

Tweet Chat Script from Andre Evans of Sovereign Health Treatment Center discussing “Alcohol Complications for Those Struggling with Dual Diagnosis” – February 12, 2015

AH: Welcome to today’s #AHchat! Our topic is “Alcohol Complications for those struggling with Dual Diagnosis Issues”

AH: Special thanks to Sovereign Health Group for helping us make this twitter chat possible!

AH: We would like to start by welcoming our special guest, Andre Evans, who will be tweeting as @sovhealthofca

AH: Andre is the Assistant Program Director of Sovereign Health Group and is joining us to share his expertise on this topic. Welcome Andre!

AH: If you are joining us on the chat today, welcome! Feel free to introduce yourself as we go along our tweet chat.

AH: It’s great to have you all here today! Let’s get started with some of our questions.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q1: Please tell us a little about yourself and your background. What is your role at Sovereign Health?

Andre: A1: I have been working in the counseling field for over 12 years, 10 of those years have been in the mental health industry.

Andre: A1: My first experience was in the education system as an Instructional Assistant

Andre: A1: I worked with students in remedial classes, assisting both the school counselors and school psychologists.

Andre: A1: These students were diagnosed with various learning and behavioral disorders

Andre: A1: Such as mental retardation, motor skills & communication disorders, pervasive developmental, ADD & disruptive behavior disorders.

Andre: A1: Following the education field, my next experience led me to family counseling services

Andre: A1: I worked with our legal system on behalf of a child or family on issues

Andre: A1: Such as gang-related matters, child custody, child supervision, divorce, single/co-parenting, and merging families to name a few.

Andre: A1: My roll at Sovereign Health is assisting the Program Director in the Clinical Department.

Andre: A1: These daily task vary from day to day and include a variety of things.

Andre: A1: I welcome a new clinicians into or department, and support clinical supervisors and clinicians in all departmental related matters

Andre: A1: I also represent the clinical department when working with other professional departments at sovereign health

Andre: A1: Lastly, I support clinical moral, process/forecast future department challenges, create training procedures, and assist in accepting pts

AH: Thank you for sharing Andre! Your role seems very exciting and valuable.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q2: Can you tell us what are co-occurring disorders or dual diagnosis?

Andre: A2: Co-occurring disorders or dual diagnosis are defined by an individual having two diagnoses

Andre: A2: One mental health related and the other is chemical substance abuse

Andre: A2: For example, this might be an eating disorder with alcoholism

Andre: A2: Or PTSD with an addiction to heroin.

Andre: A2: Sometimes the symptoms of mental illness can be confused with symptoms of addiction

Andre: A2: Similarly, the symptoms of substance abuse or addiction can mask symptoms of mental illness

Andre: A2: Therefore, utilizing all three parts of the brain working together is the true meaning of Intuitive Eating.

Andre: A2: Co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders impact one another and must be treated together

Andre: A2: Integrated treatment helps address and treat both disorders

AH: @sovhealthofca Q3: Please tell us about the treatment that is offered at Sovereign Health for dual disorders?

Andre: A3: Sovereign Health provides a specific treatment plan for each individual.

Andre: A3: Our comprehensive programs begin at the admissions process

Andre: A3: Our expert staff conducts a thorough assessment for any potential co-occurring conditions

Andre: A3: This helps create an accurate diagnosis so that each patient gets the right treatment.

Andre: A3: We use evidence based therapies along with innovative methods that supplement traditional medication and social models

AH: @sovhealthofca Q4: What kind of dual disorders do you often treat?

Andre: A4: The dual disorders I treat most often vary between heroin addiction and schizophrenia or alcohol abuse and depression.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q5: How can substance abuse complicate a mental health disorder?

Andre: A5: People with alcohol/sub use disorder are twice as likely to have co-occurring mental health disorder.

Andre: According to the National Alliance on Mental Health Illness (NAMI), substance abuse worsens the prognosis for a person with mental illness.

Andre: A5: People who are actively using are less likely to follow through with the treatment plans they created with their treatment team.

Andre: A5: They are less likely to adhere to their medication regimens and more likely to miss appointments

Andre: A5: This can lead to more psychiatric hospitalizations and other adverse outcomes.

Andre: A5: Active users are more likely to experience severe medical complications and early death

Andre: A5: People with mental illness who abuse substances are also at increased risk of impulsive and potentially violent acts.

Andre: Most concerning is that people who abuse drugs and alcohol are more likely to both attempt suicide and to die from their suicide attempts

Andre: A5: In a dual diagnosis, both the mental health issue and the drug or alcohol addiction have their own unique symptoms

Andre: A5: These may get in the way of a person's ability to function, handle life's difficulties, and relate to others

Andre: A5: When a mental health problem goes untreated, the substance abuse problem usually worsens

Andre: A5: when alcohol or drug abuse increases, mental health problems usually tend to increase as well.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q6: is often addressed first in a dual diagnosis case and why?

Andre: A6: Treating an individual admitting into our care can vary

Andre: A6: Treatment plans to focus on the substance diagnosis first

Andre: A6: This is because prior to detoxing the co-occurring symptoms cannot be accurately identified and or treated successfully.

Andre: A6: After the detox phase, we can treat the co-occurring disorders more successfully.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q7: What treatment approaches are successful in treating a dual diagnosis?

Andre: A7: There are many approaches that can be used to treating a dual diagnosis.

Andre: A7: However, here at Sovereign Health we use only scientific based treatments (e.g., CBT and others)

Andre: A7: These treatments are solutions to aid in the recovery process to a sober and positive lifestyle.

AH: @sovhealthofca Q8: If someone is suffering with a dual diagnosis, where is the best place to start for recovery?

Andre: A8: If an individual is suffering from a dual diagnosis, the best place to start is to visit Sovereign Health's website.

Andre: A8: You can access the Sovereign Health Website here:
<http://ow.ly/IYopQ>

Andre: A8: Here, an individual can become educated on a range of mental health challenges

Andre: A8: You can also contact one of our expert treatment consultants for more information.

AH: @Sovhealthofca Q9: What resources are available for a person with a dual diagnosis?

Andre: A9: Information can be obtained from the NIDA website:
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/>

AH: @Sovhealthofca Q10: What encouragement would you offer to an individual suffering with a dual diagnosis who is seeking help and treatment?

Andre: A10: I would encourage an individual suffering from a dual diagnosis to connect with a family member, friend or mental health professional

Andre: A10: These people can provide the much needed love and support during the healing process

Andre: A10: Also check out Sovereign Health's website to gain awareness and education on the right treatment program for him or her

AH: Thank you Andre for sharing this great information and insight about dual diagnosis disorders

AH: If you or a loved one has been suffering with a co-occurring disorder, we hope this information brings you hope.

AH: Seeking out treatment is critical for hope, healing, and recovery

AH: For more information about Andre the Sovereign Health Care Group, visit their website at www.sovcal.com

AH: Thank you to everyone who participated in our Twitter Chat today! And thank you for the great insight @sovhealthofca!

AH: Please stay tuned for future Twitter Chats from AH!

AH: If you are in need of resources for substance abuse, visit our website at www.addictionhope.com Or [Sovereign Health](#)