"The Effects of Prescription Drug Abuse"

Stacy Seikel M.D. of Georgia Detox and Recovery Centers

Twitter Chat Script - September 17, 2015

AH: Welcome to today's #AHchat! Our topic is "The Effects of Prescription Drug Abuse".   Special thanks to Rivermend Health for helping us make this twitter chat possible!   It's great to have you all here today! Let's get started with some of our questions.

AH: **Please tell us a little about yourself and your current role?**

Dr. Seikel: I am the Medical Director of Georgia Detox and Recovery Centers and the Chief Medical Officer of Integrated Recovery Programs for RiverMend Health. I am also a patient advocate and a professional mentor and leader in the field of opioid addiction treatment. I am Board Certified in both Addiction Medicine and in Anesthesiology.   I have worked on state and national levels to improve care for pregnant women with substance use disorders.   I have also developed programs to keep families intact while a parent achieves recovery and sobriety. I have served as Medical Director of various addiction treatment organizations, as well as overseen several medical and psychiatric services and programs. I have developed a volunteer pain management clinic for the homeless and uninsured. You can learn more on our website: http://www.georgiadetoxandrecoverycenters.com/georgia-addiction-doctors-and-experts/Stacy-Seikel.html

AH: Thank you for sharing Dr. Seikel! Your role seems very exciting and valuable. How prominent is prescription drug abuse today?

Dr. Seikel: We are in an epidemic http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/. Every day in America "44 people in the United States die from overdose of prescription painkillers," according to the CDC.

CDC reports that "The most common drugs involved in prescription overdose deaths include:

- [Hydrocodone](#) (e.g., Vicodin)
- [Oxycodone](#) (e.g., OxyContin)
- Oxymorphone (e.g., Opana)
- [Methadone](#) (especially when prescribed for pain).

Prescription painkiller overdose deaths also often involve benzodiazepines. People who take prescription painkillers can become addicted with just one prescription.

In 2013, nearly two million Americans abused prescription painkillers. Each day, almost 7,000 people are treated in emergency departments for using these drugs in a manner other than as directed." 52 Million people in the US, over the age of 12, have used prescription drugs non-medically in their lifetime.

AH: **What are the short term effects of prescription drug abuse?**

Dr. Seikel: There are many possible [side effects associated with prescription drug use](#). With opiate based drugs, short term effects may result. This may include euphoria, respiratory depression, slowed heart rate, and more.

AH: What are the long term effects of prescription drug abuse?

Dr. Seikel: The Long term effects of prescription drug abuse may vary based on the drug, some of the long term effects include addiction, tolerance, physical dependence, and withdrawal.

AH: **What are a few of the treatments that work well for those addicted to prescription drugs?**

Dr. Seikel: Treatment for addiction to prescription drugs that incorporates multi-therapies is most effective. This may include pharmacotherapy, behavioral therapies, and more. Some forms of pharmacotherapy that have been effective in treatment prescription drug addiction include Vivitrol and Buprenorphine.

AH: **What encouragement might you offer to the individual struggling with prescription drug misuse/addiction?**

Dr. Seikel: This is a treatable disease, and with help and treatment, recovery is possible!

AH: Thank you Dr. Seikel for sharing this great information about prescription drug addiction. If you or a loved one has been suffering with an addiction, we hope this information encourages you to get connected. Seeking out treatment is critical for hope, healing, and recovery.

For more information about Dr. Seikel and Georgia Detox and Recovery Centers, please visit www.georgiadetoxandrecoverycenters.com.

If you are in need of resources for substance abuse, visit our website at www.addictionhope.com