

# NJ Addiction Treatment Providers Committed to Providing Tobacco Treatment

by Bernice Order-Connors, LCSW, CADC

In New Jersey, the Addiction Treatment Community continues its commitment to providing tobacco treatment to clients in their care. This commitment is evident in the calls for trainings from treatment providers, calls for clinical consultation and the groundswell of support from the addiction treatment community through the Addiction Treatment Providers (ATP) to see a restoration of funding for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) for clients in treatment programs.

In 2004-05 more than 15 full-day trainings were provided to both inpatient and outpatient treatment programs. Additionally, there were several half day trainings provided. The ongoing demand for training and consultancy services demonstrates the commitment and vision of NJ's addiction treatment community to providing state-of-the-art addiction treatment, which includes the provision of tobacco treatment services for their clients. And while NJ historically has been a national leader in this area, there has never been as great a demand for tobacco training and consultancy as there has been this past year. We believe this to be in large part due to the funding of the Tobacco Consultancy coming through ATP. There is a feeling for the first time that tobacco treatment is coming from within the addictions treatment community itself, rather than being imposed from the outside. The support of ATP and New Jersey Division of Addiction Services (DAS) has been crucial to the success of the tobacco training and consultancy this past year, and we applaud this!

## Restoration of Funding for NRT has been Key

In June 2004, NJ lost its funding for NRT (patches and gum) for its residential treatment programs. This was due in part to the cuts to the NJ Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program (NJCTCP) which lost nearly \$19 million of funding. In addition, structural changes occurred in Trenton when the NJCTCP stayed with the Department of Health and Senior Services, but the Division of Addiction Services moved to their new home in the Division of Human Services. The loss of this resource was a tremendous blow to the addiction treatment community. The Tobacco Dependence Program, which distributed the NRT for the State, received calls from several agencies indicating they were down to their last nicotine patches and had anywhere from 5-40 clients who needed medication.

The Addiction Treatment Providers advocated for restoration of funding for the NRT. The NJCTCP was unable to fund the program, and so, DAS committed to \$65,000 in NRT initially for one year, making the NRT available not only to the inpatient programs,

but to outpatient programs as well. The restoration of the funding for NRT for the residential programs as well as the expansion of the NRT to the outpatient programs and the making the NRT available to the staff at both the residential and outpatient programs has been crucial to the continued success of New Jersey programs in successfully addressing tobacco in addictions treatment and continues to be a cornerstone in making New Jersey the national leader in this area.

## New Jersey continues to be the National Leader

The training and consultancy services of the Tobacco Dependence Program have been highly regarded. We have been invited to present as part of statewide conferences and meetings for addiction professionals, as keynote presenters and as providers of entire 3-day training events (as part of statewide events or events for individual systems that were making the move to become tobacco-free). At the National Conference on Tobacco OR Health in Chicago in May, 2005, the work of the Tobacco Dependence Program was consistently cited by other national leaders who have integrated tobacco treatment into both addiction and mental health services as the model for integrating tobacco treatment services into the treatment milieu. Most recently, we've been consulting with the New York State Partnership for the Treatment and Prevention of Tobacco Dependence.

This past year, we've also made strides to share some of the experiences we've had in NJ through publishing articles.

Bernice Order-Connors co-authored a chapter on treating tobacco use in the text, *Addiction Counseling Review*. TDP staff also recently published a paper on the "Integration of Tobacco Dependence Treatment into Residential Addictions Treatment in New Jersey" in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*.

Our hope is that in the coming year, partnerships will be formed between ATP, the TDP and individual addiction treatment providers to publish their experiences and share them with the addiction treatment community nationally as well.

## References:

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