

# RESEARCH ROUNDUP

IBR'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## NIDA NOTES highlights DATAR project; node-link mapping

**DATAR's focus includes developing new techniques to improve drug treatment effectiveness.**

The upcoming issue of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) newsletter, *NIDA Notes*, will feature several articles on the first phase of DATAR (Improving Drug Abuse Treatment for AIDS-Risk Reduction), a treatment demonstration project begun by IBR in 1989. DATAR focuses on analyzing drug treatment process and developing new techniques to improve treatment effectiveness, reduce client dropout, and prevent relapse. A continuation of the DATAR project (which now stands for Improving Drug Abuse Treatment Assessment Research) was recently funded by NIDA.

IBR Director **Dr. Dwayne Simpson** observes that in its first 6 years "the DATAR project collected a wealth of data, allowing us to use state-of-the-art analytical tools to look at important variables in the treatment process that impact client motivation, retention, and behavior. In addition, we have produced a number of practical, hands-on treatment manuals for counselors to use in helping clients improve their knowledge, skills, and commitment to recovery."

The newsletter also showcases one of the most significant treatment enhancement strategies used in the DATAR project, a visual representation counseling technique called node-link mapping. In recent years, TCU Psychology Professor and developer of node-link mapping, **Dr. Donald Dansereau**, has published a number of studies that lend

support to the usefulness of this technique in drug abuse counseling. Working with IBR colleagues **Drs. George Joe, Sandra Dees, and Urvashi Petri, Mike Czuchry, and Drs. Danica Knight** and Dwayne Simpson, it has been found that node-link mapping is especially beneficial for clients who have attentional problems, those who use cocaine, those with less education, and with African-American and Mexican-American clients. In addition, using node-link mapping in counseling sessions appears to improve session attendance, the efficiency with which issues are handled, and the therapeutic relationship between clients and counselors. Other studies indicate that clients exposed to mapping techniques as part of counseling seem to be more successful in reducing drug use and criminal activity. ■

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## DATAR Continuation up and running

**Clients are randomly assigned at intake in order to study select treatment enhancements.**

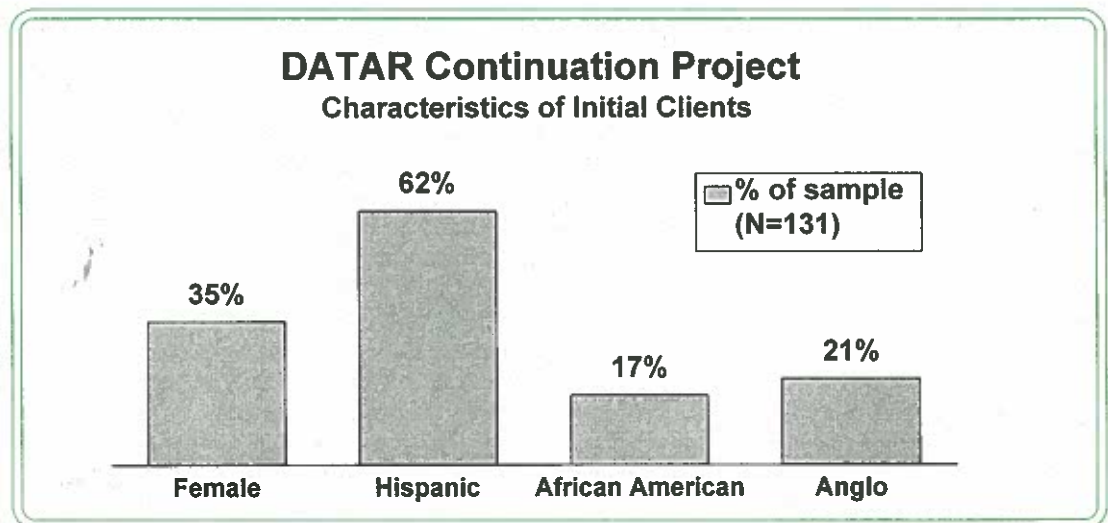
The 5-year continuation phase of the DATAR project began admitting clients on the first day of its grant period (September 1, 1995), due in great part to careful planning and coordination with the staff of Drug Dependence Associates, Inc., a San Antonio-based methadone maintenance clinic that now serves as the project's clinical research site. **Dr. Lois Chatham**, IBR Associate Director and DATAR Project Manager, notes that in the first 6 months after start-up the project had already admitted 131 clients and held 1,269 individual counseling sessions, with counselors utilizing node-link mapping in almost 400 of those sessions.

As part of the project's study on the effectiveness of select treatment enhancements such as node-

link mapping, clients are being assigned randomly to one of several counseling conditions at intake. In addition, clients will be encouraged to attend a variety of psychoeducational groups over the course of their treatment. The first such group (HIV/AIDS education and prevention) is currently being implemented and evaluated.

