
Topic

A Mixed-Method Evaluation of the Georgianwood Virtual Concurrent Disorders Treatment Program

Key question

What patterns in mental health, substance use, and daily functioning are observed among participants in the Georgianwood virtual concurrent disorders program, and what insights do they have regarding their program experiences?

Project aims

Concurrent disorders (the co-occurrence of mental health and substance use conditions) are common but often undertreated, and there is limited evidence on how integrated care functions in a fully virtual setting. The Georgianwood Virtual Concurrent Disorders Program was designed to provide integrated care entirely online, including one-on-one sessions with trained professionals and group activities, during a period when in-person services were limited. This study aimed to explore patterns in mental health, substance use, and daily functioning among program participants, and to examine participant experiences of the program, including perceived benefits and challenges. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combined quantitative analyses of available clinical and functional data with qualitative insights from interviews, providing an exploratory assessment intended to inform future program development and improve patient-centered virtual care strategies.

Key findings

- The program served a clinically complex, predominantly middle-aged group (mostly women and unemployed individuals) with high rates of psychiatric comorbidity, including PTSD and personality disorders.
- Participants with alcohol, cannabis, or cocaine use disorders generally presented with moderate to severe severity levels.
- Participants showed steady improvements in anxiety, depression, and daily functioning, with many reducing or stopping cannabis and cocaine use; however, day-to-day challenges and alcohol or nicotine use persisted.
- Participants valued the convenience of virtual care and supportive staff relationships, but highlighted challenges with technology, trauma-informed support, and personalized care options.

Helpful terms

- **Concurrent Disorders:** also called co-occurring disorders or dual diagnosis, are conditions where a person experiences both a mental health disorder (such as depression or anxiety) and a substance use disorder (such as alcohol or drug addiction) at the same time.
- **Integrated Care:** a treatment approach where both mental health and substance use conditions are treated together by the same healthcare team.
- **Virtual Care:** healthcare services delivered online instead of in person. In this program, services included one-on-one sessions with trained professionals as well as group activities.

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