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

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Background

AGRI Major Grant (2016-2018); CRISM Development Grant

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 I Analysis of Screening data: first 9 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 (n=30): 54.5%
- Partner (n=25): 45.5%

Type of Addictive Disorder

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

Index Patient vs Partner

[VAL UE] 44.4%

Index Patient vs Partner – by Gender

Female

50% (n=10)

12.5% (n=2)

33% (n=12)

Male

50% (n=10)

87.5% (n=14)

67% (n=24)

Total
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 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 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%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Intimate Partner Violence</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Frequency Table</strong></th>
<th>Never 1</th>
<th>Rarely 2</th>
<th>Sometimes 3</th>
<th>Fairly Frequently 4</th>
<th>Frequently 5</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)

Screening tool:
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

HITS (Mean & SD): Gender Comparison

- Index Patient
- Partner

- Male
- Female

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