

Project Team

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The Need

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health has called for a transformation of the mental health system to partner with consumers of those services in delivering effective interventions focused on recovery, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has developed a Mental Health Strategic Plan to address these recommendations. One promising approach is to implement Illness Management and Recovery (IMR), a structured curriculum to help mental health consumers manage their illnesses and pursue goals related to recovery from mental illness. Although IMR is based on practices shown to be effective in controlled research, effectiveness of the comprehensive package of IMR has not yet been demonstrated in a randomized, controlled trial.

The Research Questions

- The primary objective of the proposed research is to test the effectiveness of IMR as an implementation package.
- Our primary focus is to examine the impact of IMR intervention on consumer outcomes re-

Systems-Research Tools

This is a randomized, controlled trial comparing IMR to an attention control group of mental health treatment in 200 veterans with schizophrenia spectrum disorders. Assessment will include semi-structured interviews and standardized measures at baseline, 9 months, and 18 months to assess illness self-management (e.g., symptoms), objective indicators of recovery (e.g., role functioning), and subjective indicators of recovery (e.g., perceptions of well-being). Electronic medical records will be accessed to determine the impact of IMR on other service utilization and costs.

Project Overview

IMR was developed from a review of effective approaches for illness self-management training in persons with severe mental illness. The 9-month curriculum is taught using educational, motivational, and cognitive-behavioral techniques, and incorporates five evidence-based practices: education about mental illness, strategies for increasing medication adherence, skills training to enhance social support, relapse prevention planning, and coping skills training. *(continued)*

Project Overview (from previous page)

The program was developed for widespread dissemination and includes a manual, worksheets, an introductory video, a clinical training video, a fidelity scale, and informational brochures for consumers, family members, clinicians, and administrators.

The Impact on Veterans

The proposed study directly addresses a stated need in the VA's Mental Health Strategic Plan and is a critical first step to systematically evaluating the effectiveness of a comprehensive, manual-based approach to improving recovery outcomes for veterans with severe mental illness. As an implementation package, IMR offers mental health providers useful tools that could be widely disseminated across the VA system.

Milestones and Deliverables

<i>Description</i>	<i>Due date</i>
1. Enrollment Start Date	05/19/08
2. Enrollment Completion	12/31/09
3. All Follow-up Data Collection Complete	12/30/11
4. Patient Experience Focus Groups Completed	11/2010 thru 04/2011
5. Final papers	01/31/12

Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Center of Excellence for Implementation of Evidence-based Practice
<http://www.ciebp.research.va.gov/>
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Affiliated Centers:

Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis
 Center for Health Services & Outcomes Research
<http://www.indyhealthservicesresearch.org/>

National Stroke QuERI Coordinating Center
<http://www1.va.gov/stroke-QuERI/>

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Center of Indiana
www.psych.iupui.edu/ACTCenter

Center for Assessment Mechanisms and Management of Pain (CAMMP)



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