Evaluation of Alachua County's Metamorphosis Therapeutic Community Treatment Program

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Introduction

❖ Substance use is a major problem across the U.S., with 25% over the age of 12 admitting that they used illicit drugs in 2022 (SAMHSA, 2022)

❖ According to the United Nations on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2022):

   ❖ 271 million people aged 15-64 years have used drugs at least once
   ❖ 35 million people suffer from substance use disorders (SUDs)

❖ SUDs can have negative effects causing physical and mental health issues, impaired functioning, social/legal issues, and increased mortality

❖ Therapeutic Communities (TCs) are one of the most effective approaches to treat SUDs

Meta Overview

New members learn the therapeutic importance of:
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Tolerance
- ❖ Openness
- ❖ Resilience
- ❖ Accountability

Members come to know that how they deal with change is critical in their recovery.

Long-term substance use residential TC for adults with co-occurring mental health and serious substance use disorders

Employs evidence-based treatment approach that treats substance use as a disorder of whole person and challenges thinking and behavior

Members learn to recognize and respond to challenging situations arising from daily social interactions or former lifestyle circumstances

Recovery is taught to be a total lifestyle change and a form of developmental learning cultivated within the social context of self-help
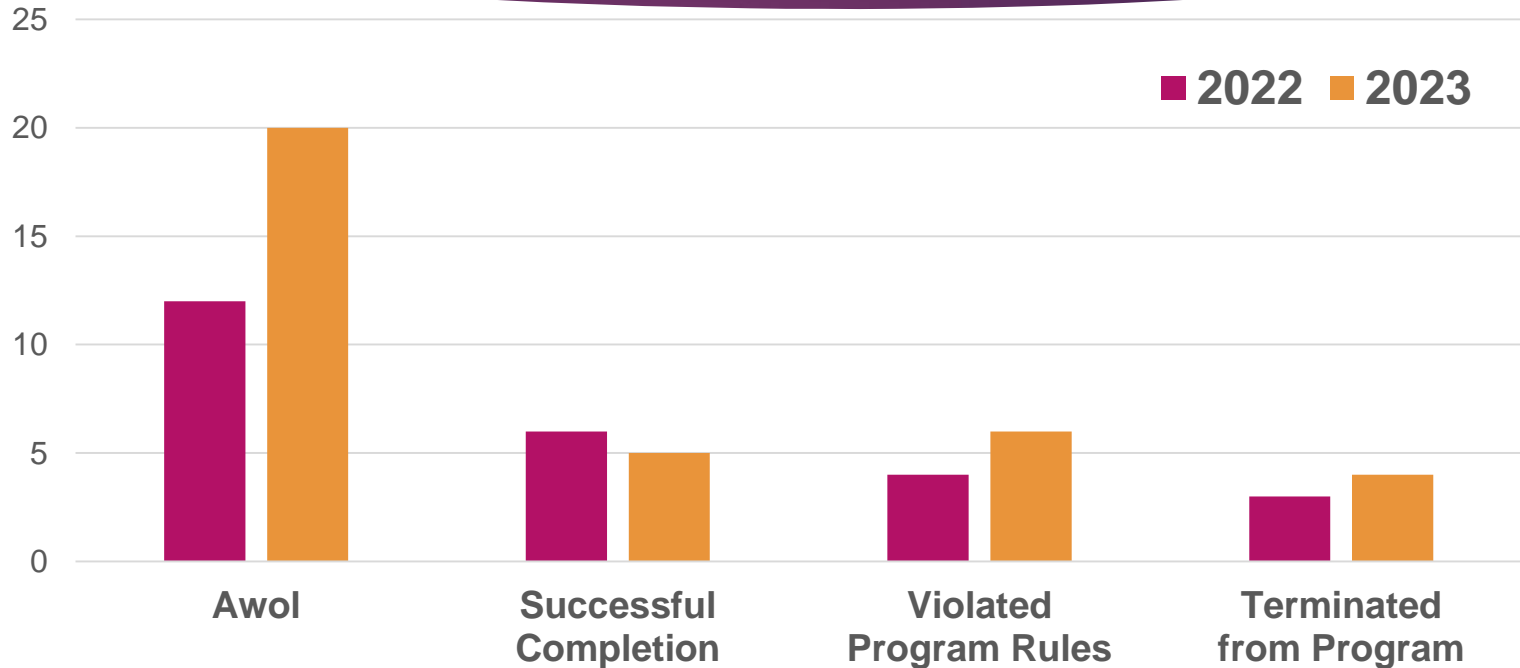
Methodology Overview

