



# Designing and Developing "Addictionology" Major in Iran's Spatial Planning Macro-district 8

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## Dear Editor,

Drug addiction is one of the pervasive social problems in today's world. It has ruined thousands of lives worldwide, has left millions dying prematurely, and has cost billions of dollars to control, treat, and reduce the harms of addiction. Drugs have a turnover of about 1,400 - 1,600 billion dollars in international trades (1, 2). Repetition of the vicious cycle of addiction management in Iran, increased prevalence rate, changing the pattern of drug use, dramatic augmentation of new psychotropic substances, the higher mortality rate due to substance abuse, and younger age of drug users are the most critical factors that have doubled the need for drug use prevention and control. Prevention is the priority for counternarcotics policies, and according to cost-benefit calculations, the effectiveness of prevention has been proven (3).

However, different periods of addiction management in Iran and the increasing numbers in this field can reveal the inefficiency of management protocols. In other words, despite great efforts, addiction problems in the country have not decreased (3). One of the most important reasons is the lack of a scientific pole and scientific macro studies on this issue. On the other hand, conflicts of interest between responsible organizations, as well as the lack of long-term and comprehensive strategies and parallel structures, have seriously challenged the effective measures in this field (4).

Having adopted a future-oriented approach, universities are identifying opportunities, threats, and future challenges and seeking to resolve and mitigate the threats using scientific tools. The country's higher education system requires a reference university to develop and promote sci-

ences, expand education proportionate to the needs of the community, and be responsible for social responsibilities. Considering the scientific and spatial planning division of the country into ten main regions, the emergence of diverse scientific poles and axes, and the existence of potential and appropriate context, as well as high addiction rates in southeastern Iran, it seems necessary to design and create a new field called "Addictionology" in the universities of medical sciences in the spatial planning district 8. By developing such a field, it can be hoped that influential scientific measures will be taken to raise public awareness, reduce the rate of addiction, and provide earlier treatment and new ways of addiction treatment. As a result, addiction in society would decline by diminishing both supply and demand. Furthermore, exorbitant socio-economic, cultural, and medical costs would also decrease.

## Footnotes

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