ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year of 2017

Helping to Address Substance Use Disorder
In our Local Communities
Dear Friends, Alumni and Supporters:

Drug addiction has reached epidemic proportions throughout our country and is being described as “the biggest manmade epidemic” ever in the US. More people are dying from drug overdoses than from any other cause of injury death, including traffic accidents, guns or falls. National statistics predict that 1 in 8 children will be affected by addiction in the US, while 1 in 7 adults are estimated.

Clinically known as a substance use disorder (SUD), addiction is classified as a chronic relapsing brain disease. While there are no “quick fixes” to healing the addicted brain, body, and its associated behaviors, a long-term graduated care approach can support people in the recovery process while learning coping skills to deal with life’s challenges.

A Way Out concluded its fifth full year of operation on December 31, 2017. The staff and board of directors have reflected on the impact the organization has made during this time. At the end of 2017, survey results concluded that 68% of all A Way Out clients were still sober. And, most of these people gained employment, secured housing and reunited with their families.

A Way Out’s family program continued to help families of loved ones with an addiction. One client said: We didn’t know what to do, where to turn or how to manage. It was awful. Through some searching we found A Way Out and you helped us make the first steps in getting our son help. Today he is thriving, working, healthy - we are so proud of him. Thank you.

This annual report describes the clients it has served and their progress towards recovery. Information is gathered at the time of initial intake, during case management, during therapy sessions and with post case-management care. Data within is based on one-on-one interactions with staff and client self-reporting.

This report was undertaken to identify program successes or challenges in helping those who reach out to A Way Out with drug and alcohol abuse disorders. We continually and confidentially analyze their progress toward recovery. With this information in hand, the program director and clinicians are better informed about their work and more prepared to improve upon it. This report was also undertaken so that clients, families and the communities concerned can be given some research-based assurances about potential benefits. In addition, fiscal stakeholders can judge the value returned on their investments.
A Way Out is a nonprofit, community-based, nongovernmental organization. Our goal is to secure, oversee and provide long-term evidence based graduated care for individuals in Garfield, Eagle and Pitkin counties who have not been able to afford or access the level of care needed to overcome a substance use disorder.

We are proud to report our findings and hope you will find our work impactful. It is an honor and a privilege for us to provide these services.

Elizabeth Means, CEO & the A Way Out Board and Staff

**Board of Directors**

Michael Connolly, Chair  
John Brune, Vice-Chair  
Caroline Cochener, Secretary  
Robert Musser, Treasurer  
Bill Anuszewski  
Don Bird  
Drew Drazin  
Robert Ferguson

**The A Way Out Team**

Elizabeth Means, Executive Director  
Beth Berkeley, Family Program  
Delfina Heurgo, Bilingual Clinician  
Kim Reil, Clinical Manager  
Dena Southerlan, AWO Clinician

**Advisory Board**

Jeanne Andlinger  
Eben Clark, Esq.  
Alan Nelson, MD  
Judge Kathryn Sullivan

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I hope to continue my journey in recovery. The transitional sober living helped me get my feet back on the ground. I don’t know how I became homeless, but I couldn’t hold a job while I was using. My life is so much different now. I have a job and purpose in my life today. I am thankful for the support you have given me. I don’t know where I would have been without your help.
Our Programs

AWO provides the following services to ensure residents have complete access to evidence-based substance use disorder care, so they have the best chance of getting well. We provide: free mental health assessments, counseling, streamlined referrals for substance use disorder care, a year of clinical and social support, sober living connections, and scholarships for intensive addiction programs locally and outside the area for those without resources. Families receive help too! It is critical for family members to receive guidance in navigating their own challenges. We serve the community at large including homeless individuals, families without financial means, and the underinsured.

Crisis Support

AWO received over a hundred calls from community members in 2017 regarding himself, herself or someone else in crisis with a substance use disorder. These calls are directed to an AWO clinician or an appropriate outside professional for immediate assistance.

Assessments

Free clinical assessments are provided for individuals who want to make a change and are seeking help getting into a validated addiction treatment program. These assessments identify each person’s individual key issues and help determine appropriate treatment options.

Inpatient & Outpatient Addiction Treatment Support

AWO works with people who have tried everything to overcome their addiction. Typically a long-term inpatient facility and a medical detox (available only outside the area) is a first step to give individuals the critical care needed to start the healing process, but the costs can be prohibitive. AWO helps with this. Also, an outpatient program often follows discharge from the intensive inpatient experience as added support and continued care. AWO can help make this care possible to many.

Aftercare Case-Management

AWO clinicians are with clients from inception, throughout their inpatient/outpatient treatment process, and ongoing for a year after treatment to help navigate the issues and stressors they often must face in new sobriety, such as: past legal issues, relationship problems, job issues, or homelessness, to name a few.
Alumni and Peer Support Program
AWO provides a clinician, a peer support specialist, and an alumni coordinator who connects with clients on an ongoing basis. Fun activities such as golf, bowling, hiking, meals, etc. are implemented by alumni who support each other in maintaining ongoing sobriety and wellness.

