Client satisfaction and perceptions of treatments in the North American Opiate Medication Initiative, a randomized trial for long-term opioid-dependency

Background:
Substitution with opioid-agonists (e.g., methadone) is an effective treatment for chronic long-term opioid dependency. Patient satisfaction with treatment has been associated with improved addiction treatment outcomes. However, there is a paucity of studies testing the perceptions and satisfaction with opioid substitution treatment (OST) among opioid-dependent patients.

Objectives:
The present analysis aimed to determine participants’ satisfaction and perceptions of OST and to test the relationship between treatment satisfaction with participant characteristics and treatment outcomes.

Methods:
The North American Opiate Medication Initiative (NAOMI) was a randomized clinical trial conducted in Vancouver and Montreal between 2005-2008 that compared the effectiveness of supervised injectable diacetylmorphine and oral methadone. Participants’ satisfaction with treatment was evaluated using the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ). In addition, perceptions of injectable and oral treatments were collected through in-depth interviews with 29 participants.

Results:
A total of 232 (92%) and 237 (94%) participants completed the CSQ at 3 and 12 months, respectively. A multivariate analysis showed that participants receiving injectable treatment were more satisfied. Satisfaction at 3 months was positively associated with treatment retention at 12 months. The qualitative analysis revealed gender-specific treatment experiences; women discussed adjusting to the clinical setting whereas men focused on the schedule, work and rules of clinic. Participants receiving oral treatments emphasized advantages of the delivery of care in the study.

Conclusions:
These findings support current evidence regarding the effectiveness of injectable diacetylmorphine treatment for long-term, opioid-dependent women and men who have not benefitted from other treatments.

What are the implications of your research on practice or policy?
The measurement of patient perceptions and satisfaction with treatment is a core component of patient-centred care. This approach provides an opportunity to understand the impact of these treatments on patients’ substance dependence, health, treatment needs and outcomes. Thus, improves the delivery of care for those affected by chronic opioid dependency.