
Public Policy:
Making Your Effort Work
FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS!

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Public Policy is both complex and simple

The Mystery of Public Policy

The Mystique of Public Policy

And the Sometimes Messy components of Public
Policy

Making sure that your interests get translated into good policy and at the same time making sure that the interests of others do not block your activity



Competing interests



Public Policy has national, state and local implications. Because of the competing interests of these different governing entities, there is both overlap and conflict

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- State level activities tend to focus on budgets and regulatory issues such as licensure, certification, etc.
 - Local activities tend to relate to zoning, local planning etc.

Understand the system – POLITICS

- The goal of any elected official is to get elected again. What do I have to do to make sure that I get enough votes to be elected in the next election cycle? This is a given
- Politicians at the local, state and national level all listen or give more listening time to those that help them get elected. This is a given

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- There are a few “cause” elected officials, but the majority of elected officials begin with asking themselves what can I do to look good to those that elected me and who will help get me elected again.



In order to build a public policy effort, it must be focused!

- You will be budget limited
- The temptation is to take on every and any issue
- Make sure that the issues you identify are the issues of your constituent group
- Build collations when you can, go it alone when you must.

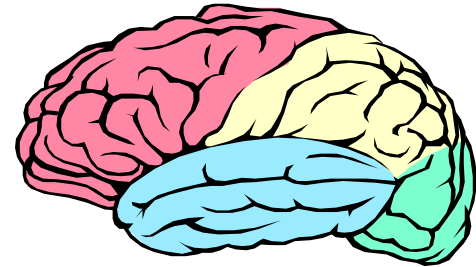
Every effort, every plan should have three components

- Education/information
- What it is you want/Ask for something
- Offer to be a resource/expert



What are your key Issues?

- Addiction: A Brain Disease with biological underpinnings
- Addiction: A Chronic Disease
- Addiction: Lifelong management of the chronic disease is needed!



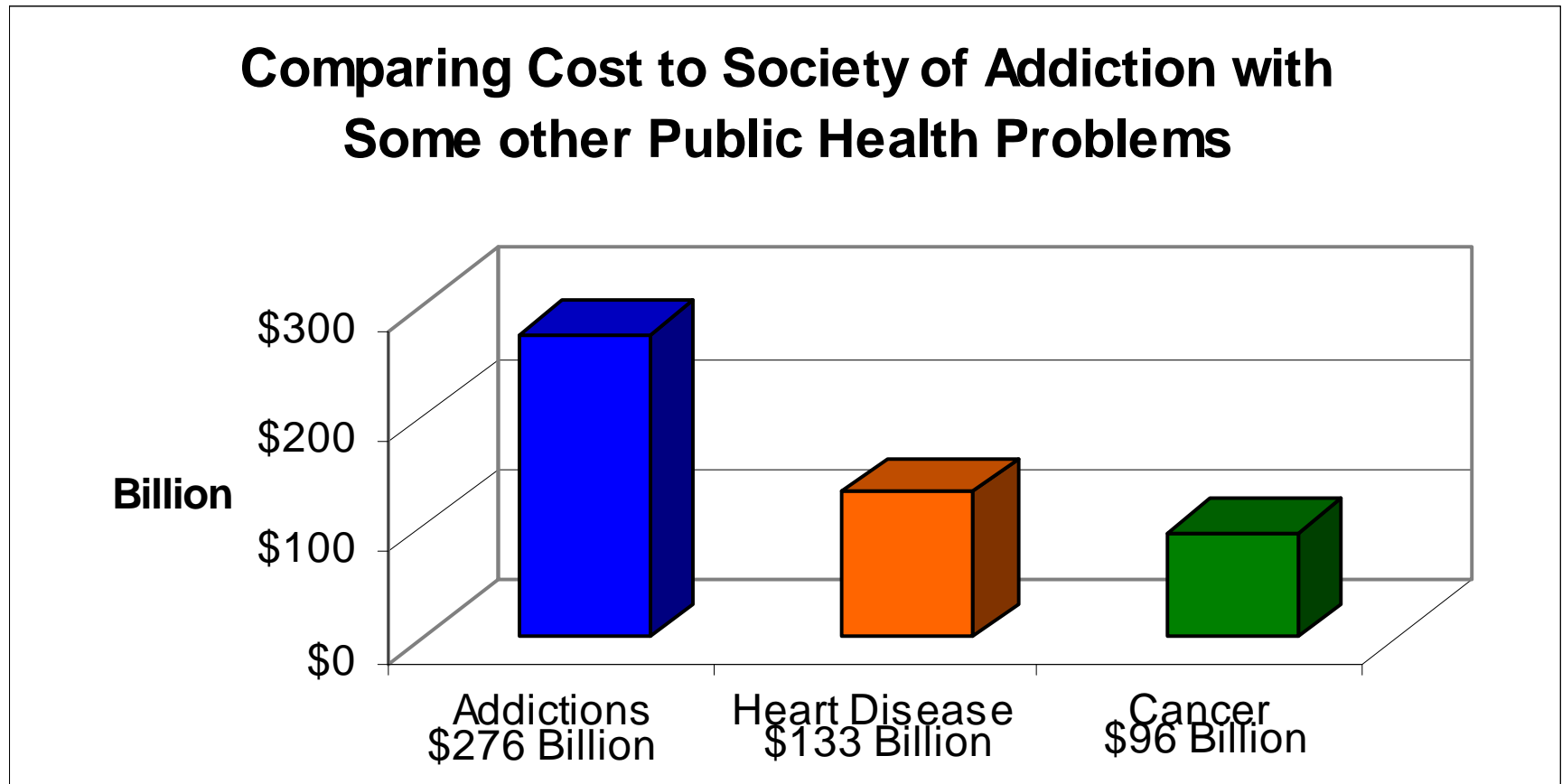
Public Policy takes time, energy and resources.

