Kentucky Opiate Replacement Treatment Outcome Study
Findings at a Glance

Introduction

In 2007, Kentucky opiate treatment programs (OTPs) began collecting outcome data on medication-assisted therapy. The Kentucky Opiate Replacement Treatment Outcome Study (KORTOS) is conducted in collaboration with the Kentucky Division of Behavioral Health and Narcotic Treatment Authority and includes client-level intake data collected by OTPs. Through a contract with the Division of Behavioral Health, the data are submitted to the University of Kentucky Center on Drug and Alcohol Research (UK CDAR) where 6-month follow-up interviews are completed with consenting maintenance treatment clients.

This Findings at a Glance summarizes client outcomes for 236 clients from Kentucky OTPs who completed both an intake interview between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014 and a six month follow-up interview targeted between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015. There was a low refusal rate for follow-up participation (0.4%) and a high follow-up rate (82.6%).

Characteristics of the Follow-up Sample

Of the 236 adults who completed a 6-month follow-up interview:

- 55.9% were female and 44.1% were male
- The majority of follow-up clients were White (94.5%), 1.7% were African American and 3.8% were Hispanic, American Indian, or multiracial
- They were an average of 34.4 years old at the time of the intake interview
- They were an average of 30 years old or older at intake.
- Almost half of clients were never married (46.2%), 26.3% were married, 24.2% were separated or divorced, and 3.4% were widowed
- Nearly half of follow-up clients (44.9%) had at least one child under age 18 who was living with them

Factors Examined at Intake and Follow-up

### Past-6-month Substance Use

- **97%** clients reporting any illegal drug use at intake
- **35%** clients reporting any illegal drug use at follow-up
- **28%** clients reporting any alcohol use at intake
- **19%** clients reported any alcohol use at follow-up
- **55%** clients reporting heroin use at intake
- **12%** clients reporting heroin use at follow-up
- **80%** clients reporting prescription opioid misuse\(^a\) at intake
- **11%** clients reporting prescription opioid misuse\(^a\) at follow-up

\(^a\) Including opiates such as morphine, Percocet, Oxycontin, Lortab
### Past-6-month Mental Health, Physical Health and Stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health</th>
<th>At Intake</th>
<th>At Follow-Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Pain</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Average Number of Days
- **Mental Health**: 2.7 at follow-up
- **Physical Health**: 1.5 at follow-up
- **Chronic Pain**: 2.0 at follow-up

#### Stress-Related Health Consequences
- **At Intake**: 37.4
- **At Follow-Up**: 5.9

#### “I liked the program and the staff a lot. They seemed to really care
not just about my substance abuse problems, but my entire well-being.”

- Kortos Follow-up Client

### Past-6-month Economic Indicators

#### Employment
- **At Intake**: 33%
- **At Follow-Up**: 42%

#### Economic Hardship
- **50%** had difficulty meeting basic living needs for financial reasons at intake.
- **27%** had difficulty meeting basic living needs for financial reasons at follow-up.

#### Gender Differences in Wages
- Employed women made only $0.80 for every dollar employed men made.

### Past-6-month Criminal Justice System

#### Arrest
- **19%** reported an arrest at intake.
- **6%** reported an arrest at follow-up.

#### Incarceration
- **17%** reported being incarcerated at intake.
- **4%** reported being incarcerated at follow-up.

#### “I love them. They treat you like they would anybody else. They treat you like a human being.”

- Kortos Follow-up Client

---

*Measure of symptoms in the past 7 days. Higher scores on the Stress-Related Health Consequences scale indicate higher stress and greater physiological indicators of stress. The highest possible score is 75 and the lowest possible score is 0.*
Past-30-day Recovery Supports

- 17% clients attended mutual help group meetings at intake
- 52% clients attended mutual help group meetings at follow-up
- 5 average number of people client could count on for support at intake
- 8 average number of people client could count on for support at follow-up

Quality of and Satisfaction with Life

QUALITY OF LIFE RATINGS
- Average rating at intake: 3.9
- Average rating at follow-up: 7.6

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE
- Average rating at intake: 9.3
- Average rating at follow-up: 16.5

The lowest possible score is 5 and the highest possible score is 25. Lower scores indicate lower satisfaction and higher scores represent higher satisfaction.

Ratings were from 1='Worst imaginable' to 5='Good and bad parts were about equal' to 10='Best imaginable'.

Program Satisfaction

At follow-up, clients were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the treatment program on a scale from 1 (worst treatment imaginable) to 10 (best treatment).

- 97% understood their treatment plan
- 96% felt better about themselves after participation
- 96% felt they received the services they needed
- 97% understood what was expected of them
- 96% felt they were treated with respect

Average rating: 8.5

Conclusion

The 2016 KORTOS evaluation indicates that opiate treatment programs in Kentucky have been successful in facilitating positive changes in clients’ lives in a variety of ways, including decreased substance use and severity of use, decreased mental health symptoms, decreased economic hardship, and decreased involvement with the criminal justice system. Results also show that clients have an improved quality of life and more support for recovery after participating in treatment. Overall, KORTOS clients had significant improvements in key factors that have been associated with facilitating recovery.