

Special Reports

New Science-Based Models

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Enterhealth Opens

In an Industry Where Claims of Uniqueness Abound, Enterhealth Offers a Truly New Model

Not too long ago, a group of investors got together, some of them addiction docs, but mostly just ordinary investors with a keen interest in backing a truly unique, highly integrated science-based model of addiction treatment, a development that may be the first of its kind ever attempted in the addiction treatment industry.

And this month that model, principally the brainchild of renowned addictionologist Dr. Harold Urschel, came to life in the form of Dallas-based Enterhealth, which just a few weeks ago opened its 16-bed Life Recovery Center, the residential piece of a treatment model that is quite possibly about as entirely evidence-based as exists anywhere in the U.S., or even worldwide, addiction treatment universe. "Our goal here was really to examine closely the known science surrounding addiction," says Urschel, who is not only a major principal in the Enterhealth business enterprise but also the key designer of the highly unique program that is emerging at Enterhealth.



In Development

Emerging is a key word when it comes to Enterhealth, because Urschel admits the model, mostly over the next 18 months or so, is likely to refined and, if the evidence dictates, even undergo some very substantial changes.

And CEO David Kniffen, who expects other Life Recovery Centers to open soon, especially in Europe where there is a dearth of quality addiction care, says the investment so far in Enterhealth has been substantial, in the \$5 million range. "And our investors have deep pockets, so they stand fully ready to back expansion should demand for our treatment product warrant," he says.

Little Doubt

But as Treatment Magazine, has surveyed the treatment landscape over the past five years, it has become increasingly clear that consumers are looking for much more than the spiritually based approaches that have dominated since the mid part of the last century.

And Urschel suspects that there has been little in the way of comprehensive outcomes studies, perhaps

because the industry fears such studies may show existing approaches may not work all that well.

And probably a major reason for this, according to Urschel, is that acute care models have been used to treat what science is increasingly telling us is a chronic disease that very likely requires, depending on the individual, a lifetime of care. "Our key insight here is that addiction has really only been partially treated," says Urschel, who also integrates strong business insight into the Enterhealth treatment model through his acquisition of a prestigious Stanford MBA. "We have set out here to totally reformulate the way addiction treatment is delivered in the future."

With a private pay business plan that offers 45 days of care for \$37K, Enterhealth is not yet a mass market product. But others, like Florida House Sunlight Recovery in Florida are attempting to lengthen care and take more of a chronic disease approach at lower price points.



Holy Grail

Clearly, the Holy Grail of making a chronic disease addiction care model highly affordable and, thus, a mass market product, is getting the Internet to play a central role in the delivery of addiction treatment. And Enterhealth has its eye on the ball when it comes to the Internet, currently offering an online recovery enhancement and addiction educational product called Enterhealth Online Life Care.

Urschel clearly has hopes that Enterhealth's online product, which he plans to develop into a full fledged "distance treatment" program will perhaps one day become as successful as has "distance education," with the Internet in the 1990s revolutionizing education delivery while creating a new multibillion industry along the way. Should Enterhealth's online addiction treatment delivery really catch on, it will no doubt make the small group of five Enterhealth investors very rich. CEO Kniffen says that not only will each client who enters residential treatment at Enterhealth be enrolled in Online Life Care, but Enterhealth has plans to aggressively market the \$99 Internet product to treatment centers nationwide, creating a whole new revenue stream.

A business over three years in the planning and making, Enterhealth is appearing on the addiction treatment scene at a time of increasing scrutiny into whether or not treatment actually works. Causing quite a stir, a major article in the New York Times in late December pointed out the woeful lack of outcomes data throughout the addiction treatment industry. The article suggested that much of the \$20 billion spent annually - actually, about \$25 billion is currently spent every year on treatment - might be a waste of money.



But at Enterhealth, the name of the game - their mantra - is evidence-based practices. And the latest in scientific advancements - pharmacotherapies, brain scanning - will also be integral at Enterhealth.