



Office of
RESEARCH &
STRATEGIC PLANNING

ENHANCING RESULTS IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS THROUGH RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

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Developed for Community Corrections Subcommittee



Office of Research and Strategic Planning (ORSP)

- Comprised of two units:
 - Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Centers
 - Justice Center for Evidence Based Practice

- Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center (CJSAC)
 - Collect, analyze, and disseminate justice data in WV
 - Contribute to effective state policy through statistical services, research, evaluation, and policy analysis
 - Generates statistical and analytical products to serve as a basis for sound policy and practical decisions for the justice system in West Virginia through the use of research and evaluation

Office of Research and Strategic Planning (ORSP)

- Justice Center for Evidence Based Practice (JCEBP)
 - Promote the use of EBP in the administration of justice in the state
 - Synthesize current research on EBP, translate to policymakers and system administrators
 - Aide in the development of a comprehensive, statewide strategic plan aligned with EBP
 - Services related to LS/CMI
 - Ensure LS/CMI is implemented properly across the justice system
 - Establish minimum standards for training and certification
 - Develop quality assurance policies/procedures in conjunction with programs/agencies
 - Manage online LS/CMI – data and access

Recent ORSP Work Related to Community Corrections

- Established Community Corrections Information System (CCIS)
 - Managing CCIS and ongoing revisions (new additions, reports, tabs)
 - Creation of new reports useful to DRC staff
 - Began and continue data cleaning (now dataset for 2008-2010)
 - Establishing protocol for ongoing data management
 - Periodically train DRC staff on use of CCIS, including policies

- Established LS/CMI online system
 - Created certification and QA standards
 - Conduct User and Trainer workshops and adhere to certification procedures (DOC and DRC trainers in place, Users in multiple agencies)
 - Developing electronic mechanism for all QA reporting

Status of Research and Evaluation in WV

□ Research and Evaluation

- To date, little or no research or evaluation in WV on community corrections

- NO state funding has been provided specifically to support research or evaluation on community corrections in WV

- Funding and staffing have been limited to:
 - Grant administration
 - Program monitoring for purposes of grant compliance
 - Establishment of community corrections information system (CCIS)
 - Training day report center staff on risk and needs assessment (without knowing whether it is being done properly)

Status of Research and Evaluation in WV

□ **Quality assurance**

- Has been nearly absent, relying solely on grant monitoring activities and periodic data reviews from CCIS
- Even when done, based largely on gross “counts” of clients and services received...no systematic assessment
- As a result, little or no attention has been paid to actual “capacity” and “content” of programs

□ In short, since their inception community corrections program have operated without systematic study of:

- the quality of staff, programs and the services they provide, or
- the impact of services on client behavior during and after release

Research Questions, No Answers

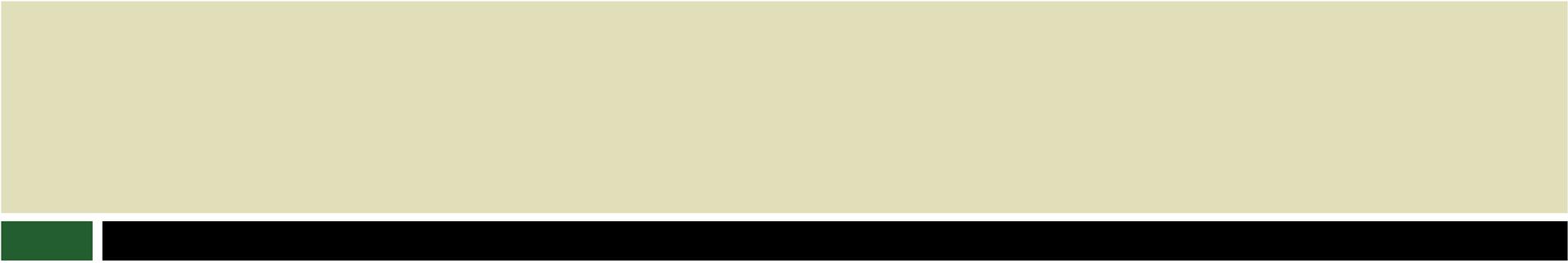
- Given limited focus on research and evaluation...the questions left unanswered are almost limitless...

