

# MI: Outcomes Brief

## WHAT IS MI?

Motivational interviewing (MI) is “a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.”<sup>1</sup> Many service practitioners receive training in MI, and it is commonly used by permanent supportive housing (PSH) providers, especially those using a housing-first approach.<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES OF MI?

- A 2010 meta-analysis of 119 studies found that 75 percent of participants showed some improvement as a result of MI, with 50 percent gaining a small but meaningful effect and 25 percent gaining a moderate or strong level. When compared to other active treatments such as 12-step and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), the MI interventions took over 100 fewer minutes of treatment on average yet produced equal effects.<sup>3</sup>
- A 2005 review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials using MI as an intervention demonstrated improvements in physical health, mental health, and substance use; 80 percent of the well-designed MI trials found significant positive effects of MI for behavior change, indicating that MI is more effective than traditional approaches.<sup>4</sup>
- A third meta-analysis of MI found that the effect size of MI was doubled when the recipients were predominantly from minority populations, compared with White non-Hispanic Americans.<sup>5</sup>
- In a study of homeless, unemployed, and substance-dependent veterans wait-listed for entry into a residential treatment program, significantly more participants entered the program from the group that received an MI intervention (95 percent) than in the group who received a standard intake interview (71 percent).<sup>6</sup>
- Among 285 homeless adolescents recruited from drop-in centers, one brief motivational intervention was associated with reduced reported illicit drug use at one-month follow-up compared with youths in the control groups.<sup>7</sup>
- In the Center for Social Innovation’s Phase I MI Simulator Study, participants identified as direct service providers, advocates, and administrators (14 percent) working in mental health (54 percent), addictions (27 percent), and housing or shelter (29 percent) settings. Participants in all study conditions

increased their use of MI. Prior to the study, 65 percent had used MI with their clients. Following the study, all but one (95 percent) were actively using MI with clients.

## LEARN MORE

- ***What Is Motivational Interviewing?*** t3 podcast (16 October 2015): <http://thinkt3.libsyn.com/what-is-motivational-interviewing>
- William Miller and MI and Quantum Change – Lecture Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yvuem-QYCo>
- Additional research studies conducted using MI with people experiencing homelessness: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=%22motivational-interviewing%22+homelessness>

1 Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.) (p. 12). Guilford Press: New York.

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3 Lundahl, B. W., Kunz, C., Brownell, C., Tollefson, D., & Burke, B. L. (2010). A meta-analysis of motivational interviewing: Twenty-five years of empirical studies. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 20(2), 137-160.

4 Rubak, S., Sandbæk, A., Lauritzen, T., & Christensen, B. (2005). Motivational interviewing: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *British Journal of General Practice*, 55(513), 305-312.

5 Hettrema, J., Steele, J., & Miller, W. R. (2005). Motivational interviewing. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1, 91-111.

6 Wain, R. M., Wilbourne, P. L., Harris, K. W., Pierson, H., Teleki, J., Burling, T. A., & Lovett, S. (2011). Motivational interview improves treatment entry in homeless veterans. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 115(1), 113-119.

7 Peterson, P. L., Baer, J. S., Wells, E. A., Ginzler, J. A., & Garrett, S. B. (2006). Short-term effects of a brief motivational intervention to reduce alcohol and drug risk among homeless adolescents. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 20(3), 254.