

NIDA launches CJ-DATS

by *D. Dwayne Simpson, IBR Director*



“The project has enormous potential for addressing scientific, clinical, and policy based issues demanding attention.”

It is timely to devote this newsletter to **CJ-DATS**, a new NIDA-funded “cooperative agreement” that brings together a nationally prominent panel of researchers to study drug treatment in the U.S. criminal justice system (see related story below). It includes seven Research Centers—at Brown University (**Peter Friedmann**, PI), University of Connecticut (**Linda Frisman**, PI), University of Delaware (**James Inciardi**, PI), University of Kentucky (**Carl Leukefeld**, PI), University of California at Los Angeles (**Michael Prendergast**, PI), National Development and Research Institutes (**Harry Wexler**, PI), and TCU (**Dwayne Simpson**, PI)—as well as a Coordinating Center at University of Maryland (**Faye Taxman**, PI) and NIDA collaborators (**Bennett Fletcher** and **Pete Delany**). Functionally, this project

will share similarities with DATOS (see www.datos.org), NIDA’s third national evaluation of community-based treatment in which our group has participated.

Joining me as leaders of our TCU team are **Kevin Knight** and **Pat Flynn** (as Co-PIs), and **Debbie Roberts**, Director of Programs and Services Division with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), which oversees one of the largest prison systems in the world. At least a dozen states that provide the majority of prison-based drug treatment in the U.S. are excepted to participate in CJ-DATS. The project has enormous potential for addressing scientific, clinical, and policy based issues demanding attention. We have our work cut out for us and we are anxious to get started. ■

Investigating drug abuse treatment for correctional populations

IBR has been chosen as one of seven new National Research Centers created to study current drug treatment practices and outcomes in correctional settings and to examine strategies for improving treatment services for drug-involved offenders. The Criminal Justice Drug Abuse Treatment Studies (CJ-DATS), a 5-year cooperative agreement project funded by the National

Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), will investigate key elements of prison-based treatment systems in the U.S. and make recommendations for policies to enhance outcomes and improve the overall efficiency of treatment service delivery. A key objective for this landmark study is the establishment of science-based evidence for the role of corrections-based treatment in

Inside this issue:

<i>Research Highlights</i>	3
<i>What’s New on the Web</i>	4

Continued, page 2.

Continued from front page

reducing drug use and crime-related costs to society.

The National Picture

Since the 1980s, the U.S. has witnessed huge increases in the total number of incarcerated adults, with approximately 2 million men and women currently serving time in federal and state correctional facilities. An additional 4.7 million people are on probation or parole. Nationally, 3 out of 4 inmates have a history of illegal drug use, yet fewer than 20% get any type of treatment while incarcerated despite growing evidence that corrections-based treatment can reduce drug use, drug-related crime, and re-incarceration rates. For example, research from several states has demonstrated that graduates of long-term treatment programs, such as modified in-prison therapeutic communities, have significantly lower relapse and recidivism rates than their untreated counterparts. Favorable outcomes are even better for graduate parolees who go on to participate in aftercare treatment after their release.

Research for CJ-DATS will help establish important partnerships with correctional systems in about a dozen states, resulting in studies with greater scope and coverage. One anticipated outcome of CJ-DATS is the establishment of integrated, research-based treatment models for service delivery within the criminal justice system that have undergone evaluation through rigorous multisite studies. Without this timely and authoritative research to provide guidance for the future, the field of correctional treatment could face dwindling public support and funding, as both taxpayers and politicians expect to see “results” from prison-based treatment initiatives.

The Texas Connection

IBR, in partnership with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), will focus on drug treatment approaches within the state’s criminal justice system. Previous research working with TDCJ has shown that effective offender treatment involves the successful completion of sequential components across time, beginning with primary treatment within prison walls (e.g., modified therapeutic communities), followed by structured half-way houses and outpatient treatment upon release, and long-term aftercare

“The original research plan is being expanded and will likely include other state or federal systems interested in participating.”

services beyond that. The new CJ-DATS studies will further this research by investigating (1) methods for improving screening and referral procedures for drug-involved offenders, (2) the effectiveness of different treatment models and interventions, (3) the best structure for transitional aftercare and community re-entry programs, and (4) how to address the treatment needs of special offender populations, such as women, youth, and inmates with psychiatric disorders.

Texas has one of the largest corrections-based treatment systems in the country, with over 12,000 prisoners in drug treatment programs at any given time. TDCJ operates a variety of treatment programs within its prison, state jail, probation, and parole divisions and spends over \$40 million annually on correctional

treatment programs. In addition, the state is interested in and supportive of long-term research aimed at improving outcomes.

“We are seeking better ways of addressing the needs of drug-involved offenders,” notes **Dr. Dwayne Simpson**, Director of IBR and Principal Investigator for CJ-DATS studies at TCU. “This type of comprehensive research strategy will, when completed, serve both policy makers and taxpayers alike by providing evidence-based guidelines for delivering effective and efficient drug treatment in correctional settings.” Simpson also pointed out that the original research plan is being expanded and will likely include other state or federal systems interested in participating.

Co-Principal Investigators **Drs. Kevin Knight** and **Pat Flynn** will oversee the field operations for the phases of studies to be conducted by TCU. These include a comprehensive study of offender outcomes from major intensive treatment programs operated by TDJC, treatment process studies using both in-prison facilities and parole/probation residential programs as study sites, and continuum-of-care studies focused on the development and testing of an aftercare delivery model.

