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## 3 Concepts for Community based Alcohol treatment:

**Introduction:** Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) was founded in New Mexico/USA as a program open to addicted people sent to trained specialists at a treatment center. In 2007 Robert J. Meyers and John Gardin were invited to come to Bielefeld/Germany (320.000 inhabitants) which is a well known model of community mental health care in Germany. Given the existing services offered for homeless people, offenders, adolescents, families and mentally handicapped people in community mental health care, CRA was introduced in order to combine all of these institutions and follow the common idea of positive reinforcement. CRA became the starting point of a growing network of different providers implementing something like a „healthy city“ for addicts. Institutions for addicts in other German Cities such as Tübingen followed these ideas.

10 certificated CRA-Supervisors and 1 CRA-Trainer who were trained by Robert J. Meyers and John Gardin from 2007 and equipped with a German translation of the CRA Manual by Meyers & Smith, now offer German speaking professionals working in the addiction field evidenced and community based CRA Training in order to encourage a 3-step program.

In the 60's and 70's the former concept of psychiatric treatment and services in US and in a lot of European countries, esp. Italy, was changed to **Community Mental Health**. Whereas European Countries followed this way until the end of the century the US American health system changed to more biological concepts of psychiatric treatment. A lot of community mental health centers are closed today.

### Community Mental Health Principles:

1. Catchmented responsibility
2. Responsible Teams
3. Decentralized horizontal authority and responsibility
4. Capitation payment
5. Use of existing community resources
6. Multi-response mental health center
7. Non-institutionalization
8. Outcome based bonus system
9. Citizen/consumer participation

Mosher/Burt: Community Mental Health, 1988, p. 92

### Community Reinforcement Approach:

CRA was developed from the early 70's based on a behavioral therapeutical concept by Azrin and Hunt. Positive reinforcement became the main idea of a treatment program for addicts which was evidence based and became the best treatment concept worldwide although not yet implemented everywhere ...

### Community Reinforcement Approach Principles

1. Client focused
2. Emphasis upon positive reinforcement
3. Establishment of social "reinforcers"
4. Internal or external motivation
5. Proven efficacy
6. Time limited
7. Focussing Independence

Support from Robert Meyers and JaneEllen Smith on ICTAR 11 in 2006

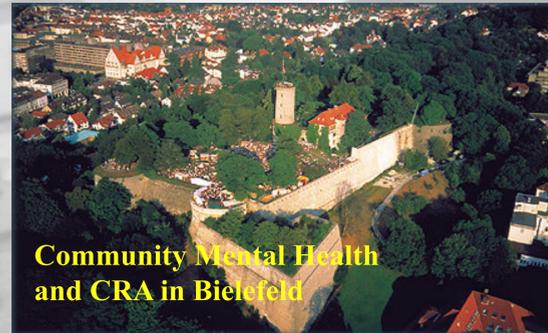


**The Healthy Cities approach of WHO** seeks to put health high on the political and social agenda of cities and to build a strong movement for public health at the local level. The concept is underpinned by the principles of the Health for All strategy and Local Agenda21 of the WHO. Strong emphasis is given to equity, participatory governance and solidarity, intersectoral collaboration and action to address the determinants of health.

The role of city health profiles in influencing health policy is:

- to interest, inform and educate the public, health professionals, politicians and policy-makers and stimulate them to action;
- to act as a source of information about health in the locality;
- to identify health problems, high-risk groups and unmet needs;
- to be a critical component of health planning, indicating health priorities, the preferred resource allocation and direction of service development; and
- to provide a focus for intersectoral action

City leadership for health, edited by Geoff Green & Agis Tsouros, WHO 2008



### Community Mental Health for addicts in Bielefeld:

Niels Pörksen and Günther Wienberg since 1984 in Bielefeld are two reformers of German psychiatric services since 1975. They inspired and managed change of treatment services for patients with psychic disturbances and alcohol and drug problems in the late 80's and 90's. Wienberg required support not only for motivated addicts but also for the „forgotten majority“ of addicts. The von Bodelschwingsche Anstalten Bethel in Bielefeld, a protestant treatment center for the mentally handicapped, epileptic and homeless people (the biggest one in Europe) became the core of a network not only for addicts which became famous all over Germany. Community based services for mentally handicapped, addicted and homeless people, for offenders and chronic ill people grew up to be a model of best practice of Community Mental Health.