Internal vs. External Staff models

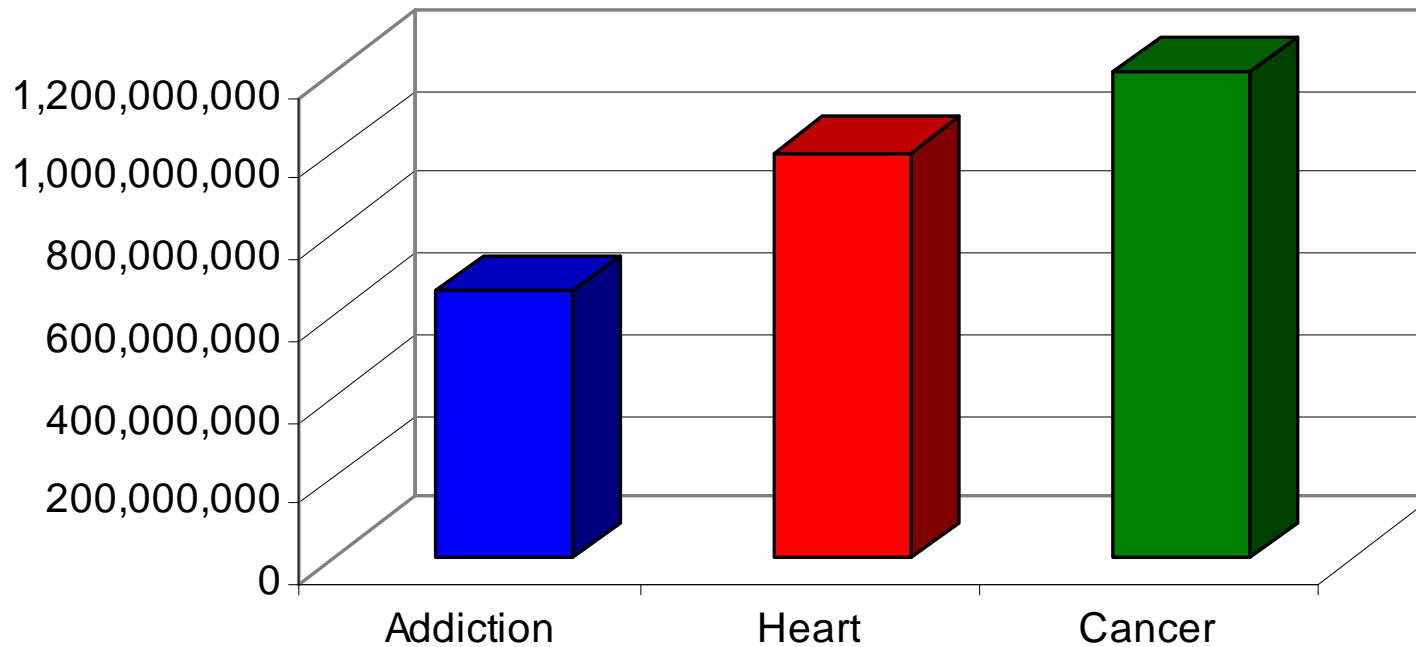
The key to everything is
information... Without information do not
begin your effort



