

Mechanisms of Behavior Change in the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders: A Portfolio Analysis



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Introduction

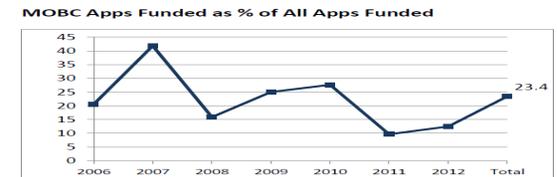
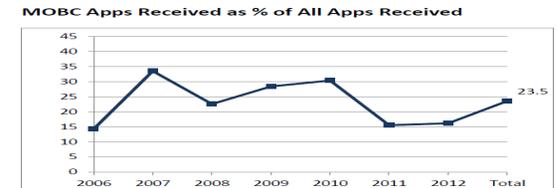
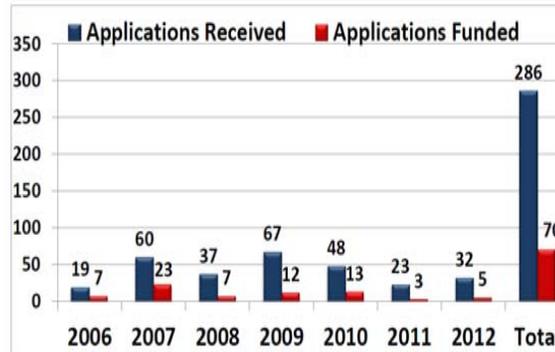
Over the past 25 years, the alcohol treatment field has made enormous progress in the development and evaluation of behavioral treatments for alcohol use disorders. Several behavioral treatment modalities, such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), brief Motivational-style interventions, and 12-step approaches, have consistently documented clinical efficacy via significant reductions in rates of heavy drinking. Irrespective of these advances, a growing amount of evidence has indicated that most of our behavioral treatments have yielded equivocal results when compared to one another. The inability to detect significant differences between different types of behavioral treatments have led to a significant shift in our efforts of solely addressing treatment efficacy outcomes to identifying the mechanisms of change (MOC) that underlie how behavioral treatments are purported to operate. Over the past 10 years, the Division of Treatment and Recovery Research (DTRR) at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) has focused on enhancing a specific research portfolio of grants focused on identifying the MOC within our empirically supported treatments. The present portfolio analysis seeks to provide a descriptive analysis of these efforts with particular emphasis on grant Fiscal Years 2006 to 2012.

Method

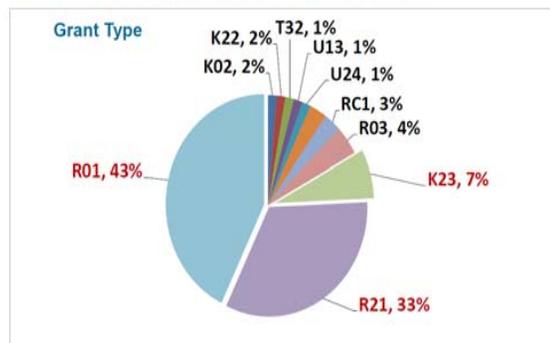
The present portfolio analysis seeks to provide a descriptive analysis of these efforts with particular emphasis on grant Fiscal Years 2006 to 2012. Our methodology focused on reviewing approximately 1400 grant applications that have been submitted as well as funded each year within our division. We implemented specific word searches (e.g., treatment mediators; MOC) in the QVR system to identify MOC-related grants. Each grant was content analyzed by a Project Officer with expertise in MOC that underlie alcohol treatment protocols.

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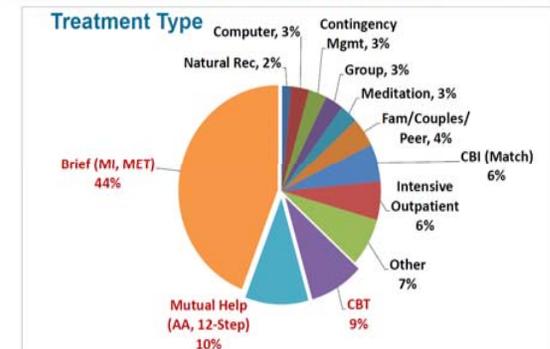
Results



DTRR Funded MOBC Portfolio FY06-12



DTRR Funded MOBC Portfolio FY06-12 (n=70)



Conclusions

Results of our portfolio analysis indicated that a total of 286 MOC-related grants were submitted to our division during FYs 2006 to 2012. Approximately 70 out of 286 MOC-related grants were funded resulting in an overall funding success rate of 24.5%. This is comparable to an overall success rate of 24.6% for other funded grants (e.g., alcohol use medication development; health services) within our division. The majority of the applications funded were R01s (43%), R21s (33%) and K23s (7%). Our content analysis also revealed that the majority of the applications focused on either Brief Motivational Interviewing (MI) interventions (44%), Mutual Help groups (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous) or Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (9%). A total of 78 unique treatment mechanisms were identified with the most commonly examined being either self-efficacy, motivation to change, change talk, coping skills or negative affect. Overall, our analysis indicates that the MOC portfolio is diverse and one of the largest within our division. Our efforts during the prior 10 years have assisted in growing this area of research, which has led to the recent publication of a PAR initiative titled "Mechanisms of Behavior Change in the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders".