Discussion: Treatment of Substance Use Disorders

Of the substance disorders, alcohol-related disorders are the most prevalent even though only a small percentage of individuals actually receive help. Recidivism in the substance treatment world is also very high. As research into treatment has developed, more and more evidence show that genes for alcohol-metabolizing enzymes can vary by genetic inheritance. Women have been identified as particularly vulnerable to the impacts of alcohol. Native Americans, Asians, and some Hispanic and Celtic cultures also have increased vulnerability to alcohol misuse.

Even with these developments, treatment continues to spark debate. For many years, the substance use field itself has disagreed with mental health experts as to what treatments are the most effective for substance use disorders and how to improve outcomes. **The debate is often over medication-assisted treatment (MAT) versus abstinence-based treatment (ABT).** Recently the American Psychiatric Association has issued guidelines to help clinicians consider integrated solutions for those suffering with these disorders. In this Discussion, you consider your treatment plan for an individual with a substance use disorder.

**To prepare:** Read the case provided by your instructor for this week’s Discussion and the materials for the week. **Then assume that you are meeting with the client as the social worker who recorded this case.**

**Post** a 300- to 500-word response in which you address the following:

* **Provide the full DSM-5 diagnosis for the client. Remember, a full diagnosis should include the name of the disorder, ICD-10-CM code, specifiers, severity, and the Z codes (other conditions that may need clinical attention). Keep in mind a diagnosis covers the most recent 12 months.**
* Explain the diagnosis by matching the symptoms identified in the case to the specific criteria for the diagnosis.
* Describe the assessment(s) you would use to validate the client’s diagnosis, clarify missing information, or track their progress.
* Summarize how you would explain the diagnosis to the client.
* Explain how you would engage the client in treatment, identifying potential cultural considerations related to substance use.
* Describe your initial recommendations for the client’s treatment and explain why you would recommend MAT or ABT.
* Identify specific resources to which you would refer the client. Explain why you would recommend these resources based on the client’s diagnosis and other identity characteristics (e.g., age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, religion, etc.).

***Note:****You****do not****need to include an APA reference to the DSM-5 in your response. However, your response should clearly be informed by the DSM-5, demonstrating an understanding of the risks and benefits of treatment to the client. You****do****need to include an APA reference for the assessment tool and any other resources you use to support your response.*