



SAMHSA'S PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE WELLNESS

Incorporating Wellness Into Recovery

SAMHSA's Program to Achieve Wellness Recognition of Excellence in Wellness

What: Through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Program to Achieve Wellness, organizations and communities will be recognized for their exemplary wellness efforts that improve the cardiovascular health of those living with mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders.

When: Apply by July 28 to showcase how your organization or community improves wellness outcomes for people with mental and/or substance abuse disorders, including individuals living with serious mental illness.

For more information, visit the [Program to Achieve Wellness webpage](#).

Background

The most common causes of death among people with serious mental illness are heart disease, cancer, and lung disease, which can all be caused by smoking (Druss et al., 2011; as cited by CDC, 2017). People with mental and/or substance abuse disorders smoke at rates 70% higher than most Americans, resulting in as many as 200,000 deaths per year among this group (CDC, 2013). Not only is smoking prevalent among individuals living with mental and/or substance abuse disorders, but related chronic conditions are also exceedingly high for this population: People with serious mental and/or substance abuse disorders are twice as likely to be overweight or obese (Daumit et al., 2013), adding to a greater risk for diabetes and high blood pressure. Healthy People 2020 notes that while mental health disorders can precede chronic disease; chronic disease can intensify the symptoms of mental health disorders—"in effect creating a cycle of poor health" (2017). The whole health and well-being of individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders is critically important for supporting all Americans in living long, full, healthy, productive lives. SAMHSA's Program to Achieve Wellness strives to address this complicated cycle of poor health.

Goal

The goal of the "Recognition of Excellence" is to identify and showcase programs and practices that put the concept of wellness into action. Recognized programs will be those that:

- Create meaningful improvements in the lives of people in recovery from mental and/or substance abuse disorders, including those living with serious mental illness (for example, improving cardiovascular health, decreasing blood pressure, decreasing risk factors for chronic diseases)
- Effectively work to address the rates of chronic illness and premature death experienced by this population

SAMHSA’s Program to Achieve Wellness is inviting applications from programs that have demonstrated exceptional achievements in integrating effective wellness practices into services for people in recovery from behavioral health disorders. Three programs will be selected and highlighted as models that other communities can adopt and implement.

Acknowledging the need to address the chronic disease cycle, and in support of the [Million Hearts Initiative](#)[®], programs will be selected for their success in improving cardiovascular health outcomes for individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders, including those with serious mental illness. . Improvements in cardiovascular health or cardiovascular health indicators or biomarkers can include:

- Hypertension/High Blood Pressure
- Kidney Disease/Kidney Functioning
- Cholesterol
- Smoking/Tobacco Use
- Diabetes/Self-Management
- Other Health Risk Assessment Data Collected
- Number of provider/specialist referrals resulting from an on-site health or wellness fair

Benefit

The Recognition will allow SAMHSA’s Program to Achieve Wellness, and the selected programs, to share comprehensive, effective, and outstanding program and practice strategies and designs with the mental health field, public health field, and general public. A webinar will announce the selected programs, providing an opportunity for viewers to learn more about the effective approaches, as well as how to replicate their strategies. The importance of wellness, and the need to address health disparities and the mortality gap, will be illuminated through the Recognition of Excellence in Wellness.

Eligibility

- National organizations, community-based organizations (including providers, peers, and peer providers), communities, states, and tribes in the United States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories are eligible to apply
- Federal agencies and individuals are ineligible
- Applicant organization must provide services or supports to those living with mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders
- The program described in the submission must address at least one of the [Eight Dimensions of Wellness](#)

How to Apply

Complete and submit an application cover sheet, a narrative description of the program, two testimonials from program participants, and documentation of the impact on health or wellness.

Application Cover Sheet

An application cover sheet is required for all submissions. [Click here to download the cover sheet.](#)

Application Package Overview:

- Application cover sheet
- Narrative description
- Two testimonials from program participants
- Outcome documentation

Narrative Description

Submit a narrative no longer than five pages that clearly and concisely describes:

1. What are the components of the wellness program, the rationale for the program, and funding supporting the program
2. How the wellness program was implemented, including the story of the transition or change in adopting the program, staff responses to the change, challenges that were overcome, and any champions who served as catalysts for change
3. How the program impacted wellness of the target population
4. Why the program should be acknowledged for excellence
5. How the program is being, or will be, sustained
6. The narrative must detail improvements in cardiovascular health in the target population through their involvement in the program

Testimonials

Applicants are asked to submit **two brief testimonials or stories** from individuals who participate/participated in the wellness program. Testimonials can be submitted as written attachments or video supplements. **Written testimonials should not exceed 500 words.**

Testimonials submitted as videos should be no longer than three minutes. Testimonials must include self-reported improvements in heart health.

