

NEWS RELEASE



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NCADD-NJ's addiction discrimination report released and dramatized at State House

TRENTON ... (September 20, 2005) – The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey (NCADD-NJ) has released a series of recommendations by a panel of legal, medical, and policy experts to address the most common forms of discrimination facing people with an addiction or in recovery from an alcohol or drug problem. The document, “Overcoming Addiction Discrimination,” outlines the panel’s remedies to the inequities addicted individuals face in health care, employment, education and housing.

“This report proposes concrete measures to address areas of bias that people with an addiction routinely face,” said John Hulick, NCADD-NJ’s director of Public Affairs and Policy. “For NCADD-NJ, it is particularly rewarding in that it lies at the heart of the agency’s founding principle, which is to uproot the stigma that has long confronted people with an addiction to alcohol or drugs and made their return to wellness that much more difficult.”

In concert with the release of its findings, NCADD-NJ debuted a spoken-word performance in front of the State House today. The performance, entitled “Re-Cover-Me, demonstrated the effects addiction bias has on thousands of state residents. “Re-Cover-Me” presents some of the forms addiction discrimination takes and the challenges that many New Jerseyans recovering from addiction face as a result. Hulick said “the piece was created to illustrate the personal hardships

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that confront many people long after they have stopped using alcohol or drugs. The artists use real-life stories meant to creatively engage a wide-ranging audience and inspire them to confront addiction discrimination and to celebrate recovery from addiction.”

Among the anecdotes from NCADD-NJ’s report used in creating “Re-Cover-Me” was that of a 22-year-old, who after receiving an assessment over telephone that determined low-level, outpatient treatment was the appropriate course, died of an overdose. Another of the stories describes a young man’s loss of his job because of a drug possession charge involving less than a gram of marijuana. The report can be found on NCADD-NJ’s website, www.ncaddnj.org.

NCADD-NJ has dedicated itself for more than 20 years to educating New Jersey’s citizens about alcohol and drug use issues, to advocating on state policies concerning individuals addicted to alcohol or other drugs, and to reducing the stigma that frustrates a public health approach to the disease of addiction. More information about the council is available at its website, www.ncaddnj.org.