Family Engagement
Families of loved ones with an addiction benefit greatly from family counseling to deal with the chaos addiction has caused and to focus on self-care routines, boundary setting and calming skills.

Education and Prevention Symposia/Events
A Way Out brings nationally renowned speakers to the area every year to present on current topics in addiction, the family, trauma informed care, youth and adolescent substance abuse, the brain and more. New research is disseminated and effective solutions are introduced to bring about positive change. These educational events provide additional training to local and statewide addiction professionals to improve care across the state.

As a teen, the concept of never drinking or doing drugs was foreign and unacceptable to me. But then, it got so bad. I had to do something. A Way Out helped me get into an inpatient program and now I am going to AA meetings. All this help is doing something for me that I never thought was possible. My cravings are farther and farther apart. And, I decided to return to school. I am also enrolled in a CPR course at CMC. I find myself wanting to help others. It is a miracle and I take each day as it comes.
A Way Out’s Continuum of Care for Substance Use Disorder

**Crisis Calls:**
- Crisis calls received
- Concerns identified
- Connect caller with AWO counselor
- Connect caller to appropriate resource

**Assessments:**
- Provide free clinical assessment
- Identify needs
- Connect with higher level of care

**Financial Aid:**
- Provide scholarships based on need
- Facilitate application process
- Help underserved connect to treatment

**Streamlined Access to Care**
- Discounted treatment costs for clients
- Programs selected based on client needs
- Connections made for clients

**Family Program**
- Counseling for parents, spouses, teens
- Scholarships provided for children
- Family groups offered

**Community Benefit**
- Families are reunited
- Legacy of addiction is broken
- Children flourish
- Roads are safer
- Less hospital visits
- Reduced jail visits
- Increased community engagement

**Alumni Program**
- Peer Specialist Support
- Social Engagement
- Volunteering
- Helping Others

**Integration**
- Clients gain a year of sobriety
- Clients become employable
- Clients gain housing
- Clients are back in family
- Clients engage in community

**Educational / Prevention Programs**
- Lectures & events focused on prevention
- Solutions to dealing with teen & adult SUD
- Showcase affordable treatment resources for providers & the public
- Present latest in scientific research

**Long-Term Support**
- Year of support
- Year of case management
- Transitional living support
- Ongoing counseling

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The Numbers
Did you know? Since 2013, AWO has supported over 2,000 people!

2017 Survey Results
Surveyed clients reported significant improvements across a spectrum of key recovery measures. Specific quality of life and addiction recovery measures are gathered at initial intake, 6 months and at 12 months.

Who and How Many?
AWO worked with 200 individuals in 2017 and of those 200, 148 were enrolled in a year of case-managed recovery care. Additionally, 34 families participated in the Family Engagement Program, and approximately 150 attended our education and prevention events.

In 2017:
- 70% of clients who started in 2017 maintained sobriety throughout the year
- 82% of clients without jobs gained employment
- 95% of the 51 homeless clients gained housing within 6 months of treatment
- 85% of clients in 2017 had no new legal infractions
- 95% of clients in 2017 did not have a new admit to a hospital ER or detox facility
- 91% of case-managed clients (148) were self-sustaining by the end of 2017
- 83% of all clients in 2017 (200) reported improved relationships with family

Gender:
51% Male
49% Female

Ethnicity:
- Caucasian 65%
- Latino 15%
- African American 2%
- Native American 2%
- Asian 1%
- Unknown 15%
Reported Substances Abused Prior to treatment

(Many clients used multiple substances, however, these numbers report client’s primarily abused drug.)

**Primary Abused Substance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th># of People</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Medication</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over the counter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Costs of Substance Abuse

The National Institutes on Drug Abuse uses a variety of sources to monitor the prevalence and trends regarding drug abuse in the United States. The resources below cover a variety of drug related issues, including information on drug usage, emergency room data, prevention and treatment programs, and other research findings. Abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs is costly to our Nation, exacting more than $520 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Care</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Year Estimate Based On</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>$27 billion</td>
<td>$249 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illicit Drugs</td>
<td>$11 billion</td>
<td>$193 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription</td>
<td>$26 billion</td>
<td>$78.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opioids</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$64 billion</strong></td>
<td><strong>$520.5 billion</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Total U.S. Drug Deaths**

**Drugs Involved in U.S. Overdose Deaths** - Among the more than 64,000 drug overdose deaths estimated in 2016, the sharpest increase occurred among deaths related to fentanyl and fentanyl analogs (synthetic opioids) with over 20,000 overdose deaths. Source: CDC WONDER

![Graph showing total U.S. drug deaths from 1999 to 2017.](image)

**Increased Satisfaction with the Quality of Life (QOL)**

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best, clients were asked about how they felt their quality of life (health, relationships, finances, housing, legal issues) was. The average response upon initial visit with an A Way Out clinician was a 3.8 on a scale of 1 to 10. After working with clients for 12 months the quality of life number indicators increased to a 7.1. This is an improvement of 87% in areas important to one's sense of well-being and satisfaction with life.
**Why do people relapse?**

Relapse rates for addiction resemble those of other chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. Relapse is often a part of the recovery process – for many diseases. Nationally the relapse rate for addiction is between 40-60%. A Way Out has been fortunate to have low relapse rates of between 30-35%.

