

BACKGROUND

Addiction recovery unfold within socio-cultural contexts where treatment options and orientation differ.



PRIMARY SUBSTANCES

Crack cocaine, marijuana

Heroin, increasing amphetamine and ecstasy

PRIMARY TREATMENT MODALITY

Outpatient treatment

Pharmacotherapy (buprenorphine, methadone)

TREATMENT PARADIGM/GOAL

Abstinence based

Harm minimization

PLACE OF 12-STEP IN SERVICES

12-step tenets integrated in most Programs; 12-step participation encouraged

Not integrated or encouraged

- Most recovery research emanates from the US; because the US treatment system is somewhat unique, findings may not apply elsewhere.
- Need to identify 'universal' recovery-promoting beliefs and practices to inform services globally.

AIMS AND METHODS

- Using data from standardized scales in parallel studies in the US and Australia, we compare addiction beliefs, recovery 'paths', and utilization of 12-step groups (12SG) among persons in recovery.
- Community-based person in remission for a year or longer per DSM-IV-R criteria recruited through media advertising in New York City (USA, N = 158) and in Melbourne (Vic., Australia, N = 113).

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS



NEW YORK
(n=158)

MELBOURNE
(n=113)

Male	50.3%	57.4%
Age (years)	44.14	43.16
Education (years)	12.1	10.3 ^{***}
HIV + (among tested)	26.7%	1.0 ^{***}
Hep C (among tested)	31.2%	41.3% [†]
Ever MH diagnosis	38.5%	63.2 ^{††}
Ever arrested	77.2%	72.6%
Employed FT/PT	48.7%	58.3

SUBSTANCE USE HISTORY



Lifetime Addiction Severity: Mean, SD ^a	11.94 (2.05)	13.53 (.66) ^{***}
Age first regular use (in years)	14.7	15.0
Ever injected	31%	66.4% ^{***}
Ever abstinent >1 month then relapsed (Yes)	63.1%	57.4%
Number abstinent periods	8.4	4.5 [*]
Months abstinent (current M)	49.7	73.2 ^{**}

	Ever	Primary	Ever	Primary
Alcohol	98.1%	9%	100%	26.6% ^{***}
Cannabis	98.1%	0%	91.7%	14.2% ^{***}
Crack	88.5%	59.2%	9.3%	<1% ^{***}
Cocaine	91.7%	8.9%	59.3%	2.7% ^{***}
Heroin/other opiates	63.1%	21.8%	68.5%	41.6% ^{***}
Methamphetamines	34.8%	<1%	87.6%	11.5% ^{***}
Other		NA		2.5%

IMPLICATIONS

- Although they differed in primary substance, both samples, now middle aged, had experienced long and severe addiction history and remained drug abstinent for multiple years.
- In spite of a higher rate on injection drug use, 1% of AU were HIV+ vs. 26.7% in NY
- AU entered treatment earlier and experienced only half the number of relapses before recovery than did participants in NY
- Fewer in AU attended 12-step but among those who did, level of 12-step involvement was similar to that in NY
- In spite of differences in treatment orientation and modality, views on addiction and recovery were generally similar in NY and in AU, especially the need for total abstinence, for taking responsibility for recovery, for seeking professional help and maintaining ongoing participation in recovery support groups.
- Overall, persons with a long and severe addiction history who had experienced multiple treatment episodes and relapses prior to recovery appear to draw similar conclusions about what is needed to sustain recovery, in particular, total abstinence and ongoing participation in recovery support groups.
- These recovery-promoting factors appear to transcend treatment orientation.

UTILIZATION OF RECOVERY RESOURCES



PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT

Ever – any treatment	87.9%	77% [*]
Age 1st Tx (years)	31.61 (SD=9.62)	28.28 (SD=8.79) [*]

SELF-HELP Current

Ever Current Ever

Participation in non 12-step recovery support group	N/A	17%	N/A	21%
Any 12-step (AA or NA)	89.3%	79.7%	81.4% ^{***}	69.3%
AA	77.8%	59.9% ^{**}	70.8%	71%
NA	92.4%	79.8% ^{***}	69.0% ^{**}	*76%
12-step involvement (0-9)	5.1			4.9

RECOVERY AND ADDICTION BELIEFS



RECOVERY

N = 158

N = 113

Recovery definition:

No drug or alcohol at all	93.8%	73.5% [*]
Most effective way to seek recovery		
Quit cold turkey	56.8%	61.1%
Gradual cut down to complete stop	11.6	32.7% ^{**}
Other	32.6%	6.2
Perceived harm of future drug use	9.7	9.47 [*]

ADDICTION BELIEFS

Commitment to total abstinence	3.24	3.24
Addiction is a chronic disorder	3.42	3.21 ^{**}
Addicts must seek professional help	2.88	2.76
Addicts are responsible for their recovery	3.33	3.43
Addiction has a genetic basis	2.56	2.61
Addiction is a coping strategy	3.08	3.28 ^{**}
Someday I will be able to "successfully" use my drugs of choice	1.23	1.23
I need help from a power greater than myself to live my life	3.50	3.13 ^{***}
I need to attend 12-step meetings for the rest of my life	2.74	2.61

Scale range = 1 - 4; *p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001