



Questions to Ask Treatment Centers

Choosing the right treatment center for a specific patient can be challenging. With the right guidance and questions, informed decisions could be made. The following are a few suggestions to help you recognize what program is best for your patient and what programs to avoid. Rule number 1, don't pick programs based on Google searches or looks. Marketing material is often very misleading.

- Obtain an independent evaluation from a 3d party, such as an Interventionist or counselor, not a recommendation from a person who works for the program.
- Speak to a staff member that works in an operational role, rather than an Intake Person. Operation or Clinical staff can speak to day-to-day activities.
- What type of treatment modalities are used and how often? Eg. Group Therapy, Individual Therapy, Psychoeducation.
- What type of ancillary services are used to support the treatment model and how often are they used. Eg. Experiential exercises, Tutoring, TMS, Neurofeedback.
- What Medical Services are offered and how often? Eg, Medication Mgt., Psychiatric visits, Psych. testing.
- What treatment philosophies are incorporated into treatments. Eg 12-Step, SMART, Refuge. Do they promote abstinence vs. Harm-Reduction.
- A program should offer Medication Assisted Therapy and Harm Reduction among the treatment choices.
- The length of stay should be based on your progress, not a minimum program requirement. What is the average length of stay for a patient.
- Avoid a program that isolates you from your family and takes away your email and phone the whole time. It's typical to have your phone removed at early stages and offered on merit basis or without risk.
- Ask if discharge planning support is offered in finding jobs, housing, transportation, childcare, medical services.
- When possible, avoid programs that are in resort areas or are away from a community by more than several hours. The focus of care should be on the treatment received rather than its amenities.
- Your treatment plan should include what you want, within clinical and ethical standards and is agreed upon by family and the patient.
- Ask if your family is involved in the program from day one. How many family sessions and/or lectures are offered.
- Although certifications and accreditation are a minimum standard, they Do Not necessarily indicate a high quality of care. Ask about staff turnover and look for longevity.
- Most of all, informed consent requires that the program share outcomes for your diagnosis as well as the benefits and risks of all protocols. Ask about completion



rates and treatment efficacy. Has the program does research studies on their own treatments and best practices- what were the outcomes?