



## **Total Quality Management and performance in substance abuse treatment centers**

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**Objective.** To examine the relationship of organizational characteristics of substance abuse treatment centers with their use of quality management practices (total quality management [TQM]) and the contribution of TQM use to a center's provision of comprehensive care and to use of evidence-based treatment practices.

**Data Sources.** Data were collected from a national sample of over 700 private and public substance abuse treatment centers in the National Treatment Center Study.

**Study Design.** The design was a cross-sectional field study. The key variables were three TQM practices, the provision of comprehensive treatment services, and the implementation of evidence-based treatment practices. Numerous organizational characteristics were controlled.

**Data Collection.** The data were obtained through interviews with administrative directors and clinical directors of the treatment centers in 2002–2004.

**Principal Findings.** In multivariate models, TQM practices were positively related to provision of comprehensive care and use of evidence-based practices. A limited set of organizational characteristics predicted the use of TQM practices.

**Conclusions.** Substance abuse treatment centers' implementation of TQM processes may be positively related to the quality and cost-effectiveness of care provided.

**Key Words.** Quality management, substance abuse treatment, behavioral health services