

HPC strives to guide, educate, encourage, and support their clients



Beyond the Prescription

January marks the 6th anniversary of the opening of High Point Clinic. Our initial mission was to provide high-quality evidence based treatment with a primary focus on women's issues. Today, more than ever, that is still an area of critical need. The past year has seen an explosion in revelations regarding sexual abuse towards women. Time Magazine's prestigious "Person of the Year" award went to The Silence Breakers, the brave women who have come forward to expose this huge problem in our society. While many believe that addiction is simply a series of bad choices, studies clearly show that this is not the case. Emotional trauma is the primary cause. The number of women who suffer from substance dependence issues after having experienced sexual trauma is overwhelming. Until we realize this as a society, we will never be dealing with the real issues surrounding addiction and subsequent overdose deaths.

Another topic related to sexual trauma is PTSD. The largest group of people in the United States with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD are not soldiers returning from war, but women who have experienced sexual trauma. Studies have shown that 50% of PTSD victims will eventually develop an opioid-use disorder. Based on that, according to recent statistics, 50% of women in the United States have experienced some type of sexual abuse or trauma, that means 25% of the female population in the United States is at risk for opiate dependence. Yet this huge factor is almost never addressed in the media or by the medical profession. Fortunately, as more women's stories about abuse come out, I am confident that the link to addiction will also become more visible.

One of the biggest problems in addressing this issue, is the guilt and shame that accompany sexual abuse. It is very difficult for people who have been abused to discuss it, or even many times to be aware of how severely it has affected them. It's not just those who are poor and disenfranchised as the Time article pointed out, it is even difficult for college-educated, Academy Award winning actresses to speak about their abuse. If it's that difficult for these famous and empowered women to come forward, how much harder it is for people with substance use issues, who are used to being ignored and mistreated. The truly incredible part of this is that frequently the abuse continues later in life. I have had patients who have been sexually assaulted by physicians they trusted to help them in their recovery. So I think it is critically important that we all need to be aware of this problem, be more sensitive to this issue as a society and a profession, and all stand together to address this issue and help resolve it, as well as eliminating the stigma surrounding both sexual abuse and substance dependence, so that healing can occur both on an individual and societal level.

Vance Shaw, MD, FASAM Board Certified by the American Board of Addiction Medicine



Straight from the Director's Pen



The house located at 205 High Point Drive was bought by Dr. Vance Shaw (known to me as my husband) on Sept 12, 2012. Prior to that date, Dr. Shaw had attempted to engage others already practicing addiction medicine to go through whatever steps necessary to provide a non-profit to assist our opiate-addicted community. He didn't receive interested feedback from those he had approached. However, he felt strongly led to be part of a non-profit, not realizing he was going to be the one who was required to take the initial plunge into opening one.

The official opening of High Point Clinic was in Jan of 2013. Becoming a non-profit has been a long, grueling, and costly process. However, it continues to be an important part of High Point Clinic's mission to be so named. We are proud to still be the only independent, non-profit Medication Assisted Treatment Clinic in the state of Tennessee. Being a non-profit does not mean that we are able to offer free services or even services at a reduced cost. Our mission at High Point Clinic has always been to serve opiate-addicted patients through evidence-based approaches. We recognize that the services we provide are not cheap. For us to provide the services needed to aid those who knock on our door, we have no choice but to fall within the same payment categories that other clinics suggest. Being non-profit does keep the clinic in check, since the clinic as a whole answers to a Board of Directors. No one at High Point Clinic financially profits more than what is agreeable to the Board. The clinic, as a non-profit, is held to higher standards than other facilities providing similar care. We are required to have a large book of up-to-date policies and procedures which we worked very hard to write. We were audited last year and will be audited each year in the future. It is very important for us to be able to prove how our monies are used and how well our internal controls keep any questionable actions from happening within the clinic itself. It also allows us to have clear processes we use to move us through each day. We use a local, well-respected accounting firm to assist us because this provides check point reducing the possibility of corruption within the clinic itself.

