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I know someone who died from a blood related condition for using a faulty needle for drugs. He was doing his best to get sober, but he was homeless and that really made it hard for him to stop using. I believe we need to provide basic needs for alcoholics and narcotics addicts including food and shelter on the condition that they attend AA or NA meetings everyday to get sober. Inmates come out of prison as "dry drunks" and "dry addicts" because the Maine prison and jail system doesn't require Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous programs for their recovery program for inmates. They don't have a relationship with a Higher Power in prison or jail that can prepare them for the temptations they'll face on their release.

I have a friend in AA who said, "You need to go to a meeting in the beginning of your recovery as often as you used." For a lot of people with substance abuse disorders, this means going to recovery meetings everyday at first and they're not able to obtain employment right away if they're really going to address their substance abuse disorder long-term. But they feel pressure to disregard their recovery in order to provide for their basic needs. The goal is to get them involved in a recovery program like AA or NA that will save their lives and keep them out of the hospital. Sponsors in these programs who have been sober for over a year can work with the system to develop progressive treatment plans for their sponsees that will eventually lead to them having a solid reference for job placement.

We need to get these people off the street first if they're seeking help. Make all aid conditional upon going to NA and AA meetings full-time at first. It will get them a new set of friends who won't tempt them to use. Judges have recommended and required AA for people for a long time.