

# Office of the State Court Administrator

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## State of Colorado Problem-Solving Courts Strategic Planning

Statewide administrative support for drug courts has many components, including long-range planning, budgeting, developing useful information technologies, and providing support to individual drug courts to improve processes and operations. Additionally, administrative leadership, coupled with local judicial leadership, can provide a crucial link to state legislators to communicate the impact and economic benefit of drug courts. The State of Colorado has elected to engage in a process of discussion, discernment, and planning resulting in the development and adoption of a Five Year Strategic Plan based on the Recommended Goals for Re-Charge of the Problem Solving Committee described in the Colorado Problem Solving Courts Advisory Committee Strategic Plan February 15, 2012.

### Vision

In five years, Colorado Problem Solving Courts will operate in every district that needs one, adhering to a unified, core of research-informed practices, grounded in an environment of continuous quality improvement, and focused on building and maintaining the respect and confidence of consumers, key stakeholders, funders, and the public.

### Goal 1: Ensure Fidelity to the Ten Key Components

**Rationale:** Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components was authored in 1997 by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals with the support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This seminal document which outlines the ten key components of drug courts has served as a guide for the development and implementation of drug court programs throughout the country. Accordingly, many state drug court administrations have sought to ensure that their drug courts operate with fidelity to this model. At the same time, states and local jurisdictions recognize the need to adapt the application of these components to fit the unique political, operational and resource landscapes of their jurisdictions.

### Objective: Expand Problem Solving Court Principles and Guidelines

#### Activities: Finalize the Problem Solving Court Principles and Guidelines

1. Develop the definition of Problem Solving Courts in Colorado.
  - a. Define core principles that a program must implement to make them a PSC

2. Determine role of SCAO in planning and implementing new courts in guidelines
3. Finalize team roles and responsibilities
4. Expand guidelines to include other problem solving courts beyond adult criminal drug court.
  - a. Explore sub- committees addressing specific issues of other identified PSC's. Topic at a PSC Committee meeting should be to expand membership on Advisory Committee for specialist in FDC, Mental Health, DUI etc.

**Objective: Create a Fidelity Strategy for Colorado Problem Solving Courts**

**Activities: Implement the Fidelity Strategy for Colorado Problem Solving Courts.**

1. Develop a fidelity strategy
  - a. Self-Assessment- Courts to engage in fidelity review using self - assessment with a research based tool, facilitated review of online resources and action planning by district
    - i. Select several self-assessment tools
    - ii. Pilot tools in select courts to determine which are the simplest and best fit for COPSC
    - iii. Develop or select self-assessment tool with support from NPC Research and CCI technical assistance
    - iv. Educate local court teams on assessment and focus on local facilitators/barriers
  - b. Peer Review-Begin to think through how a peer review model could be implemented
    - i. Use model established in other states as
    - ii. Seek funding to develop Colorado specific peer review model and training
2. Review statewide evaluation and prioritize recommendations
  - a. Continue to emphasize the importance of key components and appropriate target populations
  - b. Determine advisory committee response to evaluation outcomes
  - c. Develop an Action Planning tool for local court use
    - i. Request local Annual Action Plans and help courts to operationalize these plans
    - ii. COPSC office will ask Coordinators to bring, share, and problem solve around the team Action Plan
  - d. Develop a CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) protocol tied to evaluation

**Objective: Provide Training and Technical Assistance for Colorado Problem Solving Courts**

**Activities: Develop a state-wide continuing education plan/curriculum for problem solving courts.**

1. Determine training needs
  - a. Develop training standards and resources
    - i. For new team members
      1. Standards for mentoring new team members
    - ii. For "enhancement" curriculum
    - iii. Develop role specific curricula
    - iv. For "emerging issues"

- v. Training on common “problems/issues” in PSCs – trauma informed care, traumatic brain injury, medication assisted therapies
- 2. Integrate PSC “basics” into the core training provided to: DAs, PDs, Probation, Court Administrators.
  - a. Develop basic message about problem solving courts: Statewide status of PSCs, philosophy and the research base behind them as well as underlying message of support for programs that follow EBPs.
- 3. Develop a model for training stakeholders for involvement in COPSCs
  - a. Develop toolkit for local communities
  - b. Enhance website to include statewide information on COPSCs and PSC basics

**Objective: Create a Planning Initiative for new for Colorado Problem Solving Courts.**

**Activities: Create a planning process for new sites.**

- 1. Develop resources to support new PSCs
  - a. Create best practice planning protocol - advisory to courts in exploration/planning phase
  - b. Develop training program – focusing on teams in exploration/planning phase (steal from NDCI)
  - c. Develop capacity for TA – as follow-up to Training experience
  - d. Seek funding - state or grant to expand capacity of PSC expertise and availability
- 2. Improve information related to how to start a PSC
  - a. Improve the website to better meet needs of teams in exploratory and planning phase
  - b. Develop a tool that local courts can use when contemplating implementing a PSC – needs data, resources, stakeholders
  - c. Develop communication protocol for when you want to start a PSC

