IDENTIFYING AND TREATING MULTIPLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

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Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice at UT Tyler
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Master of Social Work with a concentration in Mental Health and Substance Use
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Worked in mental health and substance use field since 2015 as a mental health technician, patient advocate, and therapist.
Received my LMSW license in September of 2019 and my LCSW license in May of 2022. Been with Greenhouse and American Addiction Centers since May 31, 2021.
Objectives

1. Learn to identify specific criteria for multiple mental health and substance use disorders

2. Gain an understanding of how mental health influences polysubstance use and cross addiction

3. Discuss multiple treatment tools and options for various fields of behavioral health care service providers
Introduction
Defining Polysubstance Use

- What is polysubstance use?
The use of more than one drug is known as polysubstance use. "This includes when two or more are taken together or within a short time period, either intentionally or unintentionally."

- How prevalent is the use of multiple drugs? "More than half of individuals who are hospitalized and have a substance use disorder (SUD) use more than one substance."

(National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Drug Overdose Prevention, 2022; D’arrigo, 2020)
Dangers of Polysubstance Use

In 2019, it was recorded that almost half of all drug overdoses involved multiple substances at once. The use of more than one substance at a time continues to increase as a common pattern of substance use.

- **Mixing stimulants**
  - **Examples of stimulants:** ecstasy (MDMA), cocaine, methamphetamines, amphetamines (speed)
  - Stimulants (also known as uppers) can increase your heart rate and blood pressure to dangerous levels and increase your risk of several serious health problems. Combining stimulants may even directly or indirectly increase your risk of:
    - Brain injury
    - Liver damage
    - Heart attack
    - Stroke
  - Signs of use/overdose\(^2\) that may occur when mixing stimulants:
    - Fast/troubled breathing
    - Increased body temperature
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Chest pain
    - Seizures or tremors

- **Mixing depressants**
  - **Examples of depressants:** opioids (heroin, morphine, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl), benzodiazepines
  - Depressants (also known as downers) can slow down your breathing and increase your risk of several adverse health outcomes. Combining depressants can also directly or indirectly increase your risk of:
    - Damage to the brain and other organs
    - Overdose
    - Death
  - Signs of use/overdose\(^3\) when mixing depressants:
    - Slow breathing
    - Weak pulse
    - Altered mental status or confusion
    - Passing out

- **Mixing stimulants and depressants**
  - Mixing stimulants and depressants doesn’t balance or cancel them out. In fact, the results of combining drugs are unpredictable, often modifying or even masking the effects of one or both drugs. This may trick you into thinking that the drugs are not affecting you, making it easier to overdose.

- **Drinking alcohol while using other drugs**
  - Drinking alcohol while using other drugs isn’t safe. Alcohol is a depressant with similar effects to other downers. Mixing alcohol with other drugs can increase your risk of overdose and serious damage to the brain, heart, and other organs.

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National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Drug Overdose Prevention, 2022
What are the most commonly abused substances?

- "Alcohol is by far the most commonly abused substance: 10.2% of all Americans struggle with an alcohol use disorder, far more than any other substance." More than half of all Americans (166 million) identified drinking in the last year.

Current numbers of people in the U.S. who have reported illicit substance use in the last year:
- Marijuana: 49.6 million
- Prescription Painkillers: 9.3 million
- Hallucinogens: 7.1 million
- Tranquilizers or Sedatives: 6.2 million
- Cocaine: 5.1 million
- Prescription Stimulants: 5.1 million
- LSD: 2.6 million
- Methamphetamines: 2.6 million
- Ecstasy: 2.6 million
- Inhalants: 2.4 million
- Heroin: 0.9 million
- Crack: 0.7 million

(9 SURPRISING STATS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE IN 2022, 2022)
Identifying an Addiction
What does Addiction Look Like?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUngLgGRJpo
Criteria for a Substance Use Disorder

15.4% of all adult Americans struggle with a substance use disorder each year. This equates to approximately 39 million people. This does not account for individuals who use/abuse substances; only those who have a substance use disorder.

### DSM-5 Criteria for Diagnosing Substance Use Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crasping</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craving</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inability to manage commitments due to use</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing use, even when it causes problems in relationships</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuing use, even when it causes problems in relationships</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Giving up important activities because of use</strong></td>
<td><strong>Giving up important activities because of use</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing to use, even when it puts you in danger</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuing to use, even when it puts you in danger</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing to use, even when physical or psychological problems may be made worse by use</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Fewer than 2 symptoms: no disorder; 2-3= mild disorder; 4-5= moderate disorder; 6 or more= severe disorder</strong></td>
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(Position Statement 33: Substance Use Disorders, 2017)
Addiction in the Brain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAzgw599Gyg
Using this Information in Treatment

- Support From Family and Loved Ones
- Increases Self-Awareness and Understanding
- Increases Motivation for Change
- Increases a desire for evidenced based treatment
- Assists individual in advocating for themselves
Environmental Risk Factors

