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# NIDA NOTES

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## Special Interest Groups Focus CTN's Research

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NIDA's [National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network \(CTN\)](#) provides a unique opportunity for researchers and practitioners to work together to test research concepts that can help them fill gaps in knowledge about drug addiction treatment. To better focus future research on specific treatment areas and the needs of different populations, participants who share an interest in a common treatment issue have formed six special interest groups, and two more are in the works. The groups address research and treatment interests in the following areas:

- HIV/AIDS
- Adolescent treatment
- Women and gender issues
- Comorbid patients
- Court-involved patients
- Ethnic minority populations
- Behavioral therapy (planned)
- Pharmacotherapy (planned)

The groups meet regularly and serve as expert resources for the CTN in their respective areas, says Dr. Betty Tai, who directs NIDA's CTN office. They fulfill such functions as assessing current practice in their special areas, identifying promising research-based interventions, developing new research concepts for testing, and preparing long-range research plans. For example, the first group to form -- the HIV/AIDS group -- has developed an AIDS research strategy for the CTN and proposed treatment research concepts for HIV prevention and treatment in drug treatment settings for protocol development. (See "[The CTN's First Three Waves of Research Protocols.](#)")

Seminars held at the CTN's annual meeting reflected the input of these special interest groups and illustrated how they are broadening the scope of the CTN's treatment research agenda. The seminars covered challenges in the treatment of substance abuse disorders among adolescents using family therapy and treatment medications, treatment issues for men and women substance abusers with trauma histories and post-traumatic stress disorder, issues in the assessment and treatment of substance abusing patients with coexisting mental disorders such as antisocial

personality disorder and depression, and the impact of HIV/AIDS and HIV interventions on substance abuse treatment in CTPs.

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