

The Important Role of State Substance Abuse Agencies

Each State and jurisdiction has an identified lead agency that manages the publicly funded addiction treatment, prevention, and recovery service system. These agencies, governed by different statutes and regulations, vary in terms of their exact functions, size, and placement within State government. Yet these same agencies also share a number of common characteristics as well. The development of effective federal policy requires an awareness and appreciation of the important role State substance abuse agencies play in managing our nation's prevention, treatment and recovery system.

Promoting and ensuring quality

State agencies work to ensure that services are of the highest quality through State established standards of care. NASADAD members are dedicated to continuous quality improvement and participate in initiatives to promote innovative practices and programs. For example, State directors use the data described above to help advance these practices and drive management decisions. NASADAD drafted a case study of how States use data to improve systems that accessed by visiting <http://nasadad.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2013-June-State-Substance-Abuse-Agencies-Program-Management-and-Data-Utilization-Case-Studies-of-Eleven-States.pdf>.

Effectiveness through planning, oversight and accountability

States work with stakeholders to craft and implement annual plans for State-wide service delivery. In the process, they employ mechanisms to ensure public programs are effective. State agencies use tools such as performance data management and reporting, contract monitoring, corrective action planning, on-site reviews and technical assistance.

Management of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant

The SAPT Block Grant is a \$1.8 billion federal formula grant that is allotted to NASADAD members. By statute, twenty percent of the SAPT Block Grant must be dedicated to critical substance abuse prevention programming. To learn more about the SAPT Block Grant, see <http://nasadad.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/SAPT-Block-Grant-Fact-Sheet-Extended.pdf>

Promoting coordination across State government

NASADAD members promote cross-agency collaboration given the impact of alcohol and other drug use has on other sectors. For example, State directors engage with the criminal justice entities on issues like offender reentry, drug court programs and diversion initiatives. Other examples include work with education agencies, child welfare, transportation, primary care and more.

Unique relationship with the provider community

State substance abuse agencies have very important relationships with the provider community. State directors note this connection is critical given the increased pressures on those delivering prevention, treatment and recovery services. NASADAD members provide training, continuing education, oversight and other support to those delivering services.

Reporting data

The management of the SAPT Block Grant requires States to collect and report data describing the services and programs funded by this important funding stream. This data includes information on the number of people served by the SAPT Block Grant. In addition, States collect report performance and outcome data to help demonstrate the positive impact services have on (1) reducing the use of alcohol and other drugs; (2) employment; (3) criminal justice involvement and more.

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