



## ISAP Provides Training on Co-Occurring Disorders to Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Staff

By Sherry Larkins, *Research Sociologist*  
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In the fall of 2010, the ISAP Training Department was awarded a three-year contract by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) to provide technical assistance and skill-based training to DMH staff who treat clients with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

Over the past several years, the Los Angeles County DMH has made significant efforts to enhance the capability of its system to treat co-occurring disorders (COD), in part, by increasing the skills and knowledge of its workforce.

From 2007–2008, the ISAP Training Department led a training initiative focusing on mental health counselors and clinicians who provide services for children and their parents/caregivers. More than 1,000 providers received ongoing training, technical assistance, and/or coaching support as part of this initiative.

A related training initiative focused on training staff at all 25 mental health clinics in the county that are directly operated by the DMH to improve rates of screening and assessment for substance use disorders among their dually diagnosed clients.

Notably, evaluation data highlighted that, system-wide, DMH staff significantly improved their screening and assessment rates following training. These successful training efforts laid the foundation for the current three-year contract.

Over the next three years, ISAP will be providing training services across DMH’s complex system. Whereas the initial training efforts with DMH (2007–2008) focused narrowly on children’s providers and those clinicians working at directly operated clinics, the new contract calls for a much broader infusion of addiction knowledge and skill development throughout the system.

The trainings are designed to increase skills and improve the effectiveness of DMH staff in caring for this hard-to-treat population. To date, ISAP has conducted technical assistance support and/or training for the following DMH programs:

- Older Adult Program (screening and brief intervention skills for clinicians treating seniors and older adults with COD).
- Transitional-Age Youth Program (identifying substance use among adolescents with co-occurring mental health issues and using intervention approaches tailored to the client’s stage of readiness for change).
- Jail Mental Health Program (interventions with substance-using mental health clients who are incarcerated).
- Peer Advocate/Volunteer Program (addiction basics and effective listening and linking practices)
- Co-Location Pilot Projects, in which behavioral health providers are placed into primary care settings to screen for mental health and substance use issues (introduction to screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment [SBIRT] for mental health and primary care staff).

Additionally, as part of this contract, ISAP will be collaborating with DMH on the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Co-Occurring Disorders Conference at the Burbank Marriott hotel, Oct. 26 and 27 (see *Calendar of Events* on Page 8). With a focus on preparing mental health staff for healthcare reform and integrated care, the statewide conference is expected to draw more than 500 attendees.

We look forward to an exciting conference and another three-year partnership with the DMH!

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# ISAP Study Examines Efficacy of Enhanced Substance Abuse Treatment for Women Offenders

[www.uclaisap.org/CJS](http://www.uclaisap.org/CJS)

By Nena Messina, Principal Investigator  
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The ISAP study *Enhancing Substance Abuse Treatment for Women Offenders*, funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, was designed to examine the efficacy of women-focused treatment serving female drug court participants.

The study's 150 participants were randomly assigned to a traditional mixed-gender drug court program or an enhanced women-focused drug court program.

Compared with substance-using men, substance-using women consistently report greater histories of trauma and abuse in childhood, which often continues into adolescence and adulthood.

The resulting negative impact from such experiences has led many researchers to propose specialized trauma-informed treatment for women as a more appropriate and effective way to facilitate their recovery, rather than the more typical "gender neutral" programs.

The expectation is that women-focused programs provide services that take into account women's pathways to substance use and other specific needs, and that they are implemented in a manner that promotes women's psychological growth. However, given the limited number of studies of women-focused treatment and that most have not used rigorous designs, this expectation lacks empirical support.

Drug court treatment programs are required to provide individual and group counseling (with a strong emphasis on vocational/educational counseling and referral), 12-step meetings, and self-help group discussions.

The women-focused programs in this study were enhanced, incorporating services designed to focus on issues specific to women's recovery, such as their histories of sexual and physical abuse and domestic violence, as well as their parenting issues and overall health and well-being.

## Women Offenders' History of Abuse

Women reported their histories of sexual and physical abuse and household dysfunction in childhood upon entry into treatment. Cumulatively, the women reported family abuse as the most traumatic event experienced (24% - sexual abuse in childhood by a family member; 24% - physical abuse in childhood by a family member).

Thirty-seven percent of the women reported experiencing five or more types of traumatic events. Thirty-one percent

of the total sample met the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The essential feature of PTSD is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor. These include persistent *re-experiencing* of the traumatic event, persistent *avoidance* of stimuli associated with the trauma, and persistent symptoms of increased *arousal*. The person's response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

The full symptom picture must be present for more than one month, and the disturbance must cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of *functioning*. All of these symptoms are taken into account before a diagnosis of PTSD is given.

