



PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO REDUCE NEW HAMPSHIRE'S HIGH RATE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE RATES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE are significantly higher than national averages. The state has the highest synthetic opioid death rate in the nation. Alcohol consumption rates in the state are also much higher than the national average. Of the more than 100,000 people in need of treatment for the disease of addiction in New Hampshire, only between four and six percent get that treatment.

A new initiative by The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice and the New Hampshire Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is hoping to make inroads in the state's substance abuse crisis. The initiative, known as the New Hampshire SBIRT Inter-Professional Education Training Collaborative (IPE), includes five local colleges and universities: Antioch University New England, Franklin Pierce University, the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University, and the University of New Hampshire.

The focus of the initiative is to train health-care professionals to quickly and effectively screen for patients who are abusing, or may be at risk of abusing, drugs or alcohol using a method called Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). SBIRT is designed to identify substance abuse at "risky" levels, with the goal of reducing and preventing disease, accidents, or injuries that might result from someone's use of drugs or alcohol. It has been developed to not only to help health-care professionals assess those at risk, but also to work effectively with colleagues to successfully intervene and refer patients to treatment if needed.

During its first year, the collaborative has trained 303 future doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, clini-

cal mental health counselors, and social workers in SBIRT. The goal is to train about 1,000 students in three years (2016-2019).

Each school in the collaborative has committed to incorporating SBIRT training, developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, into their core curriculum. They're also working to make the training accessible to a wide array of current and future health-care professionals through online training modules and inter-professional activities.

With substance use costing New Hampshire approximately \$2 billion annually in lost worker productivity and earnings, health-care costs, public safety and criminal justice expenses, the partners in the collaborative think training the next generation of health-care professionals is a wise use of the resources and a highly effective way to get more at-risk people into treatment.

To read more about this project visit dartmouth.org/TDI_SBIRT.

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