- **Physical health**
  - Access to harm reduction programming
- **Mental health**
  - Family History of Addiction
- **Social & emotional learning skills**
  - Access to Support
- **Trauma/Resiliency**
  - Learned Behaviors from loved ones
- **Access to Support**
- **Community**
  - Access to health services
- **Societal**
  - Economic wellbeing and housing stability
  - Health insurance coverage for mental health and substance use treatment
  - Impacts of justice involvement on economic and social advancement
  - Legislation and Policy
- **Stigma**
  - (Minnesota Department of Health, 2022)
Substance Use and Mental Health
Most Common Co-Occurring Disorders

• Depression
• Anxiety
• Bipolar disorder
• Post-traumatic stress disorder
• Schizophrenia
• Personality disorders

"Current estimates suggest that 37.9% of all people with a substance use disorder have a co-occurring mental illness. Research from government agencies highly recommends dual-diagnosis care for these individuals, as it delivers much better treatment outcomes and makes it more likely that people will complete treatment."
Why Co-Occurring Disorders Are So Common

• "The reasons why substance use disorders and mental disorders often occur together are not clear and establishing the relationships between these conditions is difficult. Still, three possible explanations deserve attention."

• Possible Reason 1: Having a mental disorder increases vulnerability to substance use disorders.
  • Individuals may experience negative reinforcement from substance use through losing (even if only temporarily) negative thoughts, emotions or memories.

• Possible Reason 2: Substance use disorders may increase vulnerability for mental disorders.
  • Certain substances can trigger mental health disorders, mental health symptoms, and increase high risk situations.

• Possible Reason 3: Both substance use disorders and mental disorders could be caused by shared, overlapping factors.
  • Genetics
  • Learned maladaptive patterns
  • Exposure to traumatic or stressful life experiences

(Surgeon General’s Report, 2016)
Identifying and Assessing Mental Health Needs in Substance Use Treatment

- Behavioral health / emotions
  - Stress, social interactions

- Non-severe conditions
  - Mild depression & anxiety

- Serious mental illness
  - Bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, severe depression & anxiety

- Drug & substance abuse
  - Alcohol, drugs

- Critical situations
  - Suicide, violence
Questions?
Treatment and Recovery
Establishing Safety – Presence in Treatment

Safety is described as the first stage of healing in substance use treatment.

- Eliminate the presence of substances, high risk environments, high risk people and behavior.
- Increase the presence of community through engagement and support of peers.
- Increase the level of support through a multi-disciplinary treatment team to address all concerns.
- Establish time between last use of substances to create the opportunity for intervention.
- Identify all needs that may be contributing to substance use or maladaptive behavior.
- Create the image of hope and begin intervening within the appropriate level of care.
Identifying Specific Needs and Level of Care

Detox
- 24-hour medical care and physician supervision.
- Focuses on stabilizing individuals.

Residential & Inpatient
- Live on-site, meaning they have 24-hour clinical/medical supervision or care.
- Days are scheduled with activities, therapy, and medical care, leaving minimal free time.

Partial Hospitalization Program / Intensive Outpatient
- PHP individuals are 20 or more hours per week and are designed for complex substance use disorders or co-occurring disorders that do not require 24-hour care.
- IOP individual programs 9-15 hours a week and begin focusing on their aftercare plan.

Outpatient
- Individuals begin engaging in outpatient services (med management, therapy, etc.)
- Individuals begin engaging in community support (SMART, AA, NA, CA, etc.)
The Treatment Team – Full Comprehensive Care

"Effective treatment addresses all of the individual’s needs, not just their drug use."

- Medical doctors
- Nurses
- Addiction counselors (therapists, social workers, chemical dependency counselors)
- Psychiatrists / Psych Nurse Practitioners
- Case Managers / Intake Coordinators
- Addiction recovery mentors
- Peer Specialists / Advocates
- Treatment Advocates / Mental Health Techs

(National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2019)
"Medications are often an important part of treatment, especially when combined with behavioral therapies."

(National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2019)
"Treatment should address other possible mental disorders. Counseling and other behavioral therapies are the most commonly used forms of treatment."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBT / DBT</th>
<th>Family Therapy</th>
<th>Trauma Informed</th>
<th>Solution Focused</th>
<th>Behavior Modification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing patterns of thinking and core beliefs</td>
<td>Setting boundaries &amp; expectations</td>
<td>Begin healing</td>
<td>Identifying goals to work towards</td>
<td>Changing problematic behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing positive thoughts to improve emotional and behavioral outcomes</td>
<td>Creating areas of needed support</td>
<td>Addressing effects of the past</td>
<td>Increasing self-awareness</td>
<td>Gaining new tools and skills to improve outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2019)
Substance Use Education – Increasing Knowledge

How Substance Use Affects

brain

relationships

body

mental health

society & communities
Let's Test Your Knowledge of Drug Facts!
What substance is this?

This specific drug impacts the hormonal balances in an individual's endocrine system.

Heavy use of this drug causes loss of hair, fatty tissue to build up in the breasts, and can shrink the testicles in men.

Heavy use of this drug causes hormone and menstrual problems, loss of female features of the body, and decreases the ability to get pregnant for women.
What substance is this?

Alcohol
What substance is this?