High Point Clinic is not interested in becoming a huge conglomeration with patients lining up down the street awaiting their appointments. We have a rather small patient count compared to other clinics. Since our inception, we have always served our patients by providing professional addiction medicine physicians, case management, and Masters level counselors. The standards we have set through our practice have been applauded by and now have become mandated by the State of TN. We desire to help patient populations without creating a clientele too large to serve effectively. As a non-profit, the clinic can receive grant monies, which up to this point, we have not taken steps to procure. However, a huge focus for the New Year is to obtain grant monies. We would love to be able to provide services through grant monies for those who are listed at poverty levels and have no other means to afford the treatment.

In the New Year, we will continue to strive to help educate those women who are pregnant and become new mothers about their disease and what the evidence shows about addiction in those pregnant. We also educate them about how addiction affects their unborn fetuses and newly born babies. High Point has always been extremely dedicated to educating all sectors of society and bringing about a better

Don't believe everything you think



IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE:

- **If you are going to be late for an appointment, please call us. If you are more than 30 minutes late you will not be seen that day, you will have to reschedule for the next available clinic day**
- Your account must be at a zero balance! Otherwise, if High Point is closed due to weather, we cannot call your prescription in
- If you want to request a PA, please note that you must have compliant drug screens

understanding and acceptance for the disease of addiction. Dr. Shaw has previously written about the ACE score and how it ties in with the disease of addiction. In the New Year, we will continue our interest in providing evidence based treatment for those who have high ACE scores. Dr. Shaw will continue to provide educational opportunities for those ETSU medical students who are rotating through at High Point Clinic. He will also continue his work with the student counselors and the public. We will continue to be politically active, fighting for the patients through whatever means may be effective.

So, in 2018 we will be embarking upon the 6th year of High Point's mission to aid those who suffer from opiate use disorder. Education of the patients, their families, the community and those individuals who are intent on serving the future population of opiate-addicted individuals is of primary importance. Especially for those who are going to be instrumental in effecting medical and psychological treatment of those who suffer with opiate addiction. We hope to provide additional physicians at High Point Clinic who are sensitive to our patient population and who are willing to learn, and practice, evidence based addiction medicine rather than practicing opinionated addiction medicine. We look forward to a New Year filled with new opportunities to open the eyes of the public regarding the need for the stigma of addiction to be erased. It is a long road, but anything is possible, and change is made one step and one person at a time.

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to take a moment to thank you, our patients, for trusting us at High Point Clinic with your treatment and your care. We are interested in growing our patient population to some extent so feel free to put out the word for those who are truly interested in their recovery. There is certainly no shortage of clinics available to provide care through Medication Assisted Treatment. However, we strive to be the clinic who is known to have the will and the empathy to help those who entrust us with their care. We will continue to struggle with you and for you in hopes that one day the reactions of others to the word "addiction" and "buprenorphine" will be calm, non-judgmental, and unprejudiced. Let us know what is important to you and what we can do to support you.

Happy 2018! Rene' Shaw, Director
High Point Clinic

Counselor's Corner

It's a New Year and that means New Year's resolutions. Many people spend the first few days of a new year, creating goals for themselves in the upcoming year. The thought of a starting a new year and having new goals can be very exciting—a clean slate! This is a time when people decide to change things in their lives and create different habits or behaviors. This can not only be very exciting, it can be very positive and many of the goals people set are great. However, it can also be very discouraging and create disappointment when we don't achieve the goals we set. So, as you start your New Year and think about goals you want to set, here are few things to think about that may help you be successful and achieve your goals:

- * Make sure your goal(s) is positive and realistic
- * If you are giving something up, replace it with something positive
- * Set small goals that can be achieved more quickly (maybe a set of weekly goals)
- * If you notice that depression or anxiety are interfering with reaching your goals, get treatment for that
- * Get support from others—we all struggle with meeting our goals
- * Create a clear and specific plan
- * When you meet one of your goals, reward yourself—you deserve it
- * Expect setbacks
- * If it becomes a struggle, reassess and modify your goals—take it one step at a time

Here are some possible goal ideas that might help you get going on a list for yourself. Set healthy boundaries for yourself. Be kind to yourself, have self-compassion. Resist negative thinking, practice positive thinking instead and challenge the negative thoughts. Do something healthy every day that you enjoy. Take ownership of your treatment. The list is limitless, have fun with it. Remember, we are here to help you be successful and have a great 2018.

Amy Lovell, Clinical Director