



HORIZON SOUTH RESIDENTIAL FACILITY: OUTCOME EVALUATION

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PRINCIPAL FINDINGS: Horizon clients, nine months following admission to treatment, are significantly more likely to be alcohol and drug-free, employed, and housed, and to have improved psychosocial functioning. Although findings indicate a number of clients return to varying degrees of alcohol or drug use, and the decrease in arrests reflect moderate improvement, the overall indicators of treatment outcome are favorable.

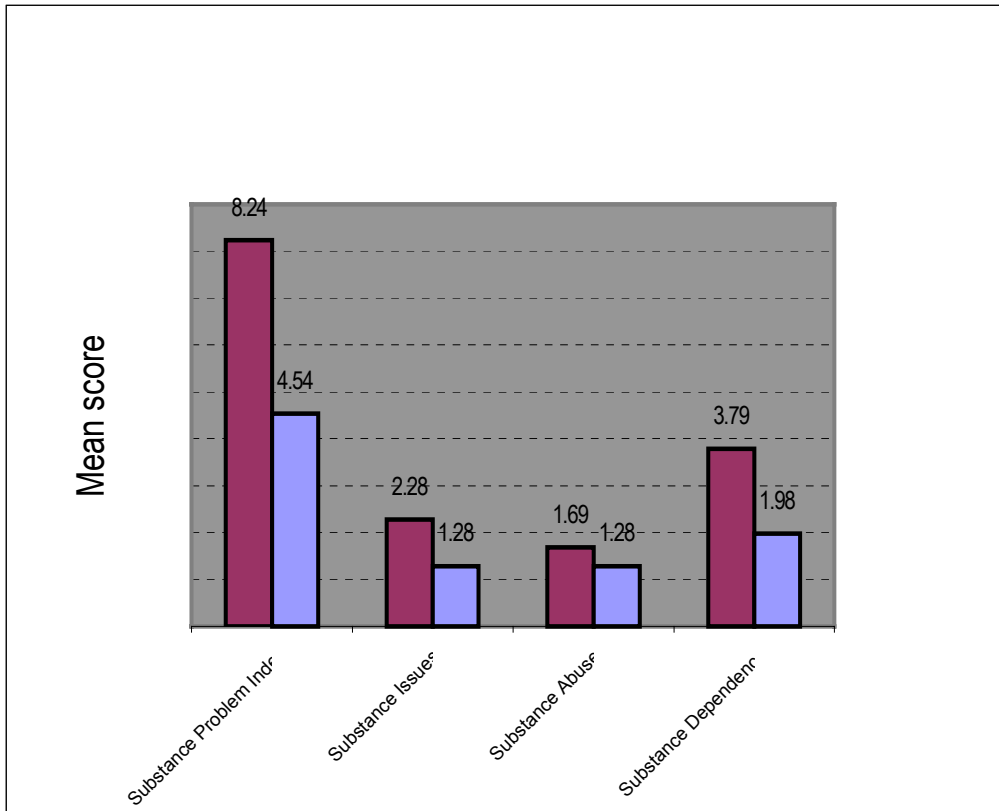
The Alcohol and Drug Services Research Institute has completed a follow-up study of the Horizon South Residential Facility. A random sample of 124 admissions to Horizon were recruited between January 2000 and January 2001, out of the total of 264 unduplicated clients admitted. Clients were asked by a research assistant to participate in the study as soon as possible after admission; 79% were recruited within one week of their admission into the program. Clients who signed an informed consent were interviewed briefly by a research assistant, at a time that did not interfere with their participation in treatment, to verify management information system and to collect information useful in tracking them at follow-up. Of the 124, 109 consented to be a part of the study.

Nine months after their admission, research assistants contacted these clients to administer the same instruments Horizon collected during treatment. Nine months is chosen so that clients will have been out of treatment an average of at least six months. The federal government's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment recommends six months post-treatment as the minimum length of follow-up, because clients who have been successful for that amount of time are likely to continue to be successful (CSAT, 1995; see also McLellan et al., 1992; Hoffman and Harrison, 1988). Seventy-five clients (69%) were successfully contacted and completed the follow-up assessment. This is somewhat below the minimum sample size that was our aim. (In order to detect significant changes over time with reasonable certainty, a completed sample size of about 85 clients is needed (Cohen, 1992).) Recent analyses have shown that outcome estimates based on 60% of the sample, lower than the proportion obtained here, are only minimally different from those based on 90-100%, so that there may be only a slightly higher rate of later substance use than is reported here (Hansten, et al., 2000).

