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Essay Sample on Substance Abuse: A Growing Problem Affecting Young People Essay

Introduction

Substance abuse is a growing problem that currently affects young people. Many youths have died from substance-related issues, including overdose and addiction. Due to this problem, the number of emergency room visits and deaths linked to the overdose of substances has increased. Whiteford et al. (2013) defined substance abuse as a maladaptive behavior pattern that entails dependency on drugs or substances that alter the cognitive status, mood, and behaviors. This essay presents a case study of a 25-year-old male, diagnosed with depression and anxiety disorders after struggling with opioid abuse. The patient presents with withdrawal symptoms to our organization for treatment.

Case Presentation

Douglas is a 25-year-old Caucasian male who presents to our facility for opioid and alcohol abuse. He is currently unemployed and lives with his friends because he lacks a stable relationship with his family due to addiction. Recently, Douglas was diagnosed with mood and anxiety disorders after presenting with the following symptoms: extreme sadness, irritability, mania, panic, tense muscles, heart palpitations, sleep problems, shortness of breath, rigid muscles, and loss of concentrations (Minkoff, 1989). For the last two weeks, my client has been consuming 12 bags of heroin intravenously, 42 ounces cans of beer, and has inhaled cocaine worth one hundred dollars per day. According to Douglas, he wants to avoid going to jail, and that is the primary reason the client is seeking help. The probation officer has worked with Douglas and his family to plan for the probation intervention program rather than jail. The client willingly agreed to be assessed for admission to the outpatient treatment facility.

Alcohol and Drug Use History

When Douglas began to use and abuse substances, his drugs of choice were cocaine and heroin. During the examination, Douglas stated that he was first introduced to alcohol and marijuana at the age of 15, although marijuana is not his substance of choice any longer. Five years later, his best friends introduced him to heroin at the time he was undergoing stressful moments in his undergraduate school. At the age of 19, Douglas said that he started consuming alcohol with his friends when they attended a party. His use of substances increased rapidly and began to affect his ability to function.

Douglas tried to stop abusing drugs but in vain. Instead, he switched to the use of anti-anxiety drugs such as valium and opiate painkiller, Vicodin. This attempt to substitute the use of illicit drugs with legal drugs failed. During this period, two of his friends died, ostensibly from overdoses. This incidence not only frightened Douglas to the extent of wanting to withdraw, but it also resulted in deep grief, which plunged him further to substance abuse. At the age of 22, Douglas was hospitalized eight times for detoxification but immediately resumed using drugs each time he was

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