How To Organize and Operate an Information Center on Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

A Guide

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Section 4
Preface

This Guide represents one small part of an on-going North American collaboration to address and prevent problems attendant to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. It is a collaborative effort of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, and Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists, coordinated by the Project Cork Institute. The goal is to provide a basic introduction to the many facets of an information center and what is required to run a center efficiently and economically. This Guide is directed to several audiences, but in particular to small government-sponsored information centers in North America, as well as those sponsored by agencies, organizations, and treatment and prevention centers.

This publication grew out of an earlier collaborative effort of the sponsors and the World Health Organization to facilitate the creation of information centers in developing countries. The publication that resulted was entitled, How to Start and Run an Alcohol and Other Drug Information Centre : A Guide.

The editors and contributors hope that this publication will serve as a catalyst for continued development in the field of information services. It demonstrates a recognition of the importance of the role of information in efforts to reduce and eliminate the problems associated with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
Many people and organizations donated considerable time and effort to the development of this publication. The material that is presented was assembled with the assistance of many SALIS members with cooperation from the Addiction Research Foundation and the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information as well as the sponsoring organizations.

Robert Denniston, Chief of Communications Division of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention had the vision to suggest that SALIS members combine their technical skills and expertise to develop this manuscript.

Margo Hawley of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, Margy Chan, Louise Hamel, and Debra Monkman of the Addiction Research Foundation, as well as Marlene Mannella of the Prevention Resource Center in Columbia, Missouri, contributed time and energy to this project.

Linda VanWart at the Project Cork Institute was persistent and tireless in her efforts to located and organize the many bits of information that were needed to complete the project.

While possibly not formally designated as contributors, those who were intimately involved in the preparation of the earlier WHO Guide which prompted this volume, need to be acknowledged. In many instances it is their work which provided the “starting point.”

It is important, also, to acknowledge the contributors and all who have been involved who, beyond sharing of their expertise, were patient with our requests for just “a bit more” information, and weathered the process of revisions and the delays which seem inevitably to accompany such enterprises.