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A Note From NIDA's Director

NIDA's initiative to blend drug abuse science and practice brings drug abuse researchers and service providers together in the pages of this journal and also face-to-face in frequent meetings and conferences. This past June, more than 600 professionals from all corners of the addiction field convened in Miami Beach for "Smart Practice, Practical Science: Blending Treatment and Research"—2 days of plenary sessions, breakout panels, and informal collegial discussions.

Among the educational offerings at the Miami Beach conference, participants could choose a daylong hands-on training session in the use of a brand new, research-proven and community clinic-tested product just released by still another arm of NIDA's Blending Initiative. Since 2001, Blending Teams cosponsored by NIDA and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in partnership with the Addiction Technology Transfer Center, have been working to facilitate the movement of research findings into mainstream addiction treatment. Their newest product teaches counselors to maximize their return on the time they invest in administering the Addiction Severity Index (ASI). Users learn to integrate the ASI into the treatment planning and documenting processes (www.mattc.org/information/smart2).

Meanwhile, in NIDA's Clinical Trials Network (CTN), researchers and service providers are jointly designing and conducting studies to produce community-clinic-ready solutions to questions of primary clinical importance. Nearing completion are a comparison of several treatments for women with co-occurring trauma and substance abuse disorders, and two studies aimed at curbing the spread of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases among men and women in drug abuse treatment.

The successful partnerships and exchanges of the Blending Initiative, now producing results in the Nation's treatment facilities, show how powerful the combination of research and practice can be.



Nora D. Volkow, M.D.

Director

National Institute on Drug Abuse