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cbhphilly.org

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215-878-2600
3300 Henry Avenue
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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear CBH Member,

At Community Behavioral Health (CBH), we aim to make sure all Philadelphians have access to high-quality, cost-effective, and recovery-oriented services that meet all their needs. Our member services representatives are always available to help guide you through the process of accessing behavioral health services in Philadelphia.

In winter 2021, we launched this newsletter to help answer some of your behavioral health questions. We are excited about the feedback we have received and hope to continue to provide you with the information you need to make sound decisions when it comes to your behavioral health.

In this issue of the Member Services Newsletter, you will learn about substance use disorder, what it is, where you can find help, and the types of help available to you. CBH has a wide network of providers and programs to assist you along the way.

I hope you find this newsletter informative and useful as you navigate your treatment path and address your behavioral health needs. Remember, the CBH Member Services Department is available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reach out with your concerns by phone at 1-888-545-2600.

Sincerely,

Faith Dyson-Washington
CEO
Community Behavioral Health



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ADDICTION SERVICES

What is substance use disorder?

Substance use disorder is the repeated use of a drug or alcohol that negatively impacts a person's daily life. People who use substances repeatedly feel sick if they do not have the drug or alcohol they regularly depend on. This feeling of sickness is called "withdrawal." Withdrawal is one of the signs of a substance use addiction.

Addiction changes how the brain works and causes a strong, uncontrollable craving for the drug of choice. Studies show addiction changes the areas of the brain that relate to judgment, decision making, learning, memory, and behavioral control. For this reason, many scientists and medical professionals see addiction as a long-term illness like diabetes or asthma.

Signs of a substance use addiction affect people differently. You may notice changes in personality, strong cravings, and body movements. People affected with this disorder may show gaps in decision-making, learning, and memory. There are many ways to measure and treat addiction. The list below shares some examples of signs and symptoms that may happen because of a substance use addiction.

- ➔ **Physical health problems** such as headaches, sleep disorders, sexual dysfunction, gastrointestinal problems, liver disease, respiratory problems (sinusitis for snorted drugs, cough for smoked drugs), dilated or constricted pupils
- ➔ **Changes in behavior** such as nervousness, anxiety, anger, irritability, depression, mood swings, unusually fast or slow movements
- ➔ **Family problems** (including separation and divorce), abuse or violence, family members' anxiety and depression, behavioral problems among their children
- ➔ **Social loss** of long-standing friendships, spending time with other individuals with substance use problems, social isolation, loss of interest in regular activities
- ➔ **Job or school changes** such as missing work or school, poor performance, frequent job changes, or relocations

- ➔ **Legal concerns** such as arrests, DUIs, theft, drug dealing
- ➔ **Loss of money** such as borrowing money from friends/relatives, selling possessions (presumably for drug money)

“Substance use affects everyone who loves the person using drugs, but there is hope. You and your loved ones can heal from substance use.”

— *CBH Member*

THERE IS HELP

Where Can I Find It?

If you have insurance, you can contact your insurance company and request substance use treatment. If you live in Philadelphia and have Medicaid, CBH is your insurance for behavioral health services. You can contact CBH Member Services at 1-888-545-2600, 24 hours a day, seven days per week, to request trauma therapy.

As a CBH member, there are several kinds of therapy available to help you recover from substance use. Therapy is also available to family members and loved ones of a person who is suffering from substance use. Some of the therapies available are detoxification, rehabilitation, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), intensive outpatient therapy, group therapy, and dual outpatient therapy. Other services available include cognitive behavioral therapy, seeking safety, dialectical behavioral therapy, and prolonged exposure therapy. These services are called Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs). EBPs are services that have proven effective in supporting people with behavioral and/or substance use health challenges.

Services are offered based on medical necessity. *Medical necessity* is a review of your physical and mental health needs.

Substance use therapy is available for youth and adults. Therapy can occur via telehealth (over the phone) or in person.

There are many kinds of therapy available to you. Please visit the CBH website at cbhphilly.org or contact CBH Member Services at 1-888-545-2600 to learn more about your benefits.

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Glossary of Terms

Addiction: repeated use of drugs or alcohol

Assessment: an in-depth interview to understand the needs of you or your loved ones

E.P.I.C. Evidence Based Practice and Innovation Center

Recovery: healing from substance use concerns

WHAT IF I'M EXPERIENCING WITHDRAWAL OR THINK I NEED TO STAY IN A HOSPITAL FOR SUBSTANCE USE CARE?

The Assessment

Mental health and substance use assessments are like emergency room visits. Individuals visiting the assessment centers arrive with a variety of health conditions and needs. Emergency responders may bring people who need emergency care for assessment. Safety is a top priority at each assessment site. The needs of each person are important. However, individuals may be prioritized for care based on their needs. Expect to speak with more than one behavioral health professional. Many assessment sites are connected to universities. If you are interviewed by a medical resident, he or she will consult with a psychiatrist before the final recommendation of your Level of Care (LOC) for treatment. Assessment centers have COVID-19 protocols in place.

