

Mission: To reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental health illness on America's communities.

Goal(s): The Agency was established in 1992 and directed by Congress to target effectively substance abuse and mental health services to the people most in need and to translate research in these areas more effectively and more rapidly into the general health care system.

Core Competencies: SAMHSA's core competencies include releasing and managing block grants and special programmatic funding and providing states, tribes, providers, communities and the public with the best and most up-to-date information about behavioral health issues and prevention/treatment approaches.

Priorities/Initiatives: SAMHSA has drafted a set of Strategic Initiatives, with input from the SAMHSA Tribal Technical Advisory Committee, Tribal leaders in consultation, and from tribal organizations and providers, and with other stakeholders. The Strategic Initiatives will be used to prioritize the Agency's work and to guide the best use of limited financial and human resources.

The Strategic Initiatives (8) include:

- ✓ Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illness;
- ✓ Trauma and Justice;
- ✓ Military Families – Active, Guard, Reserve, and Veteran;
- ✓ Health Reform;
- ✓ Health Information Technology for Behavioral Health Providers;
- ✓ Data, Outcomes, and Quality – Demonstrating Results;
- ✓ Public Awareness and Support; and
- ✓ Housing and Homelessness.

Mental illnesses and substance abuse are complex problems that affect nearly every aspect of life. As a result, SAMHSA's Strategic Initiatives and other pieces of the Agency's work are interconnected and sometimes overlapping. SAMHSA recognizes this complexity and remains committed to working with partners inside and outside the field to foster a comprehensive, coordinated approach to behavioral health. Where there are gaps, we will partner and innovate. Where there is overlap, we will increase collaboration and reduce redundancy.

From the Strategic Initiatives arises a Strategic Plan (draft to be available soon for public review and comment). SAMHSA must adhere to its Strategic Plan, use limited resources wisely, and leverage the efforts of partners and collaborations. This limitation means staging work, especially as health care reform unfolds and changes are implemented through 2014 and beyond.

Major Services/Resources: To accomplish its work, SAMHSA administers a combination of competitive, formula, and block grant programs and data collection activities. The Agency's programs are carried out through:

- The Center for Mental Health Services (CHMS) which focuses on the prevention and treatment of mental disorders.
- The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) which seeks to prevent and reduce the abuse of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) which supports the provision of effective substance abuse treatment and recovery services.
- The Office of Applied Studies (OAS) which has primary responsibility for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of behavioral health data.

Some major programs include:

- Block Grants to States and Territories. Statutorily specified formula funding for a broad array of services and capacity building.
- Competitive awards such as the Access To Recovery, which supports substance abuse treatment and recovery support services through a voucher-based system; the Strategic Prevention Framework and Partnerships for Success that supports planning activities to produce a plan to meet identified community needs; and, Systems of Care (and the Tribal only Circles of Care).
- National Surveys – 3 major health data collection programs to assist policymakers, providers, and patients in making informed decisions.
- The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). Maintains a searchable database of interventions for prevention and treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders. Currently the NREPP contains a listing of 4 AI/AN approaches developed by and for American Indians and Alaska Natives.