



Utilizing Outpatient Telehealth as Treatment Approach for Patients with Substance Use

Disorder: A Quality Improvement Project

Veronica Kwegyir-Afful, MSN, PMHNP-BC, FNP-BC

Department of Nursing, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824



Introduction

- In 2017, 19.7 million Americans were diagnosed with SUD, affecting one in eight adults (SAMHSA, 2020).
- Healthcare providers are finding alternative approaches to implement evidence-based decisions for improved Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment and care.
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is effective, combining medications and psychotherapy for SUD.
- The COVID-19 pandemic shift to telehealth impacted mental health and SUD treatment (Mark et al., 2022).
- Pre-pandemic, only 27% of United States (US) SUD facilities offered telehealth MAT.
- Expanding telehealth can bridge care gaps in SUD treatment
- This quality improvement (QI) project utilizes telehealth as a treatment approach to address SUD treatment challenges.

Methodology

- The QI project utilized the Transtheoretical Behavioral Change Model (TTM) to screen adults with SUD in an outpatient setting, guiding them toward abstinence. The process involved a multidisciplinary team, including psychiatrists, psychiatric mental health nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, psychologists, and registered nurses.
- A Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)-based questionnaire, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, assessed providers' perceptions and effectiveness of the education module. Domains included perceived usefulness and ease of use, key factors influencing TAM attitudes.

Data

A. Telehealth-Delivered MAT:

- 155 patients were admitted for telehealth WM.

Prevalence of Substances Treated		
Substance	Patients	Rate (%)
Alcohol	101	77.1
Opioids	14	10.7
Cannabis	4	3.1
Benzodiazepines	4	3.1
Alcohol/Benzodiazepines	5	3.8
Kratom/Alcohol/Benzodiazepines	1	0.8
Fioricet/Alcohol/Codeine	1	0.8
Crystal Meth	1	0.8

B. Staff survey and education

- 33 staff members participated in the survey/education
- All staff were >18 years. There were 27 females and 6 males.

Staff Demographics	
Role	Attended Education Training
Provider (MD/NP/PA)	6
WM Nurses (RNs)	5
Addiction Counselors	17
Patient Access Specialists/Medical Assistants	5

