

Outcome Referrals, Inc. Proves the Effect of Matching Therapists to Patients vs Assignment Will Change Mental Health

With a brief 5 minute assessment, Outcome Referrals, Inc. proves matching patients with providers expedites recovery thus changing Mental Healthcare .

FRAMINGHAM, MA, USA, June 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Major Scientific Breakthrough Changes Behavioral Healthcare

A major scientific breakthrough that enhances behavioral healthcare was [published today in JAMA Psychiatry](#). The authors are a team of scientists and industry leaders, led by University of Massachusetts Amherst professor Michael Constantino, Ph.D.

Funded through a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Award (IHS-1503-28573), the research tested a system for matching patients to therapists who have a successful track record in treating those patients' specific concern(s). This system was compared with typical case-assignment methods that leave such matching to chance. Both patients and therapists were unaware of their match status and

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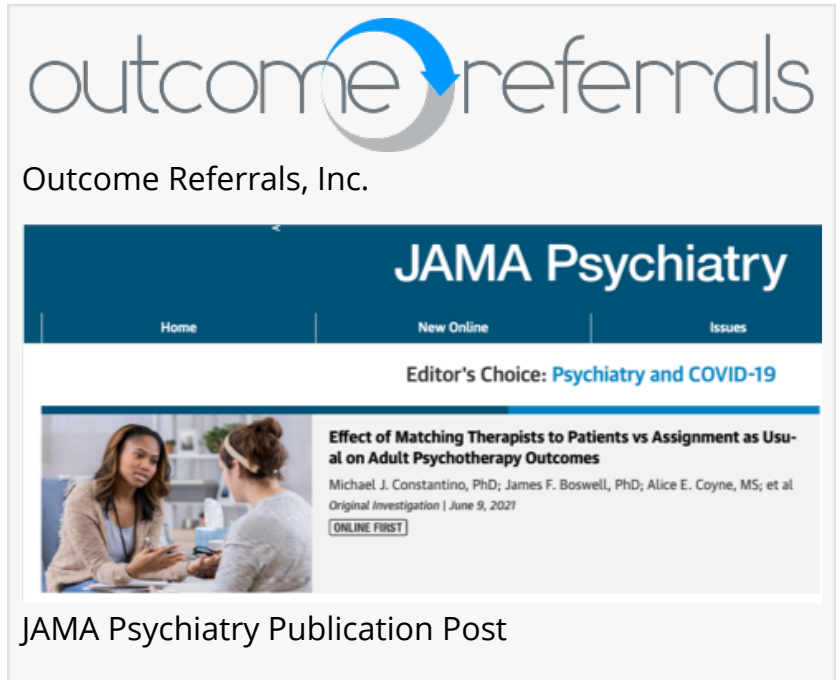
An intervention as powerful as therapy itself.”

Dr. David Kraus

treatment was delivered as usual.

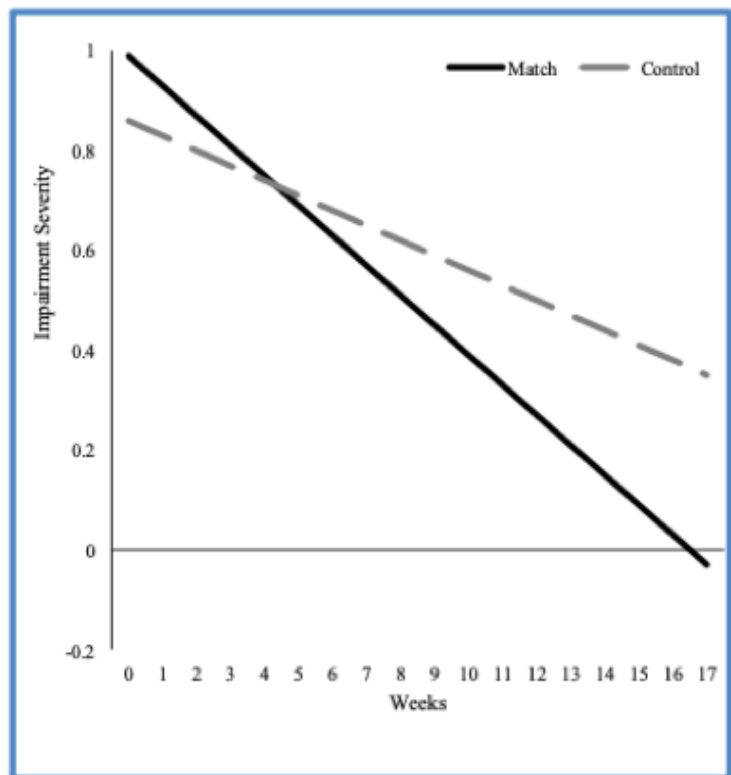
“We are delighted to report that matching to therapists' performance strengths significantly improved patient outcomes over 16 weeks of behavioral health interventions,” says Constantino.

Unlike interventions that dictate how therapists should practice, “The appeal of this intervention



is that the therapists practiced without researcher or health plan oversight. The superior effect resulted not from influencing what clinicians did with their patients, but rather who they treated in a way that played to their existing strengths." This minimalist method of personalized care is much easier to replicate and make available to the public than ones that require therapists to extensively retrain or discard their preferred approach.

With roughly 80-100 million people in the US with a diagnosable mental health condition, the rising incidences of behavioral health issues due to COVID-19, and the common struggle for people to find any therapist, let alone a personally well-suited one, matching meets an important need.



Matched vs Unmatched Comparison

In July, the team's industry partner, [Outcome Referrals, Inc.](#), led by [Dr. David Kraus](#), will launch MatchedTherapists.com where this process will be available to consumers struggling to find a good therapist and has a free public-service offering. Therapists are already registering for the service and uncovering their often-hidden areas of expertise.

The research-proven and patent-protected match process is simple:

- Consumers anonymously complete a 5-7-minute assessment that informs the system of their specific areas of concern, like depression and work functioning; then,
- In the background with high-speed computing, we search for a telehealth or in-person therapist that ideally has exceptional outcomes, compared to their peers, in treating those exact issues; and then,
- Present to the consumer a "short-list" of best-matched therapists who currently have open appointments.

"If we are able to match at the highest level, outcomes are especially positive," says Kraus. That said, even matching at lower levels produces better outcomes than when patients see therapists who are historically ineffective in treating their specific concerns—a common risk with usual case assignment that are based on pragmatics or providers' self-reported specialties.

As co-investigator, James Boswell, Ph.D., at the University at Albany, SUNY says, "Providers often have little insight into their own areas of relative effectiveness and ineffectiveness, and for too

long, mental healthcare has relied on nonsystematic ways of pairing patient with therapist. Addressing this issue, measurement-based matching to the therapist's known strengths is a major advancement in the field.

PCORI is an independent, nonprofit organization authorized by Congress in 2010. Its mission is to fund research that will provide patients, their caregivers, and clinicians with the evidence-based information needed to make better-informed healthcare decisions. For more information about PCORI's funding, visit www.pcori.org. The statements here are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of PCORI, its Board of Governors or Methodology Committee.

Headquartered in Framingham MA, Outcome Referrals, Inc. is dedicated to using clinical assessments and artificial intelligence to make behavioral healthcare work for everyone.

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