

Women and Addiction

This is the first in a two-part series on women and addiction and Horizon's women-focused program at Horizon Village.

Addiction to drugs and/or alcohol is a serious and chronic problem for both men and women of all ages and backgrounds. However, because of the differences in the bodies of men and women, as well as in the sociocultural factors which contribute to substance abuse, women with addictions face different challenges to their health, as well as to the approach and progression of their treatment.

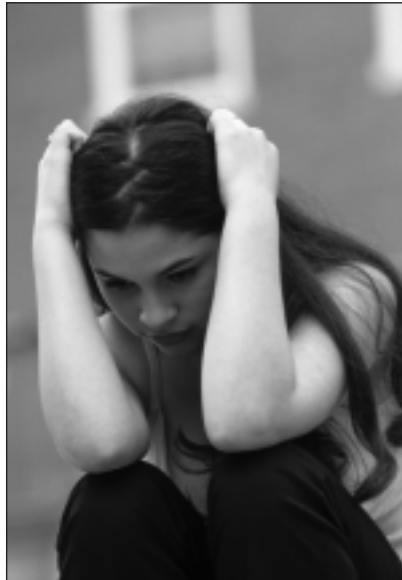
Women of all races, income groups, education levels and types of communities suffer from the serious illness of addiction and are in need of treatment. Research indicates, however, that women are less likely to seek treatment for their addiction than are men. Often, women who use drugs or alcohol have low self-esteem, little or no self-confidence and an overwhelming sense of helplessness.

"Women often don't seek treatment because they don't have the money, they can't afford child care, they fear losing their children or their spouse or they fear punishment or reprisal from their spouse or the authorities," says Paige Prentice, director of Horizon Village.

But research also indicates that women may become more quickly addicted than men to certain drugs. By the time they seek treatment, women are often more severely addicted and require treatment that addresses their specific needs, such as poor nutrition, physical abuse, pregnancy or other serious medical or mental health issues.

"Women benefit more from programs that provide additional services, such as medical care, child care, social services and assertiveness training," says Paige. "Yet, many drug treatment programs may not provide those services. Women also need more assistance and support after their treatment to sustain their recovery."

Alcohol and drug abuse has long been thought to be a problem more commonly associated with men. But, as women's health concerns continue to receive additional attention, it's becoming more apparent that the use of alcohol and illegal or prescription drugs by women is creating serious problems for these women and their families.



Cordell James Photography



From the desk of...

Anne Constantino
President & CEO

It is great to see that more and more people are concerned about improving their physical health and wellness. Every day and in every area of the media there is excellent information about good nutrition, exercise and the elimination of unhealthy habits such as smoking. Reports indicate our nation's physical health – as a whole – has never been better.

But what about our mental health? Are we as focused on obtaining and maintaining good mental health?

Statistics indicate that, each year, 20 percent of the population – or one in every five individuals – will experience a mental health disorder that requires treatment. However, 50 percent of those who need treatment for a mental illness will not receive services. Most often, reluctance to seek treatment is the result of the stigma that many in our society attach to mental illness and to people who have a mental illness. Additionally, the lack of understanding about the possibility of recovery continues to be a barrier to individuals seeking and receiving appropriate treatment.

Five years ago, *The Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health* called for the willingness of each of us to educate ourselves and others about mental health and mental illness, and to confront the attitudes, fear and misunderstanding that remain as barriers to treatment and recovery. Have we made progress in the past five years? This is important. Remember the statistics stated above. This is an issue that affects every one of us and those we love. ♥

Construction Update:
New Women's wing at
Horizon Village – See page 2

How is Horizon addressing the specific and additional needs of women with addictions? In our next issue, we will discuss the women's program at Horizon Village. ♥

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Horizon Village addition is on its way.

The new women’s wing being constructed at Horizon Village, Horizon’s intensive residential facility in Sanborn, is really taking shape! Ground was broken in early January after required testing was completed. So far, the site work, excavation, foundation and underground work have been completed, despite the cold and the snow. Rough framing of the addition began in mid-March.

“We’re still on schedule for completion this June,” says Don Will, vice president of infrastructure and resource management. “Everything is going according to plan so far, with no major problems.”

