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Title: Using Holistic and Integrated Communication Strategies to Expand Addiction Treatment: Implications and Lessons Learned

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Aim: This study aims to determine which types of media and approaches are effective at educating different audiences and advocating for changes in insurance practices, appropriations for treatment services, and efficient use of resources and services.

Methods: The study uses conceptual frameworks from communication, behavior change, and social movement theory to view and evaluate CATG communications strategies and their implementation at the national and state level. Qualitative data for this analysis include materials from site visits, quarterly reports, documentation of key events or milestones, and stakeholder interviews.

Results: The Open Society Institute's CATG program is driven—and supported—by a “holistic and integrated” communications strategy for education and advocacy intended to generate dialogue and reach a range of stakeholders at the national and state level, from policymakers to partners, service providers, the general public, and people in need of treatment and their families. Our current political reality values and relies on a diverse range of communication channels, from face-to-face meetings to newspapers, radio, television, print materials, and social media. Communications strategies geared toward education and advocacy must be as varied, flexible, and dynamic as their media channels, yet consistent in their messages and purposes. This study examines examples of highly successful and less-successful state coalition campaigns to identify best practices, potential pit-falls, and adaptation of the national campaign to different contexts.

Conclusion: The findings provide implications and lessons learned for developing guidelines for consistent, sustainable, and effective national- and state-level communication campaigns for education and advocacy in future.

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