



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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AA Linkage for Alcohol Abusing Women Leaving Jail

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Abstract

The increase in incarcerated women is a growing public health concern. Jails serve 15 times more people per year than do prisons and have very short stays, which pose few opportunities for treatment or treatment planning. Alcohol use is associated with poor post-jail psychosocial and health outcomes that include sexually transmitted diseases and HIV.

Although many incarcerated women have attended AA during their lifetime, AA attendance after release is infrequent. The group conducting the study has found that for those who attend weekly, AA is associated with improvements in alcohol use and alcohol related incidents during post incarceration. Therefore, reducing barriers to post release AA meeting attendance may benefit alcohol abusing incarcerated women returning to the community. AA linkage strategies improve AA attendance and outcome among outpatients, but have not previously been tested in criminal justice populations.

The study proposes to conduct a randomized trial (n= 400) evaluating the effectiveness of innovative methods to enhance the linkage between alcohol abusing women leaving jail who are returning to the community and AA resources. In the intervention condition, an AA volunteer will meet once individually with an incarcerated woman while she is in jail and arrange a contact immediately after release and accompany the participant to AA meetings. The control condition will consist of providing schedules for local AA meetings, the current standard of care for incarcerated women with alcohol problems.