Alcohol Problems in the United States: Twenty Years of Treatment Perspective

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Thomas F. McGovern
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BROADER TREATMENT PERSPECTIVES

Alcoholics Anonymous and the Disease Concept of Alcoholism
Ernest Kurtz

Although the idea of “illness” helped many early and later members of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) to understand their alcoholism, Alcoholics Anonymous neither originated nor promulgated the disease concept of alcoholism. The main contribution of A.A. in this area was the broadening of the extant concept to one of “three-fold” malady, with an emphasis on “the spiritual.” Examining the political and medical contexts of the time as well as A.A. literature shed light on the culture’s changing understanding of alcoholism in the second half of the twentieth century.

KEYWORDS. Alcoholics Anonymous and the disease concept, alcoholism, spirituality

Treatment for Alcoholism: Older and Wiser?
Paula L. Wilbourne
William R. Miller

Our understanding of alcoholism and treatments for alcohol problems has developed dramatically in the last 20 years. This review summarizes some key aspects in our understanding of treatment for alcoholism. Few commonalities characterize individuals with alcohol problems or distinguish them from individuals without such problems. Evidence suggests that treatment is effective. Just as individuals vary in their development of alcoholism, they may recover in equally variable ways that include reductions in drinking as well as total abstinence.

KEYWORDS. Alcohol, alcoholism, treatment, review

Spirituality, Alcohol and Other Drug Problems: Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?
Oliver J. Morgan

A brief examination of the history, central figures, and literature of spirituality in addiction studies is followed by a review of central concepts and a look toward the future of spirituality research. Some current initiatives are also examined.

KEYWORDS. Spirituality, alcohol problems, addiction, research
American Prisons as Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centers: A Twenty-Year Reflection, 1980 to 2000
Stephen K. Valle
Dennis Humphrey

Treatment of the alcohol and drug offender in the criminal justice system has undergone substantial changes over the past several decades. While initially a reluctant stepchild to jail/prison-based program services, substance abuse treatment programs for offenders with alcohol and drug problems now occupy a major place in the development of correctional policy, planning, and delivery of services in our nation’s correctional facilities.

This article will highlight the significant developments in offender treatment from the perspective of two career correctional and treatment professionals who, combined, represent more than fifty years of hands-on experience in the development and management of alcohol and drug treatment services for offenders housed in jail and prison correctional facilities. This article will provide a brief overview of the literature on the treatment of the alcohol and drug offender as a backdrop for presenting some of the issues and models for effective jail/prison alcohol and drug treatment programs.

KEYWORDS. Substance abuse treatment, prison/jail treatment

Alcoholism/Addiction as a Chronic Disease: From Rhetoric to Clinical Reality
William L. White
Michael Boyle
David Loveland

Although characterized as a chronic disease for more than 200 years, severe and persistent alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems have been treated primarily in self-contained, acute episodes of care. Recent calls for a shift from this acute treatment model to a sustained recovery management model will require rethinking the natural history of AOD disorders; pioneering new treatment and recovery support technologies; restructuring the funding of treatment services; redefining the service relationship; and altering methods of service evaluation. Recovery-oriented systems of care could offer many advantages over the current mode of serial episodes of acute care, but such systems will bring with them new pitfalls in the personal and cultural management of alcohol and other drug problems.

KEYWORDS. Chronic disease, disease management, recovery management

A VIEW FROM THE FIELD
Twenty Volumes of ATQ: A Content Analysis
Jerome R. Koch
Jean A. Lewis

Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly is a “resource for practitioners.” This paper represents an analysis of the types of research published in ATQ in an effort to meet that goal. Data reveal that the majority of articles are designed to inform clinicians of the latest strategies and techniques for improving their practice. However, an increasing number of articles are being published which report results from analysis of primary and secondary data. Also on the increase is the proportion of authors who are affiliated with academic institutions and who are trained at the doctoral level.

KEYWORDS. Content analysis, alcoholism treatment, clinical and professional resources

Youthful Drinking
Gail Gleason Milgram

The issue of adolescent drinking is reviewed to provide a perspective on the statistics on use and related problems. Since the percentage of adolescents who have consumed alcohol has remained fairly constant during the past fifty years, prevention and education programs should consider focusing on the reality of the youthful experience. Goals of such programs would target specific issues (e.g., drinking with peers, heavy drinking, drinking and driving, etc.).

KEYWORDS. Introduction to alcohol, adolescent alcohol use statistics, prevention and education

Reflections on the Past, Present and Possible Future of Women’s Alcoholism Treatment
Jane M. Nakken

The past twenty years have produced both good news and bad news in the treatment of alcoholic women. The impact of important strides in our clinical knowledge and skills is limited by the fact that women’s access to effective alcoholism treatment peaked in the 1980s and is in decline. In 2002 we face the reality that providing excellent treatment for alcoholic women is as much a political and societal challenge as a clinical one: the treatment field must take on the challenge of opening our doors to all women in need of treatment. We must do this both by creating new, more accessible treatment models and through activism to push for increased access to current treatment resources.

