

SOUND EFFECTS

April 1, 2024 | EDITION #3

Dear Friends of SOUND,

While April brings hope of spring and growth and the levity of April Fool's Day – we need to also acknowledge the importance of Alcohol Awareness Month and National Minority Health Month (NMHM.) Alcohol Awareness month aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote community action while NMHM highlights the importance of reducing health disparities and improving the health of racial and ethnic minorities and American Indian/Alaskan Natives.

First, a snapshot of what we're facing in terms of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD):

- In the United States, approximately 15 million individuals, about 6.1% of those aged 12 and above, grapple with AUD.
- Within King County alone, this equates to roughly 113,000 residents aged 12 and older facing AUD.
- Alcohol, often initially used to self-medicate for untreated mental health conditions, can in time worsen these same conditions such as anxiety, depression and other psychiatric disorders.
- Combining alcohol with opioids poses a heightened risk of overdose.

At Sound, our addiction management physician and our psychiatrists can prescribe medications that complement therapy:

- Antabuse induces illness when alcohol is consumed.
- Acamprosate curbs cravings.
- Naltrexone blocks opioid receptors, reducing alcohol's euphoric effects.
- Vivitrol another opioid receptor blocker, which is injected monthly, offers convenience.

Recognizing that for many, reducing alcohol consumption is more feasible than immediate abstinence, Sound embraces a harm reduction approach. Our goal is gradual progress toward healthier lifestyles. AUD and Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in general transcend age barriers. Sound clinicians are encountering children as young as 13 struggling with fentanyl and other drug dependence. We're committed to expanding our youth-focused programs and services for all substance use disorders.

Now for a closer look at AUD among certain minority groups. Native Americans have higher rates of alcohol dependence and related deaths despite lower overall alcohol consumption than the general population. While the black community has lower rates of AUD than those in the majority, those who do suffer from AUD face disproportionate negative consequences such as poverty, limited education, legal problems and unemployment. Racism, stigma, and cultural barriers complicate access to mental health services within BIPOC communities. Sound is working very hard to lessen these disparities by making behavioral health care more accessible for minorities.

For additional information about reducing minority health disparities:

- Read more about Sound's active and ardent role in addressing historical and ongoing issues related to [Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion \(DEJI\)](#)
- Learn about [NMHM](#) and how individuals can make a difference.
- Explore the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities [Brother You're On My Mind](#) campaign.

For assistance or more information about AUD:

- Contact [Sound](#) today at 206-901-2000 for support.
- Get educated on the [health impacts](#) of alcohol use.
- Delve further into understanding [Alcohol Use Disorder](#).
- Learn about [Alcohol Awareness Month](#).
- Reach out to the [Washington Recovery Help Line](#) at 866-789-1511.
- Call 988 for a mental health emergency.

Let's unite to amplify awareness, extend support, and foster hope as we confront the complexities of AUD and the disparities of minority health.

Sincerely,



KATRINA EGNER | SOUND PRESIDENT & CEO

www.SOUND.health

Please call 206.901.2000 to donate today

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