

A communication periodical for our clients, staff & the community at large

# The Chronicle

A Paterson Counseling Center Newsletter

## Special points of interest:

- PCC client satisfaction outcomes reveal clients are pleased with overall levels of service
- Community feedback indicates addiction still prevalent in the community
- PCC accepts anonymous feedback through its website
- Clients indicate 95% satisfaction rate with overall counseling services

## The Importance of Accreditation—CARF

For some organizations accreditation is an event, a period of scrutiny that must be overcome in order to get a seal of approval from a reviewing authority. At PCC we live the values that CARF strives to promote for all treatment providers everyday.

Through our quality assessment team sessions we discuss opportunities for improvement in services and we revisit issues that come up during counseling sessions as input into how we can exceed client expectations. We recognize that adopting the standards and recommended practices of accrediting authorities helps to foster best in class service which is really at the heart of what we do in the clinic.

We leverage technology to open up avenues of communication between our staff, the community and our clients. Our comprehensive review of treatment data helps us gauge success with our overall approach to treatment. We know that our clients are satisfied with the services we provide but would like to see extended hours. Feedback also reveals that we are making strides in our infrastructure aimed at creating a positive experience for clients.

As you move throughout the facility you will note the outcomes and measures for 2011 indicating our commitment to a high level of service for our clients posted on our bulleting boards. Please feel free to discuss the results with our counseling staff.

## A Newly Emerging Addiction—Beware

We all enjoy the benefits of the Internet, and for many of us it is also an indispensable tool for work, education, and communication. While time spent on the Internet can be hugely productive, for some people compulsive Internet use can interfere with daily life, work and relationships.

When you feel more comfortable with your online friends than your real ones, or you can't stop yourself from playing games, gambling, or compulsively surfing, even when it has negative consequences in your life, then you may be using the Internet too much. Learn about the signs and symptoms of Internet addiction and how you can get balance back in your online life.



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### What is Internet addiction or computer addiction?

Internet Addiction, otherwise known as computer addiction, online addiction, or internet

# Internet Addiction Continued

addiction disorder (IAD), covers a variety of impulse-control problems, including:

**Cybersex Addiction** – compulsive use of Internet pornography, adult chat rooms, or adult fantasy role-play sites impacting negatively on real-life intimate relationships.

**Cyber-Relationship Addiction** – addiction to social networking, chat rooms and messaging to the point where virtual, online friends become more important than real-life relationships with family and friends.

**Net Compulsions** – such as compulsive online gaming, gambling, stock trading, or compulsive use of online auction sites such as eBay, often resulting in financial and job-related problems.

**Information Overload** – compulsive web surfing or database searching, leading to lower work productivity and less social interaction with family and friends.

**Computer Addiction** – obsessive playing of off-line computer games, such as Solitaire or Minesweeper, or obsessive computer programming.

The most common of these Internet addictions are cybersex, online gambling, and cyber-relationship addiction.

## Risk factors for Internet addiction and computer addiction

You are at greater risk of Internet addiction if:

You suffer from anxiety. You may use the Internet to distract yourself from your worries and fears. An anxiety disorder like obsessive-compulsive disorder may also contribute to excessive email checking and compulsive Internet use.

You are depressed. The Internet can be an escape from feelings of depression, but too much time online can make things worse. Internet addiction further contributes to stress, isolation and loneliness.

You have any other addictions. Many Internet addicts suffer from other addictions, such as drugs, alcohol, gambling, and sex.

You lack social support. Internet addicts often use social networking sites, instant messaging, or online gaming as a safe way of establishing new relationships and more confidently relating to others.

You're an unhappy teenager, you might be wondering where you fit in and the Internet might feel more comfortable than real life friends.

You are less mobile or socially active than you are used to. For example, you may be coping with a new disability that limits your ability to drive. Parenting very young children can make it hard to leave the house or connect with old friends.

You are stressed. While some people use the Internet to relieve stress, it can have a counterproductive effect. The longer you spend online, the higher your stress levels will be.

## Physical symptoms of Internet addiction

Internet or computer addiction can also cause physical discomfort such as:

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (pain and numbness in hands and wrists)
- Dry eyes or strained vision
- Back aches and neck aches; severe headaches
- Sleep disturbances
- Pronounced weight gain or weight loss
- Source: helpguide.org