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Mobile breathalyzers in substance use disorder treatment: Utilization, validity, and utility in treatment provision

Adi Jaffe

Alternatives Behavioral Health LLC, USA

Aims: To describe the feasibility, implementation, validity and utilization of mobile momentary-assessment breathalyzers within the context of an Intensive Outpatient (IOP) treatment for Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD).

Methods: Fifty-five participants in an IOP treatment program in Southern California were provided breathalyzers at the onset of treatment. Breathalyzer assessment schedules were set based on client's self-report of sleep schedule and three to five assessments (M=4) per day were conducted remotely. Breathalyzer data was recorded for the duration of treatment, which lasted between two-to-six months (M=3.5 months). Participants were given a short survey to assess their satisfaction with the breathalyzer system. Data preparation and analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Results: Analysis indicated substantial presence of missing data when looking at individual data points. Analysis of relative missing frequency, relative non-zero BAC readings as well as maximum BAC were conducted for the overall sample and based on initial treatment-goal selection.

Conclusions: Our study reveals that the utilization of momentary substance detection methods, such as a breathalyzer, within an IOP treatment context is feasible. Furthermore, the study reveals specific analysis recommendations for providers engaged in such data collection. Finally the use of reporting adherence as a measure of treatment progress is suggested given the relationship between treatment success and breathalyzer reporting observance.

Biography

Adi Jaffe received his PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2010. Even before he graduated, his name had become known through his online and academic writing. His views on addiction and his research on the topic have been published in dozens of journals and online publications and he has appeared on several television shows and documentaries discussing current topics in addiction and the problem of addiction as a whole. He also teaches courses at UCLA and the California State University in Long Beach that address addiction specifically or biological psychology and behavioral neuroscience more generally. His view is a holistic one, drawing from the best and most recent research to bring as a complete solution to addiction clients. At Alternatives Behavioral Health, LLC, USA, he serves as the Director of Research, education, and innovation and is in charge of client monitoring, technology solutions, and data collections and outcomes research. His goal is to make Alternatives the best treatment program.

adjaffe@gmail.com

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