- Selected examples:
 - ▣ Are DRC programs functioning in a manner that would even suggest they “work”? Phrased another way...how closely are DRC programs aligned with known evidence based practices?
 - ▣ Are DRC programs serving an appropriate population?
 - ▣ What is the capacity for community corrections to reduce prison crowding via diversion and aftercare?
 - ▣ Are DRC programs assessing clients in a valid manner?

Research Questions, No Answers (Cont.)

- Selected examples (cont.):
 - Is programming and supervision strategies appropriately match to the risk level and needs of clients?
 - What is the capacity of programs and staff to provide quality rehabilitation services? (e.g., experience, training, resources, etc.) And how does capacity vary across programs?
 - Are community corrections programs effective at reducing recidivism, and under what conditions and for whom?

- Lastly, it is not even clear if they are cost effective as they currently operate...
 - “Cost effectiveness” (in terms of dollars and sense) depends upon whether DRCs are supervising appropriate populations (i.e., people who would have otherwise gone to prison and/or serving as an early release mechanism for incarcerated offenders)
 - Could be simply “widening the net” and/or shifting costs from counties to the state



With all of this said, however, we know based on DECADES of research that there are MANY benefits (some more and some less tangible) to the use of alternative sanctions in the community...too long to mention in this presentation!

Nonetheless, we do not know the answers to these questions-
- as they relate to day report centers operating in the state of West Virginia.

Expectations for DRC Performance

- Goal: Enhance public safety (that is, lessen the chance of client recidivism) by offering programming services and supervision in the community.

- Scientific literature tells us how to do this best...that is what successful programs look like, how they operate, and what their staff look like.

- Selected examples include:
 - ▣ Conduct valid assessments of risk and need
 - ▣ Provide “hybrid” of supervision and services (include strong theoretical basis, empirically supported programmatic activities, and approp. dosage)

Expectations for DRC Performance (Cont.)

- Adhere to RNR principles
 - ▣ Target criminogenic needs (needs principle, treatment matching)
 - ▣ Provide intensive programming and supervision to high risk offenders (risk principle)
 - ▣ Use cognitive-behavioral approach (at least 70% of programming hours per client)
 - ▣ Match service delivery with offender personality and learning style (responsivity principle)

- Utilize motivational interviewing and active listening skills in client management and to enhance intrinsic motivation of clients

- Adhere to core correctional practices (appropriate use of authority, reinforcements, effective approval/disapproval techniques, and relationship skills), including use of positive reinforcement

Expectations for DRC Performance (Cont.)

- Build offender skills (social, coping, life, problem solving, etc.) through directed practice and cognitive-behavioral strategies
- Include a relapse prevention component, while offering services in clients natural environment
- Pay attention to staff competencies, training, have clinical supervision of staff, and involve evaluators
- Measure staff performance AND provide feedback in all these practices!

Program Implementation and Integrity

- **Fidelity Principle:** Relates to “how well” a program is implemented.
 - Is a matter of **program integrity**- that is, whether programs or models are utilize in the design of the program
 - High integrity, presumes program is built on an empirically supported theoretical model, including the Principles of Effective Correctional Intervention
- **Program Quality:** degree to which a program delivers interventions and services in a systematic & consistent manner
 - The degree and quality of implementation are not well documented, but is known that poor implementation does impact program effectiveness.

Program Implementation and Integrity

- **Examples of poor implementation:**
 - Providers substituting their own preferred techniques and strategies
 - Too little time spent by clients in treatment, cognitive programming
 - Delivered by poorly trained or unmotivated providers.

- **Dosage:** the amount of treatment offered and received (BIG issue rarely even addressed!)
 - Impact of effective treatment diminished because too little is offered (e.g., five sessions are provided when ten are required to have good effects).
 - Lack of participation by the offenders (present but not engaged, have poor attendance, or drop out before completing treatment).