When completed, the new wing – which is being funded by OASAS – will include a multi-purpose room for women-specific activities and classes, as well as a lounge and family visitation area, conference room and offices. Horizon Village’s current program will be enhanced to include

women-only individual and group counseling, education and supportive services.

“Research clearly indicates women have different needs in recovery than men,” says Paige Prentice, director of Horizon Village. “They are much more likely to open up and participate when they are among other women, so we are very excited that we’ll be able to offer this type of service to recovering women in Western New York.” ♥



Thanks to mild weather, construction on the new wing at Horizon Village is moving along, and plans are underway for a June opening.

MEET OUR Board

Name:
Stefanie Zakowicz

Title: Director,
Public Relations,
Tops Markets, LLC

HHS Boards:
Horizon Health
Services and
Health Management
Group Boards



Gordon James Photography

How did you come to be on the Boards? “Through Anne Constantino, with whom I attended *Leadership Buffalo*. Like most people, I have had personal experience in the area of mental illness and addiction through a close relative, so it is especially meaningful for me to participate at this level.”

What have you found most rewarding about serving on the Boards? “I serve on several other boards in the community, but this is my first experience with an organization involved with the health and treatment of individuals. It is enormously gratifying to be a part of Horizon, and know that its staff can truly impact peoples’ lives in such a positive way. I only hope I can contribute in some small way to its continued success.”

What do you want people to know about Horizon? “I would like people to recognize two things: first that there is a tremendous need in our community for this kind of resource and two, that Horizon is here to help meet that need. Horizon helps individuals, and its staff does so in a caring, compassionate manner, keeping each individual’s dignity and respect in mind. The individuals who have the opportunity to rebuild their lives because of the help they receive through Horizon’s programs are a testament to Horizon’s success.” ♥

**Women represent
40 percent of all
admissions to
Horizon Village.**

Hello
My name is

Donna Sherman
LCSW - R

Program Coordinator, Niagara
County Comprehensive Case
Management & Forensic Mental
Health Unit, City Market Center &
Niagara County Jail

Gordon James Photography



with serious and persistent mental illness. Donna says the staff members, case managers and nurses in Niagara County show a high level of care and concern for consumers, who often have extensive needs.

“It’s really a privilege to work with the staff and the consumers

at City Market and at the Niagara County Jail,” says Donna. “Staff often go above and beyond the call of duty when helping consumers. There’s a real sense of desire to help others as well as a willingness to go the extra mile.

“Horizon is on the cutting edge in its approach to treatment,” adds Donna. “Staff and management are always on the lookout for a better way because the number one goal is patient treatment, which exactly reflects my professional commitment.”

Donna received B.A. and M.S.W. degrees from the University at Buffalo. She currently holds an adjunct faculty position at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work, where she teaches graduate courses in mental health and violence prevention. Donna resides in Amherst with her husband, Vince (who also works at Horizon), and their two daughters. ♥

Donna Sherman liked working at Horizon Health Services so much she came back. Donna was program coordinator for Horizon’s *Transitions Counseling Center* from 1999-2001 before leaving to start *The Lighthouse*, a program of Lakeshore Behavioral Health. She returned to Horizon just a few months ago because she was excited about the opportunity to work with the NCCCM Program.

“Horizon is so progressive and dynamic,” says Donna. “Horizon is a leader in the human services field, and I think my experiences fit in perfectly with this program. I am very happy to be back.”

The NCCCM & Jail Programs are community-based case management programs for people

thePathtoRecovery

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles with the help of Horizon Village to turn his life around. Last names have been omitted for privacy.

Nick was barely into his teens when he started hanging out with the wrong kids and experimenting with marijuana and alcohol. It didn't take him long to become addicted, which led to him skipping school and eventually dropping out in the ninth grade. He started getting into trouble, stealing to support his habit, and landed in jail several times for drug-related crimes. At the time, he didn't want to stop smoking pot. He didn't see it as a problem that was taking him away from his life.

"I know now I was always thinking negatively because that's the only way I knew how to think," says Nick, a 24-year-old WNY resident and the first consumer to be placed at Horizon Village through Erie County's *Road To Recovery* Program.

