

NCC AP Update

By Jerry Jenkins, MEd, MAC, NCC AP Chair



The National Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals (NCC AP) continues to work hard to promote national certification and standards of knowledge and professionalism in the addiction profession.

The delivery of healthcare is rapidly changing as the science and technology supporting it advances. Behavioral healthcare is no exception. Substance use disorder treatment is and will become more integral with value based reimbursement strategies expanding. Examples frequently mentioned in literature include the use of SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment), integrated health care where primary care and behavioral health care are aligned, and Medicaid Health Homes.

All of the preceding need professionals proficient in addressing substance use disorders. This includes professionals to provide assessment as well as treatment or recovery support services regardless the population: adolescents, adults, persons with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, tobacco dependent, persons with English as a second language, etc.

The NCC AP has purposefully sought to develop credentials identifying specialized skills to payers and other treating professionals. The credentials cover the range of employment settings. Now included is the opportunity

for recognition of persons with lived experience — peers — peers who have taken the additional step of meeting a national standard.

NCC AP will continue to work with NAADAC to promote our respective credentials to payors as recommended and or/preferred credentials for addiction professionals.

Supporting this effort are a hardworking group of professionals who spent May 4–7, 2017 doing the work of the Commission. You can meet us by visiting the new and improved NAADAC website at www.naadac.org/about-the-ncc-ap. The Commission insures the currency of standards and processes, as well as performs due diligence around the development of new credentials.

Our meeting had invaluable support from Certification Manager Donna Croy, NAADAC Executive Director Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, NCC AP Consultant Kathy Benson, as well as NAADAC Director of Communications Jessica Gleason. The work session reflected the breadth of substance use disorder treatment challenges worldwide: workforce; training and development; specialization; determining competencies for the rapidly expanding work environments in which there is a demand for qualified substance use disorder treatment professionals; as well as staying current on new advances whether that be treatment strategies or technological tools like medications or smartphone applications.

Going forward, the NCC AP wants to hear from readers about how we can improve our processes or ideas for developing new credentials. We are accessible by email and hope to meet many of you at NAADAC’s Annual Conference in Denver where the Commission will be presenting a breakout session on the importance of national credentials.

On the horizon is more collaboration and development of credentialing with the Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence (ATTUD) and Council for Tobacco Treatment Training Program (CTTTP), as well as the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG). These collaborations are around identifying professionals trained, experienced and who have met a national standard for treating tobacco use and dependence or gambling related disorders respectively. Again, we are working to develop ways of identifying professionals with special skills.

In closing, please let us know how we can do better at what we are doing. We know you do critical work in the healthcare arena. We want you to be quickly recognizable through your credentials as the “go to” professional to deal with substance use disorders. In the meantime, we will keep you informed of our credentialing initiatives through this column as well as the NAADAC website.

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Jerry A. Jenkins, MEd, MAC, has been the Chief Executive Officer of Anchorage Community Mental Health Services since 2003 adding Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services in 2013. He is in his third year as the President of the Alaska Behavioral Health Association. Anchorage/Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services provides behavioral health services across the span of life from ages 2 to 100. As an addiction treatment professional, Jenkins has over 34 years of experience in treating substance use disorders and mental illness. He has worked in and managed community based, outpatient, halfway and residential treatment services. He is an advocate for safe, affordable and accommodating housing for consumers as well as recovery as the expectation for behavioral health care with particular emphasis on being trauma informed.