

## Media Magic! How Media Redefined First Choice Health Services' Outreach Efforts



“How you portray yourself online has a lot to do with whether clients make that first contact,” said Susie Mullens, project director of the Appalachian Technology Assisted Recovery Innovations (ATARI) program at First Choice Services (FCS), in Charleston, West Virginia. Establishing a user-friendly, eye-catching, and mobile responsive Web presence was a priority for FCS staff. They enlisted the help of FCS media coordinator and freelance videographer, editor, and graphic design whiz Adam Sypolt to create a clean, sleek, and engaging site that incorporates regional imagery and colorful branding. “Ease of use and simplicity in design should all point the user to a complete experience,” said Adam. The key is interactivity: “If we don’t hit people visually, if we don’t have interactive components, we’re going to lose the crowd,” said ATARI program coordinator Teresa Warner.

FCS uses the University of Wisconsin’s Addiction–Comprehensive Health Enhancement Support System (A-CHESS) mobile application to address the substance abuse treatment needs of rural West Virginians. Faced with financial constraints and living in remote locations, many clients face transportation and child care challenges that limit them from attending in-person group sessions. The FCS Web site is now one of the first places Teresa refers clients because it serves as a one-stop shop for helpful resources, including A-CHESS-developed video tutorials. The Web site has become such a successful tool that one client group decided to host their weekly meetings virtually through the A-CHESS application and to incorporate tutorials from the FCS Web site to improve their user experience. “It’s important to have a Web site with meaningful information,” Teresa said. “We’ve seen the limitlessness of the site. Clients can still have a valuable treatment experience without using the clinician’s time.”

Next on the horizon for FCS—movies! Program staff are filming 3–5-minute *Choose Your Own Adventure*–themed videos. Clients become actively engaged in the story of an alcoholic in recovery who uses the A-CHESS application to help when temptations arise. Clients are provided with choices for how the protagonist handles each scenario and can see the consequences of their selections. FCS incorporated 12-Step program literature as the basis of the scripts and recruited friends to act out the vignettes. “The goal is to have that feeling of total immersion—to feel the consequences for your actions and see their effect on a person just like you,” said Adam.

Interested in learning more about how FCS is using technology to enhance client services?  
Check out their presentation during the biweekly TAC grantee call Thursday, November 7, 2013,  
at 1 p.m. (ET) and be sure to visit their Web site at <http://1stchs.com/>