakeholder groups in changing the culture, policies, and practices specific to addressing substance use.
Vision for the Future: A Public Health Approach

Five general findings and topline messages

• Both substance misuse and substance use disorders harm the health and well-being of individuals and communities. Addressing them requires implementation of effective strategies.

• Highly effective community-based prevention programs and policies exist and should be widely implemented.

• Full integration of the continuum of services for substance use disorders with the rest of health care could significantly improve the quality, effectiveness, and safety of all health care.
Coordination and implementation of recent health reform and parity laws will help ensure increased access to services for people with substance use disorders.

A large body of research has clarified the biological, psychological, and social underpinnings of substance misuse and related disorders and described effective prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Future research is needed to guide the new public health approach to substance misuse and substance use disorders.
Recommendations for Stakeholders

• Report calls on various stakeholder groups to help change the culture, attitudes, and practices around substance use:
  – Individuals and families
  – Educators and academic institutions
  – Health care professionals and professional associations
  – Health care systems
  – Communities
  – Private sector: Industry and commerce
  – Federal, state, local, and tribal governments
  – Researchers
The Report was launched on November 17, 2016 in Los Angeles, CA, at a summit cohosted by OSG and Facing Addiction, a national non-profit organization dedicated to finding solutions to the addiction crisis by unifying the voice of the over 45 million Americans and their families directly impacted by addiction.
Next Steps for the Report

• **Translate the Science into Public Understanding** – Traditional and social media to inform the public, particularly parents and community leaders

• **Incorporate the Science into Health Care** – Expand training of health care professionals, improve availability, access, and quality of services in all health settings

• **Modernize Policies** – Assure broad access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services
Questions?
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https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov