



# Albany County Adult Drug Court SYNC REVIEW

- **AC-ADC-2009-035:**
  - “Drug Court improves self confidence and self worth and I love it.”
- **AC-ADC-2009-036:**
  - “The family felt very strongly that this program has helped the client and when a friend died it became very evident that this could have been him without intervention from the team.”
- **AC-ADC-2009-037:**
  - “Drug court provided me all the tools I needed to succeed.”
- **AC-ADC-2009-038:**
  - “I am a lot stronger than I ever thought I could be.”
- **AC-ADC-2009-039:**
  - “I did something in one year that I couldn’t do in six years on my own.”

# Summary

- Albany County Adult Drug Court (ACADC) experienced a very high turnover losing five out of seven staff. Rather than this turnover being the demise of the program, the coordinator explained it as an opportunity to gain more knowledge and experience; to grow the program. It is this positive attitude that makes this program work effectively for clients.
- There is great collaboration and awareness in the substance abuse treatment community in Albany County.
- Wrap around services in this community are understood and used.
- All ACADC team members seem to work well together but there is another leg to the stool and that is the willingness of the client to work the program.
- An interesting finding, paradoxical in nature was discovered in this review. Some interviewed felt that there was great awareness in the community of the ACADC and others felt that the awareness was lacking.
- Originally, a client’s outcome was not to go to jail. As the client became more involved, the desired outcome changed into recovering and not relapsing.
- Three basic pillars exist that form ACADC:
  - Treatment,
  - Supervision, and
  - Case management.



### **Access to Services:**

- There were no waiting lists for the services accessed and treatment was received within the first week after referral to ACADC.
- Clients are encouraged to and do reach out to the other clients and even assist with transportation for group sessions.
- The treatment providers were always available; clients have a great deal of trust with ACADC staff.
- One client interviewed is the only person in the family to graduate high school, and is currently the only member who has attended college. The client reports that all of this is possible due to the ACADC program helping the client to get clean and live a productive life.
- Another client interviewed expressed satisfaction with accessing ACADC and the timeliness of entering the program.
- Client was referred to the program by a public defender; the client then began in ACADC three weeks after arrest.

### **Quality of Services Including Recovery Support:**

- The client found the ACADC program as their security and it improved the client's social abilities.
- Mental health concerns are recognized and taken seriously by the ACADC staff; when appropriate these clients were referred to the appropriate providers.
- ACADC supports family involvement and using family as a resource or as a way to locate services through family.
- When working with clients who were significantly older than other participants and had lifestyles which were deeply rooted, the ACADC staff recognized these individual situations and handled them appropriately.
- In the case of serious narcotic use, a significantly longer time for detoxification was a consideration in the treatment plan.
- The client reported having learned a lot about brain functions; and that the brain had to heal in order to fully recover.
- ACADC assists clients with establishing educational goals for their future.
  - In one case, the caseworker assisted the client in getting enrolled in college as a full-time student.
- A client had some personal issues that the team recognized immediately; they then took a different approach to obtain information from the client in an appropriate and productive manner.
- Training seems to be recognized as being important in ACADC. Many of the team members have gone to national, related trainings which have assisted with providing a high quality of service.
- There is a relapse plan put in place prior to leaving the program.
- A therapist met a client who was in route to a bar in order to prevent a relapse.
- Clients may continue with their therapists after completing the ACADC program if they desire.
- Participants of the program appear to be given ample chances to succeed without being terminated from the program.



- Clients tend to “drop by” even after graduation to let ACADC staff know how their lives are going.
- Good wrap around services were shown by all; even those outside of the treatment team such as the defense attorney who really understood and had the clients well being considered.
- A client felt like culture and family were respected by the treatment team.
- Adult independent living skill needs are assessed and then provided for such as tax preparation.

### **Coordination:**

- ACADC does well with coordination externally with other providers in the community.
- Wrap-around services were very well utilized and this has largely contributed to the success of the clients.
- If a client resides with a family member who suffers from similar addiction issues, counseling for these family members is required and provided to help the client ultimately reside in a healthy environment.
- There is a significant level of investment between the client and treatment providers; so much that treatment providers will meet with the clients outside of office hours when the client is near a relapse.
  - One staff member even met a client who was in route to a drinking establishment and prevented a relapse.
- Supervision is very strict at first for clients; naturally this bothers most clients but ultimately they see the necessity for this and appreciate the structure.



### **Access to Services:**

- The client lived in Cheyenne, but moved to Laramie to participate in ACADC because the client was arrested in Albany County. Each drug court in Wyoming is unique and there is not enough consistency among them that a client can transfer or complete a program in another county. In this particular case however, the move was serendipitous; moving to Laramie worked in the client's favor as the client moved away from negative influences.
- Alcoholics Anonymous programs lack different group types to accommodate the different needs of substance abuse.
- One client felt that one on one therapy rather than group therapy in the first six months might be more effective.
- There were concerns about what happens to the person when they leave the program, because this is such a relationship-built program.
- A client was receiving services from a psychiatric nurse practitioner for medication but services were discontinued based on the client's inability to pay.

### **Quality of Services Including Recovery Support:**

- Staff change is something that came up in several cases as being negative for the program. This is not to say that the new staff is not exceptional, just that the



change in staff members caused some confusion and consternation among participants in the program at the time.

- Cultural sensitivity is something that was expressed by a client as lacking; this may be an issue that could warrant further consideration and training.<sup>1</sup>

### **Coordination:**

- One review team reported that friction exists between the supervision component and treatment component because of different models being used and the clients are picking up on this atmosphere.
- Productive, internal communication was noted as an area that could be improved upon.

### **Systemic:**

- The job market in this community is difficult for program participants to work in because most establishments, such as restaurants involve alcohol to some extent.
- One client interviewed commented that as a whole, Wyoming tends to discriminate against those with mental health needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Contrary to this statement from a client; another client reported feeling culture was recognized and honored among staff.