

## Survey of Members in Treatment Workforce for Three or Fewer Years

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NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals, has surveyed its members who have been in the addiction treatment workforce for three or fewer years. The results shed light on who is entering the workforce and why they are choosing the profession.

### [Complete Survey Results](#)

NAADAC is the largest national membership organization for addiction-focused health care professionals with over 13,000 members. Founded in 1974, NAADAC is dedicated to enhancing the professional growth and development of individuals who treat and prevent addiction.

According to the Practitioner Services Network (PSN) survey, which is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, NAADAC's early career members are likely to be female (70 percent), white (78 percent), and on average 42 years old.

Forty percent hold at least a master's degree, compared to 73 percent of NAADAC's overall membership. Early career members, however, are in large part pursuing continuing education, including advanced degrees.

Though these members are new to the addiction treatment workforce, they have on average 17 years of prior work experience. Most are drawn to the profession by personal factors such as a desire to help the community or by having friends or family with addiction disorders.

"This survey provides concrete evidence of what we have long known about addiction professionals," said NAADAC President Elect Mary Woods. "They come to the profession with deep, personal commitments to help others and they work hard to expand their treatment skills and knowledge."

Early career members reported higher than expected rates of satisfaction with many aspects of their jobs. They are most satisfied with the nature of the tasks they perform and their work environments, while they expressed dissatisfaction with salary and workload. Only half see

opportunities for career advancement, but 86 percent indicated that they would pursue a long-term career in the profession.

"NAADAC is committed to helping addiction counselors advance professionally," Woods said. "We are developing tools and strategies to assist those who want a career in addiction treatment. This survey will guide our efforts."

The survey identified the training and resource needs of new addiction professionals. Most have access to in-service or Internet materials, but a significant minority have limited or no access to these resources.

This is NAADAC's second PSN survey. The first was released in 2001 and sampled NAADAC's overall membership on demographic and professional characteristics and Internet use rates.

NAADAC will focus its next survey in part on the practice settings of its members and the clients they serve. Little is known about the configuration, staffing patterns and specialties of private practice settings.

"We would like to thank CSAT for its continuing support of NAADAC and this research effort to learn more about the men and women who provide addiction treatment services," Woods said. "This endeavor would not have been possible without CSAT's financial and technical support."

The National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago conducted the survey's phone interviews. The Lewin Group of Falls Church, Va., prepared the survey report.

### [Complete Survey Results](#)

A hardcopy of the survey results can be obtained by calling NAADAC at 800-548-0497.