KEYWORDS. Women, alcoholism, treatment

Alcohol Problems in Native America: Changing Paradigms and Clinical Practices
Don Coyhis
William L. White

Views about the sources and solutions to alcohol problems among Native Americans have undergone dramatic changes over the past quarter century. This brief article summarizes the nature of these changes, with particular emphasis on emerging principles and practices that underlie the resolution of alcohol problems among Native peoples.

KEYWORDS. Native American, cultural revitalization movements, “firewater” myths, culturally-informed treatment
The Response of African American Communities to Alcohol and Other Drug Problems: An Opportunity for Treatment Providers
Mark Sanders

The closing decades of the twenty-first century were marked by a rise in culturally indigenous responses to alcohol and other drug problems in the African American community, and a consistent call for more culturally sensitive and competent addiction treatment services. This article provides a brief description of several indigenous recovery movements and discusses how addiction treatment agencies can collaborate with these movements to better respond to the needs of African American clients and families.

KEYWORDS. African American, addiction, religion, treatment

Participation in Alcoholics Anonymous Among African-Americans
J. B. Kingree
Bryce F. Sullivan

This paper examines the appropriateness of Alcoholics Anonymous as a resource for African-Americans with alcohol problems. The paper discusses features of the organization that may hold special appeal for African-Americans and reviews studies that have compared rates of AA involvement between African-Americans and Caucasians. Some conclusions are drawn from this research and suggestions for future research are made.

KEYWORDS. Alcoholics Anonymous, African-American, participation

Latinos and Alcohol: Treatment Considerations
Melvin Delgado

The history of Latino-specific alcohol services is one that can best be measured in one or one-and-one-half decades. Although the Latino community has been severely affected by alcohol use and abuse, services have been slow to recognize the unique cultural needs of Latinos. The past decade, however, has witnessed a dramatic shift in this thinking and the future holds much promise for the field.

KEYWORDS. Latinos, programs, culture, diversity

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

Thomas F. McGovern

The editorial board of Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly (ATQER) was polled about their perceptions of significant trends in the treatment of alcohol problems, from 1980-2000. They identified the major influences, positive and negative, together with the effects on treatment initiatives in response to managed behavioral health care, the decline of inpatient services, increased emphasis on drugs other than alcohol, and the changing character of treatment providers.

KEYWORDS. Treatment, alcohol problems, major influences, treatment providers, managed behavioral health care

Treating Co-Occurring Alcohol-Drug Dependence and Mental Illness: A Personal Retrospective Reflection (1971-2001)
Jerome F. X. Carroll

This personal retrospective reflection spans three decades of a conscious and purposeful effort to treat and study individuals with co-occurring alcohol-drug dependence and mental illness. Specific services and policies designed for this population are described, as well as efforts to integrate mental health services into a comprehensive, integrated holistic treatment program. The most recent efforts by New York State's Office of Mental Health and Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services are described. Achievements realized and a significant barrier to further progress are included.

KEYWORDS. Co-occurring alcohol-drug dependence and mental illness, MICA, dual diagnosis, integrated mental health and substance abuse treatment, New York Model, Quad IV, barrier to further progress

A Tale of Two Cities (and Two Programs): The Rise and Fall of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Treatment at Mayo Clinic and Timberlawn Hospital, 1975-2000
Edgar P. Nace
Robert M. Morse

Two personalized accounts describe the authors' perceptions of drastic changes in their treatment centers. The growth and decline of the programs is traced in terms of treatment, education, and financial dimensions.

KEYWORDS. Alcoholism, drug dependence, treatment, education, Mayo Clinic, Timberlawn

Broadening the Base of Treatment for Alcohol Problems, a 1990 Report for the Institute of Medicine: Personal Reflections
Robert D. Sparks

These reflections on the 1990 report for the Institute of Medicine provide an abbreviated summary of the methods used to prepare the original report. A few of the significant observations and recommendations of the IOM report are highlighted. Considerations are offered for a need to determine the impact of the report.

KEYWORDS. Institute of Medicine, alcohol problems, study, base of treatment
Treating Alcohol Problems: A Future Perspective

William L. White
Thomas F. McGovern

In this closing article commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the publication of Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly (ATQ), the editors offer their own thoughts about the future treatment of alcohol problems in the United States. The review includes twenty-two predictions that touch upon the organization and staffing of the treatment field, the central ideas that undergird the field, and the future of clinical technologies used to treat alcohol problems.

KEYWORDS: Future, trends, client characteristics, treatment technology, aging of workforce

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