

### **Access to Recovery Defined**

The concept of the Access To Recovery (ATR) faith-based initiative was first introduced by President Bush in his 2003 State of the Union Address. ATR's mission is to increase capacity and access to faith-based rehabilitation programs. The program's objective, recognizing that the recovery process is a personal journey, is to allow individuals in need of substance abuse treatment to receive vouchers. NAADAC's objectives for this new substance abuse treatment program are based on three principles: 1) consumer choice 2) use of a results-oriented curriculum that will utilize individual treatment by licensed and/or certified professionals and 3) increased capacity.

### **Implementation of ATR**

The President proposed \$600 million in new funds over a three year timetable for the new initiative. The first \$200 million installment was included in the President's 2004 Budget Request to Congress, however only \$100 million was authorized for use by Congress in its FY 2004 final budget document (also known as an omnibus).

ATR, as it is currently structured, is vague given the lack of clarity regarding licensure and certification requirements. Though NAADAC is supportive of the President's wishes to increase substance abuse funding, it feels strongly that the only way effective implementation can be achieved is through faith based providers and professionals adhering to the same set of licensure and certification requirements that secular counselors have had in place for decades. Congress echoed this opinion in its FY 2004 final budget document which directed all providers participating in the new initiative to be accountable in using the same standards of care, licensure, and certification requirements. NAADAC will work vigorously with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) and other stakeholders to ensure that licensure and certification requirements are a prominent part of this new initiative.

### **Demographics of ATR**

The initial phase of ATR will support treatment for approximately 100,000 people per year and expand the array of services available including medical detoxification, inpatient and outpatient treatment modalities, residential services, peer support, relapse prevention, case management,

and other recovery-promoting services.

State Drug and Alcohol Authorities are the key to ensuring a coordinated approach among the grantees that come into contact with people who have addictive disorders. The authorities are directed to award the grants using a competitive process. States will be required to use the new funds to supplement, not supplant, current funding and build on existing programs, including SAMHSA's Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant.

## **References**

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