



TIP 25 - Substance Abuse Treatment and Domestic Violence, p. 9–17.

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Topic of material:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> General info | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trauma and Substance Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Service Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Other Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

About how long did this material take to read?

30 – 45 minutes

What is the main idea of this material?

Survivors of domestic violence with substance abuse challenges have extra hurdles and needs that must be addressed to keep them safe and sober. The article discusses how to work with dv victims/survivors that are in substance abuse recovery.

How would you summarize the material in just a few sentences?

Providers of substance abuse treatment need to be able to recognize signs of domestic violence so that they can assist their clients in becoming sober while also being safe. Survivors of domestic violence have additional needs such as safety, understanding options and decision-making, differentiating between taking responsibility for her substance abuse but not the domestic violence, increased PTSD and physical ailments. Substance abuse treatment providers need to assist survivors in relapse prevention as they often have the abusers as their suppliers which increases the lethality of relapse.

It is important also to address the specific needs of someone that has experienced dv and is also experiencing substance abuse challenges and possibly involved with the legal system (i.e. drug court) and other systems that may require the client to be sober or abstinent to continue treatment etc.

How might this apply to doing community-based advocacy?

It would be extremely helpful for treatment providers to be in contact with community-based advocates. Also, for advocates to know which treatment providers are familiar with DV so that our referrals could be most helpful for the survivors.

With clients experiencing substance abuse as a coping mechanism it is important for community-based advocates to understand the challenges these clients face as they may have many plans written up for them and their successful completion is part of the requirements.

What is a critical question you have after reading this material?

I think a critical and important question should be toward the client to get that individual's input on how important her recovery is to her safety and well-being. We need to discuss these things with clients directly and work with them as experts on their own lives.

I question one of the things the article suggests which is that treatment providers do a "long-term safety plan" at the outset, even at the intake. Often at the beginning a survivor does not have all the information she needs to make a long-term decision. The safety plan needs to have flexibility for when/if she changes her mind. She also needs to be empowered to change her plan as needed; if a victim is still in the situation she may feel that it is too much pressure to leave or make a long-term decision.