

OUR APPROACH

The Nathaniel ACT Team offers a two-year alternative to incarceration (ATI) for adults with severe and persistent mental illness charged with felony offenses. Nathaniel provides comprehensive services and supervision, helping participants to live safely and productively in the community through mental health and rehabilitation services tailored to each participant.

INTEGRATED ACT AND ATI SERVICES

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) is an evidence-based model for providing comprehensive and flexible mental health treatment, rehabilitation, case management and support services using a mobile, team-based approach. ACT is appropriate for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness whose needs have not been met by more traditional service delivery approaches. CASES' Nathaniel ACT Team is the only state-licensed team that engages mentally ill adults in these services as an alternative to jail or prison.

Nathaniel ACT provides participants:

- Services in the community
- Low participant-to-staff ratio
- 24-hour/7-day-a-week availability
- Crisis intervention services
- Coordination with inpatient services
- Short-term and long-term housing placements
- Independent living skills training
- Employment, education, and job training referrals
- Additional evidence-based services, including family education, wellness management, and integrated treatment for dual disorders.

Nathaniel ACT provides the Court:

- Pre-release service plans for defendants
- Coordination with jail-based discharge planning services
- Linkages and escorts to appropriate housing upon release
- Frequent progress reports on participants' status
- Escorts to court appearances by the court liaison specialist
- Timely notification of non-compliance

ABOUT CASES

The mission of CASES is to increase the understanding and use of community sanctions that are fair, affordable, and consistent with public safety. By addressing the factors that underlie criminal behavior, such as mental illness, homelessness and addiction, CASES' innovative programs help young and adult offenders re-integrate into society. CASES makes our communities safer, provides opportunities for individuals with multiple barriers to success, and saves taxpayer dollars each year.

LICENSURE AND FUNDING

The Nathaniel ACT Team is licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health. Nathaniel ACT receives funding from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Medicaid, the New York City Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, the New York City Council and the generous support of private foundations, corporations and individuals.



Nathaniel ACT Team
346 Broadway, 3 West
New York, NY 10013

www.cases.org

To make a referral or for more information,
please contact:

(212) 553-6325 or
act@cases.org

NATHANIEL ACT TEAM

An Alternative to Incarceration for Adults
with Mental Illness

PROGRAM SERVICES

The multi-disciplinary Nathaniel ACT Team includes a psychiatrist, nurses, social workers, case managers, and a peer specialist. Team members—specialists in the areas of psychiatry, nursing, substance abuse, family education, wellness self-management and vocational services—also act as generalists in the delivery of services and case management. The ACT Team provides:

- comprehensive assessment, treatment planning, and continuous risk assessment and management
- medication administration and management
- regular mental status examination and medication review
- weekly treatment groups
- access to CASES' transitional housing program
- supervised and supportive housing placement
- integrated mental health and substance abuse treatment
- vocational support and referrals to education, job training, and employment
- peer support and culturally competent services
- help obtaining Medicaid, food stamps, public assistance, and Social Security benefits
- on-call assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Individuals must:

- be eighteen years or older;
- have a severe and persistent mental illness that seriously impairs their functioning in the community;
- be indicted on a felony or subject to superior court information; and
- be facing a minimum of one year of incarceration.

Priority is given to those with continuous high service needs that are not being met in more traditional settings.



Case manager Kevin Cleare (left) meets with a participant outside his home in upper Manhattan

OUR RESULTS

PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE

- 63% of participants enrolled in Nathaniel ACT Team services since 2003 have successfully completed the program or remain engaged in services.

INCREASING PUBLIC SAFETY

- 72% of participants receiving Nathaniel ACT Team services at any time between 2003 and 2006 had no subsequent rearrests, and 82% had no further criminal convictions, during a study period that averaged 19 months following release to the program.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

- 60% of participants who completed their first year of services between July 2007 and June 2008—all of whom were homeless or hospitalized at intake—secured long-term or permanent housing within their first year of receiving Nathaniel ACT services.

AWARDS

CASES' mental health programs have received numerous awards, including the American Probation and Parole Association's President's Award, the Thomas M. Wernert Award for Innovation in Community Behavioral Mental Health Care, the American Psychiatric Institute's Special Achievement Award, and the Howie T. Harp Commitment Award for consumer integration.

HOW IT WORKS

Referral Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and staff from the Kirby Forensic Psychiatric Center and Assisted Outpatient Treatment are the main sources of referrals, but anyone can make a referral by calling our intake specialist.

Screening and Risk Assessment Upon referral, candidates undergo a multi-step screening and risk-assessment process completed by the intake specialist and psychiatrist to determine eligibility and suitability.

Initial Service Plan The intake specialist creates an individualized treatment and supervision plan for each eligible participant that includes:

- initial housing placement
- appropriate long-term housing (congregate, supportive, independent)
- medication regimen and medication management plan
- expected level of group and individual treatment participation
- treatment protocol for co-occurring substance use disorders
- additional community services, such as psychosocial clubhouse programs, vocational training/job placements, and education placements
- Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) status

Two Years of Services and Supervision During the two years of supervision, the ACT Team reviews the participant's treatment status daily and adjusts services based on comprehensive clinical assessment, treatment needs, and participant goals. Participants who complete program requirements are typically sentenced to probation or have their criminal charges reduced or dismissed.

Aftercare Participants are linked to community mental health, generic ACT, or step-down case management services when they complete Nathaniel ACT. The Nathaniel ACT Team monitors participants for three months post discharge to ensure successful linkage to aftercare services.