TCU Studies

To accomplish its objectives, a variety of studies have been proposed by each of the Research Centers taking part in CJ-DATS. Over the 5-year project, the investigations at TCU will include:

Treatment Outcomes

These studies will focus on recidivism outcomes for in-prison and community-based drug treatment programs. Understudied approaches

such as cognitive-behavioral, social support, and faith-based models of treatment delivery will be included. A key objective is to “update” information within the CJ system about treatment participants and their outcomes in order to inform future planning. Untreated offenders and program dropouts will be used as comparison groups for examining outcomes over time. By providing empirical comparisons of treatment models, therapeutic strategies, and other factors known to impact outcomes, these types of studies are seen as having both state and national benefit.

Treatment Process

These investigations will look into the “black box” of treatment for drug-involved offenders. Using the TCU model of treatment process as a conceptual basis (read more about the TCU model at www.ibr.tcu.edu), these studies will focus on identifying key therapeutic components involved in the delivery of effective treatment and describing their functional relationships. The TDCJ system offers an opportunity for multisite sampling, making it possible to apply the process model to a variety of corrections-based treatment settings, and to design and test therapeutic elements aimed at increasing treatment engagement, retention, and program completion. This is expected to yield comprehensive, empirical evidence on the best ways to improve recovery and reduce recidivism.

Continuum-of-Care

Criminal justice clients who participate in community aftercare are more likely to reduce their drug use and criminal activity, especially when they have received a continuum of services (i.e., in-prison treatment, followed by a residential

phase or work release, followed by community outpatient care). TCU studies will therefore focus on the development of a standardized, evidence-based community re-entry care model for Texas outpatient providers. The end product will be a handbook or manual for providing outpatient services for Texas criminal justice clients through the first 6 months of re-entry, covering topic areas such as enhancing rapport, cognitive mapping, job skills, family issues, HIV/sexual health, relationship skills, special issues, and client monitoring. This comprehensive model and protocol will be implemented and tested in agencies currently providing aftercare services for TDCJ. In addition, structure, duration, and client matching issues in aftercare delivery will figure prominently in these investigations.

Reasons for Optimism

The opportunities presented by CJ-DATS are enormous for furthering our national understanding of successful and efficient drug abuse

treatment in correctional settings. And the challenges are great, as well. However, as a nation we are unique in our capacity to assemble a cooperative of experienced addictions scientists and program providers with the capacity to carry out rigorous, cross-site drug treatment studies using large, independent criminal justice populations. As such, the international value of the clinical and scientific contributions of CJ-DATS promises to be high and can help set standards for similar investigations in other countries in the future.

The regionally-focused research centers and state corrections departments participating in CJ-DATS stand poised to make a significant contribution to a burning societal concern—how best to handle the drug-involved offender. Our research has the potential of shifting the stance of corrections officials and policy makers from a punitive orientation toward incarcerated drug users to one that includes options and optimism for successful recovery. ■

Research Highlights

In a study of 793 municipal employees who completed anonymous questionnaires on personal drinking and drug use, attitudes toward drug policies, work group cohesion, trust in management, and willingness to use the EAP, those with higher rates of substance use were less willing to use the EAP than nonusers. However, substance users who were aware of the EAP, who were favorable toward policy, and who reported low tolerance for coworkers who abused substances were as willing to use EAP services as nonusers. Overall, awareness of EAP services, support for workplace

policy, and perceptions of work group cohesiveness were significant factors in employee willingness to use the EAP. As previous research has shown that individuals with drinking and drug problems may be particularly reluctant to seek help, this study supports workplace prevention efforts that target environmental and social contexts as a way to buffer substance users' reluctance to seek help. **Reynolds, S. G. & Lehman, W. E. K. (In press). Levels of substance use and willingness to use the Employee Assistance Program. *Journal of Behavioral Health Services and Research*. ■**

What's New on the Web

At the IBR site, <http://www.ibr.tcu.edu>

New Resource Collections: The IBR Web site has been redesigned to streamline access and highlight integrated sets of materials—manuals, forms, and findings.

Collections are:

- National Treatment Evaluations
- Correctional Treatment Evaluations
- Treatment Process
- Counseling Manuals for Social Skills and Recovery
- Cognitive Interventions
- Technology Transfer
- Client/Treatment Assessments



At the DATOS site, <http://www.datos.org>

Publications: This section of the DATOS site now features publications listed by selected topics, in addition to the listings by year.

Search: A new **Search page** (powered by the very popular Google search engine) facilitates the overall usefulness of the site for visitors. ■

IBR Research Staff

Director and Professor
D. Dwayne Simpson

*Associate Director and
Senior Research Scientist*
Lois R. Chatham

Senior Research Scientists
Donald F. Dansereau
Patrick M. Flynn
George W. Joe

Research Scientists
Kirk M. Broome
Sandra M. Dees
Jack M. Greener
Danica K. Knight
Kevin Knight
Grace A. Rowan-Szal

Collaborating Scientist
Barry S. Brown

Associate Research Scientists
Michael L. Czuchry
Tiffany L. Sia

Research Associates
Norma G. Bartholomew
Janis T. Rhodes
Ryan R. Roark



Institute of Behavioral Research
TCU Box 298740
Fort Worth, TX 76129

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Ft. Worth, TX 76129
PERMIT NO. 2143

RESEARCH ROUNDUP is published quarterly by the Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University. For more information—Phone: (817) 257-7226; Fax: (817) 257-7290; E-mail: ibr@tcu.edu; World Wide Web: www.ibr.tcu.edu. This newsletter is prepared by Norma Bartholomew and Charlotte Pevoto. Copyright © 2002 TCU Institute of Behavioral Research, Fort Worth, Texas. All rights reserved.



printed on recycled paper