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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The future of the profession is at stake, and the nation’s leading addiction organizations are working to preserve it.

Due to the rapid changes expected in the addiction profession through the Affordable Care Act and parity, three leading organizations in the field – NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, the National Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals (NCC AP) and the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) – are discussing collaborative activities to ensure professional quality in the delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support services.

In its [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) , 2010-11 Edition, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) named substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors as one of the fastest growing professions, expected to grow 21 percent by 2018. Despite this positive outlook, changes to practice legislation and funding streams make the future of the profession difficult to predict.

“Our field is at a real turning point with drivers such as the Affordable Care Act, parity, and myriad challenges facing the addiction workforce looming large,” stated Mary Jo Mather, IC&RC Executive Director.

The leaders of NAADAC, NCC AP and IC&RC view great strength in the strategy of collaboration. Together, the three organizations will work to influence federal policy, including workforce development issues within Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and other departments. The goal of working together is to protect the addiction profession as a specialty within the primary healthcare system. Ideally, an economy of scale can be achieved in the managing, administering, programming and serving the addiction profession.

“Now, perhaps more than ever, the addiction profession needs strong voices, unified messages

and cohesiveness that our respective organizations can take the lead through joining forces and working collaboratively,” stated Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, NAADAC’s Executive Director.

Shirley Beckett Mikell, NCC AP’s Director of Certification, agreed. “NCC AP and IC&RC have a tremendous amount of respect for one another as addiction credentialing organizations. What better demonstration of that high esteem for one another than working together.”

Areas of collaboration include:

- Joint internal and external communications concerning credentialing and licensing, including conducting surveys and publicizing the results,
- Developing a common advocacy agenda and combining advocacy efforts, including co-hosting the Advocacy Leadership Summit on April 16 and 17, 2013 in Washington, D.C., and,
- A crosswalk of credentials, leading toward standardized credentials and a national system of credentialing.

With a shared goal of advancing the profession, NAADAC, NCC AP and IC&RC are committed to cooperating as they meet the challenges ahead.

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[NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals](#) , represents the professional interests of more than 75,000 addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals in the United States, Canada and abroad. NAADAC’s members are addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals, who specialize in addiction prevention, treatment, recovery support and education.

The [National Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals \(NCC AP\)](#) has since 1990, instituted nationally recognized credentials specifically for addiction professionals. The NCC AP

operates as an independent credentialing body, managing credentials and additional services, including test administration, certification standards, ethics codes of conduct and rules of credentialing development and procedure.

[IC&RC](#) , the world leader in addiction-related credentialing, has protected the public by establishing standards and facilitating reciprocity for professionals since 1981. Today, IC&RC represents 76 member boards and 45,000 professionals from 24 countries, 47 U.S. states and territories. IC&RC's nine credentials include counselors, clinical supervisors, prevention specialists, criminal justice, co-occurring disorders professionals and peer recovery coaches.