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT REDUCES DRUG USE AND CONSEQUENCES

Over half of the clients interviewed nine months after treatment intake had reduced their use from that at admission, and 41% had not used drugs or alcohol at all since they were interviewed early in the treatment program. Of those who continued to use, however, half were using their primary substance daily.

Figure 1: Changes in substance abuse problems, issues, abuse & dependence past month

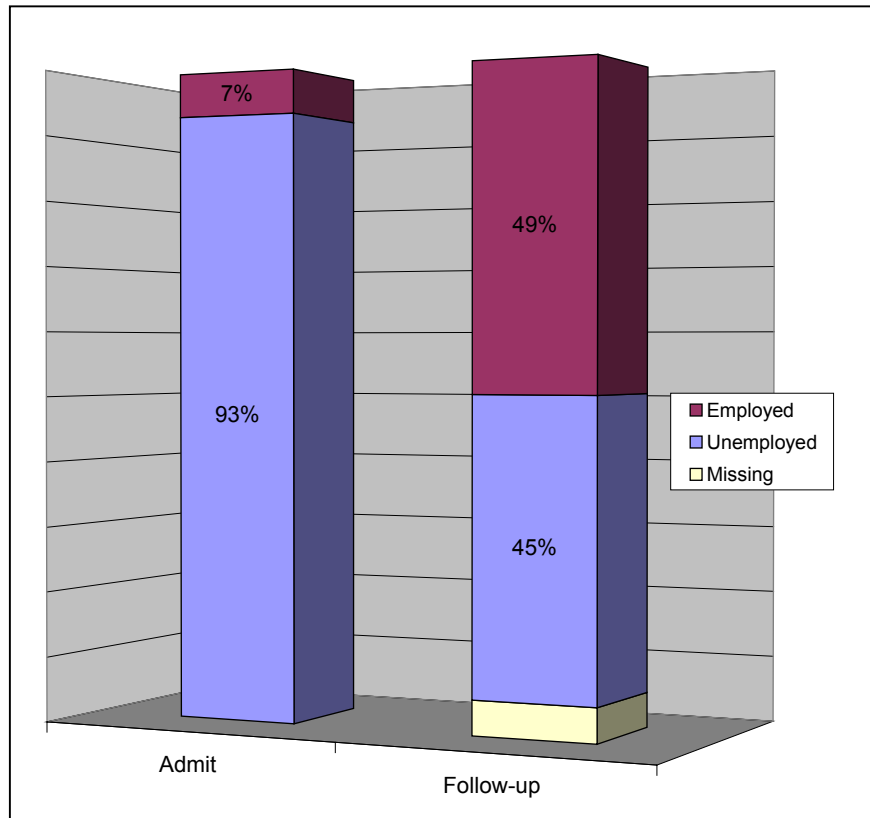


Clients were administered the GAIN-S9 (Chestnut Health Systems, 1999) at admission and again nine months later. This 16-item instrument incorporates DSM IV dimensions of alcohol and other drug abuse and dependence as well as more general substance issues. Clients who exhibit signs of dependence are generally assessed as needing treatment or relapse prevention. A global or summary score, the Substance Problem Index (SPI) is calculated by adding up scores from all 16 GAIN questions. A total of 61 study participants (56%) had both GAIN measures (at baseline and follow-up) available for analysis. As shown in the graph, by followup all scale elevations had subsided.

EMPLOYMENT INCREASES FOLLOWING RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

Over 90% of the clients had not been employed when they entered Horizon for treatment. Among those who were followed, however, half were employed nine months following their treatment entry. This is quite remarkable given the decline in the employment rate during the time of the study.

