

# **The GATE Model: An Interactive Tool for Addictions Risk Assessment**

## **Program Description**

Working with individuals and families suffering from addictive illness has become increasingly challenging, as professionals operate within a patchwork quilt of public, private, and community resources that often lack coordination. In response to the national opioid crisis, the task of finding a common language between clinicians, agencies, clients, and support systems is increasingly important for treatment outcomes.

The GATE Model is a user-friendly, interactive, graphic tool that enhances the options available to the professional, for the assessment of clients in diverse settings, for risk of addiction. Developed for the Master of Social Work curriculum of the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, School of Social Work, the GATE Model simplifies the process of identifying needs and allocating resources, within the continuum of care.

The visual impact of the GATE Model increases the accessibility of the clinician's observations, strengthening the motivation of clients and families to accept recommended interventions. Patterns of addictive illness are familiar to professionals in treatment settings, who have witnessed different versions of the same dynamic, again and again, and the GATE Model captures the clinician's unique view.

Participants will consider the Syndrome Model (Shaffer, et al, 2004), as they examine the GATE Model's focus on Genetics, Access, Trauma, and Environment, in the dynamics of observed risk factors for addiction. Practical applications of the GATE Model will be explored, with emphasis on assessment and treatment planning.

## **Program Objectives**

Upon completion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify significant limitations in traditional addiction theory and practice, and its impact on treatment systems.
- List core concepts of Shaffer's Syndrome Model of addiction
- Explain the GATE Model to assess risk of addiction in case examples.
- Describe the GATE Model in a treatment planning context.
- Outline and communicate risk factors in addiction with colleagues.

## **Target Audience**

This program is for all Health and Human Services Professionals, Educators, Guidance Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Case Managers, those in the Criminal Justice System, Armed Forces, Program Developers, Grant Writers, and any other interested persons.

## **Contact Hours**

Variable - 2.0 to 8.0 contact hours

### **Program Agenda**

Program agenda available upon request – it will depend on the number of contact hours.

### **Faculty**

**Tab Ballis, LCSW, LCAS, CCS**, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist, and Certified Clinical Supervisor at Insight Wellness Services, in Wilmington, NC ( [www.insightwellnessservices.com](http://www.insightwellnessservices.com) ). Tab is an adjunct faculty member of the University of North Carolina, Wilmington School of Social Work, where he teaches the Family Systems and Addictions course for their Addiction Certificate program. His innovative GATE Model for addictions assessment and person-centered planning has been developed as a web-based course, for the UNCW College of Health and Human Services, Center for Workforce Development. Providing clinical supervision for LCSW and LCAS candidates for over two decades, Tab applied his knowledge and experience in service to the North Carolina Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board's Clinical Supervision Task Force in 2019.