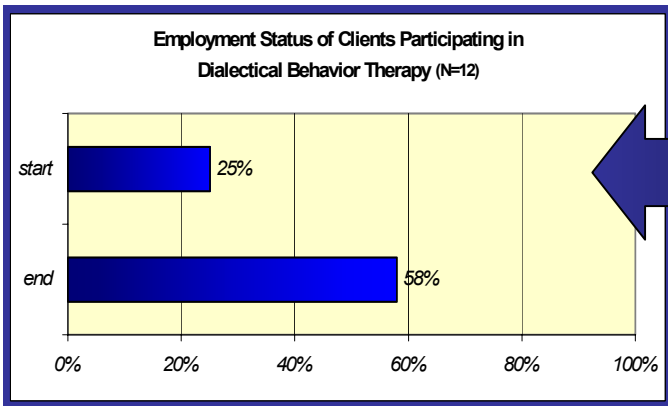
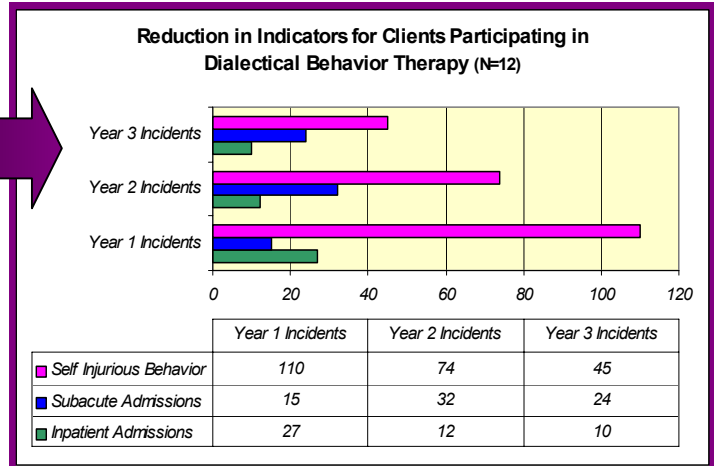


DBT...A Successful Treatment Intervention

Clinicians are challenged daily to find effective ways to help people to reach their fullest potential in their recovery from serious mental illness. DMHAS now looks to science to inform us about treatment approaches that work. One such proven treatment method, **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)**, was introduced at the DMHAS Southeastern Mental Health Authority (SMHA) in 1996. DBT treatment is specifically designed to treat individuals with a diagnosis of "borderline personality disorder," a serious condition that affects about 2% of all Americans and causes major disruption to families and work life. People with this condition suffer from mood swings, have difficulty managing their emotions and may be self-injurious or chronically suicidal. DBT involves individual psychotherapy, DBT skills training, therapist consultation team participation, and telephone consultation. Services are organized around target behaviors that include: suicidal or self-injurious behavior; treatment interfering behavior; and quality of life interfering behavior.

Data collected from a retrospective review of 12 client records suggests the effectiveness of DBT services on target behaviors. There was a notable decrease in self-injurious behavior representing a **33% decrease** during the second year of treatment and a **60% decrease** in the third. There was a **73% reduction** in inpatient admissions from the first year of treatment to the third year. SMHA sub-acute residential admissions increased as a contingency management strategy to decrease the use of more restrictive inpatient hospitalizations.



Of the 12 records reviewed, there was an increase in employment status from **25% to 58%**. Some individuals began part-time employment, others increased from part-time to full-time. Though increasing employment status was not necessarily a target of treatment, the emphasis placed on skill acquisition and targeting quality of life interfering behavior and, "getting a life worth living," impacted employment status in a positive manner. Other factors that may have contributed to the increased employment status include the emphasis placed on the recovery model, and on employment as an important part of recovery.

WHAT'S NEXT?

SMHA is currently working toward developing a formalized system of evaluating treatment outcomes to better establish the efficacy of DBT Services. Other planned developments include enhanced baseline data collection on such measures as depression, anxiety, anger management and behavioral self-control. Post treatment follow-up is also planned.

For more information, please contact Sandi Philips, Supervising Clinician, at 860-859-4614 or e-mail at Sandra.Philips@po.state.ct.us