

THE FLORIDA LEARNING SYSTEM

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National Partners

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration



Center for Substance Abuse Treatment



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Florida Partners

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Beginning our Second Year!

We are all very excited to begin the second year of implementing the Strengthening Treatment Access and Retention-State Implementation (STAR-SI) grant and the Advancing Recovery (AR) initiative. As we begin the second year, we reflect upon and celebrate the successes experienced during the first phase of the projects.

Our Florida **STAR-SI providers** have been very successful in tackling the issues relating to client treatment access and retention. For example: DACCO has reduced their intake paperwork (it now takes about 30 minutes to complete rather than 1.5 hours), which has resulted in more time for clinicians to spend in providing quality treatment; Lakeview Center, Inc., has made great strides in improving retention of Marchman Act clients; while Manatee Glens has dramatically reduced their timeframe from clients' first contact to assessment; and Stewart-Marchman Center has successfully reduced its client waiting list by initiating walk-in assessments. Also, on page 2 of this newsletter read about Meridian's success at implementing a walk-in assessment system. These are just a few of the successes experienced by the STAR-SI agencies!

Most of the first year STAR-SI agencies will continue to implement rapid cycle change projects, as well as continue to report data for our grant. The providers will also be able to share their experiences with the in-coming agencies during the second year grant cycle, as well as continue to benefit from the technical assistance provided through the grant!

The **Advancing Recovery agencies**, Operation PAR, River Region Human Services and Spectrum Programs, have all been pioneers in the area of medication-assisted treatment! Each agency has worked diligently to develop and implement processes for clients to receive Vivitrol in conjunction with other substance abuse treatment for alcoholism.

It is always a challenge to implement new treatment options, but this group has certainly risen to the occasion! Most of the first year activities included educating staff and clients about the benefits of medication-assisted treatment, development of treatment protocols, identifying clients who are motivated and can benefit from the medication, and last but certainly not least, dealing with medication cost issues.

Despite the bumps along the way, the AR team has many success stories to share. One River Region client said: "it was worth it; without the shot I would have lied about my drinking like I did the previous 9 times in treatment." Both staff and clients have been very motivated by the almost immediate improvements that have been attained using Vivitrol.

The STAR-SI and AR partnerships have been instrumental in helping us focus on practices and systems improvements that result in better treatment for our clients! We look forward to our continued success during the upcoming year!

Sheila Barbee, Project Director, Substance Abuse Program Office, The Florida Department of Children and Families

Year Two Kick-Off Meetings Planned

The Florida STAR-SI Year Two Kick-Off meeting will be convened on November 14 & 15 in Tampa. New STAR-SI agencies will join us in Tampa where they will learn the details regarding rapid cycle change, presenting the business case and much more. They will be introduced to their coaches/mentors and have opportunities to interact with and hear the inspirational success stories from our year one STAR-SI participants.

The Advancing Recovery Initiative will be holding their Round I Fall Learning Session in Bethesda, Maryland on November 8 & 9. This is a national meeting of all AR participants and will focus on the successes, the learning opportunities and the next step for AR sites. Each Florida AR site will be sending two team members to the Fall Learning Session and State AR representatives will be there as well.

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Strengthening Treatment Access and Retention - State Implementation (STAR-SI)

The Sky's the Limit



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- ★ *Dr. Pauley Johnson*

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- ★ Central Florida Behavioral Health Network
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- ★ South Florida Provider Coalition

In The News

The Best Part of All: *Improving Customer Care*

Meridian Healthcare, Inc. in Gainesville has experienced great success with STAR-SI change cycles. Rosa West, Senior Clinician and Change Leader at Meridian, says their first change cycle was to **reduce no-shows for assessments and decrease wait times for assessments.**

Meridian has 9 sites in 9 counties in central Florida, each providing both mental health and substance abuse services. Seventy-five percent (75%) of sites had long wait times and all sites reported problems with no shows. Ms. West explains, "People would call in and schedule an assessment which made that time not available for the next person calling in - even though we knew the first caller was very likely to no-show for their appointment." The decision was made that Meridian would initiate walk-in appointments at all 9 sites on designated days. Supervisors met with staff and brainstormed days and times that would work best for each site.

Beginning May 1st anyone calling the Meridian Access Center was told which site is open for walk-ins on the days/times the caller requested. This was an especially meaningful change for Rosa who, having worked at the Access Center early in her career at the Meridian, said she remembers the disappointment she heard in the voices of clients when she had to tell them they could not be seen until two or three weeks later.

