

# Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

A Chronic Disease



# Southeast Missouri Behavioral Health

17 locations throughout Southeast Missouri





## Definition of *illness*

*Meriam Webster*

- ▶ a : sickness
- ▶ b : an unhealthy condition of body or mind

# Definition of Disease

*Meriam Webster*

A condition of the living animal or plant body or of one of its parts that impairs normal functioning and is typically manifested by distinguishing signs and symptoms : sickness, malady

# Is a Substance Use Disorder a Disease?

- ▶ The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) defines Addiction as a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory, and related circuitry.
- ▶ Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social and spiritual manifestations.

# CHRONIC ILLNESS

Chronic relapsing condition which untreated may lead to severe complications and death.

# SUD AS CHRONIC DISEASE: It is treatable but not curable

Adjustment to diagnosis is part of patient's task.

There is a wide spectrum of severity.

Retention in treatment is key

Best treatment is integrated: referrals to specialists, behavior and habits must change, medications may be needed.

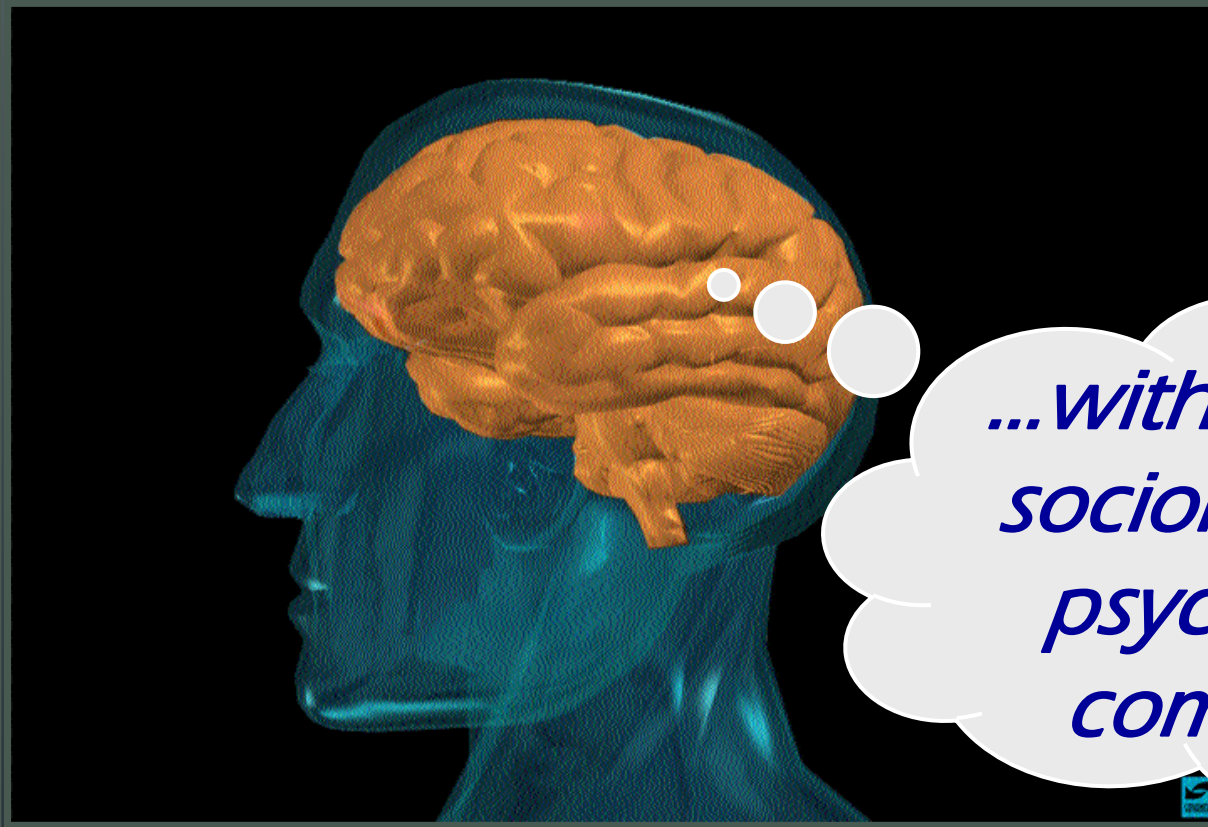
# SUD and Other Chronic Disease

- ▶ Relapse rates are similar:
- ▶ Diabetes - 30 to 50%
- ▶ Hypertension – 50 to 70%
- ▶ Asthma - 50 to 70%
- ▶ Addiction: 40 to 60%



# Addiction is a Complex Disease

## BIO/PSYCHO/SOCIAL



*...with biological,  
sociological and  
psychological  
components*

# BIO/PSYCHO/SOCIAL

- ▶ SUD is genetic, chances are much greater if one or both parents have it.
- ▶ SUD requires behavioral changes
- ▶ SUD requires social and spiritual changes

# Other Diseases are Bio/Psycho/Social

- ▶ Diabetes is behavioral and social as well as biological
  - ▶ Biological - Diabetes is genetic, having a family history makes it more likely, the pancreas does not function, and medication can help
  - ▶ Behavioral changes such as includes exercise, diet, weight loss, help
  - ▶ Social settings effect diabetes - doughnuts and coffee with friend, Halloween candy, Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings with friends and family can lead to relapse (Mom's pumpkin pie, the neighbor's eggnog, Aunt Grace's candied yams and stuffing).

# Effective Treatment Must Meet Medical Necessity

- ▶ As with any disease effective Substance Use Disorders treatment follows the rules of Medical necessity

# Fighting Stigma

- ▶ 150 years ago the stigma surrounding different cancers caused those with the disease to be shunned by many.
- ▶ Persons with severe mental illnesses were shuttled off to institutions
- ▶ Even depression was treated as a weakness
- ▶ Like Substance Use Disorders, only after the stigma is reduced and society accepts it as the disease it is will those with a Substance Use Disorder seek treatment and recovery

# QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME

