

New Outpatient Addiction-Treatment Center to Target Commuters, Working Professionals

A new outpatient addiction-treatment center has opened just around the corner from Grand Central Terminal. The location of [Elevate360](#) isn't a coincidence.

Founder and executive director Sarah Church said she is targeting working professionals—including commuters—and others struggling with addiction who want a part-time program.

Elevate360 will offer psychotherapy provided by an initial team of six clinical psychologists. The center will also collaborate with an onsite psychiatrist who offers medication-assisted treatment under his own license but works out of their office suite.

"We're really focused on using protocols that are grounded in the scientific literature and are shown to work," said Church, a clinical psychologist who previously served as the executive director of the Division of Substance Abuse at Montefiore Medical Center and as an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Church said she launched Elevate360 with her own savings as well as funds she raised from Coppermine Capital, a private investment firm. Rates will be competitive and they will work with patients who need financial assistance, she added.

Evidence-based approaches include group psychotherapy, motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioral therapy and family behavioral therapy. Time commitments vary, depending on whether clients are coming straight out of rehab and detox programs, she said.

Studies have shown that inpatient and outpatient treatment for addiction are about equally effective, Church said. One significant benefit of outpatient treatment is the ability for patients to take the positive skills and strategies they learn and try them out in their everyday lives with family and friends for long-term results, she said.

Elevate360 is also the newest member of the nonprofit Coalition of Medication-Assisted Treatment Providers and Advocates of New York State, a provider association with more than 45 members statewide.

"Retention in treatment is the single-most-important factor in your success and outcomes," said Allegra Schorr, president of the coalition.

In addition to regular office hours, Elevate360 will offer flexible treatment times before and after the workday and during lunch. A flexible schedule lets people integrate treatment into their lifestyle and stay with the program, Schorr said. Using a health-management approach, which treats addiction as a chronic condition, is also key, she said.

Elevate360 is currently out of network for insurers. In addition to offering on-site programs, it plans to provide clients with a mobile app from CHESS Health to help them when they're out on their own. The app uses tools such as a location tracker that lets patients identify risky places, such as a bar or their dealer, where they are likely to be tempted to drink or use drugs, Church said. When a patient approaches such a location, the app engages them with photos of their children or family members and provides inspirational or self-recorded video messages to steer them away from using.

Most individuals need at least three months in treatment to significantly reduce or stop their drug use, according to research cited on the website of the National Institute of Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health. Best outcomes occur with longer durations of treatment.

While treatment times will vary at Elevate360, the general consensus is that patients need at least a year of treatment, Church said.

In New York City, someone dies of a drug overdose every seven hours, COMPA noted. At the same time, just 1 in 10 people struggling with a substance-use problem seek treatment.