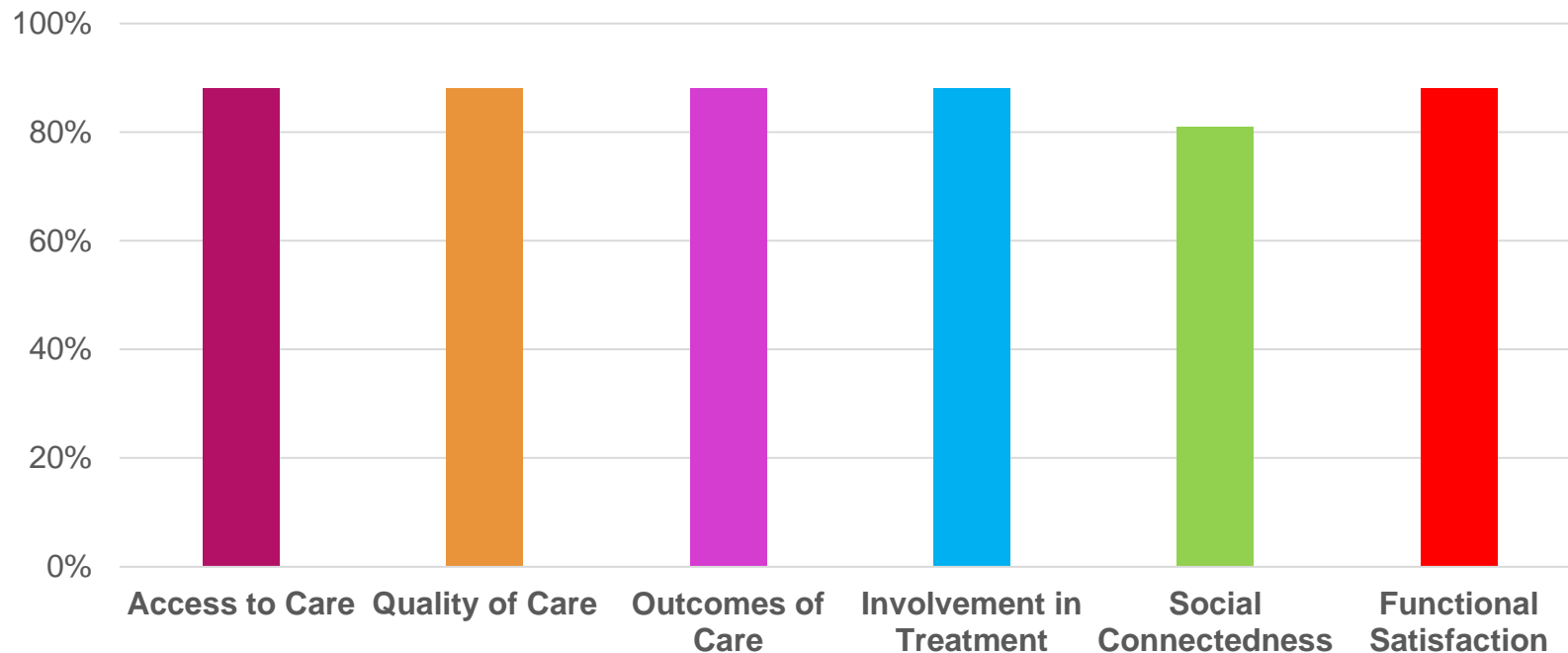| Evaluation Activity	Mode of Administration	
	On-Site Site Visit	**Virtual (Teams)**
Planning Meetings		X
Review of Program Materials		X
Interviews with County Administrative, Program, and Agency Staff	X	X
Focus Groups with Active Meta Clients and Graduates	X	X
Chart Reviews of Program Graduates and Non-Graduates	X	
Observation of Client Process Group	X	
Fidelity Assessment	X	X

Findings

❖ Different evaluation methods each provided a nuanced perspective

❖ Several common themes emerged across the various methodologies, and those are incorporated into the Recommendations

