

Advancing Alcohol & Drug Abuse Treatment in the Circumpolar North: Report to the Arctic Council and Senior Arctic Officials in November 2008

Lead Country (ies):

- USA, Russia

Project Coordinator:

- Asida Prather, Program Coordinator, APrather@northernforum.org

Participating Arctic states and Permanent Participants:

- USA, Russia

Summary of Objectives:

- To support mutual efforts on healthy lifestyle promotion in northern regions, to facilitate knowledge and experience exchange in the areas of drug addiction and alcoholism.

Brief summary of activities during Norwegian chairmanship:

Dr. Bernard Segal is actively involved in this project and provides continued project support through identification of programs in Alaska, establishing contacts with specialists in the field, and providing research information to the working group. Dr. Segal has been involved in the Northern Forum's Healthy Lifestyles project since 2005 Summit in Whitehorse. Since 2006, Dr. Segal conducted several training sessions in Russia and the information from the training sessions have been published in Russian and distributed (Title: Additional materials "Modern approach to treatment of drug addiction and psychiatric diseases" Khanty-Mansiysk 2006)

Delegation visit:

To continue with the goals of the project the Northern Forum organized a visit for a delegation consisting of three doctors from Khanty-Mansiysk's Clinical Neuro-psychological Hospital. The visit took place in Anchorage and Seattle from May 24 - June 4, 2008. Three substance abuse treatment programs were visited by the group and included Clithroe Alcoholism Treatment Program in Anchorage, Therapeutic Health Services and Lakeside Milan programs in Seattle. The doctors were provided with in-depth information about each program, including patient in-take procedures, patient interviewing techniques, diagnostics, treatment, and detox approaches, as well as funding, and other information pertinent to each program.

Participants of the visit were:

- Dr. Konstantin Misyura, Head Doctor, Khanty-Mansiysk Clinical Psycho-neurological Hospital
- Dr. Andrey Novikov, Deputy Head Doctor, Outpatient treatment department, Khanty-Mansiysk Clinical Psycho-neurological Hospital
- Ms. Marina Dukhina, Doctor, Nizhnevartovskiy Psycho-neurological hospital
- Ms. Inna Balabanova, Interpreter

In Clithroe program visiting doctors learned about residential service for men and women including a dual-diagnosis treatment program for individuals with mental health issues, family services, and patient assessment techniques. Each visit involved active discussions and questions from the group and answers from the staff regarding how the program operates.

In addition, the group visited Alaska Youth Crisis Center and the Community Services Patrol's (CSP) Sleep-Off Center, both located in Anchorage. In Seattle the group visited Therapeutic Health Services (THS) and Lakeside Milam programs. Program staff provided a detailed overview of how the program is implemented. During their visit they also met with the President of THS program and one of their Russian staff, who was very helpful in explaining and describing how the programs work. One of the main outcomes of the visit to THS was an invitation to host 1 Russian practitioner in the program. Moreover, they agreed to assist with a stipend and other living expenses. The training would be for 3 months and the trainees to come have to know English.

Both visits were extremely successful. The doctors were especially interested in the way programs are operated and funded. The group also learned about the paperless data system, which they would like to institute in their hospital. They were interested in learning that the primary services providers are not physicians but rather social workers, psychologists, and in some cases nurses. In addition, they received extensive materials from both the THS and Lakeside Milam programs. The group agreed to review these materials and extract what's applicable to their treatment program.

Current Status of work:

A three-day videoconference focusing on short-term outpatient substance abuse rehabilitation strategies and stages is planned for November 2009. The videoconference is planned for practitioners from regions participating in the substance abuse treatment and prevention working group, which was initially formed in 2006. The goal is to share information with a broader audience while minimizing costs. Participants will include specialists from Alaska who will share and exchange substance abuse rehabilitation strategies and their Russian counterparts.

Planning for additional training in the THS program is underway with tentative dates set for April 2009. Khanty- Manisiysk Narcological Hospital will identify practitioners who will undergo training in Seattle. It should be noted that due to limited funding opportunities for this project, each region participating in the working group is responsible for their expenses. Funding limitations resulted in weak participation from other members of the working group.

Any matters requiring decisions or directions:

- To continue the Substance Abuse project into the Danish Chairmanship

Anticipated deliverables for 2009 Ministerial

- To be determined.