

# Mental Health

Fostering Workable Solutions in Prevention, Treatment, and Policy



Abt provides policy analysis, strategic evaluation and financing solutions to help clients **operate effective mental health programs and organizations** that are person-centered, community-anchored, culturally responsive, recovery-oriented and outcomes-driven.



## Our Services

We provide a comprehensive array of services, including:

- Developing/executing effective strategies, initiatives, policies and programs
- Research and evaluation
- Data collection and analysis
- Policy and economic analysis
- Project management
- Social marketing and health communication
- Survey research
- Systems design
- Scholarly/policy documents
- Technical assistance and training

## Selected Clients

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- State and local government agencies

## Examples of Our Work in Mental Health

### Health Communications & Marketing

Abt delivers communication services to support SAMHSA's mission to prevent and reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on Americans. This includes developing multi-media communication resources for use by the field and general public, as well as supporting partnerships with federal, national and state entities for the purpose of advancing the substance abuse prevention and treatment and mental health agenda.

We are also providing communications support and outreach to encourage enrollment in the nation's new healthcare insurance marketplace. We are also researching tobacco use prevention and cessation messaging for individuals with mental and substance use disorders.

In addition, Abt is creating a strategic communication plan for SAMHSA to guide its activities—incorporating all communication platforms and covering a wide range of audiences, events and national health observances.

Abt leads National Recovery Month, the award-winning national health communications campaign that promotes the societal benefits of treatment for substance use and mental disorders and promotes the message that recovery is possible.

Further, Abt is creating and applying prevention messages and producing materials for CSAP, including short videos for SAMHSA's Prevention Day. We have also supported the continuation and evolution of SAMHSA's prevention-themed section of the DEA's "Target America" traveling exhibit.

## Research and Evaluation

### Determining Disparities in ADHD Treatment in the U.S.

Abt recently conducted a study on the use of amphetamine medications to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in the U.S. The study revealed that treatment varies widely from state to state and even more dramatically from one county to another. The NIDA-funded study was published in the November 2013 issue of *Psychiatric Services*. It is the first study to estimate treatment rates using prescription records of individuals.

### **Evaluating the National Training Initiative on Trauma-Informed Care**

Abt will conduct a cross-site evaluation of the National Training Initiative on Trauma-Informed Care for Community-Based Providers from Diverse Services Systems for the Office on Women's Health. The evaluation will validate and elevate the training to an evidence-based model, proving its efficacy to address trauma as a central issue in treating co-occurring disorders and providing insight to inform training modifications that will improve outcomes.

### **Reimbursing Mental Health Services**

This project for SAMHSA, CMS and HRSA involved identifying barriers and defining solutions to reimbursing mental health services delivered in primary care settings.

### **Analyzing the Behavioral Health Gap**

Abt determined the gaps in behavioral health research relevant to PTSD among returning combat-exposed military personnel in this study for DoD and the Military Operational Medicine Research Program. Abt conducted a literature review and environmental scan of complementary and alternative (CAM) medicines used to treat PTSD. We assessed the scientific evidence and describe popular effectiveness claims about CAM interventions.

### **Evaluating with Real-World Impact: Project LAUNCH**

Abt conducted a five-year, cross-site evaluation of Project LAUNCH, which provides grants to programs for promoting child wellness and healthy development from birth to age eight.

### **Researching Veterans' Mental Health**

Abt is conducting the National Vietnam Veterans Longitudinal Study for the VA to learn about the long-term course of combat-related PTSD and its relationship to chronic physical illnesses.

### **Examining the Health Impacts of Deployment**

The Abt team is studying for the Department of Defense the behavioral health impacts of multiple deployments to combat zones on U.S. active duty service members' spouses. Earlier the Abt team examined for the VA barriers in disability and health benefit structures for veterans returning to competitive employment.

### **Assessing MYCHILD**

Abt designed and is conducting a mixed-methods evaluation of a primary care-based early childhood system of care (MYCHILD) in Boston. The evaluation includes analyses of Medicaid utilization and cost data for enrolled children.

### **Evaluating SAMHSA's HIV/AIDS Program**

SAMHSA's Minority AIDS Initiative-Targeted Capacity Expansion (MAI-TCE) program is designed to facilitate the development and expansion of culturally competent and effective integrated behavioral health and primary care services, which include HIV services and medical treatment, within the 12 Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Metropolitan Divisions most heavily impacted by HIV/AIDS. The program also supports integrating behavioral health services into the CDC's Enhanced Comprehensive HIV Prevention Plans. To support this initiative, Abt is conducting an in-depth evaluation of the process and implementation of MAI-TCE.

### **Technical Assistance**

#### **Implementing Evidence-Based Practices in Substance Abuse Treatment in State Medicaid Programs**

Abt developed implementation reports on evidence-based practices (EBPs) in substance abuse treatment to guide states in reimbursement of these practices within the Medicaid program.

#### **Developing Market-Tested Implementation Toolkits**

Abt led a project sponsored by SAMHSA with Advocates for Human Potential and NASMHPD Research Institute to develop high-quality, market-tested, culturally-competent and consumer-informed implementation toolkits.

### **Contact**

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**Abt Associates** is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries.

