



The Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
 Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The Evaluation Consortium  
 University at Albany



## New Hampshire Direct Service Providers Summary of Findings

Treatment providers face many challenges in their attempts to fill available positions, and there has been much concern that these staffing needs, along with anticipated demographic and social changes, will result in a treatment community unable to adequately care for those it proposes to serve. Among the many compelling issues our treatment agencies face is the perception of pervasive staff shortages, as evidenced by the reduced numbers of clinicians entering the field, difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and increased credentialing demands.

The Addiction Technology Transfer Center of New England in collaboration with the New England Institute of Addiction Studies and the State of New Hampshire, Office of Public Health, recognized that a definitive analysis of the state of existing treatment providers was crucial to determining the systemic changes needed to address these problems. Toward this end, a comprehensive examination of the substance abuse treatment provider system was undertaken through a regional workforce survey.

The following is a summary of findings, resulting from the survey of direct service providers employed in state-funded substance use disorder treatment agencies, across the State of New Hampshire. The sample was stratified to ensure that agencies across all geographic regions and with vary-



ing numbers of employees were proportionately represented.

During 2002 and 2003, an in-depth paper and pencil survey was administered to a randomly selected sample of agencies. Surveys were mailed to management staff of 24 agencies for distribution to, and independent completion by, direct service providers. Twenty one of these agencies returned a total of 102 completed surveys; for an agency response rate of 88%.

Completed surveys were forwarded to the Evaluation Consortium at Albany, for analysis. The

following results provide a description of workforce demographics, self-reported levels of professional competence, and areas of training interest and need.

The information contained within this summary can assist in recruitment and retention efforts and in the design of training initiatives and professional development programs that will strengthen the knowledge and skills of treatment program personnel.

December 2004

### Special points of interest:

- Demographics
- Professional Background
- Academic Preparation
- Compensation
- Primary Duties
- Professional Status
- Recruitment and Retention Issues
- Counselor Proficiencies
- Training Interests

### Inside Information .....

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*New Hampshire:  
State Specific Findings  
Direct Service Providers*

Agencies Returning Surveys (n=21)  
Completed Surveys (n=102)

<b>Ages</b>	
20 - 30	10%
31 - 40	19%
41 - 50	29%
51 - 60	34%
61 - 70	07%
>70	01%

<b>Professional Discipline</b>	
Addictions Counseling	70%
Social Work/Human Services	22%
Psychology	20%
Adolescent Treatment	15%
Other Counseling	15%

<b>Academic Degree Status</b>	
Doctoral Degree	01%
Master's Degree	46%
Bachelor's Degree	24%
Associate Degree	09%
Some College	10%
High School Diploma	05%

<b>Coursework Completed</b>	
ATOD Specific	62%
Related Field	64%

<b>Certification/Licensure</b>	
Current	30%
Pending	20%

<b>Current Salary</b>	
< \$14,999	04%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	37%
\$25,000 - \$29,999	18%
\$30,000 - \$34,999	26%
\$35,000 - \$39,000	08%
\$40,000 - \$49,000	04%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	01%
>\$75,000	00%

*Who are they?*

- Seventy-two percent of respondents are female and 92% are white. Their reported median age is 41-50.
- Nearly one-half (47%) consider themselves to be in recovery from an alcohol and/or other drug addiction.
- Seventy percent of the respondents identified addictions counseling as their current profession.

*What are their professional backgrounds?*

- Almost one-half of the respondents (47%) have a master's degree or above. Nearly one-third (30%) of the respondents are currently licensed or certified, 20% report licensure or certification as pending, and 50% have never been licensed or certified.
- Direct service providers demonstrate minimal differences between the number of years in the substance abuse treatment field (2-5) and in their current position and role (2-5).
- Fifty-one percent of direct service providers indicated that their current employment in substance abuse treatment is a second career. The top two reported reasons for entering the substance abuse treatment field are personal interest (62%) and previous experience with addiction or recovery (56%).

*How much are they receiving in compensation?*

- The median yearly reported compensation of respondents was \$25,000-\$29,999 with 52% receiving less than \$30,000, and 25% in the \$30,000 - \$39,999 range.
- Level of education is positively correlated to salary.
- Forty-four percent of respondents report full health insurance as compensation. Full sick leave is paid to 81%, partial sick leave to 11%, and another 75% receive some other fully paid leave.

*What are their primary duties?*

- More than one-fifth of the respondents (21%) are employed in outpatient substance abuse treatment facilities, 33% in residential settings or therapeutic communities, and 26% in outpatient community mental health centers.
- Respondents report: treating (82%), making referrals (83%), screening (80%), and diagnosing or formally assessing (68%) individuals with substance abuse disorders, in the last 12 months.
- The top three treatment models reported to have major use are: relapse prevention, integrated substance abuse and mental health, and cognitive-behavioral skill development.

