

## Inpatient or outpatient treatment?

Which should you attend? Dr. Elca Erlank answers:

*"Any treatment is better than no treatment."* (Unknown author).

Inpatient treatment is a type of treatment in which a patient is provided with 24 hour care at a live-in facility. Both psychiatric, psychological and physical health assistance are included in this treatment. In Stabilis Treatment Centre, an inpatient treatment centre and one of the few centres in South Africa with a multi-professional team and multi-dimensional program, people are given the opportunity to recover in a pleasant environment with excellent care.

One important difference in inpatient treatment when compared to outpatient treatment is the amount of medical and psychological/ emotional attention received by a patient. In inpatient treatment, constant medical supervision is placed over each patient. Detoxification is also provided and psychiatric observation and assessment is more intensive and accessible.

Inpatient treatment may be more effective because it offers a very structured and defined program. This type of a setting allows patients to focus on physical and psychological recovery. A person, who is in a severe dependency phase and cannot be functional in their environment anymore, needs inpatient treatment.

Outpatient programs can be very useful for people who need to continue to work or attend school. The type of outpatient treatment program will vary depending on the patient's needs. The factors involved in deciding about in- or outpatient treatment to be taken in consideration is the type of substance which is abused, the timeframe of dependency, severity of substance abuse, physical and psychological/ emotional complications of the substance abuse, support systems and social-economic status.

The motivation level and readiness of the patient for change is also an important aspect because outpatient treatment is different from inpatient treatment, in that you are not under constant supervision and still live in your environment.

Inpatient or outpatient treatment? Which treatment is more successful? My answer is while keeping in mind above suggestions: *treatment works if you work it!*

*We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking  
we used when we created them. [Albert Einstein](#)*

### **ENQUIRY:**

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