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ONDCP Quest Blog: A New Focus on Recovery

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Something quite historic is afoot at the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). For the first time, recovery will be embraced as a pivotal organizing concept through the activities of ONDCP. During a recent visit with ONDCP staff, we discussed ways this new focus on recovery could help:

- celebrate the growth and diversification of American communities of recovery;
- reduce policy barriers to long-term addiction recovery;
- create platforms through which the voices of individuals and families in long-term recovery can be heard on key policy issues,
- develop and disseminate treatment models that incorporate prolonged recovery support and assertive linkages between professional and peer-based recovery support resources;
- formulate an addiction recovery research agenda; and
- facilitate international information exchange on creative and effective approaches to long-term addiction recovery support for affected individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities.

The vision that emerged from our discussion was of a nation reaching and engaging individuals and families at earlier stages of problem development; providing accessible, affordable, and effective resources to achieve acute stabilization; guiding the transition from recovery initiation to long-term recovery maintenance; providing resources to enhance quality of personal and family life in long-term recovery; and breaking intergenerational cycles of addiction-related problems. The vision was of communities across the United States creating the physical, psychological, and cultural space where recovery and resilience can flourish and calling upon people who were once part of the problem to become part of the solution.

Recovery can be contagious. It can be spread interpersonally by recovery carriers—people whose character and quality of life exert a magnetic attraction to those still suffering. ONDCP has an opportunity to spread recovery by defining it, celebrating it, and mobilizing recovery carriers within communities across the country. Recovering people and their families are ready for such a call to service.