



For Immediate Release

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**Open Society Institute Awards \$750,000 to NCADD-New Jersey
To Expand Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Addiction**

Part of National Initiative to Increase Access to Treatment

BALTIMORE – The Open Society Institute today announced a \$750,000 grant to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey (NCADD-NJ) to expand access to high-quality treatment for drug and alcohol addiction for individuals who need it. NCADD-NJ is a statewide advocacy organization with a more than twenty five year history of promoting the prevention and treatment of, and recovery from, alcohol and drug addiction in New Jersey.

Only 59,800 of New Jersey's 800,000 residents who needed treatment received it in 2007. This alarming addiction treatment gap in New Jersey mirrors a national problem. In 2007, 23.2 million Americans needed treatment for drug or alcohol addiction, but only 10 percent of them were able to get treatment for this chronic health condition. The vast majority of those who need help are unable to get addiction treatment, either due to lack of health insurance, inadequate insurance coverage or a lack of treatment services in communities.

The grant to NCADD-NJ is one of eight demonstration grants totaling \$4.8 million to organizations across the country, including a university research center, a state government agency and advocacy groups. NCADD-NJ is partnering with The Nicholson Foundation based in Newark, New Jersey on the OSI initiative. The Nicholson Foundation addresses drug and alcohol addiction as one of its program areas. In collaboration with government and community stakeholders, the Foundation is working to improve the lives of New Jersey's families and the communities where they live, focusing on urban neighborhoods in Essex County. The grants are part of a \$10 million initiative supported by OSI to close the addiction treatment gap, expand comprehensive treatment systems and improve the quality of treatment. The initiative aims to mobilize public support for expanded treatment by increasing public funding, broadening insurance coverage and achieving greater program efficiency.

“If this disease had any other name, the residents of New Jersey would not tolerate seeing thousands of neighbors, family members, and coworkers remaining untreated,” said Victor A. Capoccia, director of the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap initiative. “Addiction is a chronic health condition, and it can be treated effectively. This important initiative in New Jersey will enable more residents who need addiction treatment to get it.”

NCADD-NJ and The Nicholson Foundation will be working cooperatively to implement advocacy and communications strategies statewide and in Newark to expand federal and state resources to close the addiction treatment gap in New Jersey as well as to improve access and coverage for eligible individuals to receive addiction treatment services.

Senator Joseph Vitale (D, Middlesex), Chairman of the New Jersey Senate's Health, Human and Senior Services Committee stated, "I have witnessed firsthand the devastation experienced by New Jersey's residents who struggle with the illness of addiction. Estranged from both family and community and unable to access needed treatment, these citizens cannot lead productive and fulfilling lives; this unfortunate situation results in greater societal and governmental costs. This cycle of devastation can only be remedied by directing ill residents to appropriate treatment channels – a goal which forms the core of New Jersey's 'Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap' project."

NCADD-NJ was selected from a pool of 35 applicants after a competitive, rigorous selection process. Each proposal was evaluated by a panel that included national experts in addiction treatment advocacy and financing. Twelve organizations were selected for full-day site visits. A review team then evaluated the projects' strengths, financing, and advocacy strategies and recommended the final eight.

"It is an honor to have been selected by the Open Society Institute to receive this grant, and to partner with The Nicholson Foundation in Newark" stated Wayne Wirta, President and CEO of NCADD-NJ. "The provision of adequate addiction treatment resources is a critical issue here in New Jersey, as in the rest of the nation. It is unique to have a foundation support communication and advocacy efforts to support a change in public policy. We are fortunate to have these resources for our state. NCADD-NJ intends to make the most of them and be successful in expanding the resources available for addiction treatment."

Mark Hoover of the Nicholson Foundation said, "The Nicholson Foundation is pleased to collaborate with NCADD-NJ and OSI to increase access to addiction treatment for New Jersey's residents. This is so important because addiction negatively affects not only individuals with a substance abuse disorder, but their families and their communities. The Foundation is looking forward to helping people obtain treatment on an individual level, so they can achieve recovery and lead productive satisfying lives; and on a community level, to reduce the social and economic consequences of the disease."

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The Open Society Institute, a private operating and grant-making foundation, works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve its mission, OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. OSI works in over 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as in the United States.

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NCADD-NJ is a non-profit organization that for more than a quarter century has dedicated itself 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.

