

***Designing and Implementing a  
Spanish-Language Multi-Site  
MET Randomized Clinical Trial***  
(Suarez, et al., 2007)

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# Hispanics in US

- 15% of US population
- 35% of Hispanics >12 years have used drugs
- Hispanics who meet DSM criteria for psychiatric disorders are less likely than Whites and African Americans to receive treatment services
- When they receive Tx services, Hispanics are more likely to be dissatisfied

# Clinical Research

- Nearly all studies exclude Spanish-speakers
- Yet, 55% of Hispanic US adults have limited English proficiency (2000 Census)
- Only one trial with Hispanic US adults has been conducted in English (Amaro et al, 2006)– in Puerto Rico
- CTN-0021 first ever trial with Spanish-speaking substance using adults

# Why MET for Spanish-speakers?

- Hispanics have been reported to have lower motivation and higher drop out rates than White Americans (Agosti et al, 1996; Longshore et al, 1992, 1993)
- MET has the potential to address health disparities by increasing engagement and retention into substance abuse treatment
- MET's approach consistent with Hispanic value on "Respect"

# Challenges

- Sites with:
  - sufficient Spanish-speaking patient flow
  - Spanish/English-speaking RAs
  - At least 4 Spanish-speaking therapists willing to be audiotaped and randomized to MET or control
  - Have a “counseling as usual” treatment offered in Spanish that could be used as a control

# Translation

- Some measures (eg. ASI) were available in Spanish
- All consents and measures had to go through translation (Kurtines & Szapocznik, 1995)
- Capturing meaning of English versions
- Capturing national/US regional variations

# Challenges in Meaning: The Example of the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire measure

- Hispanic friends
- Hispanic celebrations
- Hispanic media

# Characterizing the Population

- Separating Race from Ethnicity
- The meaning of race? “Other”
- Acculturation
  - Generation
  - Hispanicity
  - Americanism

# Challenges of Implementation in Spanish

- RAs certified in English; might not have been possible to evaluate performance in measures administered in Spanish

# Translating the Intervention

- Translating “Rolling with the Resistance”
- Hispanic counselors were attracted to MET, although had difficulty with structured tasks (e.g. Session worksheet)

# Assessing Counselor and Assessor capabilities in Spanish

- Language Fluency
- Reading Fluency
- Comprehension
- Considerable variability found (slang, colloquial expressions, accents)

# Recruitment and Retention Issues

- Migrant workers
- Need for court referrals
- Clients flee when immigration officials arrive

# Conclusions

- Multi-site research in Spanish can be conducted in the US
- Spanish language clinics can ably participate in research
- Bidirectional communication with community clinics critical to successful implementation of trial

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