Outcome Documentation

Applicants are to **include a brief summary of documentation of outcomes** to show that the wellness approach is an effective practice for improving health outcomes and reducing premature mortality of individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders. Outcome documentation can include a formal evaluation or assessment or other quantitative or qualitative data that illustrates successful outcomes of the program. **Documentation of outcomes should not exceed two pages.**

Outcome documentation must include quantitative data illustrating improvements in cardiovascular health or cardiovascular health indicators or biomarkers, such as:

- Hypertension/High Blood Pressure
- Kidney Disease/Kidney Functioning
- Cholesterol
- Smoking/Tobacco Use

- Diabetes/Self-Management
- Other Health Risk Assessment Data Collected
- Number of provider/specialist referrals resulting from an on-site health or wellness fair

Submission Terms and Conditions

By submitting a nomination, each participant automatically confers on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) an irrevocable, nonexclusive, and unrestricted license to use the submitted content for purposes consistent with the agency’s national service mission. This includes the right to copy, reproduce, display, or distribute the content of the submission, and to make derivative (copied) works based upon the submission or a substantial portion of it without attribution or prior permission. When submitting testimonials, photos, or videos applicants must include a written and signed release statement from the wellness program participant giving consent to share the story, photo, or video as part of The Recognition of Excellence application. Applications without this consent will not be reviewed.

The Recognition of Excellence in Wellness is sponsored by SAMHSA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857. Policy Research Associates, Inc. is the Administrator for the Recognition of Excellence in Wellness under SAMHSA contract no. HHSS280201500001C.

Submission

Applicants are to submit completed application packages via email to paw@prainc.com with “Recognition of Excellence in Wellness” in the subject line. If submitting videos or photos, they can be submitted in the application email, or applicants can include a link to a cloud storage server for access, e.g.: Dropbox, WeTransfer.

Alternatively, applicants can submit completed application packages via postal mail to:

Program to Achieve Wellness Recognition of Excellence
 Policy Research Associates
 345 Delaware Avenue
 Delmar, NY 12054

All materials must be received by 11:59pm ET on Friday, July 28, 2017.

Judging Criteria

Impact – Judges will award up to 50 points for an application that demonstrates significant impact on the lives of individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders. Points will be awarded when formal evaluations or other forms of outcome data, qualitative or quantitative, are indicative of an improvement in the well-being of the applicant’s target population, including illustration of improved health outcomes for individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders. Strong applications will demonstrate how the wellness program addresses a need in the narrative section, having an impact on the community; illustrate positive results and improvements in the outcomes section; and include detailed testimonials of the impact of the program on individuals with lived experience.

Replicability – Judges will award up to 30 points for applications that show creative use of funding and staffing resources, which would allow the program/practice to be easily replicated by other groups across the country. Strong applications will demonstrate replicability by detailing funding sources, staffing patterns, and the use of champions in the narrative and describing data collected for outcomes that could reasonably be collected by other programs.

Innovation – Judges will award up to 20 points for applications that represent highly innovative, practice-tested programs. Innovative programs are those successful programs that exemplify creativity, effectiveness, and demonstrate a new and novel approach for enhancing or promoting wellness among individuals with mental and/or substance abuse disorders. Strong applications will include a description of creative use of funding or staffing in the narrative, or otherwise a unique and underused approach to wellness; creative and cost-effective approaches to data collection and outcome reporting; and testimonials that speak to the wellness program as uniquely engaging and effective.

Recognition

While there is no cash prize, three programs will be showcased on the website for SAMHSA’s Program to Achieve Wellness and SAMHSA’s social media channels. The Program to Achieve Wellness will host a webinar featuring the Winners and their programs, congratulating them, and allowing for Q&A with webinar participants.

Timeline

Announcement:	Wednesday, May 3, 2017
Submission Deadline:	Friday, July 28, 2017
Winners Notified:	Wednesday, August 23, 2017
Official Announcement Webinar:	TBD, during National Wellness Week September 10-16

Questions?

Please contact PAW Assistant Director, Dr. Crystal L. Brandow, at cbrandow@prainc.com or call 1-800-850-2523 with any questions about the application process.

Applications are due by 11:59pm ET on Friday, July 28 via email to paw@prainc.com or postal mail to Program to Achieve Wellness Recognition of Excellence, Policy Research Associates, 345 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054.