

The National Principles of Care for Substance Use Disorder Treatment (the Principles) are evidence-based practices in addiction treatment which improve outcomes for individuals with a substance use disorder. Addiction treatment should parallel treatment for other chronic diseases, and always be individualized, feedback-informed, and encompass all eight of these Principles.

#1. Routine screenings in every medical setting



During check-ups and in the ER, from pediatric to psychiatric care — screenings for a SUD should be as common as measuring blood pressure.

#2. A personal plan for every patient



One size doesn't fit all. Treatment must consider unique social, mental, biological, and environmental needs — with frequent check-ins and adjustments.

#3. Fast access to treatment



Addiction alters brain chemistry, making moments of motivation to seek treatment fleeting. So when an individual is ready, it is essential that they have access right away.

#4. Disease management, rather than 28 days



While inpatient treatment may be appropriate for some based on disease severity, this isn't the best option for all. And it's not enough for sustained success. Long-term outpatient care — similar to the management of other chronic diseases — is key to recovery.

#5. Coordinated care for every illness



Many people with addiction also suffer from other mental or physical disorders. Treatment for all illnesses should be coordinated and integrated into the SUD treatment plan.

#6. Behavioral health care from legitimate providers



Behavioral interventions help individuals manage their disease and sustain recovery — and should be offered by properly trained, accredited, and well-supervised providers.

#7. Medication-assisted treatment



Just like with other chronic diseases, medication is appropriate for treating some individuals. It should be destigmatized and easily accessible.

#8. Recovery support services beyond medical care



Practical and emotional support from family members, the community, and peer groups improves outcomes for individuals with substance use disorders.

Learn more about the Treatment Task Force's work to improve access & quality of addiction treatment in America at shatterproof.org.