



Department of Psychology Colloquium

Contingent payments as a treatment for severe behavioral health problems

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There is broad consensus that health-related behaviors are critical targets for modern medicine. This provides a fantastic opportunity for behavior analysts to improve the human condition. The general approach is to deliver desirable consequences contingent upon healthy behavior change. This approach is branded “contingency management.” Over the last seven years I have applied contingency management to address problems of drug abuse and medication adherence. These problems jeopardize individual well being and are a source of substantial costs for our society. This presentation will begin with a brief description of the training history that led me to my current line of research. We will then turn to a review of the basic procedures and evidence base for contingency management in the treatment of drug abuse. The core of the presentation features descriptions of controlled trials of employment-based contingency management. This work has been the focus of my clinical research, and includes drug use and medication adherence targets. I will conclude by describing my next steps. I recently began work on a smartphone-based medication adherence intervention for HIV+ drug users. I also hope to develop a nationwide system for delivering contingency management treatment to drug abusers.