

Professional with 25 years experience will represent Northeast Region

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Ed Olsen, LCSW, CASAC, SAP, has been elected as NAADAC's new Northeast Regional Vice President (RVP). Olsen brings with him 25 years of experience in the chemical dependency treatment profession. As the current chairperson for the NAADAC Ethics Committee, and former president of the Association for Addiction Professionals of New York (AAPNY), Olsen has been a strong advocate for chemical dependency treatment on the community, state and legislative levels. The Northeast region includes seven states: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York.

"I want to thank my predecessor, Tom Durham, for the fine work he's done for the Northeast region," Olsen said. "I am honored to be the new Northeast Regional Vice President. I look forward to developing more partnerships and coalitions so that we may speak in one voice to advocate for chemical dependency treatment."

Olsen has been a driving force behind AAPNY, who began its work on state licensure for addiction professionals. Through Olsen's leadership, AAPNY has become a strong and vocal advocate in New York of legislation called "Timothy's Law." "Timothy's Law" is a bill that would require health insurers throughout the state to provide coverage for mental health and chemical dependency that is equal to coverage for other illnesses. Olsen was elected vice president of AAPNY in 2000 and president in 2003.

On the state level, Olsen is involved in dealing with employment and recruitment issues through the Workforce Committee for the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and he is a member of the advisory board for Suffolk Community College Chemical Dependency Program, the Education Advisory Committee for the Suffolk Coalition Against Chemical Dependencies and the Substance Abuse Committee for the Ryan White Foundation for HIV/AIDS.

Olsen succeeds Tom Durham, PhD, LADC, CCS, for the Northeast RVP position. Durham is a Project Director at Danya International. Durham was a driving force for NAADAC in the Northeast region and held the position since 2004.