

ABSTRACT

Thirty-eight patients admitted to the Detoxification Unit at the University Hospital of the West Indies were followed-up for three months after treatment. Data was collected at 6 and 12 weeks respectively using the Addiction Severity Index (ASI). There was a significant reduction in all alcohol and drug related behaviours at 6 and 12 weeks. Improvement was not statistically significant in the medical, employment, legal, family/social and psychiatric areas.

A multidimensional approach to the substance abuser using the ASI, allowed exploration of the relationships between all these problem areas affected by addiction. The post-treatment drug use of these patients was best predicted by the severity of their pre-treatment drug use and legal problems. Greater alcohol use at follow-up was predicted by greater severity of psychological and social problems.

The antisocial personality disorder group had more severe drug, legal and social problems than the rest of the sample on admission. There was significant improvement in their legal status, but no change in their alcohol use at 12 weeks.

Identifying factors that influence treatment outcome has important implications for treatment planning with a view to improving the quality of care to substance abusers and hopefully improving outcome.