

Brief Intervention on Patients with Substance Abuse in an Outpatient Setting

Meg Phillips, BS Nursing Student
Yu-Ping Chang, RN, PhD, Associate Professor

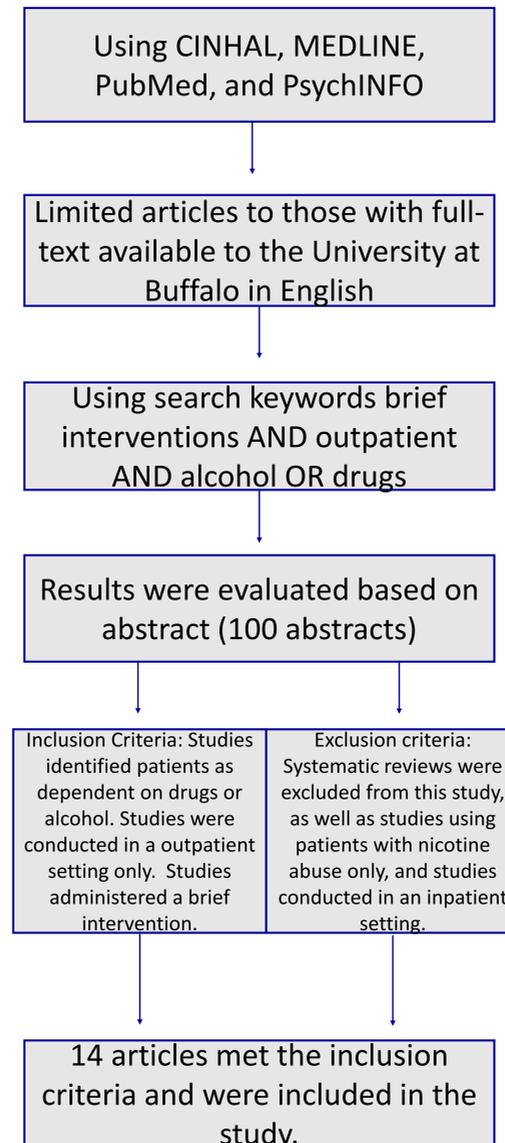
Background

- The NIAAA states that 17 million people over the age of eighteen suffer from alcohol abuse or dependency.
- In the United States, 9.2 percent of the population reported using an illegal drug during the three months prior to their survey.
- Outpatient settings allow for early detection and treatment of drug and alcohol problems
- Brief intervention and motivational interviewing are techniques suggested by healthcare professionals to treat chemical dependence.
- Brief interventions consist of several steps including screenings during visits conducted by primary care physicians or during hospital stays, the optional distribution of supplemental material (pamphlets, manuals, workbooks, etc.), and then an intervention delivered by a primary care physician, nurse, or physician's assistant.
- Recent research on the effectiveness of brief intervention in the outpatient setting has been conducted, and needs to be synthesized.

Purpose

This review aimed to systematically synthesize the literature on the effectiveness of brief intervention administered to patients substance abuse in the outpatient setting.

Methods



Results

- Of the included studies, 5 indicated the effectiveness of brief interventions, 5 indicated that brief interventions are no more effective than current methods of treating substance abuse, and 4 yielded inconclusive results.
- Only one randomized control supported brief interventions.
- 3 of the 5 studies using motivational interviewing demonstrated positive improvement including .
- 2 of 4 studies of only drug abusers showed the effectiveness of brief interventions.
- Although None of the alcohol-only studies included indicated the effectiveness of brief interventions.

Conclusions

- This review concluded that the effect of brief intervention is inconclusive. More research is needed.
- Motivational interviewing may be slightly more effective than other forms of brief intervention.
- Brief interventions may be more effective in drug users than alcohol.

References

- A list of references is available by request.

| Type of intervention | Method of Delivery | Outcomes Assessed | Results |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Motivational interviewing (5) | All used a one session motivational interview. Three followed up with 1-3 phone calls. | Two studies only assessed substance use, whereas another only assessed whether or not the individuals sought further treatment. The other two assessed substance use, as well as mental health factors. One also assessed several social outcomes. | All studies assessing the amount of substance abuse saw a decrease in substance abuse, although two randomized control trials did not show a difference between the control group and the intervention group. The study assessing entry into treatment saw more individuals in the intervention group enter into treatment than the control group. |
| Brief intervention (9) | Six studies delivered treatment over one session. The remaining delivered the treatment over anywhere from 3 to 7 treatments. | All but one of the studies assessed substance abuse. The other study assessed only the patient's AUDIT score. Many other outcomes, including psychiatric and social outcomes were evaluated. | The results varied, with only three of the studies concluding that brief interventions should be implemented. While all but one study noted improvements, most of the randomized control trials saw no difference in the behaviors of those receiving brief interventions and those in the control group. |