

START NOW, a Versatile and Effective Psychotherapy: From Corrections to Forensic Psychiatry to Opioid Use Disorder and Beyond

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Introduction

- START NOW** is a free, manual-guided skills training psychotherapy that integrates cognitive behavior therapy, motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, and elements of cognitive neuro-rehabilitation.
- Entirely available in the public domain, START NOW was originally designed for low-resource settings and as a psychotherapy for incarcerated individuals who present with mood dysregulation, impulsivity, aggression, and interpersonal discord (NIJ 2002-IJ-CX-K009).
- This program utilizes the “**ABC system**” for functional analysis of behavior, teaching participants to analyze their behavior in a systematic way from the initiating **Activator** → to the **Behavior** → and the resulting **Consequences**.
- Future directions: Spanish language translation, modification to use in outpatient depression treatment, modification for adult inpatient psychiatry

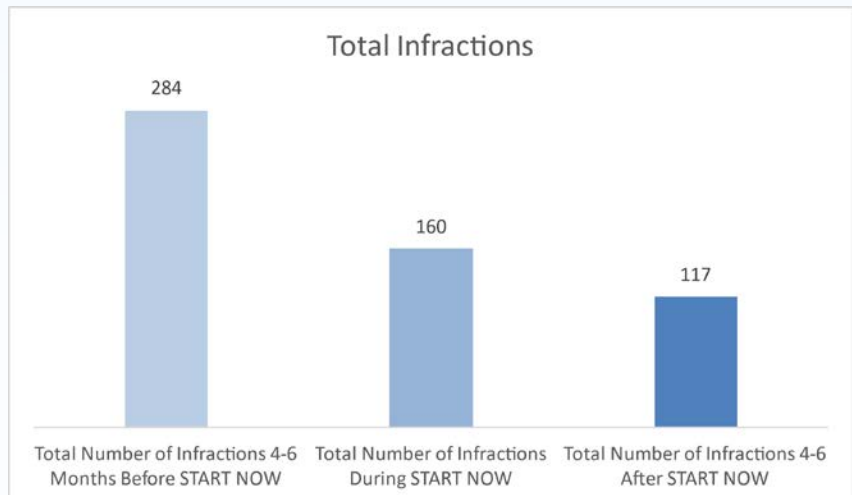
Correctional and Forensic Psychiatry

START NOW is currently implemented in correctional and forensic psychiatric institutions internationally and in more than a dozen states in the United States. See map to the right.

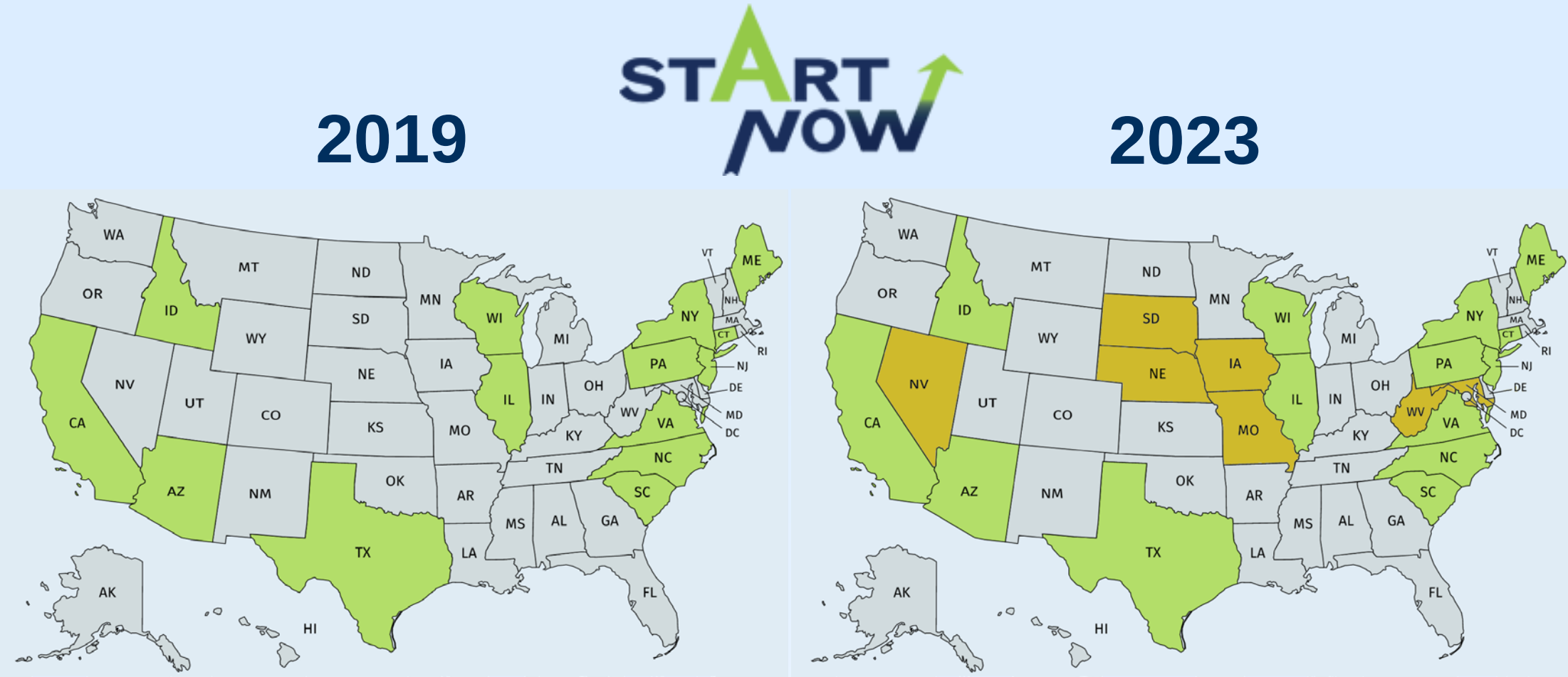
Data from the Illinois Department of Corrections

