A Systems Approach to Substance Use

Recommendations for a National Treatment Strategy

CONTEXT: TRENDS AND INITIATIVES

TRENDS

- Regionalization and accountability
- Diversification of populations and related needs
- Non-representative levels of harm
- Changing abuse patterns
- Decreasing social supports
- Prominence of harm reduction approaches

INITIATIVES

- National Framework and Priorities
- National Anti Drug Strategy
- Drug Treatment Funding Program
- FN and Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee
- FN Addictions Advisory Panel
- Mental Health Commission of Canada
- Government tools for gender and diversity-based analysis
- Development of organizations by and for people with substance abuse problems

COMPONENTS

Building capacity across continuum of services and supports

Supporting the continuum of services and supports

Moving the strategy forward

PRINCIPLES

The full range of harms associated with substance use must be recognized.

A coordinated multi-sectoral approach is required to address risks and harms.

Practices must be informed by evidence.

Systems must be based on need.

Services and supports must be informed by gender and diversity-based analysis.

Services and supports must be person-centred.

Families and other loved ones are integral.

Services and supports must focus on both risk and readiness.

Systems are accountable for providing effective services and supports.

KEY CONCEPTS

Complexity and evolving nature of people's substance use problems:

- Acuity
- Chronicity
- Complexity

Doorways and pathways through which people access services and supports

TIERED MODEL

Tier 1
Services and supports in Tier 1 are broad efforts that draw on natural systems and networks of support for individuals, families and communities.
They provide a foundation for a healthy population and have broad eligibility criteria, allowing anyone access to them.

Tier 2
Services and supports in Tier 2 provide the important functions of early identification and intervention for people with substance use problems that have not previously been detected or treated. These may include screening, brief intervention and referral.

Tier 3
Services and supports in Tier 3 are intended to engage people experiencing substance use problems who are at risk of secondary harms (e.g., HIV, victimization). They include active outreach, risk management, and basic assessment and referral services.

Tier 4
Tier 4 comprises services and supports that are more intensive than those in Tier 3 and in many cases offer specialized services for people with substance use problems. People seeking services in this tier may have multiple problems and need services and supports from more than one sector or tier.

Tier 5
Services and supports in Tier 5 are intended to address only the needs of people with highly acute, highly chronic and highly complex substance use and other problems, for whom lower-tier services and supports are inadequate.

GUIDING CONCEPTS OF TIERED MODEL

No wrong door

Availability and accessibility

Matching

Choice and eligibility

Flexibility

Responsiveness

Collaboration

Coordination

CRITERIA USED TO ID REQUIRED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Reduce risks and harms. Required services and supports are those that, within each tier, will have the greatest impact by reducing harms and risks for the greatest number of people entering that tier.

Facilitate movement within each tier. Required services and supports are those that serve as doorways to other needed services and supports within the same tier, allowing people to benefit from collaboration between providers.

Facilitate movement between tiers. Required services and supports are those that serve as doorways to other needed services and supports in higher and lower tiers, allowing people access to the full continuum of services and supports.

SUPPORTING THE CONTINUUM OF SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Knowledge Exchange

Reducing Stigma and Discrimination

Developing a Research Program

Measuring and Monitoring System Performance

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