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**New Directions to Host Mental Health and Substance Abuse Symposium in Florida**

*Experts will convene Dec. 2 to discuss how to better treat addiction and mental illness*

St. Augustine, Fla. – Nov. 29, 2016 – More than 150 Florida doctors, therapists, hospital leaders and behavioral health executives will gather Dec. 2 in St. Augustine for a one-day symposium, hosted by [New Directions Behavioral Health](#), to learn, share and discuss how to improve mental health and addiction treatment.

The event will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort and will include presentations by health experts from Rogers Memorial, Center for Discovery, and Genoa Pharmacy, among others.

The symposium will aim to educate health care providers about how to curb the rising prescription drug and heroin epidemic sweeping the U.S., and how to improve the way mental health and substance use disorders are treated.

Mental health illness and drug and alcohol addiction continues to soar in the U.S. In 2015, 20.8 million Americans had a substance abuse disorder, according to the recently released Surgeon General's report, called [Facing Addiction in America](#). That's as many as had diabetes and 1 1/2 times as many as had cancer, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy points out.

Additionally, one in five adults in the U.S. experiences mental illness in a given year and one in five youth aged 13-18 experiences a severe mental disorder at some point during their life, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

New Directions is committed to working with health care providers to advance and modernize the approach to treating substance use and mental health disorders – one that begins with evidence-based practices, early intervention and increased integration of behavioral, pharmaceutical and medical care.

The following is a sample of the symposium's sessions.

**Trends in Medication-Assisted Treatment for Substance Use Disorders**

The importance of evidence-based behavioral and medication-assisted treatments (MAT) to treat opioid addiction and substance abuse will be the focus of the symposium's closing session. Dr. John Langlow, Medical Director for New Directions, will explain why sound, evidence-based principles have been shown to reduce substance misuse significantly.

### **Eating Disorders in 2016: What to Know and How to Help**

Eating disorders begin as compulsive disorders and develop into coping mechanisms. Dr. Jennifer Henretty, Director of Outcomes and Research for the Center for Discovery, will talk about why assessment, treatment and continuing care is so important.

Providers will receive CEU or CME credits for attending the event and can register [here](#). To learn more about the speakers and the agenda, contact Theresa Martin at 904.371.6962.

### **About New Directions Behavioral Health**

Founded in 1995, New Directions helps people live healthy, balanced lives. The fast-growing health care company provides managed behavioral health services, an employee assistance program (EAP), organizational consulting, and health coaching to private and public health plans, Fortune 100 companies, large and medium employers, and labor groups. For more information, visit [ndbh.com](http://ndbh.com).

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