



COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

INSTITUTE OF BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Research and News Worth Repeating

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Substance Use

Pandemic prompted jails, prisons to let inmates out. Should they be locked up again?

The Gazette - October 8, 2020

Mass incarceration is a major issue across the country; However, in Iowa, the incarceration rate increased by more than 250 percent between 1983 and 2015. Recently however, according to the Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC) the numbers of those in prison has dropped from 9,000 to 7,500 during the COVID-19 pandemic, but still resulting in the state still being 8.7 percent above its maximum occupancy. Suggested next steps are issuing citations and summons instead of arrests for minor offenses by police departments, reforming mandatory sentencing laws, providing services for mental illness, and eliminating re-incarcerating for technical probation violations.

<https://www.thegazette.com/IowaIdeas/stories/iowa-policy/pandemic-prompted-jails-prisons-to-let-inmates-out-should-they-be-locked-up-again-20201008>

Mobile Health Unit Meets Patients with OUD Where They Are

Psychiatric News - February 3, 2020

In the town of Caroline County, Maryland, a white and brightly purple-colored RV sits in parking lots across the state. Roger McKnight, a U.S. Air Force Veteran is a peer recovery specialist and the driver of this mobile health unit (MHU) for individuals to get treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD). The mobile health unit goes to rural parts of the county so people with OUD can access treatment. It allows for patients to receive a urine screen by a nurse and a telehealth visit with a psychiatrist from the University of Maryland. A major element of the program's success is peer counseling and lack of stigma and community support. The MHU is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, University of Maryland School of Medicine, the Maryland Department of Health and Behavioral Health Administration.

<https://psychnews.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.pn.2020.2a10>

New study highlights success of a mobile clinical and outreach van in helping people on the street with opioid addiction

MedicalXpress - September 25, 2020

A new mobile health unit (MHU) in Boston sponsored by the Kraft Center for Community Health at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in 2018 has shown early signs of success. At the end of 2019, the mobile medical unit had 9,098 contacts with people living with addiction and distributed 96,600 syringes and 2,956 naloxone kits to people in Boston. The MHU also provides naloxone training, HIV/HCV testing, education around safe injection practices, prescribing and administering medication-assisted treatment (MAT), and referral to substance use treatment facilities. The unit is employing a data-driven approach,

which ensures that addiction care services are reaching areas that need it the most, has been a major contributor to its success.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-09-highlights-success-mobile-clinical-outreach.html>

\$11.5M Grant Support Study of Linkage to Community-Based Opioid Addiction and HIV Prevention and Treatment Services for Persons Released from Prison

Yale School of Medicine - October 5, 2020

Addressing Risk Through Community Treatment for Infectious Disease and Opioid Use Disorder Now (ACTION) is a new five-year project funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) among justice-involved individuals. The study will compare patient navigation and mobile health unit service deliveries for individuals who are released from prison and jails with a history of pre-incarceration opioid use and/or injection drug use and who are either living with HIV or at risk of acquiring HIV. The new project involves the Yale-HIV NIDA Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN) hub, Texas Christian University (TCU), and UT Southwestern Medical Center.

<https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/27800/>

Opioid treatment trailer coming to Brockton thanks to Kraft donation

The Enterprise - October 7, 2020

Through funding from a donation by Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, a new mobile health unit will be offering services to the local area of Brockton, Massachusetts. It is part of a program offered by the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center which was established with funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in connection with the HEALing Communities study. Health professionals will be able to prescribe major drugs for opioid use disorder (OUD) and provide suboxone and make referrals for methadone treatment from the mobile health unit as well as provide a syringe exchange. The van is expected to be on the streets by early 2021.

<https://www.enterpriseneews.com/news/20201007/opioid-treatment-trailer-coming-to-brockton-thanks-to-kraft-donation>

Prevalence and perceived importance of racial matching in the psychotherapeutic dyad: a national survey of addiction treatment clinical practices

Substance Abuse Treatment Prevention Policy - October 8, 2020

Racial matching has been listed as a component of culturally sensitive treatment, although past research has been mixed regarding its efficacy. This study examined perceived importance and prevalence of racial matching in a random national sample of 240 SUD centers selected from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Directory. It was found the majority of administrators view culturally sensitive training as important but that most centers do not prioritize racial matching as a common practice.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7545852/>

Telehealth

Illinois Lawmakers Pressed to Protect Telehealth

Health Leaders Media - September 30, 2020

The Coalition to Protect Telehealth recently praised a March 19 executive order by the Governor of Illinois that lifted some of the barriers to service via telehealth. The executive order expanded the definition of telehealth, loosened restrictions on physician licensing, and barred the charging of copays on telehealth visits. As a result, many providers invested in new technology, adjusted workflows, and educated staff,

patients on telehealth delivery. Many healthcare providers and advocates are calling for the state to make these new measures permanent.

<https://www.healthleadersmedia.com/telehealth/illinois-lawmakers-pressed-protect-telehealth>

Pandemic Perspectives: Smartphone Applications for Psychological Health Applications

Psychiatry Advisor - May 22, 2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, mobile apps have become increasingly important. Nancy Lau, PhD, of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, researches evidence-based psychosocial interventions for youth with serious healthcare needs and found that only 2% of smartphone apps have peer-reviewed evidence. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently released a guideline for digital tools that can be considered a treatment, but apps for psychosocial wellness, stress management, and changing habits and behaviors remain largely unregulated.

<https://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/home/topics/general-psychiatry/iphone-and-android-mobile-apps-for-psychosocial-health-and-wellbeing/>

Congress Expands Veteran Access to Telehealth for Mental Health Care

mHealthintelligence - October 5, 2020

Congress recently passed a bill targeting suicide among veterans. The Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act authorizes grants for the development and assessment of telehealth mental health programs for veterans. In addition to expanding telehealth resources for veterans, it also requires the VA to assess veterans' attitudes toward accessing care via technology.

<https://mhealthintelligence.com/news/congress-expands-veterans-access-to-telehealth-for-mental-health-care>

Payer-Provider Partners Tap Telehealth for Behavioral Health Access

HealthPayerIntelligence - October 6, 2020

According to the CDC, 40 percent of adults reported struggling with mental health or substance abuse in June of this year. As a result, many are pushing for behavioral health access via telehealth. "Behavioral health is really your mental state and the health of your mind and interacting with the health of your body to reflect your overall state," Paul Sherman, MD, chief medical officer of Community Health Plan of Washington told *HealthPayerIntelligence*. Thus, it has become crucial for many to provide access to the holistic care people need.

<https://healthpayerintelligence.com/news/payer-provider-partners-tap-telehealth-for-behavioral-health-access>