

Presidential Address



Come join your SCP President, Dr. Donna LaPaglia for her Presidential Address!!!

Psychologist' Call to Action:
Reimagining Addiction Provider Education

SOCIETY OF
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS



DIVISION 12
American Psychological Association

The United States is grappling with a concerning surge in illicit drug use, along with a staggering 109,000 reported overdose deaths in 2023 according to the provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This surge comes in the wake of the Covid pandemic, which brought about shifts in work and school structures, alongside reports of increased rates of depression and anxiety. Combined with the heightened lethality and potency of illicit and recreational drugs, these factors have escalated the risk of addiction and death. Unfortunately, there is little indication that these trends will reverse in the short term. However, there is a glimmer of hope amidst this crisis, as new funding from opioid settlement funds is being directed towards local communities and state addiction treatment systems. Even with the increase in resources, individuals may not make it into treatment, and if they access treatment, they may not stay due to negative experiences with providers. Research has shown that stigma negatively impacts healthcare providers' attitudes towards patients with substance use issues. Psychologists are uniquely qualified to combat stigma in health care settings and to innovate new strategies to improve recovery rates as evidenced in an article in the January 2024 edition of the APA, Monitor on Psychology.



**Friday, August 5
4:00 PM
Sheraton Grand
Seattle, Second Floor,
Redwood Room**

Given the complexity of the addictions landscape, and the negative attitudes associated with substance use disorders (SUDs) psychology leaders can positively shape healthcare systems and lead educational efforts that include teaching the technical aspects for assessing and treating SUDs using evidence-based interventions, while also focusing on the 'spirit' behind the work—the mindset and attitude of treating the whole person with compassion, free from bias and judgement. Most importantly, psychologists recognize the value of educational approaches that include space for processing the emotional side of the addictions work as a strategy to increase provider competency and foster motivation for positive and sustained patient care"