## Study Outcomes

When we explored the change in women's reports of specific symptoms for the total sample (i.e., re-experience, avoidance, arousal, functioning), we found that the women-focused group consistently reported reduced symptoms. This is an important result, as there is debate over addressing trauma issues during substance abuse treatment.

The reduction in PTSD symptomatology for the women-focused group suggests that the integration of trauma-informed services into treatment may play a vital part in women's recovery.

In contrast, the women in the mixed-gender groups reported an increase in re-experiencing their traumatic event from baseline to follow-up, and no change in their other symptoms.

Past research has suggested that mixed-gender treatment settings may actually be harmful to women; however, findings of outcomes for women in mixed-gender settings are mixed.

A variety of studies have shown that women who complete treatment are more likely to have reductions in drug use and criminal activity. However, the consistent research outlining the extensive trauma histories of women as compared to men and the undeniable link between childhood trauma and adult addictive behaviors suggest that to best meet women's treatment needs, these issues need to be addressed safely and systematically.

## UCLA ISAP and Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital Present Addiction Counselor Training Program in Egypt

By Grace Kim, Staff Research Associate I

**I**SAP Associate Director Richard A. Rawson led a series of intensive trainings for the first Addiction Counselor Training program at Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital (Cairo University, Egypt) May 29–June 2.

Using the United Nations Treatnet curriculum developed by ISAP several years ago, Dr. Rawson and key personnel of the Faculty of Medicine at Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital trained about 40 Egyptian clinicians, mostly psychiatrists, and two Iraqis, Dr. Nesif Al-Hemiary, a psychiatrist, and Dr. Lamyaa Al-Rikabi, a psychologist, who were sponsored by SAMHSA.



From left: Dr. Richard Rawson (of ISAP), Dr. Mazen El-Sakka (Gaza-Palestine Substance Abuse Research Consortium), Dr. Lamyaa Al-Rikabi and Dr. Nesif Al-Hemiary (Iraq), Grace Kim (ISAP), and Dr. Maha Mobasher (Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital) at the Cairo Opera House.

The course also attracted clinicians from other neighboring areas, including Palestine.

Dr. Karen Miotto, of UCLA, joined the latter half of the trip, presenting at the Kasr Al-Ainy International Psychiatry Conference, along with Dr. Rawson, on June 8 and 9 at the Cairo Marriott.

The evenings consisted of social networking opportunities and discussions about future collaborations between UCLA ISAP and key

Egyptian institutions, led by Dr. Rawson, Dr. Nasser Loza of Behman Hospital, and Drs. Momtaz Abdel Wahab, Tarek Gawad, Samir Abolmagd, and Maha Mobasher of Kasr Al-Ainy Hospital.

## NIDA INVEST/CTN Fellow Completes Year at ISAP

By Albert Hasson, Project Director ([alhasson@ucla.edu](mailto:alhasson@ucla.edu))

**S**uzanne Nielsen, Ph.D., from Turning Point Drug and Alcohol Centre, in Melbourne, Australia, is about to complete her year-long NIDA INVEST/Clinical Trials Network (CTN) Drug Abuse Fellowship at UCLA ISAP under the direction of ISAP Director Walter Ling.

INVEST/CTN Fellowships provide non-U.S. drug abuse scientists postdoctoral research training, the opportunity to establish collaborative relationships with NIDA grantees, and grant-writing guidance.

Dr. Nielsen graduated from Monash University with a doctorate in Pharmaceutical Biology and Pharmacology in 2008, and has worked at Turning Point since 2002. At Turning Point, she has held combined clinical and research roles, being the Senior Pharmacist and a Senior Research Fellow.

Since arriving in Los Angeles, Dr. Nielsen has become an integral member of the *Cocaine Use Reduction with Buprenorphine (CURB)* protocol development team, and

has worked with ISAP staff in the Outpatient Clinical Research Center (OCRC).

Dr. Nielsen has several publications under review that use data from studies conducted at the ISAP OCRC and the NIDA Clinical Trials Network, most notably comparing Suboxone (buprenorphine plus naloxone) induction in prescription opioid users versus heroin users. She has just finished guest editing a special issue of *Drug and Alcohol Review* on pharmaceuticals, one of her main research interest areas.



NIDA INVEST/CTN Fellow Suzanne Nielsen

Since arriving in Los Angeles, in her spare time, Dr. Nielsen has been a volunteer bicycle mechanic at the Bicycle Kitchen, a nonprofit bicycle repair and education organization located at 706 Heliotrope, near the intersection of Melrose and Vermont avenues.

Her efforts there have come in handy in repairing and building her own bike with assistance through the Bicycle Kitchen. Rain or shine, Dr. Nielsen has commuted to ISAP for the entire year.

By Beth A. Rutkowski, Associate Director of Training  
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Arizona State University's Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy (CABHP), together with UCLA ISAP and the Pacific Southwest ATTC, hosted a three-day Motivational Interviewing (MI) Academy in Burbank, CA, on March 23–25.

