Statewide Drug Court Evaluation: Benefits, Challenges, and the Future

MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH
STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR’S OFFICE
MAY 28, 2015
Background and History

First Drug Court
1989 - Miami-Dade County Drug Court created.

10 Key Components
1997 - NADCP publishes the 10 Key Components – the foundation for modern drug courts.

Chemical Dependency Task Force Report
2006 – Supreme Court Chemical Dependency Task Force Report recommends expanded use of Drug Courts

Hennepin County Drug Court
1996 - Hennepin County starts first drug court in MN (revises program in 2007).

Over 1,000 Drug Courts
2002 – Over 1,000 drug courts operational across the nation
2002 – 2 operational courts in Minnesota

Drug Court Standards
2007 – First State appropriation for drug courts
2007 – Statewide Drug Court Standards are adopted as MJB Policy

Statewide Evaluation
2012 – Completion of the initial statewide evaluation of drug courts

Follow-Up Statewide Evaluation
2014 – Completion of statewide drug court follow-up evaluation
Benefits of Statewide Evaluation

- Collective picture of the successes and benefits of drug court
- Provides information on statewide practices and fidelity to drug court standards
- Evaluates smaller courts which may not have resources for evaluation
- Adds to the body of research validating drug courts and the value of following evidence-based practices
- Informs funding decisions
Evaluation of Statewide Drug Court Goals

- **Goal 1: Enhance public safety**
  - Recidivism

- **Goal 2: Ensure participant accountability**
  - Community functioning
  - Treatment engagement during drug court

- **Goal 3: Reduce costs to society**
  - Incarceration days and costs
Evaluation Methodology

- **Statewide comparison group**
  - Propensity score matching

- **At-risk recidivism analysis**
  - Conviction
  - Charge

- **Descriptive statistics**
  - Community measures
  - Incarceration rates
  - Incarceration cost

- **Linear and logistic regression**

- **Supplemental analyses**
  - Frequency
  - Annualized recidivism
## Data Collection Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Nature of Data</th>
<th>Organization Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAANES</td>
<td>Treatment admission/discharge information</td>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC Treatment</td>
<td>Treatment information for participants in prison</td>
<td>Department of Corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC Prison</td>
<td>Prison admissions and discharges</td>
<td>Department of Corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC LSI-R™</td>
<td>Risk assessment results for Comparison Group</td>
<td>Department of Corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation/DOC Files</td>
<td>Chemical health assessments, PSI's, criminal history, personal demographics, etc.</td>
<td>Department of Corrections/County Probation Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNCIS/MNJAD</td>
<td>New charges and convictions (recidivism); primary offense characteristics</td>
<td>Judicial Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSGC Worksheet Extract</td>
<td>Criminal history worksheets and results</td>
<td>Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Drug Court Tracking Sheet</td>
<td>Drug court participant data</td>
<td>Judicial Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Supervision System</td>
<td>Jail admissions and discharges</td>
<td>Department of Corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANT</td>
<td>Risk/Need assessment results</td>
<td>Judicial Branch - Hennepin County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Court Policies</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Procedure Manuals</td>
<td>Judicial Branch - Drug Courts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies &amp; Practices Survey</td>
<td>Survey of drug court practices</td>
<td>Judicial Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug Court Team Member Survey</td>
<td>Survey of drug court team members</td>
<td>Judicial Branch</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Two and a half years after the start date, the drug court cohort’s conviction recidivism was statistically significantly lower than the comparison group.
- Drug court cohort – 17%
- Comparison group – 32%
Evaluation Results: Ensure Participant Accountability

- Non-metro participants were more likely to have a valid license at exit.
- Three in four homeless participants had other housing at discharge (facility, apartment, etc.).
- All completers had at least 90 days of sobriety.
  - 77% of completers had over one year of sobriety.

**Status for Drug Court Participants – Entry/Exit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Discharge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Diploma/GED</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent/Own</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid License</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying Child Support</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>52%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation Results: Reduce Costs to Society

- Drug court cohort was incarcerated, on average, 55 fewer days than the comparison group.
- Lower average incarceration costs after 2 ½ years.

Drug court cohort costs:
- Prison = $2,986
- Jail = $4,062
- Total = $7,049

Comparison group costs:
- Prison = $6,948
- Jail = $3,291
- Total = $10,238
Follow-up data suggest the drug court effect continues through four years:
- Drug court cohort – 28%
- Comparison group – 41%
Drug court cohort was incarcerated, on average, 74 fewer days than the comparison group.
- Incarceration costs are, on average, $4,288 lower.
Challenges to Statewide Evaluation

- Data collection
  - Multiple sources
  - Data sharing agreements
- Time/resources
- Limited ability for process evaluation
Where We Are Today

- Statewide evaluations concluded

- Drug courts collect data independently on a variety of data management systems

- Tracking sheet data collected statewide
  - Provides descriptive data, but incomplete for holistic evaluation

- Drug courts continue to expand
Where We Are Headed

- **Improved data collection processes**
  - Tracking sheet data collection is limited, time-consuming, and error prone.
  - Benefits drug courts with more frequent, up-to-date reporting

- **Shift from evaluations to performance measures**
  - More timely assessments of a drug court’s performance
Report Links

- **Publications and Reports**
  - [http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=519](http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=519)

- **Minnesota Statewide Adult Drug Court Evaluation**

- **Minnesota Statewide Adult Drug Court Evaluation – Follow-Up**