Telehealth Delivery of MAT at Kolmac Centers

MAT at Kolmac Centers



Telehealth Delivery of MAT

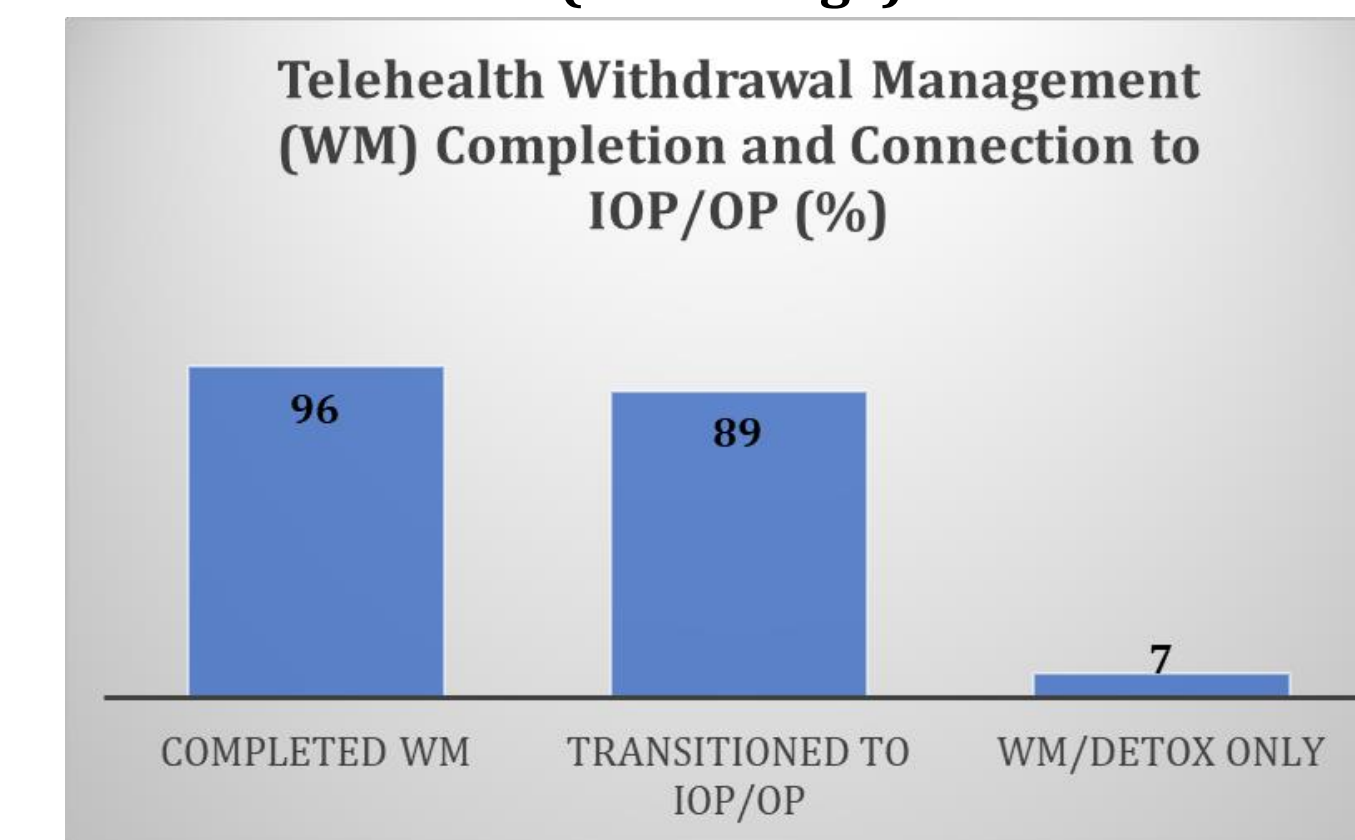


Results

Telehealth WM Completion and Connection to IOP/OP

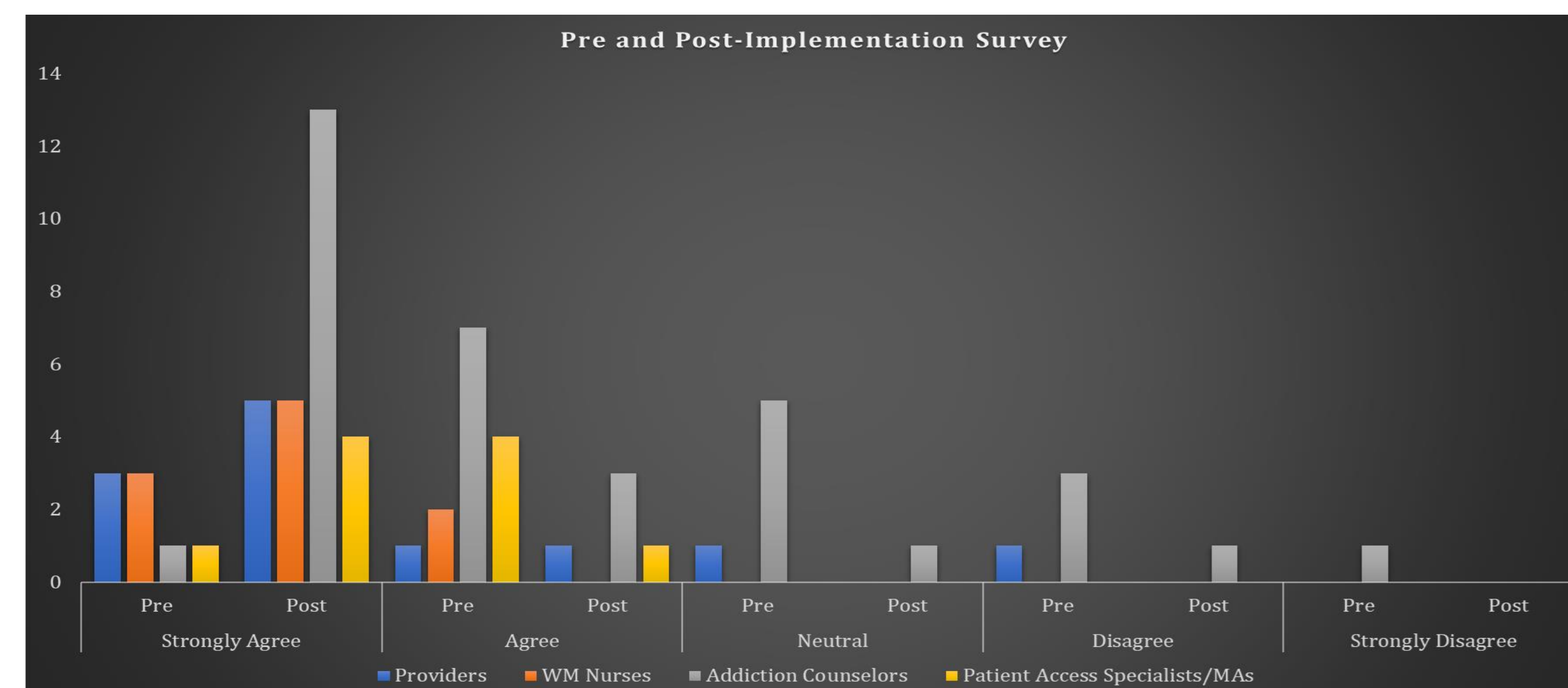
Week	Admissions	Completed WM	Connected to IOP/OP After Completing WM
1	12	12	10
2	16	15	12
3	18	17	17
4	19	19	18
5	22	22	20
6	22	20	20
7	21	21	18
8	25	23	23
Total	155	149	138

Telehealth WM Completion and Connection to IOP/OP (Percentage)



Results

Staff Survey: TAM Questionnaire



Results

- Within the project's eight-week duration, 96% of all patients, totaling 155 admissions, completed the telehealth WM program successfully. 94% of completers transitioned to IOP.
- Significant increase in WM completion and transition to the IOP program.
- Post-implementation TAM survey showed that 80% of providers, 83% of WM nurses, 76% of addiction counselors, and 80% of patient access specialists/medical assistants strongly agreed; no disagreements were reported.
- Post-implementation TAM questionnaire revealed enhanced provider and staff agreement on telehealth for WM, indicating increased comfort and effectiveness
- Telehealth is an effective, enhancing treatment approach for SUD patients.

Conclusions

- Effective treatment approaches exist for SUD patients, but access barriers persist.
- Disparities impact SUD patient access to care despite treatment outcomes similar to chronic diseases.
- Utilizing telehealth as a treatment approach for patients with SUD is effective.
- Telehealth for WM increases completion rates and IOP transitions.
- Uncertainty surrounds the impact of new DEA regulations.
- Ongoing data collection is needed to ensure the intervention's safety, effectiveness, and sustainability.
- The data supports that telehealth enhances access and retention in addiction treatment, emphasizing its safety and benefits, advocating for broader availability

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References

