**Accessing Substance Abuse and Addiction Treatment** **In Rural Areas**

Finding affordable and accessible substance abuse and addiction treatment is difficult no matter where you live. Living in a major city means you probably have many options for treatment, but what do you do if you live in a more secluded, rural area?

In order to access substance abuse and addiction treatment while living in a rural area, you need to figure out what kind of treatment you are looking for. Ideally, you will be able to find an inpatient treatment facility. If you live in a more remote area and don’t know of any treatment facilities near you, the first thing you should do is call your insurance company.

**Call Your Insurance Company**

The first thing you want to find out from your insurance company is if you have coverage for mental health treatment. The insurance company should be able to tell you not only if you have coverage for mental health treatment, but they should be able to give you details about what exactly it covers and how it works. Even with health insurance, it can be challenging to get the treatment you need because they often don’t want to pay for long-term treatment. Advocate for yourself! Make sure you get all the details you can from your insurance company, and request the information in writing as well. Find out what your deductible is, if you have one. Find out exactly what you need to do to make sure your insurance will cover inpatient treatment.

**Why Inpatient Treatment?**

While any kind of treatment is better than no treatment, inpatient treatment should be chosen when possible. At an inpatient treatment facility, there will be an entire team of people whose job is to help you get and stay sober. They will teach you about addiction and recovery and help you learn coping skills to use in your everyday life.

There are licensed mental health and addiction counselors, as well as nurses, doctors, and psychiatrists. This means that an inpatient facility has the ability to keep you safe while you are detoxing from any kind of substance. They will ensure that you get medication to prevent seizures or complications from detoxing if necessary.

Additionally, the psychiatrist will see you and determine if there is any medication you need to take. Many people who suffer from addiction are also dealing with other mental health diagnoses, such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, etc. People often use drugs and alcohol as a way to self-medicate a diagnosis that they may not even know they have. Getting on the appropriate medication is incredibly beneficial for someone trying to stay off drugs and alcohol because there will likely be less of a need to self-medicate.

Inpatient treatment also provides you with the opportunity to focus entirely on yourself and your recovery. When you attend an outpatient treatment facility, you have to go home at the end of the day and deal with day-to-day issues. This might include a job, kids, bills, family issues, and more. When you are at an inpatient facility, you can focus only on yourself and how to get better.

Most inpatient facilities will also introduce you to 12 step meetings, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. Most inpatient facilities hold their own in-house 12 step meetings and also transport patients to 12 step meetings outside of the facility. Attending a meeting for the first time can be scary and intimidating, so having the opportunity to go with other people in the facility can make it easier and less stressful. When you get out of an inpatient facility, 12 step meetings can play a huge role in your recovery. It’s a place where you will meet people who genuinely understand what you’re going through. Becoming familiar with meetings while in treatment can make it a lot easier to continue going to meetings once you get home.

**Most Inpatient Facilities Will Help You Get There!**

Lack of transportation should never be a barrier to substance abuse and addiction treatment. If you have found a facility to attend and you can afford it out of pocket or with insurance, they will most likely help you get there! If you are in a rural area and don’t have a car, call the facility you plan to attend. Once you get payment/insurance sorted out, let them know that you need help with transportation. They will likely be able to find you a ride to the facility.

**What If I Can’t Attend An Inpatient Facility?**

While inpatient treatment is arguably the most effective way to get help if you are struggling with addiction, don’t give up if you cannot attend inpatient for some reason.

**Help Yourself**

For people with internet access, there is endless information out there regarding

substance abuse and addiction treatment. There are Facebook pages and groups

that center around addiction and recovery. There are websites, blogs, podcasts, and so much information on the internet that can help you figure out what to do. You can attend 12 step meetings in person and online as well.

While inpatient treatment is the ideal way to start your recovery journey, remote addiction treatment and other types of self-help measures are certainly a better option than not participating in treatment at all. Don’t give up just because you live in an area where treatment isn’t easily accessible. Advocate for yourself. Reach out and ask for help. People in the recovery community are always happy to assist if they can!