■ Let's Look At Research



But Research Funding for Addiction is Too Low



Design a system to find information,
generate information and disseminate
information

Anecdotal stories are not enough

Translate every one of your issues to dollars and people. Push it down to the lowest level possible



Always know who is with you and who is
against you



Do not believe that everyone understands what you represent – addiction

- Brain Disease
- Chronic Disease
- Disease Management
- Recovery

Because the disease has been stigmatized
and discriminated against, so are you!

Always, always know what your bottom line, non negotiable issues are

- At the Federal Level, for NAATP on the Parity Issue, preemption is a deal breaker!

When you deal with elected officials, at every level, unless you have a personal relationship with them (personal not casual) they are not interested in being your friends.

Make an appointment

Have an agenda

Stick to the agenda,

Leave information, and

Follow up with a letter!

Do not overlook things like court rulings, regulations, and executive orders.

As a country we are moving down the road toward one unified electronic health record as a result of an executive order, not a legislative bill.

Threats

- The 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill is still spilling....
 - **A ruling in *EEOC v. Exxon* could determine the kinds of jobs recovering people can hold and have a major impact on the ways EAP's do their jobs**
 - **Never – Ever Policy is a now a reality**

Wow!

All of politics is compromise. You never get all of what you want and those opposing you don't stop as much as they want. To get their support what do you have to support that they want?



Some issues of interest now and in the future

Accountability is the new buzz word. No one wants to allocate monies without some built in mechanism for accountability.

Pay for Performance

Transparency is another “in word”. All transactions need to be open

State budgets – how do you determine in the state of Washington what is the fair share of dollars in the budget to be allocated for addiction treatment?

- Who has the data to show that dollars spent (Medicaid) on addiction treatment reduces the Medicaid dollars spent on ER visits, and other health care expenditures?
- Who has the data to show what has happened in the state of Washington around dollars spent on addiction treatment by private insurance over the past 10 years?

There is and will be a not so subtle debate over recovery vs. symptom reduction as the goal of treatment.



Do we measure effectiveness of treatment by reduced drinking days per month, or by some other quality of life issues?

We continue to have a debate about who can and should provide addiction treatment. The voucher system, initiated at the federal level, has been left to the states to sort out.

NIMBY issues are springing up all over the place locally.

Anticipate, don't always react

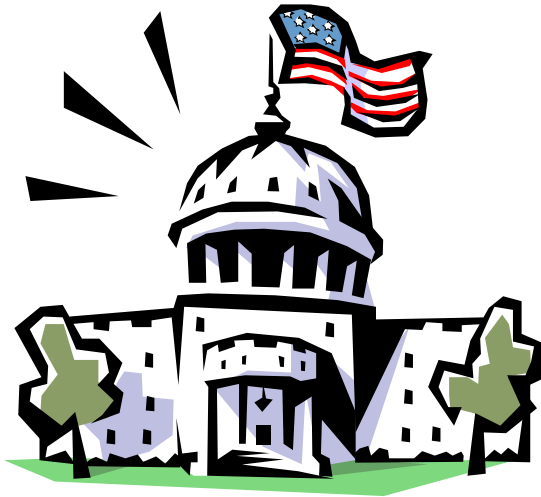
What is on the Radar Screen?

Four forces that will shape addiction treatment in the 21st Century are:

- ❑ **Brain research**
- ❑ **Chronic Disease Management**
- ❑ **Pharmacology**
- ❑ **Technology**



Key Issue in Election Year



Providing Health Insurance for the Uninsured.

Review:

- Know your focus, package your message, Communicate

- Q&A