

Dually-diagnosed individuals

[Health & Medicine](#), [Alcoholism](#)



Dually-diagnosed individuals refer to a “ group of patients with severe and persistent mental illness and co-existing drug and alcohol problems” (Burns-Lynch, 1997). Patients are more likely to go through physical, psychological, social, and spiritual problems, not only affecting their families and loved ones, but the community as a whole.

Some of these include family or intimate relationship, isolation and social withdrawal, financial problems, employment/ school problems, risky behavior while driving, multiple admission for chemical dependency services and for psychiatric care, increased need for healthcare services, legal problems, and homelessness (Hamilton, n. d.).

More importantly, the condition of the patients could get worse with psychiatric symptoms being masked by alcohol or drug use, alcohol or drug use or withdrawal that can mimic or give the appearance of some psychiatric illness, untreated chemical dependency that can contribute to a reoccurrence of psychiatric symptoms, and untreated psychiatric illness that can contribute to an alcohol or drug relapse (“ Dual Diagnosis or Co-Occurring Disorders”, n. d.).

Certain treatments can be done, such as the care/ confrontation methods (choosing between managers who will care for the patients, or allow the client to care for himself), the abstinence-oriented/ abstinence-mandated programs (which depends on the willingness on the patient to remain abstinent, or abstinence will be made a goal), and the recovery and rehabilitation method/ deinstitutionalization (which focuses on restricting the

patient in an intensive setting or allowing him to recover in the community) (Burns-Lynch, 1997).

The law requires the safety of every member of the community. Dangers can be posed by dually diagnosed individuals. But it also has to be kept in mind that they too are people who need extra care and understanding. Man has a duty to help other men in times of need. Caring for dually-diagnosed individuals will not only bring safety to the patients, but to all members of the community as well.