

Homeless and Co-Occurring Disorder

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Defining Co-Occurring Disorder

- Co-occurring disorder is a combination of mental health and substance abuse
 - Major depression and alcohol
 - Anxiety disorder and benzodiazepine
 - Panic attacks and opiate

The Relationship Between Psychiatric Disorder and Substance Abuse

- Use of substances can mask psychiatric symptoms
- Substances can cause psychiatric symptoms
- Substances can mimic psychiatric symptoms

- Homeless with co-occurring disorders use substances to escape reality and emotional grief
- Co-occurring disorders and the use of substances can contribute to homelessness
- Co-occurring disorders and the use of substances maybe the result of homelessness

Co-Occurring Disorders Complicate Conditions of Homelessness

- Mental illness and substance abuse can cause people to lose their homes
- Homelessness increases mental health and substance abuse symptoms
- Unstable conditions compromise recovery

Homeless Individuals with Co-Occurring Disorders Struggle to Meet their Needs

- Shelter
- Food
- Clothing
- Medication
- Medical

- Self-Care is not a priority for homeless people when basic survival is a priority

Communicate and Listen Do's and Don't

- Do's
 - Listen to what they are saying
 - Try to say as little as possible
 - Take time and don't rush
 - Be considerate of the person
 - Be warm and friendly
 - Avoid authoritative approach
 - Be aware of Personal Space
- Don't
 - Pass value judgment
 - Argue
 - Criticize
 - Lose your temper
 - Overreact

Avoid Argument

- Arguments are counter productive
- Defending breeds defensiveness
- Labeling is unnecessary
- Resistance is a signal to stop

Management

- Let the Person Talk
- Avoid touching the Person
- Always one or two others with you

Rules

- Set limits
- Orientate the Client
- Clarify Expectations

Evaluation of Threats

- Take all Threats Seriously
- Overt or Indirect Suicidal Talk or Threats
- Call 911

Signs of Alcohol

- Smell
- Irritability
- Slurred Speech
- Hot/Cold flashes
- Shakes and Sweats
- Two to Eight Days after Stopping or reducing intake of Alcohol person can have a seizure

Schizophrenic

- Thought Disorder
- Feeling Confused after talking with Person
- Echolalia-repeating same word
- Hallucinations
 - Visual and Auditory

Paranoid

- Grandiose-FBI Watching
- Mistrustful

Mania

- Loud
- Pressured Speech
- Flight of Ideas
- Disorganized
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations
- Boundless Energy
- Insomnia
- No Appetite

Anxiety/Panic Attacks

- Shortness of Breath
- Heart Palpitations
- Sweating
- Fear of Dying

Safety

- Anyone Working with Homeless Individuals
With Co-Occurring Disorders
- Trust your intuition
 - Partner/communicate
 - Use Law Enforcement as Needed