Use of this substance damages brain cells responsible for memory, judgment, and decision making and can cause serious mental problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, suicidal and violent behaviors.
What substance is this?

Methamphetamines/Amphetamines
How Much?

The estimated cost of drug abuse annually in the United States – including both legal and illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco is what? This includes healthcare, treatment, incarceration, court, criminal, and purchase fees; plus, much more.
How Much?

More than $740 billion a year and growing

(Wavelengths Recovery, 2022)
"Recovery capital is conceptually linked to natural recovery, solution-focused therapy, strengths-based case management, recovery management, resilience and protective factors, and the ideas of hardiness, wellness, and global health."

(Faces and Voices of Recovery, 2022)
Building New Habits through Relapse Prevention Tools

The biggest resource that is gained in recovery is... TIME!

- Cleaning and doing household chores
- Practicing mindfulness and meditation
- Attending to bills, home maintenance, and other concerns on a scheduled basis
- Reading books or listening to podcasts
- Calling friends and family more often
- Exercising
- Learning a new skill
- Discovering new hobbies and interests

During an addiction, an individual STOPS engaging in self-care, responsibilities, enjoyments, connection with others, etc.

(Early Recovery: How to Build Healthy Habits That Stick, 2022)
Maintenance of Sobriety – Increasing Success After Treatment

Housing:
- Sober Living
- Oxford Housing
- Family Home

Support:
- Recovery groups; family; friends; recovery community

Mental Health Services:
- Therapy
- Medication Management

Career:
- Vocational classes; new jobs; continuing education

Sober Activities:
- New hobbies; coping skills; self-care

(Early Recovery: How to Build Healthy Habits That Stick, 2022)
Maintenance of Recovery, Relapse, and Safety
# How to Stay Motivated

## Identifying Loss of Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Over-confidence</th>
<th>Impatience</th>
<th>Complacency</th>
<th>Fatigue</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Pity</th>
<th>Unrealistic Expectations</th>
<th>Dishonesty</th>
<th>Frustration</th>
<th>Lack of discipline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Increasing Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Celebrate</th>
<th>Build up Support Network</th>
<th>Take One Day at Time</th>
<th>Create Structure</th>
<th>Build Confidence</th>
<th>Honesty</th>
<th>Keep increasing healthy activities and time spent</th>
<th>Be active in a Recovery Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Relapse as a Part of Recovery

What to do right after a relapse

FIRST: This is normal!

Reach out for help

Attend a self-help group

Avoid triggers

Set healthy boundaries

Engage in self-care

Reflect on the relapse

Develop a relapse prevention plan

(American Addiction Centers, 2022)
Overdose Prevention

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cssRZEI9ujY
Ongoing Preventative Care

- Furthering education and knowledge of substance use
- Implementing effective community-based prevention programs
- Encourage the importance of continuum of care and aftercare
- Creating and implementing supportive policy changes that increase healthy communities
- Advocating for individuals and families and help connect them to resources
- Encourage ongoing services that address all areas of health: physical, mental, psychological, spiritual, etc.

https://isavefl.com/
(Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health, 2022)
Prevention and Treatment Resources

- I SAVE FL [https://isavefl.com/](https://isavefl.com/)
- National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare at [https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/](https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/)
- Learn all about alcohol use disorder with the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), leaders in the nation’s research efforts on the topic.
- Find out the Real Deal on Fentanyl, a national campaign by the Ad Council, aimed at educating young Americans about its dangers.
- Browse the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) who offers free publications on addiction treatment and prevention for children and families.
- Visit The Opioid Response Network providing free educational resources to individuals in the prevention, treatment and recovery of opioid use disorders and stimulant use.
- Understand addiction and how to address a child’s substance use with the resources and guides from The Family Resource Center.
- Sesame Street is leading efforts to support children’s understanding of addiction and in navigating difficult family dynamics.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) offers tools for families dealing with mental and substance use disorders.
- The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation provides a family toolkit to support families facing drug and alcohol addiction.
- Partnership to End Addiction gives parents direct support to prevent and cope with teen drug and alcohol use.
- The National Organization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) is dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals and families affected by alcohol use.
- The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is a division of the Department of Health & Human Services promoting the economic and social well-being of families, children, and communities.
- The National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA) offers a range of resources on the impact of alcohol and drug use on children and families.

[Addiction Resources, 2022]
Prevention and Treatment Resources

- Use **Google’s custom map** to find many types of recovery meetings, from NA and AA to secular approaches like SMART Recovery, in your area.
- Try **In the Rooms**, a global recovery community offering a variety of virtual group meetings several times a day.
- Visit **Virtual resources from SAMHSA**. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has pulled together lots of helpful recovery resources, from virtual meetings to Reddit threads and other sites and message boards.
- Check out **LifeRing Secular Recovery**. This organization's philosophy is that "there are as many ways to live free of drugs and alcohol as there are stories of successful sober people."
- Download the **Addiction Policy Forum's Connections**. In partnership with CHESS Health, this nonprofit has created a research-based app to help manage and support recovery.
- Go to **Recovery Research Institute** for helpful links to a variety of recovery supports.

[Addiction Resources, 2022]
References


References


Questions?