<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>Robert Walker, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-investigator</td>
<td>TK Logan, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-investigator</td>
<td>Carl Leukefeld, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Director</td>
<td>Erin Stevenson, M.S.W.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems Administrator and Programmer</td>
<td>Tom Jackson, Ed.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Coordinator</td>
<td>Allison Mateyoke-Scrivner, M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Analyst</td>
<td>Jennifer Cole, M.S.W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmer</td>
<td>Jeb Messer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Julie Brock, M.A.</td>
</tr>
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Director’s Overview

This FY 2004 Follow-up Findings Report summarizes the treatment outcomes among clients in publicly funded substance abuse treatment in Kentucky. The Kentucky Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse has contracted with the University of Kentucky Center on Drug and Alcohol Research since 1996 to oversee this project and to analyze the results to inform treatment providers, state legislators, the governor and the executive branch of state government about the outcomes of substance abuse treatment.

Kentucky is one of the very few states to conduct a follow-up study on a sample of clients who have been admitted to publicly funded treatment. Among the few states that do, most follow-up after six months. Kentucky follows up after 12 months to better understand how clients are maintaining their treatment gains.

This study also presents cost saving information for the state. The outcome data show that Kentucky’s cost of treatment is offset by savings in reduced victim costs of crime, reduced jail time and increased employment taxes from clients after treatment. The ratio of saving $5.00 in those costs for every $1.00 of treatment cost remains one of the most important findings of the study because it shows that the policy of providing treatment is a winning solution for the state.

We share this report with you to show how treatment works in Kentucky. I am pleased to be able to present this these data on the outcomes of substance abuse treatment.

Donna Hillman,
Director
Kentucky Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examined intake and follow-up data on a sample of 888 substance abuse treatment clients in Kentucky who consented to participate in a treatment follow-up study. A summary of major findings is presented here. The Kentucky Substance Abuse Treatment Outcome Study FY 2004 Follow-up Findings full report is available on the University of Kentucky Center on Drug and Alcohol Research website at http://cdar.uky.edu/ktos/.

SUBSTANCE USE CHANGES

- 72.7% of follow-up clients reported alcohol abstinence 12 months after treatment, a 52.7% increase from intake
- There was a 52.3% decrease in the number of days alcohol was used
- 88.7% of clients reported abstinence from illegal drugs 12 months after treatment, a 61% increase from intake
- There was also a 27.9% increase in the number of clients reporting marijuana abstinence at follow-up. Consequently, 92.2% of clients reported marijuana abstinence 12 months after treatment
- 97% of clients reported abstinence from prescription tranquilizers at follow-up for a 18.9% increase 12 months after treatment
- 96.5% of clients reported opiate abstinence 12 months after treatment
- 96.8% of clients reported cocaine abstinence 12 months after treatment

EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

- There was a 51.7% increase in the percent of clients employed full time at follow-up
- Unemployment decreased 28.4% from intake to follow-up

ARRESTS AND CRIME CHANGES

- There was a 73.4% reduction in the number of clients reporting arrests in the past 30 days at follow-up and a 57.5% reduction in the past 12 months
- Drug related arrests were reported by 63.4% fewer clients 12 months after treatment
- 82.1% fewer clients reported spending time in jail in the past 30 days at follow-up
CONCLUSIONS

- Substance abuse treatment in Kentucky results in significant reductions in substance use, decreased criminal activity, and increased employment

- These changes result in decreases in crime costs to victims and to the public

- Kentucky cost benefits from treatment can be estimated at $5.00 for every dollar spent on treatment during 2004