Assessments can be considered in-depth interviews where you are asked to share your story. You will meet with one to two behavioral health professionals who will ask you questions about your demographics, physical health, behavioral health, substance use, supports, and housing. You may meet with a nurse or nurse practitioner to assess physical needs. The information



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they collect will be shared with a psychiatrist or psychiatry resident. The psychiatrist or resident will review the information they've been given and conduct an in-depth interview with you. This portion of the assessment typically takes two to three hours. The assessment results in a recommendation for a LOC using the medical necessity criteria. You can request a copy of the medical necessity criteria at any time by calling the CBH Member Services Hotline at 1-888-545-2600.

In the same way, medical professionals can determine treatment for diabetes; behavioral health professionals assess your behavioral health and substance use needs. It takes years of education and a strong knowledge base to become a licensed medical professional. The behavioral health professionals at the assessment site are your experts in behavioral health and substance use care. As such, it is their responsibility to recommend the most appropriate LOC for you based on medical necessity.

If you have a specific LOC you are interested in; you are welcome to share that information during your assessment. However, it is important to know you may not be approved for that LOC. Remember, the professionals at the assessment site are responsible for ensuring your safety using medical necessity criteria.

If you are approved for an inpatient LOC, the medical professionals who assisted you through this process are responsible for coordinating your care. Continuity of care coordination includes, but is not limited to, determining bed availability, transportation, and medication management. You may be asked for a preference regarding treatment facilities but should never be asked to determine availability in the CBH Network.

If you are not approved for an inpatient LOC, you should expect to receive a discharge plan or aftercare plan. An aftercare plan or discharge plan is your next action step for your treatment. A behavioral health professional at the assessment site should review your discharge plan with you to ensure your understanding of it and its attainability.

Know Your Rights

If at any point during this process you feel you are treated unethically, please contact the Member Services Department immediately at 1-888-545-2600. Member Service Representatives are your advocates for behavioral health and are available 24 hrs. per day, seven days per week.

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EPIC—ASK FOR IT BY NAME: PROLONGED EXPOSURE

Recovery is Possible!

When being assessed, the behavioral health professional may determine an EBP that is best for you. Kind of like when a person is assessed for diabetes and the best medicine is prescribed. Prolonged Exposure (PE) is an example of a treatment that helps with substance use disorder. It is an evidence-based treatment for adults experiencing symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Sometimes, survivors of trauma continue to be haunted by their past experiences. These memories, thoughts, and feelings are often painful and difficult to live with. PE Therapy aims to reduce PTSD symptoms by helping individuals approach trauma-related thoughts, feelings, and situations that had previously been avoided. This gradual exposure process helps reduce the distress associated with trauma-related thoughts, feelings, and situations that cause PTSD symptoms. Treatment is delivered by a therapist over eight to 15 90-minute sessions.

Robert (Bob) Dilenge works as a group counselor at Merakey Parkside Recovery, a substance use program that is participating in the CBH PE Initiative with the Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety (CTSA). Bob completed his first PE case with Tim*, who had experienced multiple traumas as a young man, including being shot. The following interview was conducted with Bob and Tim to illuminate the parallel process of delivering and receiving PE treatment.

EPIC: When did you know it first started working for Tim?

Bob: I guess it was about the second or third imaginal session. Because during the processing phase, from the first imaginal, he would put his hand inside his sweatshirt. After processing the first time, I asked him why he did that, and he explained that he kept his gun there in the past. After the second or third imaginal, he stopped doing that. During one of the in-vivos, I had pulled up a video of a truck backfiring. He reported that in the past, when he heard a truck backfiring that he had grabbed his niece and took cover. The first time he heard the video with me, he cringed, and then the second or third, he didn't react at all.

EPIC: When did you know it first started working?

Tim: The day he played a recording of backfiring/firecracker sounds, stuff like that and I didn't jump like I usually did. I just laughed at it. That right there was a big breakthrough. Normally I would react totally different. I would jump



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up and be scared. And this time, I didn't do that, and I knew it was working. I could go back to the place where I almost died and not be scared.

EPIC: What is the biggest change you noticed in Tim after PE?

Bob: He is no longer angry. His whole personality changed. He comes into the clinic smiling and joking around with everyone. He has become a favorite in the clinic.

EPIC: How do you feel PE helped your recovery from substance use?

Tim: Part of my trauma involved drugs and alcohol, so they are connected. Being shot was due to me [being] involved in the sales of illegal narcotics and me not willing to go back to that lifestyle and using drugs, particularly that situation. Why would I want to go back to that? Why would I want to use a substance that almost got me killed? Actually, the substance almost killed me at one time. PE helped me stay away from it.

** This individual's name has been changed to protect their privacy.*