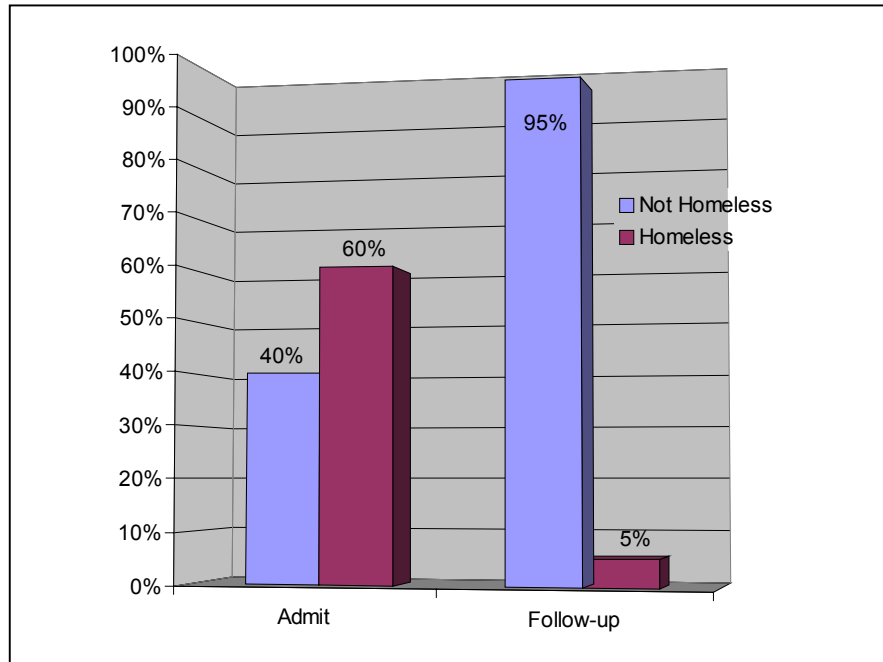
Figure 1: Comparison of Employment Status at Admission and Follow-up



It should be noted that in the Services Research Outcomes Study, the first nationally representative study of substance abuse treatment outcomes surveying 1800 clients five years following discharge, no such change was found. There was no appreciable change in the rate of full-time employment. This may be because that study also included outpatient clients, and we will need to re-assess this conclusion once the analysis of outcomes of clients in the Central Treatment and Recovery program is made.

THE LIKELIHOOD OF STABLE HOUSING IS SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER AT FOLLOWUP

Figure 3: Comparison of Homelessness at Admission and Follow-up

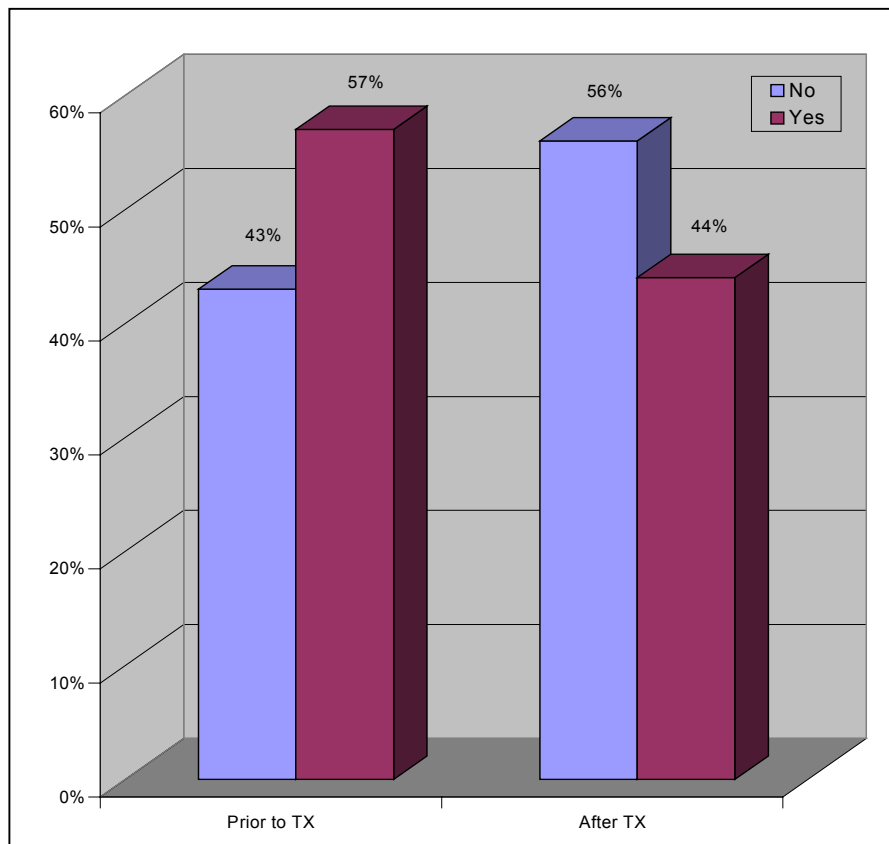


While the majority of the clients were homeless at admission (60%), by the time they were followed up many had found permanent residence. However, there are some inherent biases in this number as clients who have a permanent residence are easier to find.