- START NOW has been implemented in the Illinois Department of Corrections
- Key findings include a high completion rate over 32 sessions (228 program completions from 271 initial patients), increased patient satisfaction with a dose-response effect, decreased total infractions during and after START NOW, and overall improvement in START NOW assessment protocol (SNAP)*.**

*SNAP is designed to function as an abbreviated simplified behavioral marker tool, condensing the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS), Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ), and Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP)



Data from Illinois Department of Corrections



International:

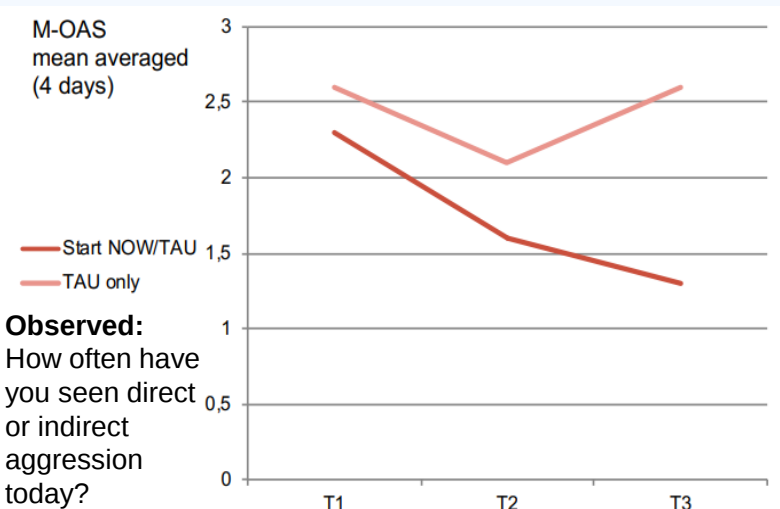
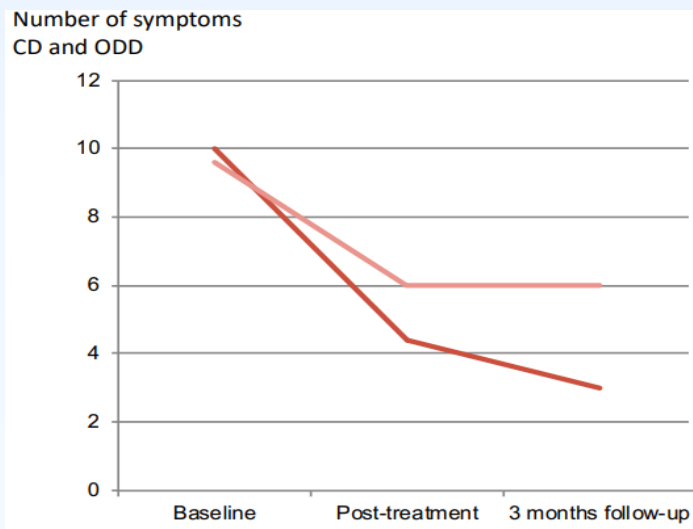
Germany; Netherlands; Switzerland; Indonesia; Canada; Martinique, France

Oppositional Defiant and Conduct Disorder

First Results of the Randomised Control Trial START NOW University of Basel

- A multicenter, cluster-randomized RCT on the effectiveness of the START NOW program on conduct disorder (CD) and oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) was conducted in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland (n=127)
- Key outcomes included reduced symptoms, enhancing emotional regulation skills in adolescents with CD/ODD, train social workers
- Control group: treatment-as-usual excluding group-based therapy, skills training, and START NOW/DBT-A or similar interventions
- Experimental group: weekly group START NOW training (12 weeks)+12 individual sessions, add-on therapy to TAU
- Key findings: Decreased CD and ODD symptoms, decreased observed**

Stadler, Christina, et al. "18th International Congress of the European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry." First Results of the Randomised Control Trial START NOW, 2019.



Observed:
How often have you seen direct or indirect aggression today?



