

### **Developing a Holistic Chemical Health System**

**Description:** Drug and alcohol abuse has significant and far reaching effects including direct effects to the user's mind and body as well as implications that reach beyond the user to families and communities as they interact with the health and human service system, law enforcement, criminal justice, and others. A standard, one size fits all model of care leaves many users unsuccessful in their quest to reach their chemical health needs.

**Proposed Action/Solution:** Addressing chemical health adequately must involve an approach that encompasses prevention as well as treatment. Treatment options should be holistic in nature with an understanding that treatment options should:

- Include both medical and mental health interventions;
- Be person- centered treatment options versus a one-size fits all approach;
- Be normalized in the same manner as treatment for medical conditions such as diabetes or heart disease;
- Be fully funded to address obstacles such as transportation, housing, legal costs and others that can impact the results of treatment if not fully addressed.
- Involve partnerships amongst systems such as health and human services, public health, law enforcement, criminal justice, etc.

In addition, health plans should consider the recommendations of chemical dependency assessors who are trained to work with clients to determine the best course of treatment—health plans should not refuse treatment recommendations due to cost or trying less restrictive treatments first when an assessment indicates the need for a particular type of treatment. These decisions often result in the loss of employment, family and friends when appropriate treatment isn't accessible.

**Consequence of No Change:** Lack of improvements to the chemical health system will result in the status quo—with a large segment of the population being unable to address their chemical health concerns—with costly impacts to the user and their families, but also society at large through involvement with systems such as health and human services and corrections.