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Linking Performance Measures to Treatment Outcomes

This project examines the links between established alcohol and other drug (AOD) performance measures and treatment outcomes in a public sector health care system. Our premise is that all organized systems of care must be held accountable for the entire process of care. This study fills a gap in the field of AOD measures since efforts until now have been focused on the private sector. We explore whether measures developed for private health plans can be used for the public sector. We examine whether adherence to AOD performance measures result in improved treatment outcomes for adults in public sector health plans. The key significance of the study is that it will shed light on how to improve accountability for delivery of AOD treatment services in public health care systems.

This project builds on previous work by the Washington Circle (WC) that developed AOD performance measures for commercial managed care plans. In this study, the project team is expanding the focus to include public sector provision of AOD services. The study will shed light on how to improve accountability for delivery of AOD treatment services in public health care systems. The main goals of this project are to:

- 1) *Use a state database to test the feasibility of a subset of the WC performance measures for alcohol and other drugs (AOD) in the public sector.*
- 2) *Evaluate the relationship between the adherence to these measures and clients' outcomes.*
- 3) *Explore with additional states, the data structure of their administrative data and possible links to other agencies' data in their states.*

We will collaborate with the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS), which has the capability of linking its administrative data set to various other state agency data, resulting in a very rich data source.

WC Performance Measures: The performance measures that will be the focus of this study were developed by the Washington Circle, a multidisciplinary group with extensive experience in AOD disorders, managed care, and performance management. A set of seven measures was developed but only five are proposed for use in this project because two of the measures rely on information that is not available in state databases, but rather through patient or plan enrollee surveys.

The five measures that will be the focus of this research are outlined below:

- Identification is defined as the percent of the adult population eligible for publicly funded healthcare that have an AOD diagnosis or service.
- Initiation of Treatment is defined as the percent of adults with an index diagnosis of AOD abuse or dependence that receives any additional AOD services within 14 days of the diagnosis.
- Treatment Engagement is defined as the percent of adults diagnosed with AOD disorders that receive two additional AOD services within 30 days of the initiation of care.
- Linkage of Detoxification and Treatment is defined as the percent of patients with an index detoxification (either inpatient or outpatient) who initiated AOD plan services within 14 days following discharge from detoxification.
- Maintenance is envisioned as the percent of adults engaged in treatment who received AOD services within a specified number of days after the services that defined the engagement episode. A more specific definition will be developed as part of this project and is the focus of current efforts by the WC.

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Further Information

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