Drug Courts: Blending Treatment and Accountability

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Change is Tough
Research Findings

• **The length of time a patient spent in treatment was a reliable predictor of his or her post treatment performance.**
  Beyond a ninety-day threshold, treatment outcomes improved in a direct relationship to the length of time spent in treatment, with one year generally found to be the minimum effective duration of treatment.

• **Coerced patients tended to stay longer.**
  This was in light of the finding that most of the legally coerced addicts had more crime and gang involvement, more drug use, and worse employment records than their non-coerced counterparts.
The JUDGE is the Greatest CHANGE AGENT!

To expedite the time interval to get offenders into accountability and treatment before losing them to their addictions

To keep the addict engaged in treatment long enough to receive treatment benefits.
Drug Courts:
An International Phenomenon
2,147 Drug Courts

1,174 Adult Drug Courts
455 Juvenile Drug Courts
301 Family Treatment Courts
110 DWI Courts
72 Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts
24 Reentry Drug Courts
6 Campus Drug Court
5 Federal Drug Court
International Drug Courts

- Australia: 5 Drug Courts
- Bermuda: 1 Drug Courts, 1 Mental Health Court
- Brazil: 3 Drug Courts
- Canada: 9 Drug Courts
- Chile: 3 Drug Courts
- England: 1 Community Court
- Ireland: 1 Drug Court
- Jamaica: 2 Drug Courts
- Norway: 2 Drug Courts
- Scotland: 2 Drug Courts

Countries Considering/Planning Drug Court Establishment

- Barbados
- Grand Cayman Islands
- St. Lucia
- Israel
- Lithuania
- Italy
Benefits of Drug Court

“drug courts provide the most comprehensive and effective control of drug-using offenders’ criminality and drug usage while under the court’s supervision.”

-Effective Treatment-
-Drug Testing-
-Community Supervision and Structure-

Belenko (1998; 2001)
Benefits of Drug Courts

Drug Courts Increase Retention in Treatment

70% Completion Rate
Benefits of Drug Court:

Drug Courts Reduce Criminal Involvement
National Research

2020 Graduates from 95 Drug Courts
Representing 17,000 Graduates

1 Year Post Graduation: 16.4%
2 Years Post Graduation: 27.5%

Roman, Townsend & Bhati, 2003
Local Research

“For every dollar spent on drug court in Dallas, Texas, $9.43 in tax dollars was realized over a forty-month period.”

Fomby & Rangaprasad, 2002
Cost Benefits of Drug Court

Avoided Criminal Justice Costs
Avoided Victim Costs
Employability
Drug Free-Babies
What Do You Need to Start?

Judicial Leadership
Existing Resource Reallocation
Buy-in from Prosecutor, Defense Bar, Law Enforcement and Treatment Community.
Compassion for the Addicted
Aiming to Solve the Problems of the People Who Come Before the Courts

DRUG COURT is Work Worth Doing!
What is a Drug Court?

A non-adversarial court hearing where drug treatment is integrated with justice system case processing.

Coordinated team of justice professionals work together to:
- identify participants early and promptly place them in Drug Court (legal screening)
What is a Drug Court?

- **provide** a wide range of treatment and other ancillary services (clinical assessment and treatment plan)
- **monitor** abstinence through weekly drug testing.
- **respond** weekly to participant behavior with rewards and/or sanctions.
- **forge** public, private and community partnerships.