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Opioid Use Disorder

Non-Inferiority Clinical Trial of Adapted START NOW Psychotherapy for Office-Based Opioid Treatment

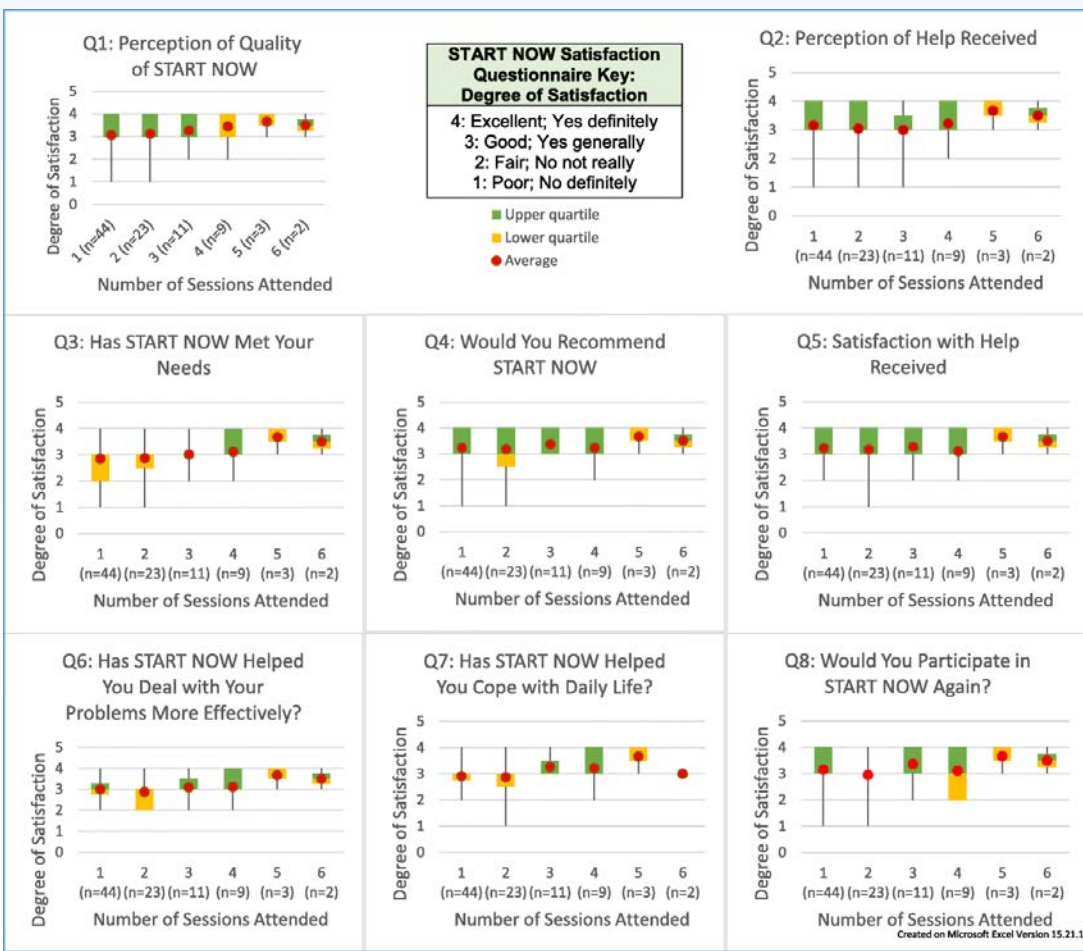
Carilion Clinic; Virginia Tech Carilion; Fralin Biomedical Research Institute

- A non-inferiority clinical trial carried out to compare manual-guided group START NOW (SN) psychotherapy to treatment as usual (TAU) group-psychotherapy based on individual professional discretion in outpatient opioid-use disorder (OUD) treatment
- 137 participants were quasi-randomized to participate in SN (n=79) or TAU (n=58)
- Results:** overall, SN participants were not more likely to have any positive drug screen result vs TAU (81% vs. 91.4%, p=0.16); SN has comparable treatment retention rates, days to last group attended, intensity of attendance, and drug screen results
- Conclusion: **adapted SN is a non-inferior psychotherapy compared to TAU for treating OUD when paired with buprenorphine/naloxone medication-assisted treatment in the outpatient group therapy setting**

Truong, Albert Yi-Que and Kablinger, Anita S. and Hartman, Cheri W. and Hartman, David W. and West, Jennifer L. and Hanlon, Alexandra and Lozano, Alicia and McNamara, Robert S. and Seidel, Richard W. and Trestman, Robert L., Non-Inferiority Clinical Trial of Adapted START NOW Psychotherapy for Office-Based Opioid Treatment

Systematic content analysis of patient evaluations of START NOW psychotherapy reveals practical strategies for improving the treatment of opioid use disorder Carilion Clinic; Virginia Tech Carilion

- 38 focus groups, 92 participation events, and 44 unique subjects participated in 1-to-6 different recorded START NOW focus group sessions
- START NOW Satisfaction Questionnaire analysis showed that **despite initial subject reticence, subject opinions of program improved with continued participation**



Truong, Albert Yi-Que, et al. "Systematic content analysis of patient evaluations of START NOW psychotherapy reveals practical strategies for improving the treatment of opioid use disorder." *BMC psychiatry* 21.1 (2021): 1-13.