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Washington, DC 20503

## Recovery Now: Taking Action to Heal America's Substance Users

At the State of the Union Address, President Bush announced a three-year, \$600 million federal treatment initiative – the *Recovery Now* program. This new program will assist more Americans who need critical recovery services, complementing existing alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs and increasing treatment capacity and consumer choice. This new initiative also will accelerate the President's pledge to heal America's alcohol and drug users by increasing treatment funding by \$1.6 billion over five years.

- **The President's Recovery Now program:**

- Helps at least 100,000 more people per year who need and want to obtain alcohol and drug abuse treatment services, but who lack the financial resources to obtain such treatment
- Ensures that a comprehensive continuum of effective treatment and support service options, including faith-based and community based programs, becomes more readily available and accessible
- Allows health care providers, faith-based and other community organizations, workplaces, and schools to help alcohol and drug abusers receive the treatment and support services that are best suited to their individual needs
- Requires state leadership, treatment delivery improvements, and full and open competition among providers, including public, private and public/private partnerships, in order to better reach and treat those in need
- Requires states to establish a system that monitors programs in terms of outcomes and costs and holds states fully accountable for delivering effective treatment.
- Serves as a model for states in administering other Department of Health and Human Services alcohol and drug abuse grant funding consistent with proposed Charitable Choice regulations

- **Who Will Benefit from the President's Plan?**

- Any individual with a drug or alcohol problem who is without private treatment coverage and who has been assessed as needing assistance by a professional in an emergency room, health clinic, school or other setting
- Individuals whose recovery is best assured when it is achieved in a program that recognizes the power of spiritual resources in transforming lives
- Any Medicaid beneficiary who has been excluded from receiving treatment in residential treatment settings
- Faith-based organizations, which may now be recognized as full and equal partners in the process of recovery
- American families that have been torn apart because of the untreated alcohol or drug dependence of a loved one
- The American public that has suffered the social and economic costs of untreated alcohol and drug abuse for far too long

- **Guiding Principles of the Voucher Program**
  - Ensure access and accountability for alcohol and drug abuse treatment services, allowing individuals greater choices among appropriate programs
  - Enable individuals to utilize federal alcohol and drug abuse dollars at all effective treatment organizations, including faith-based organizations
  - Expand treatment utilization and accountability, thus broadening and strengthening the treatment system
  - Provide a means for the Federal Government to monitor state implementation of the program to prevent fraud and abuse, ensure quality of care, and evaluate the effectiveness of the program
  - Enable nonprofit and proprietary organizations the opportunity to be listed as treatment and service providers through full and open competition
  
- **How the Initiative Will Work -- Improving and Expanding Treatment Delivery**
  - People who are seeking drug and alcohol treatment and support services will be assessed, then receive a voucher to pay for a range of appropriate community treatment programs.
  - States will work with a consortium of public and private entities to jointly administer the program, distribute vouchers, and deliver alcohol and drug treatment and other services.
  - States would be required to monitor the outcomes and costs of the voucher program and to make adjustments based on the extent to which improved client outcomes are or are not achieved in a cost-effective manner.
  - The key to accountability in this program will be the system of reimbursement. Payment to providers will be linked to demonstration of treatment effectiveness measured by abstinence from alcohol and drug use following discharge.
  - For many Americans seeking treatment, the transforming power of faith will now be available to heal those suffering from alcohol and drug abuse.