

Guidelines for Recognizing Effective Treatment Programs

- Programs should treat addiction, as a primary condition, but at the same time, the needs of the total person. Treatment should explore factors contributing to addiction and those contributing to recovery. Treatment should also explore the factors blocking recovery (such as poverty, lack of education, lack of job training, and/or a history of sexual or physical abuse).
- Programs should be culturally sensitive and staffed by individuals representative of the population the program serves.
- Programs for pregnant or parenting women should include training in parenting and good nutrition. Treatment should build into the program skills in navigating the complex health and human services network.
- Programs must recognize that chemical dependency is a family affair, not an individual illness.
- Programs must recognize that relapse is a part of recovery. Relapse prevention should be part of the process of alcohol and other drug treatment. Because those providing treatment must expect relapse, successful programs should offer pre-discharge planning, supportive services, and resources to protect children and prevent relapse during the early recovery phase.
- Treatment programs should meet professional practice standards. Local or state agencies that govern their funding and operations should certify the programs. The state director for alcohol and drug abuse is a good source for specific information.
- The program providing treatment should be licensed.