Dr. Chatham says "after an inspection of the demographics of this initial sample, I'm pleased to see it's consistent with the study design's goal to eventually examine gender and race/ethnic differences in treatment response."

The chart below features client characteristics based on data collected at initial assessment. ■



## Men's treatment enhancement workshop piloted

**Workshop addresses communication skills, intimacy, and sexual health.**

A new education module for men developed as part of DATAR is being pilot-tested at the Dallas County Sheriff's Department Chemical Dependency Treatment Program. The module, *Time Out! For Men*, is a companion piece to the *Time Out! For Me* workshop developed several years ago for women in drug treatment.

IBR Research Associate **Norma Bartholomew**, developer of the modules, describes the 6-session workshop as intended for men in treatment programs who are interested in improving their intimate relationships. The sessions focus on

communication skills, self-esteem, sexual health, and challenging gender stereotypes and sexual mythology using a variety of activities, guided discussions, homework assignments, and information handouts.

Once initial pilot-testing is completed at the in-jail program, plans call for a second pilot to be offered through a community-based treatment program. After pilot testing is completed, this package will be evaluated at the DATAR treatment site in San Antonio. A final version of the manual will be available in the fall. ■

## Research highlights

### Criminal justice treatment initiatives

Prison-based substance abuse treatment programs, especially those that combine intensive residential treatment with structured aftercare, appear to be associated with lower relapse and recidivism rates during the first 6 months following prison release. Associate Research Scientist **Dr. Kevin Knight**, in a recent assessment study of the In-Prison Therapeutic Community (ITC) component of the Texas Criminal Justice Chemical Dependency Treatment Initiative, found that 80% of inmates who entered the ITC in Kyle, Texas graduated, and most rated the therapeutic value of the program highly. ITC graduates also demonstrated marked reductions in criminal and drug use activity from the 6 months before entering prison to the 6 months after leaving the program. When compared with a matched comparison group of inmates from the general prison population who did not receive treatment, ITC graduates had significantly better outcomes. **Dr. Knight** presented these findings during a symposium entitled "Evaluation of Corrections-Based Treatment in Texas" at the recent 6th National TASC Conference on Drugs and Crime held in Chicago. He was joined by Associate Research Scientist **Dianna Newbern**, who presented an overview of "Cognitive Enhancements for the Treatment of Probationers," and Research Assistant **Matthew Hiller**, who presented "Client Profiles and Outcome Evaluations of the Dallas County Judicial Treatment Center." ■

### Improving methadone treatment

In a contribution to an upcoming special issue of the *Journal of Drug Issues*, IBR Director **Dr. Dwayne Simpson** and colleagues **Drs. George Joe, Donald Dansereau, and Lois Chatham** discuss major findings from the first phase of the DATAR project on therapeutic enhancements to methadone treatment. Using both during-treatment and 1 year follow-up measures, the authors examined outcomes of cognitive, behavioral, and psychoeducational strategies for improving client engagement and counseling

services. In addition, the interrelations among treatment process components such as the therapeutic relationship between counselor and client, service intensity, compliance, and length of stay were studied. Results indicated that enhanced counseling and more time spent in treatment were related to more positive outcomes. ■

### Workplace culture and substance abuse

**Dr. Wayne E. K. Lehman**, Principal Investigator for IBR's Workplace Project will chair a symposium at the 11th Annual Conference of the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) in San Diego. The symposium, "Drinking Climates, Addictive Cultures, and Communication Processes: A Cross-Disciplinary Perspective," will explore research and theory related to how organizational cultures may foster alcohol use and addictive behaviors. IBR Associate Research Scientist **Dr. Joel B. Bennett** will present a paper on "Drinking Norms, Enabling, and Work Group Process: Distinguishing Addictive from Wellness Cultures" and Research Assistant **Jamie Forst** will present a poster on "Job Insecurity: The Effects on Customer Commitment and Productivity." ■

### Psychological problems among probationers

In a recent study conducted by Research Assistant **Matthew Hiller**, 161 probationers remanded to 4 months of substance abuse treatment in a criminal justice facility were assessed for psychological problems using the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI-II) and other psychosocial measures. Overall, 80% of the sample showed evidence of psychological problems, 72% had significant drug abuse problems, and 58% met criteria for dual-diagnosis (comorbid drug abuse and psychological problems). Comparisons among the 3 groups indicated that probationers with comorbid problems engaged in more preadmission illegal activity and had more social impairments. However, this group also reported higher motivation for treatment. ■

## ***IBR Receives University Commendation***

As part of Texas Christian University's Institutional Effectiveness Initiative, the Institute of Behavioral Research (IBR) has been named one of TCU's Centers of Excellence. **Dr. Joseph Helmick**, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, cited the IBR's exceptional performance in obtaining research grants, training and financially supporting graduate research students, integration with faculty of the psychology department, and national reputation in the area of treatment effectiveness as reasons for the commendation.

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