Findings: Participant Reason for Discharge

Findings: Participant Satisfaction

Findings: Staff Experience

Title	Degrees / Certifications	Prior Experience				Hire Date
		TC	MH	SA	Corrections	
Clinical Supervisor / Program Director	MA in Human Services Counseling / Addiction and Recovery, CAP*, CSAC*, CAC*, MI*	X	X	X	X	12/07/2020
Lead Residential Treatment Counselor	BA in Psychology, CCO*		X		X	11/01/2021
Residential Treatment Counselor	BA in Human and Social Svcs, MSW in Progress, ICADC*, CAC*, MI*			X	X	03/06/2023
Residential Treatment Counselor	BA in Law, CCO*				X	11/28/2016
Residential Treatment Counselor	BA in Health and Human Performance, CCO*				X	10/11/2021
Counselor Aide	AA in Psychology / Education, MI*	X	X	X	X	07/17/2014
Counselor Aide	AA in Business Admin.		X	X	X	07/06/2015

Notes. CAP = Certified Addiction Professional; CSAC = Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (VA); CAC = Certified Addiction Counselor (FL); CCO = Certified Correctional Officer (FL); ICAC = Internationally Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (FL); MI = Motivational Interviewing.

Findings: Program and Staff Strengths

Strengths and Challenges	Evaluation Method					
	Review Program Materials	Staff Interviews	Focus Groups w/Active Clients & Grads	Chart Reviews	Process Group Observation	Fidelity to TC (SEEQ)
Program Strengths						
Dedicated staff	X	X	X			X
Client satisfaction	X	X	X		X	
TC Model implemented with fidelity	X	X		X	X	X
Routine, daily schedule	X	X	X			
Funding	X	X				
Transitional housing		X	X			
Good relationship with jail, probation, and court	X	X				

Findings: Staffing Challenges

Strengths and Challenges	Evaluation Method					
	Review Program Materials	Staff Interviews	Focus Groups w/Active Clients & Grads	Chart Reviews	Process Group Observation	Fidelity to TC (SEEQ)
Program Challenges: Staffing						
Insufficient staffing FTE	X	X	X	X		
Lack of staff expertise in mental health	X	X				
Lack of staff expertise in addiction	X	X				
Lack of staff expertise in community-based motivational interviewing	X	X	X			
Lack of individual therapy time	X	X	X	X		
Lack of staff availability for transports results in less time for staff-resident bonding outside of program	X	X	X	X		
Corrections culture: Staff more experienced with corrections-based than community-based programs	X	X				
No staff speak Spanish		X				

Findings: Programming Challenges

Strengths and Challenges	Evaluation Method					
	Review Program Materials	Staff Interviews	Focus Groups w/Active Clients & Grads	Chart Reviews	Process Group Observation	Fidelity to TC (SEEQ)
Programming Challenges						
High rate of AWOLs	X	X				
Program orientation & welcoming	X	X	X	X		
Lack of discretionary funds for incentives & rewards to help foster resident motivation & staff-resident bonding		X	X			X
Lack of recreational & other outings limits staff-resident bonding outside of program	X	X	X	X		
Lack of focus on job prep early in program	X	X		X		X
Prohibition of family & support network involvement early in program	X	X	X	X		X
Other prohibitive rules (no smoking, meals based on jail menu, no candy, no coffee, etc.)	X	X	X	X		

Recommendations

❖ Increase Staff FTE
  - ❖ Hire peers
  - ❖ Increase opportunities for successful graduates to stay connected to the program and help out
  - ❖ Hire bilingual staff with experience working in community-based behavioral health programs
  - ❖ Additional manpower would facilitate staff availability for trainings

❖ Create a More Welcoming Environment
  - ❖ Hiring peers and increasing program graduate involvement can help to create a more welcoming atmosphere
  - ❖ Reduce incarceration culture by hiring individuals having a history of working with community-based programs

Recommendations, Continued

❖ Train Staff
  - ❖ Motivational Interviewing
  - ❖ Evidence-Based practices

❖ Re-Examine Restrictive Rules
  - ❖ Visitation, menu, coffee, candy, smoking

❖ Programming
  - ❖ Consider flexibly shortening length of stay in some phases for residents who progress more quickly
  - ❖ Increase off-site outings with staff and residents

❖ Enhance Public Relations
  - ❖ Periodically present program description, outcomes, and availability

Thank you for your time today and for allowing us to present our Meta program evaluation findings and recommendations.