

NEVADA PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER UPDATE

Providing weekly updates for Professionals, Counselors, Educators, Parents and Activists

In The News

Seniors Post-Op Opioids

Youth Risk Behavior: Alcohol

Nothing Left to Love

Olympic 'Legal Doping'

Good Treatment is Hard to Find

NPRC News

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Addiction

Recently an article was published in the Chronicle for Higher Education on the topic of addiction and whether or not it is a disease. The author describes the differing viewpoints, explaining why some practitioners prefer the disease concept and why others would prefer to avoid that notion.

According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) addiction is a chronic disease of the brain that modifies the responses to reward, motivation, and memory. This disease affects the circuits in the brain causing an individual to pathologically pursue rewards or relief with the use of substances or actions and behaviors. Addictions cause individuals to be unable to abstain from consuming particular substances, taking part in certain activities, and it affects their behavior and ability to maintain relationships.

Although addiction is considered a disease by many, it is not universally accepted as such. Marc Lewis suggests that addiction is learned through the process of desire and that the addiction does not change the brain permanently, while Eric Kandel uses neural imaging to show

the physical changes that take place in the brain of an individual that suffers from addiction. The physical changes Kandel describes make it difficult for some individuals to stop the addictive behavior. These two argue that the validity of science is based on the replicability of findings, and that findings related to addiction are not always able to be duplicated.

Hugh Garavan, a psychiatry professor, claims that there are no biomarkers to classify addiction as a disease. He points out that there aren't any tests or conclusive circumstances associated with it. However, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) claims that brain scans show clear evidence of changes taking place in certain areas of the brain of individuals suffering from addiction and brain scans that show evidence of changes in the brain are biological tests.

Although the ASAM has a clear definition of Addiction as a disease, physicians, clinicians, scientists and the like each have their own clear, or not so clear, definition of what constitutes an addiction. Experts also have differing ideas of how to treat addiction. However, according to the Chronicle article many agree that "it's an established fact that addiction alters dopamine

receptors in the brain and can affect how the limbic system functions."

Some treatment providers may prefer not to use the disease concept because of the stigma with which it is associated. Additionally, the article presents an argument that classifying addiction as a disease discounts the effects of the environment and learned behavior on addiction. Some suggest that there is more to addiction than dependency on a substance itself.

As many of the individuals described in this article work on college and university campuses, they may shy away from the disease model as a way to reduce the cost of services for students. The current practice is the disease model, and the research assists treatment providers in caring for those with substance use disorders. Until there is more definitive research on the environmental factors and an individual's choice, the disease model will remain the dominant concept for treatment.

[What if Addiction is not a Disease?](#)
[ASM Definition of Addiction](#)
[Addiction as a disease](#)

Lacey Ojers

Events and Opportunities

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Webinar-Mental Health Disparities Research Cross-Cutting Aspects of the NIMH Strategic Plan

The NIH will host a webinar on the two following topics “Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare Visits Before Suicide Attempts” & “Racial/Ethnic Differences in Biological Aging: Relations of Behavioral and Lifestyles Factors to Telomere Length.”

August 31, 2016 11:00 pm - 12:00 pm

Dosing and Titration of Opioids

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention presents a webinar on the possible effects of opioid treatments and how to best reduce the dosage. This webinar will provide information to practitioners regarding both the benefits and possible harm opioid treatment provides to patients.

August 17, 2016 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

13th Annual National DEC Conference

The National DEC, the Nevada Tribal DEC Alliance, and the Nevada State DEC Alliance present the 13th Annual National DEC Conference which will be held in Reno, Nevada at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa. This conference is designed to promote a collaborative effort to prevent children from suffering the effects of the substance use by their primary caregivers.

October 25th-27th, 2016

More Events and Opportunities

Co-Occurring Disorders & Treatment Conference

The Co-Occurring Disorders & Treatment Conference is designed to bring together mental health providers, substance abuse treatment providers, and general medicine practitioners to promote and create treatment and recovery models that benefit all individuals especially those with co-occurring disorders.

Yakima Convention Center
Yakima, Washington

October 3-4, 2016

Sponsors/Exhibitor/Advertisement
Application Deadline: September 8,
2016

National Prevention Network Conference

The National Prevention Network Conference will focus on recent research related to substance abuse prevention and will assist with plans on how to improve prevention methods with that research.

Buffalo Niagra Convention Center
Buffalo, New York

September 13-15, 2016

Sponsors/Exhibitor/Advertisement
Application Deadline: August 22,
2016

Utah Fall Substance Abuse Conference

The Utah Fall Substance Abuse Conference is quickly approaching. It is considered to be the “premier educational and networking event in the Mountain West.” Attendees will learn from preeminent national and local leaders in the Substance Abuse field.

Dixie Convention Center
St. George, Utah

September 21st-23rd, 2016

QR Code



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