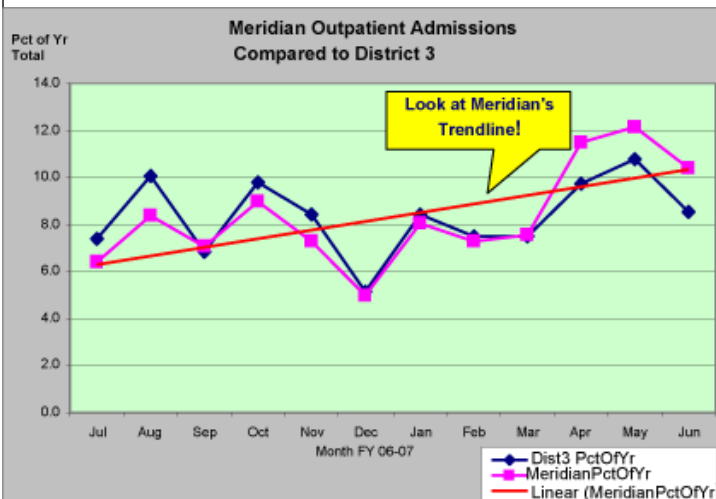
Once the change was in place, some adjustments had to be made. Staff was added and times increased based on the flow of walk-in clients. Nevertheless, after the first 2 to 3 weeks, things leveled off and everyone was pleased with the change. Wait times went from 4-6 weeks to within one week of first contact.

Now Meridian is moving on to their next change cycle, which is a direct result of the first. "Our outpatient programs are much fuller", reports Ms. West, "so we will be looking for alternative levels of care to manage the higher caseload."

Meridian has been so impressed with the rapid change cycle process that Rosa will soon begin working solely as the Change Leader for Meridian "It has been a lot of work", says Rosa, "but **improving customer care is the best part of all.**"



*Ms. Rosa West, Change Leader
Meridian Healthcare, Inc.*



At the beginning of the fiscal year, Meridian had a lower percentage of total admissions than the overall providers in District 3. However, there was a steady increase in admissions and during the last three months of the fiscal year, Meridian admitted a larger percentage of clients compared to the overall district. The increase in admissions corresponds to the implementation of change cycles!

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Advancing Recovery... Leading the Way

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*Purpose:
To develop and implement
administrative and
clinical system
improvements at provider
and state levels to
facilitate the successful
utilization of selected
categories of evidence-
based practices for
addiction treatment.*

Partners

- ⇒ **Operation PAR**
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- ⇒ **River Region Human
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- ⇒ **Spectrum Programs/
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- ⇒ **Provider Coach**
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IN THE NEWS

NIAAA Study Identifies Alcoholism Subtypes

A new study by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) has identified five distinct subtypes of the disease of alcoholism. "Our findings should help dispel the notion of the "typical alcoholic," notes first author Howard B. Moss, M.D., NIAAA Associate Director of Clinical and Translational Research. "We find that young adults comprise the largest group of alcoholics in this country, and nearly 20% of alcoholics are highly functional and educated with good incomes. More than half of the alcoholics in the United States has no multigenerational family history of the disease, suggesting that their form of alcoholism was unlikely to have genetic causes". Subtypes include:

- ⇒ Young Adult subtype: 31.5%. Rarely seek any form of help for drinking.
- ⇒ Young Antisocial subtypes: 21%. More than a third seek help for drinking.
- ⇒ Functional subtype: 19.5%. About one quarter sought help for drinking.
- ⇒ Intermediate Familial subtype: 19%. Only one quarter have ever sought help for problem drinking.
- ⇒ Chronic Severe subtype: 9%. Two thirds seek help, making them the most prevalent type of alcoholic in treatment.

"Clinician's have long recognized diverse manifestations of alcoholism" states NIAAA Director Ting-Kai Li, M.D., "and researchers have tried to understand why some alcoholics improve with specific medications and psychotherapies while others do not. The classification system described in this study will have broad applications in both clinical and research settings."

For more information: http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NewsEvents/NewsRelease/alcoholis_subtypes.htm



What's Happening Now?

The Advancing Recovery partners have completed year 1 of the grant and are moving forward with year 2. While assessing the successes and challenges of medication-assisted treatment (Vivitrol), the partners are focusing on adding the second evidence-based practice that will facilitate client transitions between different levels of care.

Activities include:

- * Continuation of the Vivitrol protocol
- * Reviewing preliminary year 1 data
- * Addressing client medication adherence
- * Developing a client satisfaction survey
- * Implementation of the second evidence-based practice
- * Identifying process improvement strategies

On-Line Training Opportunity

Join Together/Boston University School of Health are offering an on-line training opportunity titled [Helping You to Help Your Patients: An Introduction to Medication for Alcohol Dependence](#). As we are experiencing with the Advancing Recovery initiatives in Florida, new medications for addiction treatment can significantly improve treatment outcomes for many patients, especially when combined with counseling, support and aftercare. This **free** on-line course helps addiction treatment counselors understand how these medications work with the brain mechanisms involved in alcohol dependence and how medications can be a part of a comprehensive treatment program that helps patients regain control over their lives.

The comprehensive guide contains a slide presentation with recorded notes, case studies, a resource list and patient education materials.

The course offers up to 2 hours of continuing education credits.

<http://www.jointogether.org/keyissues/medications/continuing-ed/medicationintro/>

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