Impact of Program Integrity on Recidivism: Meta-Analytic Results

Percent Reduction in Recidivism

Measure	Present	Absent
Specific model	22%	5%
Trained workers	23%	7%
Supervised workers	33%	7%
Printed manuals	28%	12%
Monitor change	20%	10%
Adequate dosage	22%	9%
Involved researchers	45%	8%

Source: Andrews, D.A. and C. Dowden. 1999. "A Meta-Analytic Investigation into Effective Correctional Intervention for Female Offenders." *Forum on Corrections Research* 11(3):18-21.

Research Priorities: ORSP Projects in Planning and/or Development

- **Statewide Analysis of Community Corrections Offenders**
 - Based on 2008-2010 (maybe 2011) data
 - Produce basic descriptives:
 - clients entering and exiting DRCs
 - interventions/services received
 - trend information

- **Web-based interactive data for community corrections**
(Project IDA: <https://apps.wv.gov/dcjs/sac/>)
 - Provide instantly accessible data online
 - Public, grantors, and others can calculate statistics on DRC populations entering and leaving by: year, program, offense, risk level, services received, and various demographics (e.g., age, race, gender, etc.)

Research Priorities: ORSP Projects in Planning and/or Development

- **Efficacy of Community Corrections Programs to Deliver Services**
 - Development of a tool to assess the quality of community corrections programs across the state
 - Working title: “Global Program Assessment Inventory”
 - Expansion of current instruments: combines traditional “**capacity**” and “**content**” measures with MI performance and staff use of CCP
 - Based on researcher/monitor observations, QA data analysis, and “consumer” input
 - Validate relationship between “program quality” and recidivism reduction (multiple measures)

Program Fidelity: Capacity and Content

CAPACITY: Organization of program

- Leadership & Development
 - ▣ Involvement and qualifications of program director
 - ▣ Implementation and design of the program
 - ▣ Support for the program

- Staff
 - ▣ Type and education of the staff
 - ▣ Experience & involvement of staff
 - ▣ Assessment & training of staff

- Quality Assurance
 - ▣ Program monitoring activities (measuring relevant practices)
 - ▣ Reassessment of offenders
 - ▣ Evaluation

Program Fidelity: Capacity and Content

CONTENT: What programs do

- Offender Assessment
 - ▣ Selection of offenders
 - ▣ Assessment of offenders
 - ▣ Manner in which offenders are assessed

- Treatment
 - ▣ Targeting of criminogenic behaviors
 - ▣ Type of interventions used
 - ▣ How treatment is delivered
 - ▣ Provision of aftercare

Research Priorities: ORSP Projects in Planning and/or Development

- **Post-Release Offender Recidivism in Community Corrections Programs**
 - Establish a mechanism for tracking offenders (piloted combination of CHR, jail bookings, DOC admissions)
 - Requesting DRCs to input SID, creation of CH tab in CCIS (redesign), and soliciting DRC to run background checks on released clients as part of study)
 - Examine post-release outcomes based on services received, “quality of programs,” program integrity measures, etc. – “who recidivates, under what conditions”

- Many other projects on a wish list...immediate need to assess relative recidivism of “like” offenders in prison vs. community; ascertain proportion of incarcerated inmates who are similar to clients currently being served in the community and ascertain recidivism

Final Thoughts...

- No shortage of questions to be answered, VERY fundamental questions remain
- Little or no research to date that informs current practice in community corrections in the state, or speaks to the quality of extant programs
- No state funds are currently allocated for the completion of the aforementioned research projects (or any others)...and there is a need for additional projects to be funded.

Final Thoughts...

- ORSP staff time is currently dedicated to “administrative” activities only...maintenance of LS/CMI and CCIS databases as well as training and policy development on both
- However, community corrections is receiving indirect benefits via the funding of the JCEBP and its quality assurance activities
- Despite limited funding, the ORSP “capacity” to do the necessary research has grown exponentially in recent years via development of CCIS, LS/CMI online, and the hiring of skilled and dedicated research staff!

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