

NORTH CAROLINA TREATMENT CONNECTION

The Right Help, Right Here.



NORTH CAROLINA
Treatment Connection

THE BACKGROUND:

The opioid epidemic and the increasing need for substance use services have contributed to the growth of a broad network of healthcare providers, treatment centers, and recovery residences dedicated to supporting individuals on their path to wellness.

Unfortunately, this expansion has also created opportunities for unethical and illegal practices, such as "patient brokering."

Now more than ever, individuals struggling with substance use disorders need reliable information and support to access evidence-based treatment from trusted and reputable providers.



THE RESPONSE:

- The Stop Addiction Fraud Ethics Act of 2023 ("SAFE Act") provides general requirements for marketing, false or misleading information, and patient referral practices.
- Effective January 1, 2024, substance use disorder (SUD) treatment facilities, providers, and recovery residences must comply with new requirements designed to curb unethical marketing practices and kickbacks for patient referrals, also known as patient brokering.
- The SAFE Act requires SUD treatment providers, facilities, and recovery residences to ensure all marketing is clear, accurate, and transparent. Ads must disclose services, locations, treatment levels, average stay lengths, and financial ties to advertisers. False or misleading claims about credentials, success rates, or affiliations are illegal, as is manipulating search results. Violations are considered deceptive trade practices and can result in felony charges.

THE PATH FORWARD:

The Addiction Professionals of North Carolina is launching a statewide campaign dedicated to ensuring North Carolinians can confidently find evidence-based, ethical and reputable care close to home.

The campaign will direct individuals and families to trusted partners like the Alcohol/Drug Council of NC and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Campaign tactics include digital advertising, grassroots engagement and social media.

EXPOSING THE HARM OF PATIENT BROKERING

Patient brokering, often referred to as body brokering, is an exploitative practice affecting the substance use disorder treatment industry. It occurs when an individual, known as a broker, refers someone to a treatment facility in exchange for a referral fee or kickback.

This practice is widely regarded as unethical and predatory. Brokers target vulnerable individuals and in extreme cases, have been known to supply drugs to individuals in recovery, causing relapse. **NC Treatment Connection will work to educate consumers to combat patient brokering.**

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS ARE A PUBLIC HEALTH AND ECONOMIC CRISIS.

- More than 10% of North Carolinians experience substance use disorders.
- Every day, 12 North Carolinians die from a drug overdose.
- Substance use disorders cost North Carolina \$6.8 billion annually.

SCAN HERE TO
LEARN MORE



3 KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Addiction is a chronic, relapsing medical condition that can effectively be treated.
2. Every recovery journey is unique. Reputable treatment providers offer a reliable foundation to guide individuals toward healing.
3. Recovery is holistic, addresses the whole person and their community, and is supported by peers, friends, and family members.



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