POSTER PRESENTATION

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ADAPTATION OF CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR STIMULANT USE DISORDER DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has rapidly spread across the world. Individuals with stimulant use disorder (SUD) are a vulnerable population, who are particularly at risk of negative outcomes in this pandemic due to several risk factors including mental and physical comorbidities, weakened immune responses, high-risk behaviours, and barriers to health care access. Engaging patients with SUD in regular treatment has become even more difficult during this worldwide pandemic, which has resulted in many cuts to addiction treatment programs. The most effective treatment options for SUD are psychosocial interventions, which rely heavily on in-person interactions, posing an added challenge during physical distancing. In particular, contingency management (CM) is a behavioural therapy that utilizes tangible reinforcements to incentivize targeted behaviour changes, and is an effective treatment intervention used for SUD. Based on our experience during the pandemic with CM groups at our concurrent disorders facilities, we present practical adaptations to CM to help treat this vulnerable population. We will highlight the treatment challenges for individuals with SUD and the importance of adapting CM programs during COVID-19 physical distancing. We present strategies for how CM can be adapted and its role expanded in a safe way during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to help prevent infection spread, stimulant use relapse, and worsened psychosocial consequences. With the expected worsening in the substance use crisis, we hope this will serve as a preliminary guide to help utilize CM for SUD during this pandemic, and future pandemics.