Funding for the event was provided, in part, through a NIDA/SAMHSA Blending Initiative special project supplement, as well as registration fees.

Thirty-six attendees from across Southern California took part in the intensive MI training workshop, which was conducted by Robert Rhode, a CABHP-affiliated Clinical Associate Professor. Dr. Rhode has been teaching MI since 1986 and is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT).

Motivational interviewing is a client-centered, goal-oriented method of enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence.

#### MI Academy Overview

During the MI Academy, participants learn and/or improve their MI skills through the use of didactic lecture, videos, role-play exercises, and scoring of recorded tapes.

Digital recorders are distributed at the Academy that are used to capture 5–10 minute practice sessions, with one attendee serving as the clinician, the other a client. Attendees receive feedback on their use of various MI skills in their recorded sessions, such as their proportion of open-ended versus closed-ended questions, their ratio of reflections as compared to questions, whether or not they gave advice or directives (which is not consistent with MI style), and other items.

Following the three-day MI Academy, attendees can participate in three months of follow-up coaching calls. During these sessions, Dr. Rhode provides feedback and support as participants practice their MI skills.

The goal of the three-day MI Academy is for participants to be able to explain how the three components of MI (evocation, collaboration, and autonomy/support) can be used to solicit client motivation; identify at least three examples of “change talk” and “sustain talk” (i.e., when clients discuss their desire, ability, reason, or need to change their behavior or sustain changes they have made); demonstrate how

the MI Treatment Integrity Scale (MITI) and MI Assessment: Supervisory Tools to Enhance Practice (MIA:STEP) can be used when evaluating a counselor's interaction with a client; describe at least two ways to respond to sustain talk; and list at least two strategies that can be used to help clients experience dissatisfaction with their risky behaviors.

#### MI Academy Results

Similar MI Academies have been held throughout Arizona since 2008. Results consistently demonstrate improvements in the evaluations of attendees' audio-recorded sessions, scores on the Video Assessment of Simulated Encounters (VASE-R), knowledge questions, and self-ratings of changes in MI skills.

Previous Academy attendees have expressed that the feedback they receive on the recorded MI sessions is particularly useful.

A second California-based MI Academy is tentatively scheduled for August 3–5 in Oakland, California. For more information, please contact Linda Williamson at linda.williamson@asu.edu or Beth Rutkowski at brutkowski@mednet.ucla.edu.

#### ISAP Associate Director among NIDA International's Awards of Excellence Winners

ISAP Associate Director Richard A. Rawson is one of three winners of the NIDA International Program's 2011 Awards of Excellence honoring outstanding achievement in mentoring, international leadership, and collaborative research.



ISAP Associate Director Richard A. Rawson

The award was announced at the NIDA International Forum held in Hollywood, Florida, June 18.

“The Awards of Excellence winners are dedicated and experienced leaders in the international effort to advance drug abuse research and training,” said Steven W. Gust, Ph.D., director of the NIDA International Program.

“This year's winners have helped to prepare international scientists to work together across political borders, to lead the way for key scientific breakthroughs, and to develop collaborative partnerships to support international research.”

By Rebecca Beattie, Evaluation Coordinator

**I**SAP's Evaluation Center is evaluating a three-year project funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that adds a residential component to drug court services for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

The Co-Occurring Disorders Court Project (CODCP) serves Los Angeles County, targeting clients who exhibit symptoms of severe, chronic substance abuse and mental health disorders.

The goals of this project are to (1) increase the number of clients served by the Co-Occurring Disorders Court, (2) deliver treatment engagement interventions and integrated residential co-occurring disorder treatment services for 40–45 CODCP clients annually, and (3) implement continuing-care case management processes focused on supporting transitions from residential to outpatient treatment.

The project utilizes several measures to assess criminal behavior and recidivism, substance use, medication adherence, mental and physical health, and treatment satisfaction. These include the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), and Short Form 12 (SF-12) Health Survey, as well as medica-

tion adherence and client feedback measures. ISAP evaluation staff also conduct staff surveys and site visits.

### Project Results

The CODCP is currently in its final months and has served more than 100 clients to date. Preliminary GPRA data indicate that the project has been successful in meeting its objectives.

The project is reaching a diverse population (24% Latino and over 53% African American). GPRA data also show that clients are using fewer drugs and experiencing fewer arrests.

Psychiatric symptom questionnaires show that distressing symptoms for this group are decreasing over time, and self-report data also reveal improvement over time in mental and physical functioning. Finally, clients perceive their care to be relevant and useful and feel that staff empower clients and are sensitive to their needs.

Given the success of the project, CODCP staff are looking for ways to sustain the residential component of the program once SAMHSA funding ends in September.