The program is an alternative to incarceration for individuals in need of intensive residential chemical dependency treatment. These individuals are deemed to have a reasonable chance of success and have met various criteria set forth by the program. The goal of the program is to return the participant to the community as a clean and sober citizen off welfare and paying taxes in the workforce. Nick knows that he faces his full jail sentence if he does not successfully complete the program. And he's OK with that because he's determined to change his life around.

"Nick's only been here a short time," says Rich Pozak, CASAC and senior counselor at Horizon Village. "But he's already making great strides. He participates in groups, he's learned to listen, to communicate and he is working to establish goals for his future."

Nick came from a broken home and he moved around a lot. He's been on his own for a long time, yet has managed to get his GED. He has also been in a long-term

relationship with his girlfriend, with whom he has an 18-month-old daughter. Both have been an inspiration to Nick and given him more of a reason to change his life around. His girlfriend participates in the family groups at Horizon Village, and has come to understand so much about Nick's addiction and the factors that brought him to this point in his life.

"At first I didn't think I had a problem, so I didn't see the need to enroll in this program," said Nick. "I'm used to handling my problems myself, keeping everything to myself. My lawyer helped me see the light. Now I realize this is an amazing program, even on my bad days."

Nick said he's learned a lot at Horizon Village. His counselors have helped him to explore and understand the difference between right and wrong, helped him understand why it's important to make the right choices. They've taught him to get to know himself, to help him better understand why he used drugs and to care more about himself. They've also helped him start on a plan for his future and they've taught him patience.

"I'd like to get a job, maybe go back to school," says Nick, who says he likes cars and construction. "Maybe I'll open a barber shop someday."

But for right now, Nick is focused on the next six months and showing everyone – including himself – that he can find the life he's really wanted all along.

"I wish I'd had this opportunity years ago," says Nick. "But I'm very glad I am here now."

The Road To Recovery Program is a collaborative effort of the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services. A consortium of agencies consisting of criminal justice agencies, NYS Department of Social Services and treatment providers has been established. For more information, please contact Maria Rivett at 716.831.1800. ♥

Profile of the Compulsive Gambler

- Easily bored
- Outgoing
- Needs to appear in control
- Obsessive compulsive nature
- Competitive
- Low self-esteem/facade of self-confidence
- Unrealistic expectations of others
- Never does anything halfway
- Seeks immediate gratification
- Emotionally immature
- Intelligent
- Procrastinates
- Difficulty with authority figures
- Vacations only where gambling is available
- Manipulates/Takes advantage of others' inadequacies
- Strong denial patterns
- Narcissistic
- Underlying depression
- Anxiety ridden
- Impulsive
- High energy level/loud
- Overextends self and finances
- Needs action/excitement
- Grandiose
- Risk-taker
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Streetwise
- Poor frustration tolerance
- Tendency toward isolation
- Self-destructive
- Hostile and aggressive

For more information on compulsive gambling, visit the New York Council on Problem Gambling website at nyproblemgambling.org or call its 24-hour toll-free hotline (in NYS) at 1.800.437.1611. Or you can call Horizon's Central Intake Number at 716.831.1800. ♥

Women represent just 25 percent of alcoholism clients in traditional treatment centers in the U.S.



Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, 81st Assembly District, and Chairman of the NYS Assembly Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, visited Horizon Village last month to be briefed on Horizon's women-specific treatment program. Pictured with Assemblyman Dinowitz are (from left to right) Horizon VP Maria Rivett, CEO Anne Constantino and Paige Prentice, director of Horizon Village.

Nearly 33 million American women – or one of every three – has used an illicit drug at least once in her lifetime.

Horizon is the largest and most comprehensive outpatient provider of integrated mental health, chemical dependency and medical services in WNY.

HorizonHealthPulse is published for the employees, consumers, Board and friends of Horizon Health Services. Please share this newsletter with a friend. If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or if you have any questions or comments about its content, please call Pat Chrzanowski at 716-831-1800 or email her at pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org.

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Medical DirectorHak Ko, M.D.



HorizonHealthPulse
 Volume 3 • Issue #2 • Spring 2005
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INSIDE: Horizon Village Women's Program Fulfilling a Need.

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