

# Effectiveness evaluation of drug addicted therapeutic communities

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## Introduction

The effectiveness of treatment programmes for drug addicted have been assessed by many studies, but the international research has especially focused on pharmacological treatments whilst alternative treatment programmes as the Therapeutic Community (TC) have been less investigated.

## Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in 6 TCs in the Piedmont Region (Italy) from July 2004 to October 2005. All the medical records, that could be obtained for each TC from its foundation, were studied, for a total of 2662. To evaluate the severity was used a scale, modified from the Addiction Severity Index questionnaire, which produced a score from 0 (no problems) to 4 (extreme need of treatment). Information about drug related problems and socio-demographic aspects were also collected.

We carried out: (i) a descriptive analysis of the data; (ii) a t test to evaluate the differences in the severity level at the admission and going-out from TC; (iii) Univariate and Multivariate logistic analysis to assess which variables influenced the outcome.

## Conclusions

This study highlighted the importance not only of the time spent in community but also of the therapeutic programme implemented.

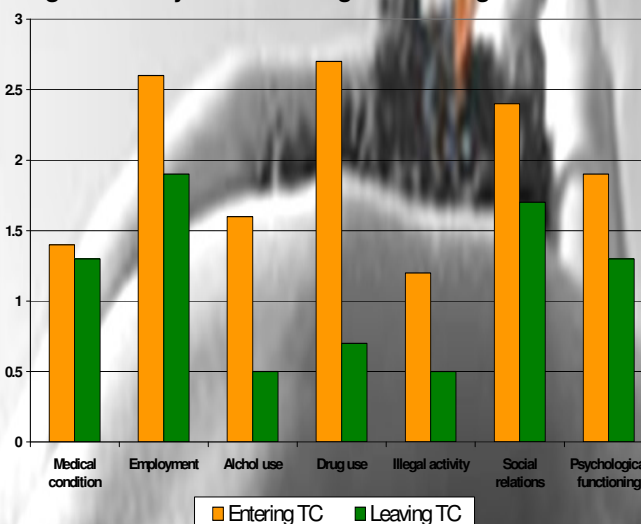
## Aim

(i) measuring the severity level in seven areas (medical condition, drug use, alcohol use, employment, illegal activity, social relations, and psychological functioning) in drug addicted when entering and leaving a TC; (ii) identifying the variables influencing the outcome (possible severity level decrease) of the TC.

## Results

The severity level differences were significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) for all the areas. The highest decrease was obtained in the drug/alcohol use areas and illegal activity and social relations ones (Fig 1). The variables which especially influence the decrease of the severity level were the time of permanence in TC ( $p < 0.001$  except for the medical condition and illegal activity areas) and to have completed the therapeutic program ( $p < 0.001$  except for the medical condition and illegal activity areas) (Tab 1).

Fig. 1 Severity level entering and leaving the TCs



Tab. 1 Variables which influence the decrease of severity

	MEDICAL CONDITION	EMPLOYMENT	ALCOHOL USE	DRUG USE	ILLEGAL ACTIVITY	SOCIAL RELATIONS	PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING
Total months in TC	-	OR=4.0 $p < 0.001$	OR=2.6 $p < 0.001$	OR=8.1 $p < 0.001$	OR=1.5 $p = 0.007$	OR=4.1 $p < 0.001$	OR=3.2 $p < 0.001$
Completed therapeutic programme	-	OR=2.8 $p < 0.001$	OR=1.8 $p < 0.001$	OR=5.4 $p < 0.001$	OR=1.3 $p = 0.042$	OR=4.9 $p < 0.001$	OR=2.8 $p < 0.001$
Completed therapeutic programme adjusted for total months in TC	-	OR=2.1 $p < 0.001$	OR=1.5 $p = 0.013$	OR=3.1 $p < 0.001$	-	OR=3.7 $p < 0.001$	OR=2.2 $p < 0.001$