Couples Seeking CCT Treatment for Alcohol and Gambling Problems in a Randomized Trial

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CRISM Prairie Node
2nd Annual Gathering
Calgary, November 15-16, 2017
Background

AGRI Major Grant (2016-2018); CRISM Development Grant
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Comparing Treatment Outcomes in Alcohol and Gambling Disorders with Congruence Couple Therapy

- 3 Sites in AHS – Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Fort MacMurray
- Data collection: Baseline, Post-treatment (3 months), Follow-up (6 months)
- Screening
- Phase II Analysis of Screening data: 18 months into study
Inclusion Criteria:

- One spouse must meet DSM-V cut-off score of endorsement (4 items gambling, 2 items alcohol use) in the past 12 months.
- 18 years or older
- Committed couple relationship (self-definition)
Treatment Seekers (N=55)
60% Female & 40% Male

Index Patient vs Partner

- Index Patient: 54.5% (n=30)
- Partner: 45.5% (n=25)

Type of Addictive Disorder

- AUD: 60% (n=33)
- PG: 14.5% (n=8)
- No Addiction: 25.5% (n=14)
Initiation (n=36)

Index Patient vs Partner

- Index Patient: 55.6% (n=20)
- Partner: 44.4% (n=16)

Index Patient vs Partner – by Gender

- Female
  - Index Patient: 50% (n=10)
  - Partner: 87.5% (n=14)
  - Total: 67% (n=24)

- Male
  - Index Patient: 12.5% (n=2)
  - Partner: 33% (n=12)
  - Total: 33% (n=12)
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. To save/improve the couple relationship—*communication, mutual understanding, partner’s trust, and connection.* | - “Building ...a solid trusting, caring relationship, something we can move forward on”;
|                                                                                             | - “Being able to understand each other better and communicate with each other like using soft voices instead of yelling’;
|                                                                                             | - “I have work to do on re-gaining trust with my wife... Just to find a way to be closer to her or close again.”           |
| 2. To aid addiction recovery by working on couple relationship                              | - “had questions about his relationship after his last “binging experience”;
|                                                                                             | - “taking a course on addiction and a lot of stuff is based on my marriage”                                               |
| 3. To deal with relationship problems arose from addiction                                  | - “Drinking leads to a rift in communication between my wife and I”                                                      |
|                                                                                             | - “More we were wanting counselling to deal with problems that arose from my drinking”                                    |
| 4. To deal with dual-couple addiction and support dual-recovery.                            | - “when there’s alcohol in the house we go on binges together”;
|                                                                                             | - “Preserve my own sobriety while supporting hers”                                                                        |
|                                                                                             | - “To work on self-awareness about co-dependence to remain sober”                                                        |
| 5. Partner’s desire to better cope with patient’s addiction and mental health issues and to support the recovery. | - “To get over my anxiety about him drinking, and to learn how to not take it so personally and the best way to approach and support him” |
|                                                                                             | - “Learning how to support each other with his anxiety and coping mechanisms to deal with it”                             |
| 6. For personal growth and well-being                                                      | - “Live a more stable less stressful life and to have personal progress”                                                  |
Index Patients (n=30)

- Among Index Patients, there were 60% males and 40% females.

- **20% of Index patients** have dual addiction problem, which means that they are addicted to both alcohol and gambling.
  
  - **23% (6 out of 26)** of participants with AUD also have GD;
  
  - **75% (6 out of 8)** of participants with GD also have AUD;
Partners (n=25) 
84% females & 16% males

Dual-alcohol couples

- Among the 19 paired couples in the study, 7 are **Dual Alcohol Couples (36.8%)**.
- 5 out of 7 couples **(71.4%)** have severe AUD, which means that both partners were classified with a severe addiction problem (DSM-V score of 6 or higher);
- 2 out of 7 couples **(28.6%)**, Index Patients have severe AUD and the partners have mild AUD (DSM-V scores 2-3);
- 2 out of 7 couples **(28.6%)** the partner presented higher DSM-V score than the Index Patient.
AUD & GD Screening Results

- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) showed that 72.7% of all the participants are in the severe range of AUD (zone IV);

- DSM-V AUD showed that 52.7% of the total sample are in the severe range and 87.8% of participants with AUD are in the severe range;

- Problem ambling Severity Index (PGSI) showed that 14.5% of all the participants had score higher than 8, which falls in the category of “Problem Gambler”;

- DSM-V GD indicates that 9.1% of all the participants are in the most severe range and 62.2% of the PGs are in the severe range.
Suicide Screening (N=54)
Male n=22, Female n=32; Index Patient n=29, Partner n=25.

- 31.5% of the treatment seekers reported **seriously thinking about killing oneself** in the past 12 months.
- 70.6% of them also reported their suicidal thought was **related to their own/partner’s addiction**.
- The partners more often reported that their suicidal ideation was related to their own or their partner’s addiction (83%) than the index patients (64%).
- Over half (59%) of those with past 12-month suicide ideation reported they had **a suicide plan**.
Suicide Screening (N=54)
Male n=22, Female n=32; Index Patient n=29, Partner n=25.

- 11% of the treatment seekers reported a suicide attempt in the past 12 months.

- *Males showed greater incidence of suicide ideation, plan, and attempt in the past 12 months than females, and index patients higher than partners.*

- 28% of the treatment seekers reported at least one suicide attempt in their life time.

- *Males and females showed similar incidence of life-time suicide attempt (27% and 28%); Index patients showed a greater incidence of life-time suicide attempt (38%) than partners (16%).
## Intimate Partner Violence Frequency Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Fairly Frequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often does your partner physically hurt you? (1)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often does your partner insult you or talk you down? (2)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often does your partner threaten you with harm? (3)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often does your partner scream or curse at you? (4)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intimate Partner Violence Screening (N=54)

* Male and female partners, index patients and partners are equally perpetrators and victims
* Mostly verbal and psychological abuse

HITS (Mean & SD): Patient-Partner Comparison

- HIT_1 (Physical)
- HIT_2 (Verbal)
- HIT_3 (Threaten to harm)
- HIT_4 (Scream/Curse)
- Total HIT Score

HITS (Mean & SD): Gender Comparison

- Male
- Female
Conclusion – Why Couple Treatment?

• 40% of couples were dually-using couples (alcohol).

• Patients linked their addiction and couple relationship problems as reasons for seeking couple treatment.

• 71% of Partners and Patients with past 12-mo. suicidal ideation reported that their suicidal ideation was related to their own and their partners’ addiction.

• Patients and Partners are equally victim and perpetrator in intimate partner violence.