

Strengthening the Backbone of Substance Use Disorder Treatment : Advancing Quality Standards for Addiction Counselors in Indonesia

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IKAI at a glance

- IKAI, the Indonesian Association for Addiction Counselors is a national organization in Indonesia that supports professionals working in the field of addiction prevention, treatment and recovery support.
- An Addiction Counselor is an individual with the competency and experience to provide substance use disorder treatment. (IKAI,2022)
- Founded in 2008 in Jakarta, IKAI has approximately 752 members across 20 provinces

IKAI's Mission

- Our mission is to empower addiction counselors to achieve excellence through professional development, ethical standards, advocacy and networking.

Current Situation

- Substance use remains both a global and national challenge.
- In Indonesia, 1.73% (3,337,000) of the population aged 15 – 64 reported substance use in the past year (BNN, Indonesia Drug Report 2024).
- The National Narcotics Board of Indonesia (BNN) reported that 14,387 people with SUD accessed rehabilitation services. Additionally, the Ministry of Health reported that 5,087 people with SUD received treatment in health care facilities (BNN, Indonesia Drug Report 2025)

Policies Situation

- Policies and regulations on SUD rehabilitation, when implemented by various ministries and agencies, risk creating fragmentation in the system and service provision.
- Lack of formal recognition of addiction counselors.
- Regulations and standards of competency for addiction counselors have not been fully implemented across all authorized ministries and agencies
- A certification agency, appointed by the National Board for Profession Certification, conducts competency examination for addiction counselors; access to certification, however remains limited.

IKAI's Strategic Efforts

1. Standardizing addiction counselor qualifications and competencies in alignment with national standards.
2. Developing the professionalism of addiction counselors through continuing training/education, promoting evidence-based practices and upholding ethical standards.
3. Advocating for a comprehensive and accessible national certification system.
4. Promoting multi-sectoral collaboration and policy reviews.

Standardizing addiction counselor qualifications and competencies in alignment with national standards

- Contributing to the initiation and to the development of national competency standards for addiction counselors.
- Contributing to the development of national standards for SUD treatment.

Developing professionalism in addiction counselors

- Providing continuing training for its members, both internally and in cooperation with other organizations
- Encouraging members to undertake the addiction counselor competency exam
- Setting and enforcing ethical standards of practice for its members

Advocating for a comprehensive and accessible national certification system

- Developing a tiered system for certifications
- Encouraging easier access to competency exam for addiction counselors

Promoting multi-sectoral collaboration and policy reviews

- Partnering with government organizations (e.g. BNN, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Immigration and Correctional Services, etc), NGOs and community organizations.
- Advocating for formal recognition that comprehensively regulates the role of Addiction Counselors
- Sharing responsibility to improve addiction services.

Recommendations in advancing quality standards

- Establishing cohesive national regulations.
- Recognizing addiction counselors as professionals.
- Integrating competency standards into policy frameworks.
- Ensuring alignment with international standards
- Promoting ethical, evidence-based practices.

Key Takeaways

- Addiction counselors are vital to recovery-oriented systems of care
- Standardization and certification are essential.
- Collaboration and cohesive policies drive quality.
- Aligning with global standards ensures sustainability.

Thank You

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