### Community Reinforcement Approach:

In the new century it was necessary to get Community Mental Health evidence based. In 2005 Robert Meyers and JaneEllen Smith were invited to present Community Reinforcement Approach in Bielefeld. They sent John Gardin to Bielefeld who became the founder of CRA in Bielefeld. He convinced the stakeholders of the von Bodelschwingsche Anstalten Bethel that CRA was what Community Mental Health in Germany was waiting for: an evidence based approach nearby to the client focussed treatment concept of Community Mental Health. In 2007 Robert J. Meyers and John Gardin trained 31 German people of different professions to arrange a community based network in Bielefeld for addicts focussing social reinforcers. Since then Bielefeld labour Office, probation officers, youth agencies and others participants start to take responsibility in this network starting a process which is still going on.

**The Healthy Cities approach of WHO** is known in Bielefeld but it is not part of it. WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen require in their „Handbook for action“ from 2009 the development and implementation of an „action plan“ all over Europe. It is going to start in Bielefeld: from the bottom.

Trainings so far:		
Bielefeld	02/07-09/07	Mother training in Bielefeld by J. Meyers & J. Gardin
Tübingen:	09/07-02/10	First German CRA Program starting in a Rehabilitation system in a regional network
Guetersloh	09/07	LWL-Clinic for Psychiatry
Heilbronn	10/08	Friedrichshof: Rehabilitation Clinic for drug addicts
Hagen	10/09-05/10	Stiftungsbereich „Vorort“: services for chronic addicts
Berlin	01/10-09/10	VIA Berlin: services for chronic addicts
	10/08-	Hospital Queen Elisabeth of Herzberge (Psychiatric Dept.)
Darmstadt	05/10-	Caritas Darmstadt: Outpatient Treatment and Counseling
Schwerin	07/10-	Start of the first CRA Program in former GDR



The first training group in Bielefeld with Robert J. Meyers and John Gardin as master trainers in 2007



stepmap.de

## 3-Steps-Program for the city:

**1.CRA-Training of a multiprofessional Core Team with multipliers from different psychosocial fields**

In Bielefeld we started with **9 psychiatrists, 5 psychologists, 1 nurse, 3 counselors, 9 social workers and 2 educators from several institutions. They went back to their teams to teach their colleagues, some very successful, others had some problems.**

**2.Building up a network for providers of reinforcers together with work agencies for unemployed people, probation officers for offenders, providers of flats and appartments for homeless people, youth welfare office for addicts with children, marital therapy, support of getting back driving licences, social clubs, marital therapy etc**

Differnet people in different institutions started to **build up a social network in order to support clients with alcohol and drug problems. In the city they look for social reinforcers which are available for the clients in order to motivate them for change. Different institutions can take common pathways for different perspectives of the clients.**

**3.Exchange of experiences between different institutions and cities and building up a Society for Community Based Psychotherapy (Verein für Gemeindeorientierte Psychotherapie e.V.)**

In between there are more and more German institutions representing different catchment areas who want to know how CRA can support them to improve their services for people with alcohol and drug problems. These different networks have the possibility to exchange best practice. The „Verein für gemeindeorientierte Psychotherapie“, a Socielty for Community Based Psychotherapy, is going to become a common platform for all professionals who are looking for change.

## Conclusion

**Broadening the base of Tretament for Alcohol Problems (Institute of Medicine 1990) evidenced based CRA and its optimistic idea of positive reinforcement is able to coax different professions and different therapeutical views away from punishment and control of addicts, towards encouragement and change. Following these guidelines of Community Mental Health means that Germany is now on the way.**

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