# Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) + Vouchers

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

This program is for adults who have been diagnosed with cocaine dependence.

**SUMMARY**

Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) + Vouchers program is a community-based, outpatient therapy program that is designed to initiate and sustain cocaine abstinence in participants by increasing the rewarding aspects of drug-free living.

**EVIDENCE**

Results from several randomized trials on the use of CRA + Vouchers in cocaine- and opioid-dependent individuals appear to be positive with higher rates of abstinence in treatment versus control groups; however, results are typically limited to the treatment period. Two studies demonstrated significant positive results up to 1 year post-treatment. In one study, patients assigned to a group that received vouchers based on abstinence increased cocaine abstinence during treatment and 1 year of follow-up compared to those who received vouchers independent of their cocaine abstinence. In a second study, a greater percentage of patients assigned to CRA + Vouchers were abstinent at 12 months compared with those in standard care.

**COMPONENTS**

The CRA + Vouchers program combines individual counseling through the CRA with an incentive program (i.e., vouchers) in which patients can earn points based on abstinence. In CRA therapy, patients work on making lifestyle changes in four main areas:

- Family relationships;
- Recreational activities;
- Social networks; and
- Vocation.

Assessments are taken in each of these areas at intake, and the therapist and patient create individual treatment goals for each area. Specific types of counseling (e.g., relationship counseling, employment counseling, social/recreational counseling) and skills training (e.g., drug refusal training, social skills training, relaxation training) are provided for patients as needed, and the number of sessions used to address each problem is flexible.

Urinalysis testing is used to measure abstinence, which is the criteria for receiving points. Points accumulate, and patients can spend them on retail items in the community (e.g., ski-lift passes, fishing license, camera equipment). Staff members purchase these items with the therapists’ approval.

**PREVIOUS USE**

The CRA + Vouchers manual was published in 1998, and the program has been implemented in a variety of populations and settings.
Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) + Vouchers

TRAINING
This program is delivered by two therapists who must have a master's degree and be supervised by a licensed Ph.D.-level psychologist. No training is required to implement this program.

CONSIDERATIONS
Considerations for implementing this program include obtaining therapists, recruiting patients, securing patient commitment, making time for sessions, and providing transportation for participants if needed.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

IMPLEMENTATION
If you are interested in implementing CRA + Vouchers, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

TIME
This program lasts 24 weeks. Two-weekly 60-minute counseling sessions are held during weeks 1 to 12; 1-weekly 60-minute session is held during weeks 13 to 24. Urinary analysis is held three times per week during weeks 1 to 12 and two times per week during weeks 13 to 24. After 24 weeks of treatment, there is a recommended 24-week period of aftercare that involves at least one check-in session per month, one therapy session, and one urine test.

COST
Information on implementation costs was not located. Please contact the developer for more information using details in the Contact section.

EVALUATION PLAN
To move CRA + Vouchers to the Effective category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence at least one external evaluation must be conducted that demonstrates positive, sustained outcomes in a diverse population. This study must be conducted independently of the program developer.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT
Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program. Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Stephen T. Higgins by mail University of Vermont, 38 Fletcher Place, Burlington, Vermont 05401, phone 1-802-656-9615, fax 1-802-847-4891, or email shiggins@uvm.edu or contact the National Institute on Drug Abuse by phone 1-301-443-1124 or visit https://www.drugabuse.gov/about-nida/contact-us

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