A Life in the Community for Everyone

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES KIT

Knowledge Informing Transformation

This document was produced for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under contract numbers 280-00-8049 with the New Hampshire-Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center and 270-03-6005 with Westat.

Printed 2008

DHHS Publication No. SMA-08-4344

Evidenced-based treatment works

ACT

Assertive Community Treatment

Delivering integrated services to people with serious mental illnesses

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Mental Health Services
www.samhsa.gov

What is Assertive Community Treatment?

Assertive Community Treatment, or ACT, is a way of delivering a full range of services to people who have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness. ACT's goal is to give consumers adequate community care and to help them have a life that isn't dominated by their mental illnesses.

How does ACT help consumers?

With ACT, consumers get help taking care of their basic needs—taking medications, getting up, and getting through the day. ACT teams work closely with consumers to see which medications work best for them. They help consumers find housing, apply for food stamps, go back to school, or get a job.

How does ACT work?

A team approach	Psychiatrists, nurses, mental health professionals, employment specialists, and substance-abuse specialists join together on ACT teams to give consumers ongoing, individualized care.
Services provided where they are needed	Consumers receive ACT services in their homes, where they work, and in other settings in the community where problems occur or where support is needed.
Personalized care	ACT teams work with relatively small numbers of people.
Time-unlimited support	ACT teams give consumers whatever services and supports they need for as long as they need them.
Continuous care	Several ACT team members work regularly with each consumer.
Flexible care	ACT teams fit their schedules around the needs of consumers.
Comprehensive care	ACT teams provide an array of services to help meet consumer needs.
Services provided when they are needed	ACT services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Someone is always available to handle emergencies.

With ACT, consumers benefit most because they are hospitalized less often and have more stable housing.