

The Issue

Nicotine is a psychoactive drug and its regular use can result in nicotine dependence and premature death. It is estimated that 2.5 million people die worldwide each year because of tobacco use and that by 2020 the death toll will be at least 10 million if present trends in tobacco consumption continue. In the United States, cigarettes kill 430,000 people directly each year, and environmental tobacco smoke kills more than 53,000.

Similar to alcoholism and other drug addictions, Nicotine has not always been viewed as a primary disease; the health profession has traditionally viewed tobacco use as a risk factor for other diseases, but not as a primary health problem itself. This approach has only hindered the process to development of optimal treatment methods for clients addicted to nicotine.

Treatment facilities and the surrounding property should be designated tobacco-free areas. NAADAC supports the prohibition of the use of tobacco products and spit tobacco within all buildings and on the grounds of all freestanding treatment facilities as well as in vehicles used to transport patients at any time.