

# W/B HIDTA Treatment and Prevention Spotlight

Arlington County's Addictions  
Corrections Treatment (ACT)  
Program



The Arlington County's Addictions Corrections Treatment (ACT) Program and Re-entry Program provides substance use treatment for inmates, including group and individual treatment, individualized aftercare plans, and motivational interviewing. ACT specifically closes a treatment gap by providing treatment for clients with a substance use dependence diagnosis who are incarcerated. Funding from the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA aids the program in its goals to reduce recidivism and prepare participants for re-entry, equipping them with the necessary skills and support to be successful.

The nine-month long program provides a variety of services to help individuals grow a deeper understanding of their substance use disorder, develop coping skills and recovery skills, and grow their support network. This support includes rebuilding trust and connection with family members, working with a peer recovery specialist, and connecting with others in the program. "What I love most about the program is the cohort piece. They get to know each other and support each other. Often, they build a support system that they use when they leave the facility. They support each other, go to meetings together, and pull each other up through hard times," Suzanne Somerville, the Bureau Director at Arlington County Department of Human Services, emphasized.

This support can be seen through celebrating holidays together and coordinating to get needs met as quickly as possible including complex medical needs, while ensuring these needs remain met after discharge. The peer recovery specialist hosts prosocial activities for participants post release. This intentionally showcases that there are fun things to do in the community that do not involve substances while bringing people together and modeling living a full life without substances by someone who has very similar life experiences. Additionally, the peer recovery specialist may go to the first treatment appointment with participants post release to help ease any anxieties. Participants will call the peer recovery specialist during moments of need, demonstrating the high level of trust between them.

The program recognizes and values the importance of keeping up to date with evidence-based strategies that have shown positive results for their population. ACT provides extensive training to staff and is always exploring strategies that will enhance treatment outcomes. Washington/Baltimore HIDTA funding can be used for residents from outside of Arlington, which is critical as the majority of participants are from other counties. This supports participants fully, from entry to post release.



ACT recently hired a new Assistant Program Manager who is excited to strengthen the program, and really work with participants to see what is working and what is not. The program stays on top of drug trends and meets with law enforcement regularly to discuss what substances are being seen in the community to make any needed adjustments. A focus on staying current with trends and evidence-based strategies, along with providing critical support and detailed planning for discharge and post-release, allows ACT to meaningfully and positively impact the lives of their participants.