**National Average of Relapse from Drug Addiction Vs. Other Chronic Illnesses**

**Percentage of Patients Who Relapse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Relapse Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1 Diabetes</td>
<td>30 to 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Addiction</td>
<td>40 to 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>50 to 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>50 to 70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Follow Up Care**

A Way Out follows up with clients for a year (in tandem with their treating physician or mental health clinician) to ensure that the recovery process is ongoing and support is provided during challenging times. Often clients choose to enroll in sober living housing before returning to their pre-treatment environment. They learn how to create a resume, fill out job applications, interview for a job and are required to get employment while in sober living. This can be especially beneficial for those who have been homeless for a period of time.

**Were you satisfied with our work, programs and delivery?**

- 89% reported  Very Satisfied
- 10% reported  Satisfied
- 1% reported  Unsatisfied
Your Support is Greatly Appreciated!

We thank you for your support, which has allowed us to help people to recover from the life-threatening disease of addiction. These numbers reflect actual income and expenses for 2017.

**Income:**

![Income Pie Chart]

- **Individuals & Foundations**: 64%
- **In-Kind Donations**: 11%
- **Events**: 3%

Total Income: $713,542

**Expenses:**

![Expenses Pie Chart]

- **Scholarships for Intensive Treatment**: 54%
- **Counseling & Case Management**: 20%
- **Transitional Housing**: 4%
- **Administration**: 13%
- **Mental Health Assessments**: 3%
- **Crisis Support**: 2%
- **Education/Prevention**: 2%
- **Peer Support**: 2%

Total Expenses: $709,300
Closing Comments

The survey dated compiled within presents a compelling argument that helping people overcome a substance use disorder is not a lost cause or a waste of time. In fact, the results can be wildly successful. Families reunite, children thrive and our communities are healthier.

The accumulative increase of sobriety rates and quality of life measures since our inception in 2013 are indicative of the success people can have in overcoming an addiction. The board and staff have targeted goals for 2018 to improve the quality of each client’s sobriety and well-being through engagement, social interactions, alumni group activities, community service and peer support.

We need your help!

The request for our services is on the rise and so is the need for more staffing and program support.

If you are interested in supporting A Way Out, please visit our website at: www.awayout.org or mail a check to: Box 10825, Aspen, CO 81612

Thank you!

Thank you for all that you do supporting our community and individuals and families in need of support looking find recovery from substance abuse.

.... From a Donor
I am beyond grateful for all that A Way Out has done for me personally and for my family. I have gone from hopeless to a life of gratitude and peace. I don’t know where I would be at this moment. Possibly I would not be alive. Because of your support I am sober, alive and helping other women. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness, compassion and generosity.

Mother of 2 young children

Our family is grateful for the opportunity you gave us to get free family counseling. The counselor gave us coping skills so we could help XXX in his new sobriety. We learned how to understand the ups and downs that we are experiencing. I don’t think we would have been able to support XXX as well if we hadn’t had the guidance and support.

Thank you for helping me get into an alcohol addiction treatment program. I was in very critical condition and very sick. In the hospital, I really had no desire to continue living. I was totally hopeless and had nowhere to go. Then, the hospital social worker contacted A Way Out and I was accepted into inpatient treatment. I had never heard of a service that helps people with this. And now, I am so grateful because I have maintained a year of sobriety (that hasn’t happened since I was 13). My family and I are talking again. And, I have a job and a place to live. This is a miracle! I never thought this would have been possible for a person like me.
I am the daughter of, the wife of, and the mother of an alcoholic. In all three relationships I have been an enabler and a co-dependent. I have seen my loved ones lose themselves in their abuse of alcohol. I have loved them and have watched them change their lives with the help of someone else. Thank you.

I had someone on staff who relapsed and needed an inpatient addiction facility. The business could not pay the full price to help him. A Way Out negotiated a discount and also helped with some scholarship funds. Today he is sober, looks great and is just so grateful for the help you were able to provide. He said to me that we saved his life, when he did not think it was worth saving.

Help on the Western Slope is hard to find, especially for a family on a tight budget. As my wife’s drinking escalated and she said she couldn’t stop, we looked for addiction programs to help her quit. I found out that we’re too rich to get assistance and too poor to afford treatment. We were desperate to get help and I found A Way Out. When I called, the staff made me feel like I was talking to a friend. They helped us get the help we needed and supported us both through the process. My wife is doing great and our kids are glad to have their “old” mommy back.

You provided me a chance to get the care I needed to stop drinking and doing drugs. A Way Out has been a true blessing, a life-changing gift that I am forever grateful for. Thank you to the staff and board for helping me change my life in unimaginable ways!
Your team has offered hope to our family. Your advice and suggestions helped to contain a life-threatening crisis, brought our son back from the brink, and offered him a way to deal with the pain and confusion in his life. We are profoundly grateful.

There is no more aloneness with that awful ache that nothing could reach. Today that ache is gone for me and never needs to return again. Instead there is a sense of belonging, of being wanted, and needed, and loved. Thank you.