



HELPING HANDS



Evidence based Substance Use Recommended Treatment

(ChatGPT Compiled)

Substance use disorders are complex conditions that affect behavior, mental health, physical health, relationships, and daily functioning. Effective treatment rarely depends on will-power alone. Instead, the strongest outcomes usually come from structured, evidence-based approaches that address motivation, behavior, and reinforcement. While treatment plans should always be individualized, three types of treatment consistently stand out as being highly effective; cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing or motivational enhancement therapy (MI/MET), and contingency management (CM). Together, these approaches form a strong foundation for treating a wide range of substance use disorders, including alcohol, opioid, stimulant, cannabis, and nicotine use.



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

CBT is based on the idea that thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected. CBT helps individuals identify the patterns that lead to substance use and develop practical skills to change them. Rather than focusing only on stopping use, CBT teaches people how to manage cravings, avoid triggers, cope with stress, challenge unhelpful beliefs, and respond effectively to high-risk situations. A major strength of CBT is its focus on relapse prevention. People often use substances in response to stress, emotional pain, social pressure, boredom, or habitual routines. CBT helps people recognize these patterns and prepare for them in advance. For example, a person may learn how to interrupt automatic thinking such as "I can't handle this without using," and replace it with a healthier coping strategy. These changes can reduce the likelihood of relapse and increase self-efficacy. CBT can be delivered individually, in groups, or through digital platforms or with other treatments. CBT remains valuable even after formal treatment ends.

Motivational Interviewing and Motivational Enhancement Therapy

Motivational interviewing is a person-centered, evidence-based counseling style that helps individuals resolve ambivalence about change. Motivational enhancement therapy is a structured adaptation of MI that often includes personalized feedback and goal setting. These approaches are especially useful when a person is uncertain about reducing or stopping substance use. Instead of confronting resistance, MI works by eliciting the person's own reasons for change in a respectful and collaborative way. Many people considering treatment are not fully ready to change. They may understand the consequences of substance use while also experiencing benefits they are reluctant to give up. MI views this ambivalence as normal rather. Utilizing MI/MET allows a person to explore both sides of an issue and strengthen what is known as "change talk," meaning the person's own statements in favor of change. This process increases engagement and supports movement toward action. The strength of MI/MET is that they are flexible and broadly applicable. MI/MET helps people start treatment, commit to goals, and staying engaged.

Contingency Management

CM is a structured, research-supported method for reinforcing behaviors that lead to recovery. CM is based on the principle of positive reinforcement. In this approach, individuals receive tangible rewards, such as vouchers, prizes, or incentives, when they meet clearly defined treatment goals. These goals often include attending sessions, submitting negative drug tests, or completing recovery-related activities.

CM works by making healthy behaviors immediately rewarding. This is important because substance use often provides rapid reinforcement, while the benefits of recovery may feel delayed. By attaching meaningful incentives to abstinence and treatment participation, CM helps bridge that gap and strengthen new habits. Instead, it often works best when combined with therapies such as CBT or MI. In many studies, CM has improved abstinence rates, treatment attendance, and retention, making it one of the strongest evidence-based tools available.

Conclusion

Although no single treatment works for every person, cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing or motivational enhancement therapy, and contingency management are widely recognized as the top evidence-based substance use treatment modalities. CBT helps people build the skills needed to change behavior and prevent relapse. MI/MET strengthen internal motivation and improve engagement in care. CM uses positive reinforcement to support abstinence and treatment participation. When these approaches are combined and tailored to individual needs, they can form a highly effective framework for recovery. The best treatment plans often integrate more than one modality, recognizing that substance use disorders involve not only behavior, but also motivation, environment, and the need for sustained support over time

Accessing Substance Use Treatment Through Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



If you or someone you care about is struggling with substance use, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a valuable resource for finding help. EAPs are designed to provide confidential support, guidance, and referrals for employees facing personal or work challenges, including substance use concerns. A simple phone call or online request can connect you with an experienced counselor who will assess your situation, discuss your treatment options, and recommend the level of care that best meets your needs. Your EAP can help you locate qualified treatment providers, explain your health insurance benefits, and coordinate referrals to outpatient counseling, intensive outpatient programs, residential treatment, or recovery support services when appropriate. Many EAPs also offer short-term counseling and follow-up services to help you

stay on track after treatment begins.

Seeking assistance through your EAP is confidential, and using these services will not affect your job status. Taking the first step early can improve recovery outcomes and provide the support, resources, and encouragement needed to build a healthier, substance-free future for yourself and your loved ones. Your EAP representative appears below.



**IAM Peer
Employee
Assistance Program**

The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peers do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations; they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer coordinators will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that addressed the difficulty you were experiencing.

IAM EAP Airline Chairmen

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Treatment Resources

If you or someone you know is seeking help for a substance, use disorder, evidence-based treatments are widely available. For information about Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Motivational Interviewing/Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MI/MET), or Contingency Management, contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Helpline 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or 1-800-487-4889 (TTY).

Trained specialists are available 24/7 to provide free, confidential treatment referrals and information in English and Spanish.