ARRESTS SHOW DECLINE FOLLOWING RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

Prior to starting treatment 57 percent of the clients in the study reported that they had been arrested at least once in the past two years. In the period since that time, arrests have declined slightly; 44 percent had been arrested at least once after treatment.

Figure 2: Comparison of Arrest Before and After Treatment



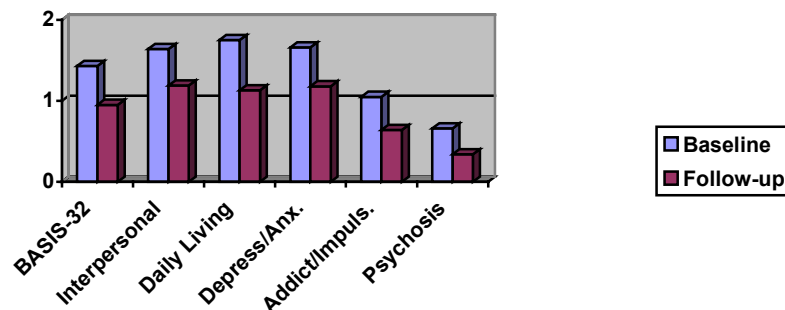
This small rate of decline parallels that in the Services Research Outcomes Study. While they found that criminal activity as reported by participants had declined, incarcerations and probation and parole violations had even increased, while arrests showed only a slight decline. They found this not surprising if the treatment episode was associated with sustained supervision by the criminal justice system. While these clients were recruited prior to the start of the Substance Abuse Crime and Reporting Act in July, 2001, over a third of the clients in the study were involved with the criminal justice system at the time of their admission.

PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONING HAS IMPROVED SINCE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

The BASIS-32 has been used in DADS outcomes monitoring program to measure psychosocial functioning. Developed for psychiatric treatment populations, it consists of 32 questions that measure 5 domains: interpersonal skills, daily living skills, depression/anxiety, impulsive/addictive behavior and psychosis. The total BASIS score assesses overall dysfunction as measured by these five 'sub-scales.'

A total of 64 study participants (59%) had both BASIS instruments (baseline and follow-up) available for analysis. Figure 5 presents the results. The mean BASIS score measures overall dysfunction while each of the five scales measures the level of dysfunction for each of the five domains discussed above.

Figure 5. BASIS-32 Scale Scores



The mean BASIS score declined between entry into treatment and follow-up, which is in the expected direction. Scores on the five domains also declined between treatment entry and follow-up. A decline in BASIS scores indicates an improvement in psychosocial functioning. There were small, though statistically significant, declines in the level of psychosocial dysfunction among these male residential clients. The mean BASIS score declined from 1.43 to 0.95. It should be noted, however, that statistically significant differences are not always clinically significant. It should also be noted that clients in the study did not report high levels of distress even at entry into treatment, so there was very little room for change.

HOW REPRESENTATIVE ARE THESE STUDY CLIENTS OF THE TOTAL TREATMENT POPULATION AT HORIZON?

Study clients were compared to all other clients who entered treatment at Horizon during the 13-month recruitment period. Table 1 presents the results. There were no statistically significant differences.

Table 1. Comparison of Horizon study clients to the remainder of the treatment admissions, January 2000 – January 2001

	Study clients	Other Horizon admissions
Number of unduplicated clients	109	155
Median Age	39	39
Median Length of Stay	45	35
Percent Currently Married	10.1%	7.7%
Median Years of Education	12	12
Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	56.9%	51.6%
Non-Hispanic Black	10.1%	16.1%
Amer. Indian/Alaskan	3.7%	1.3%
Hispanic	19.3%	23.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.5%	3.9%
Other	2.8%	3.2%
Criminal Justice Involvement	60.6%	62.6%
Unemployed at admission	95.3%	91.6%
Median Number of Arrests in Prior 2 Years	1	1
Homeless at admission	61.5%	61.9%
Past Year Needle Use	25.7%	23.2%
Primary Problem		
Heroin	8.4%	12.3%
Alcohol	54.2%	50.3%
Methamphetamine	17.8%	14.8%
Cocaine	7.5%	12.3%
Marijuana	4.7%	6.5%
PCP	6.5%	2.6%
Polydrug use	63.6%	68.4%

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