



MARRCH Position Paper: Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine abuse is treatable and has recovery rates similar to other drugs, according to the Minnesota Association of Resources for Recovery and Chemical Health (MARRCH), a statewide association of agencies and professionals dedicated to the treatment and recovery of individuals who abuse alcohol and drugs.

Minnesota treatment centers have been successfully treating stimulant addiction, such as Methamphetamine, for the past 40 years. Methamphetamine (a.k.a. Meth) is a highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. Meth can be made with easily obtained – and inexpensive – products found in virtually any drug store. Manufacture in make-shift laboratories is a relatively simple process. Because it is cheap and uses easily accessible ingredients, meth is a drug with a high potential for widespread use.

Methamphetamine, developed from its parent drug, amphetamine, was used originally in nasal decongestants and bronchial inhalers. By-products of the drug are increased activity, decreased appetite and a general sense of euphoria. The effects of the drug can last 6-8 hours. Users experience an initial rush but that typically is followed by a state of high agitation and, in some cases, violent behavior.

Widespread use, and abuse, of meth have accelerated at an alarming rate in recent years. MARRCH member agencies have responded to the Meth crisis by creating a variety of treatment models ranging from short-term outpatient to long-term inpatient programs.

MARRCH's position on methamphetamine includes:

- There is not one cure-all solution. Depending on severity, different treatment models need to be employed to deal with Meth addiction
- The current detoxification model (72 hours) is based on alcohol intoxication and doesn't work well in Meth detoxification cases
- Private insurance, Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP) and the state's Consolidated Fund all are geared to address alcohol recovery timeframes. They need to be adjusted to be effective in treating Meth cases

MARRCH recommends that the Minnesota State Legislature reviews treatment resources and successes from the field to set funding levels needed to deliver desired results. Further, MARRCH recommends that the state Department of Human Services (DHS) facilitate this review. MARRCH stands ready to partner with the state to bring the meth crisis under control.

MARRCH is the authoritative resource for input on policies and programs promoting chemical health in Minnesota. Contact MARRCH at 1000 Westgate Drive, Suite 252, St. Paul, MN 55114. Phone: 651-290-7462. MARRCH@Ewald.com