

Congregation Assistance and Community Awareness Program

About CAP:

The “**Congregation Assistance Program**” trains individuals in faith-based organizations in behavioral and mental health issues and the local community resources available to people seeking help with these concerns. Participants learn the signs, symptoms, and impact of addictions, including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and gambling, and explore ways to assist and refer a person in distress, including those with suicidal thoughts.

Often a first step for community members seeking help with a mental health or substance use concern is to approach their clergy member or faith-based community. Since these congregations already possess the human and spiritual resources to help, the Congregation Assistance Program, or “CAP”, simply provides the training, or “capacity building”, for congregants to give parishioners in need the tools necessary to start on the path to recovery. Due to requests from business and community groups who saw this as an opportunity to increase the capacity of their organizations to support and assist their own members, CAP is now offered to non-faith-based groups as the “Community Awareness Program”.

Who should attend CAP includes people who work in lay ministries, non-clinical settings, foster parents, union stewards, school or office staff—anywhere people are in roles as “natural helpers”. This program is not clinical in nature; it is rather an opportunity for people who are in positions where others may turn to them for support, to learn more about current behavioral and mental health issues facing people, families and communities, and how to connect people who may be in need to local community services and supports available to them.

The CAP provides six hours of training at your on-site location with no cost to the participants or organization. Scheduling is flexible to meet the needs of your group, and food is provided. This program is brought to you by your local Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization and funded by Ct Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, Problem Gambling Services.

The CAP curriculum is designed to (1) provide a baseline understanding of addiction and mental health issues, including problem gambling, along with resources available at the local level and (2) increase capacity of the participants to recognize and refer fellow congregants or community members in need of assistance and support. The curriculum includes a one hour QPR training (Question, Persuade, and Refer Suicide Prevention Awareness) and participants receive an additional certificate for completion. CAP can be offered in the evening, during the workday, or on the weekend.

Data has been collected on this program for several years and is able to demonstrate positive change in participants.

CAP Curriculum Includes:

1. Introduction to CAP and the role of “natural helpers”;
2. The Addiction/Disease Process;
3. Drugs of Abuse and Emerging Trends;
4. Products of Concern
5. Problem and Disordered Gambling
6. Mental Health
7. QPR Suicide Prevention

8. Local Resources

9. Next Steps

Benefits of CAP

Empowerment

Faith-based ministry and community members build their capacity to participate in prevention and early intervention activities for their congregants and community members.

Advocacy

Faith-based ministry and community members build their capacity to promote changes in attitudes about addictions, behavioral and mental health issues and recovery.

Encouragement

Faith-based ministries and community members build their capacity to provide outreach and support for families impacted by addiction, behavioral and mental health issues.

Learning

Faith-based ministries and community members are given educational and addiction prevention materials for their congregants and members.

Support

Faith-based ministries and community members build their capacity to assist congregants with local, state and federal resources that may be underutilized.

How to Learn More

To learn more information about CAP, talk with a program facilitator, or schedule a CAP for your faith-based or community organization, contact the person in your Region closest to you:

Region 1

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