

### Introduction:

Contingency Management (CM) offers an evidence-based, cognitive behavioral and behavioral approach to treating adolescent substance abuse that involves caregivers in every stage of treatment. CM treatment focuses on the whole person and is tailored to the unique treatment needs of adolescents.

The *CM with Adolescents and Their Families* treatment approach was developed at the Medical University of South Carolina. Training, agency support and quality assurance are managed by TSSArena<sup>1</sup>, a licensee of MUSC.

### What is CM?

Contingency management is an **evidence-based** treatment approach grounded in the principles of behavior management and cognitive-behavioral therapy that provides incentives for abstaining from drug abuse. Techniques involved in this treatment include positive reinforcement for drug abstinence and negative consequences for returning to drug use, with the emphasis on positive reinforcement and the celebration of success. This celebration of success helps the family and youth remain motivated to change and provides a positive and welcoming treatment environment.

The goal of CM is to weaken the rewards associated with using drugs by substituting them with healthier activities and abstinence.

### Who is the Target Population?

CM is for adolescents, age 12-17 who are abusing substances and living with biological family, adoptive or foster family or another responsible adult who is willing to participate in treatment.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cmforaddiction.com>

### What drugs can be treated?

CM interventions are effective for a broad range of substances, including alcohol, marijuana, tobacco and cocaine.

### What are the Benefits of Treatment?

Contingency Management for adolescent substance abuse **leverages the adolescent's natural support system, namely the family or caregiver supports**, to bring about change and long-lasting sobriety. Caregivers are active participants in every stage of the treatment from determining the need for treatment to identifying triggers, developing and supporting self-management plans and drug refusal skills, and planning for long-term sobriety. By including the teens primary support group in treatment we increase the chances that the youth will remain clean long after treatment has ended.

### How is CM Delivered?

CM is delivered in an outpatient setting by trained practitioners. A typical course of treatment is 14 to 18 sessions and includes drug screens and recovery support planning. The CM treatment is flexible and has specific strategies for addressing other issues that may arise such as family conflict, behavior problems and negative peer influence.

### How can I learn more or start my own CM Program?

Please visit [www.cmforaddiction.com](http://www.cmforaddiction.com) to learn more or contact Jaime Houston, Psy.D. CM Clinical Director at 717-253-4556 or [info@tssarena.com](mailto:info@tssarena.com)

*Contingency Management represents one of the most effective ways to enhance motivation among substance abusers by leveraging their personal strengths and focusing on positive gains.*