

RESEARCH UPDATE**REPORTS ON RECENT
DRUG COURT RESEARCH**

This issue of the Drug Court Review synthesizes reports on two studies in the field of drug court research and evaluation, and has included the Executive Summary of each: a cost benefit analysis of the Dallas County DIVERT Court; and an evaluation of four of five of North Carolina's pilot adult drug treatment courts, completed in May 2002.

ARTICLE SUMMARIES**DALLAS COUNTY
DIVERT COURT**

[23] This cost benefit analysis found the benefit-cost ratio over a 40 month follow-up period to be 9.43:1; that is, on average for every dollar spent to drug treatment through DIVERT Court, \$9.43 of costs may be saved over a 40 month post-treatment period.

NORTH CAROLINA

[24] This process and outcome evaluation found that rearrests among graduates 12 months after program discharge to be at 18 percent, in contrast rearrests among non-graduates stood at 41 percent, and among the comparison group at 44 percent.

DALLAS COUNTY DIVERT COURT COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

*Thomas B. Fomby, Ph.D., and Vasudha Rangaprasad, M.A.
Southern Methodist University*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This study is a follow-up study of the DIVERT Court recidivism study of August, 2001 written by Ms. Monica Turley and Ms. Ashley Sibley of the Psychology Department of Southern Methodist University in August 2001 entitled “Presentation of Outcome Evaluation Findings DIVERT Advisory Board.” Their study examined the recidivism behavior of 178 DIVERT Court participants and 78 Control Group participants over a twenty-seven month follow up period. They found a statistically significant reduction in recidivism arising from participation in the DIVERT Court program.
- This study analyzes a cost-benefit ledger based on the event histories of the participants in the Turley/Sibley recidivism study. The ledger is based on 15 months of “treatment” costs for each participant and, after treatment, the savings to society from reduced recidivism arising from DIVERT Court treatment.
- [23] This study finds the Benefit-Cost ratio associated with the DIVERT Court program over a 40 month follow-up period to be **9.43:1**. That is, on average, for every dollar spent upgrading drug treatment from the Control Group (traditional adjudication) to drug treatment through DIVERT Court, \$9.43 of costs can be saved by society over a 40 month post-treatment period. Even though this Benefit-Cost ratio is quite substantial, it is still a

conservative estimate of the benefits forthcoming from the DIVERT Court program for reasons detailed in the report.

NORTH CAROLINA DRUG TREATMENT COURT EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

*Amy Craddock, Ph.D.
Indiana State University*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents results of the contracted process and outcome evaluation that is part of the Drug Courts Program Office (DCPO), Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice grant (1999-DC-VX-0052) awarded to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for the North Carolina Drug Treatment Court Program (DTC). It includes data from four of the five pilot adult DTCs: Warren (Judicial District 9), Person/Caswell (Judicial District 9A), Wake (Judicial District 10), and Mecklenburg (Judicial District 26) Counties. Forsyth County (Judicial District 21) was excluded because of severe data quality problems. The process evaluation examines court and treatment attendance, compliance with case manager and probation officer contact requirements, drug test results, arrests in the program, graduation rates, and reasons for discharge for nongraduates. The outcome evaluation uses a quasi-experimental design to examine the 12-month post-program recidivism of DTC participants and a comparison group of eligible DTC applicants not admitted to the program.

KEY RESULTS

- The most common drug of abuse among participants is cocaine.
- 98.6 percent of DTC participants are chemically dependent, indicating that the DTC program is reaching its target population.

- Seventy percent of DTC participants have prior convictions.
- Of the 534 participants in the study, 33 percent graduated from the program.
- The most important predictor of graduation is program compliance, particularly urine test results, court attendance, and treatment attendance.
- [24] Eighteen percent of graduates and 41 percent of non-graduates were rearrested in the 12 months after program discharge to 44 percent of the comparison group members.
- The most important predictor of recidivism is DTC graduation.

