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Drs. Michael Dennis and Christy Scott earn Hazelden's Dan Anderson Research Award

Bloomington, IL, December 13, 2011—Michael L. Dennis, Ph.D., Senior Research Psychologist at the [Lighthouse Institute](#), Chestnut Health Systems, and Christy K. Scott, Ph.D., Research Psychologist at the Lighthouse Institute have both earned the latest Dan Anderson Research Award for their long-term outcomes study examining the effectiveness of Recovery Management Checkups on treatment outcomes among adults attending alcohol/drug treatment. Sponsored by the [Butler Center for Research](#) at Hazelden, the award honors a single published article by a researcher who has advanced the scientific knowledge of addiction treatment and recovery.

Drs. Dennis and Scott earned the award for their study, "Four-year outcomes from the Early Re-Intervention (ERI) experiment using Recovery Management Checkups (RMCs)," soon to be published in an upcoming print issue of *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. The study focused on 446 individuals attending alcohol/drug treatment through the largest addiction treatment agency in Illinois. Participants were randomly assigned to either a control or experimental group. The control group received standard quarterly assessments; the experimental group received the same assessments along with Recovery Management Checkups (RMCs). In the RMC protocol a "Linkage Manager" used motivational interviewing techniques with participants to provide feedback on current substance use and problems, discuss treatment barriers and solutions, assess motivation to re-enter treatment, and accompany people through the treatment intake process. Over a four-year period the two groups were compared on a number of outcomes, including the likelihood of returning to treatment, the amount of time until return to treatment, reduced substance-related problems, and number of days abstinent from alcohol and drugs.

"The public health care system has been slow to adopt a chronic disease approach with aggressively timed monitoring and interventions," said Dennis. "The present findings suggest that RMC is an effective method of monitoring and re-intervening with chronic substance users and is associated with improved long-term outcomes." Dr. John F. Kelly of the Center for Addiction Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital nominated Drs. Dennis and Scott for the award stating, "the Recovery Management Checkups represent a rational and intelligent response to the undulating and chronic risks associated with addiction."

The study produced several interesting and noteworthy results. Participants receiving RMCs were significantly more likely than participants in the control condition to return to treatment, to return to treatment sooner, to return more times and stay longer. They subsequently experienced fewer quarters in need of treatment, had significantly fewer substance-related problems, and had a higher number of days abstinent from drugs and alcohol. These effects were also more pronounced for individuals with a history of violent behavior and for individuals who started drinking or using drugs prior to age 15.

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"Our scientific panel of advisors was extremely impressed with the scientific rigor of this study and the fact that these individuals were tracked over an extended period of time," stated Dr. Audrey Klein, director of the Butler Center for Research at Hazelden. "It is almost unheard of for a study to collect outcomes data over a period of several years, yet such data are vital for increasing our understanding of the disease of addiction and continuously improving treatment. This study highlights the importance of treating addiction as a chronic disease and suggests that structured monitoring and re-intervention strategies hold a great deal of promise in producing positive long-term outcomes."

Drs. Dennis and Scott will accept the award this coming spring at the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers (NAATP) annual conference in Phoenix. The award is named for the late Dan Anderson, Ph.D., the former president of Hazelden and one of the major architects of the Minnesota Model, the interdisciplinary approach to addiction treatment that has been implemented worldwide.

Dennis and Scott's research was selected as the best from among several outstanding candidates by the scientific panel of the Butler Center for Research. The panel includes Klein; Valerie Slaymaker, Ph.D., chief academic officer and provost of the Hazelden Graduate School of Addiction Studies; Carlton Erickson, Ph.D., University of Texas-Austin; Lee Ann Kaskutas, Dr.PH, Alcohol Research Group, Emeryville, Calif.; Stephanie O'Malley, Ph.D., Yale University; Jon Morgenstern, Ph.D., National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, New York; and Constance Weisner, Ph.D., University of California-San Francisco.

About Chestnut Health Systems

For more than 35 years, Chestnut Health Systems has offered a broad array of behavioral healthcare services to residents in Central and Southern Illinois, fulfilling its mission of "making a difference: improving quality of life through excellence in service". Known throughout the state as one of the leading providers of addiction treatment and prevention, mental health counseling and housing, credit counseling, substance abuse related research, training, and publications, and employee assistance and workplace services, Chestnut's team of caring professionals now numbers over 700 full and part time staff.

To learn more about Chestnut Health Systems, please visit our website at www.chestnut.org or contact Celeste Brennan, Marketing and Communications Coordinator at 309.827.6026.

About Hazelden

Recognizing outstanding research and conducting research of its own are the primary objectives of the Butler Center for Research, the research arm of Hazelden. Hazelden, a national nonprofit organization founded in 1949, helps people reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction. Built on decades of knowledge and experience, Hazelden offers a comprehensive approach to addiction that addresses the full range of patient, family, and professional needs, including treatment and continuing care for youth and adults, research, higher education, public education and advocacy, and publishing. It currently has facilities in Minnesota, Oregon, Illinois, New York and Florida. Learn more at www.hazelden.org.

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