A Holistic Approach Built on Evidence

Substance use disorders. Mental illness. Post-traumatic stress disorder. The opioid crisis. Suicide. Behavioral health issues no longer reside in the margins of public health in America or, indeed, the world. They are front and center in the public eye—and on policymakers’ agendas. Abt Associates has informed global public policy on behavioral health through its partnerships with government agencies at the local, state, national and international levels, and with private foundations. We perform rigorous evaluations and longitudinal studies to collect critical data for decision making and improved prevention and treatment. We design and implement communications campaigns to alert the public to the importance, ubiquity and urgency of behavioral health issues. We devise ways to improve health systems and the delivery of health services to increase their impact on health outcomes. We perform comprehensive literature reviews to determine best practices. Our experts are adept at transmitting this knowledge across written, digital, video and social media platforms.
Data-Driven Insights for Prevention, Treatment and Recovery

Our analytic work has tangible implications for health policy that can impact well-being around the world. We devised opioid-prescribing guidelines that align with the best evidence. We improved behavioral health outcomes for persons living with HIV/AIDS.

We understand the correlation between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other psychiatric co-morbidities in Vietnam veterans. PTSD was recognized as a psychiatric disorder in 1980. Vietnam veterans were the first to be assessed for the disorder in Abt’s longitudinal study of the course of PTSD for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Abt also helped the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) determine how comprehensive behavioral health services can improve clinical outcomes for individuals affected by—or at-risk for—HIV/AIDS. Such services marry behavioral health and primary care systems and hold the promise of improving the overall health of communities in the U.S. and worldwide.

ABT STAFF CONDUCTED A RAPID LITERATURE REVIEW—COMPILING A CONSENSUS FROM HUNDREDS OF JOURNAL ARTICLES IN JUST A FEW MONTHS—TO SUPPORT THE CDC GUIDELINE FOR PRESCRIBING OPIOIDS FOR CHRONIC PAIN, UNITED STATES, 2016.
Fostering Communication for Impact

As behavioral health-related events make headlines—the opioid epidemic, celebrity deaths due to overdose or suicide—behavioral health communication strategies assume a critical role in informing the public about mental disorders and substance use disorders.

Abt communicated the impact of substance use in *Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health*. This groundbreaking document presents evidence-based programs and policies that prevent and treat alcohol and other drug related problems and outlines how the collected knowledge can address substance use and its consequences.

For SAMHSA, we collaborated with community-based organizations, schools and local governments to increase public awareness of substance use and mental health issues via National Prevention Week. Activities included video and social media postings and tips and templates for community media outreach. Abt can tailor these techniques for communities and countries worldwide.

In addition, we co-created "Community Conversations about Mental Health," a toolkit for SAMHSA that guides advocacy groups through the process of organizing community conversations, a critical part of addressing stigma. Abt can adapt the toolkit for use internationally.

"Abt gathers critical data on treatment and recovery, but we know our communities and systems are better off if we can identify risks, and communicate them to prevent problems before they lead to more serious concerns."

Christopher Spera, PhD, Abt Division Vice President, Health and Environment

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30.5 MILLION AMERICANS

REPORTED USE OF ILLICIT DRUGS OR MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES IN 2017.

The Abt Advantage

The behavioral health landscape constantly changes as new challenges arise. New research findings have prompted major changes in behavioral health policy and practice. They highlight the need for new strategies that are culturally responsive and based on solid data. Abt can keep you up-to-date on the latest trends and provide innovative solutions to help foster prevention and recovery.

We bring together multi-disciplinary expertise and use scientific evidence, advanced technology and data analytics to inform our work on prevention and treatment in settings ranging from schools to prisons. As a results-oriented organization, Abt provides practical, measurable, high-value solutions to problems at the local, state, national and international levels. The goals of our studies and practice guidelines: heal the whole person and build resilient communities.
Abt Associates is an engine for social impact, dedicated to moving people from vulnerability to security. Harnessing the power of data and our experts’ grounded insights, we provide research, consulting and technical services globally in the areas of health, environmental and social policy, technology and international development.