## UCLA Counseling Center's Screening and Brief Intervention for Substance Use Featured in SAMHSA Road to Recovery Webcast

**U**CLA Counseling & Psychological Services' ongoing provision of screening and brief intervention for substance use to students is featured in a SAMHSA Road to Recovery Webcast.

This service, which began in 2005 as a three-year SAMHSA-sponsored study conducted by ISAP, is discussed in the April Road to Recovery episode entitled "Prevention and Early Intervention for Substance Use and Mental Disorders: What's Working, What's Needed."

The episode features Suzi Spear, Project Director of the study and now an ISAP Fellow, Dr. Elizabeth Gong-Guy, Director of the Counseling Center, Colby Moss, Coordinator of Substance Abuse Programming for the Center, and Dr. Tanya Brown, Staff Psychologist at the Center.

The entire episode is available online at <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Resources-Catalog/2011/Webcast/04-Prevention-and-Early-Intervention.aspx>. The UCLA segment begins 42 minutes into the video.



Staff members of UCLA Counseling & Psychological Services, including Dr. Tanya Brown, Staff Psychologist (above), as well as ISAP's Suzi Spear, were interviewed March 7 for the April episode of SAMHSA's Road to Recovery Webcast concerning screening and brief intervention for substance use.

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## Long-Term Outcomes of Treatment for Methamphetamine Abuse

By Mary-Lynn Brecht, Principal Investigator  
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**M**ethamphetamine (meth) remains a major problem drug in California, accounting for 28% of substance abuse treatment admissions in 2010.

Indicators of use and abuse of meth rose steadily through the 1990s and into the early 2000s, reaching epidemic levels. Indicators showed some decrease starting around 2005, but in major meth-use areas, indicators have increased again during the past two years.

While a number of research studies have shown that substance abuse treatment can provide some positive results for meth users in the short term, limited information has been available regarding long-term treatment outcomes and the life course of meth abuse, especially as users age.

With funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, ISAP is currently re-interviewing a sample of meth users originally recruited because of their substance abuse treatment participation from 1995–1997 in Los Angeles County.

The 350 meth users in the sample were first interviewed about three years after their treatment participation and then a second time three years later. Now we are interviewing them a third time, about 13–15 years after that earlier treatment episode.

### Current Status of Individuals Who Received Treatment for Meth Use in the Mid-90s

Thus far, we have interviewed 199 of the original sample, and we report here on their current status. These 199 individuals are now 28–63 years of age (average age of 44); 47% of them are women; 44% are non-Hispanic White, 31% Hispanic, 18% African American, and 7% other ethnicities; and 42% are currently employed.

In the 30 days prior to the recent interview, 20% had used meth, 28% marijuana (not including medical marijuana), 11% any other illegal drug, 52% any alcohol, and 19% alcohol to intoxication.

Fourteen percent have maintained continuous abstinence from meth since their treatment episode in 1995–1997. The remainder have experienced periods of both abstinence and relapse. Individuals report 1–13 periods of abstinence.

Even those currently using meth have had an average of five periods of abstinence; 61% of the sample

maintained abstinence for at least 5 years at some point.

The duration of study participants' most recent period of meth abstinence varied: 20% were not currently abstinent, 14% reported a current period of abstinence of less than one year, 24% of 2–5 years, 10% of 6–10 years, and 32% with nine or more years.

### Factors Associated with Abstinence from Meth

Those with longer recent abstinence from meth (6 or more years) were more likely to be women, employed, or married than those with shorter recent abstinence. And those with nine or more years of abstinence participated in self-help activities during a greater proportion of their abstinent time (29%) than did those with shorter abstinence periods (10%–14%).

These preliminary results show that for many users, meth abuse is a chronically relapsing disease; yet long-term abstinence is possible and there is a need for continuing treatment and support services.

The study is continuing, and we hope to complete the remaining interviews within the next 18 months. We will be further examining patterns of meth use and recovery, as well as other drug use, criminal behavior, and utilization of substance abuse treatment services across the life spans of these current and former meth users. We also will be examining their health status, risk behaviors, and cognitive functioning in relation to their meth-use trajectories.



**D**r. Radhamés Jiménez Peña, Attorney General of the Dominican Republic (left), and ISAP Director Walter Ling signed a memorandum of understanding Feb. 24 on future cooperative efforts regarding substance use issues within and beyond the Dominican Republic's penal system.

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*ISAP Publications*

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Shetty, V., Murphy, D.A., Zigler, C., Yamashita, D.D., & Belin, T.R. (2011). Randomized controlled trial of personalized motivational interventions in substance using patients with facial injuries. *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*.

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*Calendar of Events**October 2011*

Oct. 26 & 27

**2011 Statewide Co-Occurring Disorders Conference:  
 "Integration of Substance Use Disorders in an Era of  
 Health Care Reform"**

Burbank Marriott Hotel, Burbank, CA

www.psattc.org

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