## *What are the key recruitment and retention issues?*

- Direct service providers work in agencies of varying sizes; 35% have 5 or less direct service substance abuse treatment staff, 23% have 6-10 direct service staff, 10% have 11-15 direct service staff, and 04% have more than 15 direct service staff.
- More than one-half of the respondents (54%) reported that their agencies have difficulty recruiting staff. The top three reasons reported are: insufficient funding, lack of interest in the position, and insufficient number of qualified applicants.
- Inadequate education and training (28%), little or no experience in substance abuse treatment (21%), and lack of appropriate certification (14%), are the top three reported reasons for applicants failing to meet minimum qualifications.

## *What factors aid recruitment and retention?*

- The five most important work characteristics that enhance job satisfaction for direct service providers, and promote recruitment and retention, are identified as: one-to-one interactions with clients (91%), opportunities for personal growth (74%), interaction with agency/co-workers (66%), commitment to treatment (64%), and their role as a change agent (56%).
- Agency changes that would promote retention of direct provider staff include: more frequent salary increases (76%), more/improved on-going training (39%), promote career growth (32%), more individual recognition/appreciation (32%), and lessen/provide assistance with paperwork (29%).

## *What factors hinder recruitment and retention?*

- Almost two-thirds of respondents (61%) reported that they believe the status of addiction counselors is lower than that of other helping professionals. The top three reasons given for this low status are: stigmatization due to their association with substance abusers (32%), a greater likelihood for substance abuse professionals work for public agencies rather than private practice (28%), and the perception that substance abuse professionals have less formal education/training (27%).
- Most respondents report low salary/poor benefits (97%), competition from other fields in terms of compensation (96%), certification/licensure/academic requirements (88%), the cost of education/training (87%), large caseloads (84%), and negative preconceptions regarding addicted clients (82%) as barriers to entering the substance abuse treatment field.
- Major areas of dissatisfaction that hinder retention of direct providers, once they are in the field, include: salary/benefits (68%), lack of career growth opportunities (22%), and inability to influence agency decisions (17%).

## *Is there interest in developing leadership abilities?*

- Despite self-reported minimal proficiency in clinical supervision (25%) and administrative management skills (29%), over half of respondents expressed interest in receiving training in clinical supervision (55%) and more than a third (35%) in administrative management skills.

## *New Hampshire: State Specific Findings Direct Service Providers*

### **Agency Setting**

Outpatient SA Treatment	48%
Residential/Therapeutic Community	18%
Outpatient Community	17%
Inpatient Hospital	03%
Outpatient Hospital	02%

### **Top 5 Treatment Models**

Relapse Prevention	66%
Integrated SA & MH	55%
Cognitive Behavioral	47%
Twelve-Step	45%
Psycho-Educational	42%

### **Turnover Rate (past 12 months)**

Terminated	15%
Quit	26%
Laid off	02%

### **Self-Reported Proficiency**

Professional & Ethical Responsibilities	95%
Interpersonal Communication Skills	96%
Signs & Symptoms of Substance Abuse/Withdrawal	68%
Documentation Skills	78%
Intervention Skills	76%

### **Areas of Training Interest**

Co-occurring Substance Abuse & Mental Health Problems	78%
Relapse Prevention	78%
Treatment Engagement	73%
Individual Counseling Skills	72%
Intervention Skills	68%
Treating Special Populations	68%
Relationship Between Substance Abuse & Other Medical Problems	67%
Group Counseling Skills	67%

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## *What areas have been identified as in need of professional development?*

- Direct care providers in New Hampshire perceive themselves as lacking proficiency in several key areas. These include: staff recruitment and retention skills (96% and 92%, respectively), clinical supervision (85%), marriage and family therapy (82%), drug pharmacology/pharmacotherapy (84%), and treating adolescents (73%).
- Almost all respondents report interest in participating in the following training activities: co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems, relapse prevention, treatment engagement, individual counseling skills, intervention skills, treating special populations, relationship between substance abuse and other medical problems, and group counseling skills.

## *How would providers prefer to receive professional development?*

- Respondents reported that providing direct supervision (74%), in-service training (52%), and paying the cost of continuing education (35%) are effective ways to develop skills and enhance abilities.

Electronic copies of the *Addiction Technology Transfer Center of New England Workforce Survey*, and resulting data reports, are available for downloading at the ATTC-NE website: [www.attc-ne.org](http://www.attc-ne.org). Technical questions or concerns about the data analysis should be directed to: Dianna L. Newman, PhD, The Evaluation Consortium, University at Albany.

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The Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
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*Dedicated to your success  
— by putting the latest academic  
research into the hands of  
professionals who work on the  
front lines daily.*

The pressure behavioral health care professionals face every day can make keeping abreast of the latest research almost impossible. We are committed to making it easier to infuse evidence-based research throughout the workforce. Our programs are designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the substance abuse treatment workforce; both individually and collectively.