**Objective: Implement Evidence Based Practices in Colorado Problem Solving Courts**

**Activities: Identify and implement evidence-based, promising and best practices**

- 1. Promote evidence-based, promising and best practices for PSCs
  - a. Continuing Education on Implementing EBP’s
  - b. Communication through Quarterly newsletters articles on EBP
  - c. Ensure Systems accountability through a “basic” level of understanding/cross-training about implementing EBPs to be able to ask the right questions.
- 2. Ensure PSCs are using evidenced based treatment models
  - a. Provide education on evidenced based treatment models to PSC
  - b. Develop strategy to assist PSC in choosing evidenced based treatment programs
  - c. Support treatment providers move to EBP for PSC population
- 3. Identify EBP, “Best Practices,” and “Promising Practices”
  - a. Look for DU interns in Law and Social Work who can routinely do literature searches and send out summaries plus research articles to the courts
  - b. Establish a COPSC Advisory Committee Fidelity Subcommittee to address identification and implementation of evidence based practices

- i. Issues to be considered – legal practice, assessment/screening, evidence-based sentencing, treatment, treatment court practices

## **Objective: Proactively address capacity building strategies**

### **Activities: Proactively address capacity building strategies**

1. Leverage Procedural Fairness initiative to address capacity building in COPSC
  - a. Chief Judge is prioritizing strategies across the system to increase procedural fairness
2. Develop a screening and triage tool to sort offenders into court services/responses
  - a. Integrate probation tool being developed to determine risk and needs of all incoming offenders
  - b. Build judicial training on evidence-based sentencing
  - c. Integrate case flow management to differentiate cases and send to appropriate venue.
3. Address the issue of systems capacity
  - a. Courtroom capacity (courtroom space/time, judge, clerk, deputy)
  - b. Probation capacity
  - c. Being directive about target population – high-risk/high-need

## **Goal 2: Develop a Staffing Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

**Rationale:** State administrative structures for drug courts typically feature a high level judicial administrator, a state wide coordinator, regional managers and local program coordinators. A locally placed liaison between the problem solving courts and the central administration can help ensure two way communication between local and central staff and enhance the response of central office staff to local issues.

### **Objective: Develop a Staffing Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

Develop a staffing model for treatment courts that reflects the needs of the Trial Court, Probation, District/County Attorneys, Public Defenders (Defense Bar) and treatment organizations to effectively operate these specific dockets within the Key Component guidelines.

### **Activities: Develop a Staffing Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

1. Assist in the development of staffing models for each team role, prioritizing district attorney and public defender
  - a. Develop a survey that includes current staffing patterns, time commitment to PSC activities, and desired level of participation
  - b. Determine which roles on team are willing to participate
  - c. Develop a report from survey to submit to PSC Committee
  - d. Meet/discuss implications and messaging with external agencies

2. Develop a time computation model for all team members
  - a. Determine existing resources or models for time computation
  - b. Seek funding and TA from outside organizations that specialize in time computation models

### **Goal 3: Develop a Funding Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

**Rationale:** Drug court sustainability relies upon developing strategies to continue and enhance operations, including support for staff, drug testing, supervision, treatment and supportive services. State administrative structures can serve as a crucial link to the state legislature to secure support for drug court operations; provide support for applications for grant funding; and assist in maximizing drug courts' access to resources controlled by other stakeholders.

#### **Objective: Develop a Funding Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

Develop a funding model reflective of an approved staffing model and all other expenses associated with the operations of problem solving courts.

#### **Activities: Develop a Funding Model for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

1. Work with other state-level stakeholders to develop funding model for CO PSCs
2. Develop a coordinated budget request with state-level stakeholders
3. Support prioritizing problem solving courts for substance abuse and mental health treatment funding.
  - a. Work with Interagency Committee Correctional Treatment Fund board to define evidenced base, best practices and promising practices for problem solving courts
  - b. Determine how and if treatment funding could be tied to performance
4. Ensure that Problem Solving Courts have necessary resources to include personnel, treatment, drug testing and other programmatic resources to reach high risk, high need, eligible offenders.
5. Create a subcommittee to explore alternative models and funding for PSCs

### **Goal 4: Evaluation and Cost-Benefit Analysis for Colorado Problem-Solving Courts**

**Rationale:** Research and evaluation can include ongoing monitoring of basic court volume, participant demographics, and program retention rates; as well as rigorous independent evaluations that compare the performance of drug court participants to a comparison group, composed of similarly situated individuals who did not participate in drug court. Research activities can assist policymakers and practitioners in understanding the impact of their programs; sub-populations for which drug courts are particularly suited; and areas for improvement.

#### **Objective: Expand the Capacity of the Colorado Problem Solving Court Management Information Systems**

#### **Activities: Expand the Capacity of the Problem Solving Court Management Information Systems**

1. Develop case management tools and reports for problem solving courts in JPOD.
2. Determine data elements needed for PSC daily management, CQI, outcome, and process evaluations
  - a. Coordinators group meeting with PSC Staff to develop data elements and reports.
  - b. Test module, provide feedback, bug fixes
3. Upgrade JPod to meet COPSC needs
  - a. Analyze JPod system for fit
  - b. Continue meeting (virtually) to look at including case management module in J/Pod
  - c. Meet to develop a proposal and schedule for module development and roll-out
  - d. Build, test, roll-out module within JPOD, continue to build a process to effectively manage data to evaluate problem solving courts at the local and state level.
4. Assist with identifying the data elements necessary to create a cost-benefit evaluation model.

**Objective: Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement Protocol**

**Activities: Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement Protocol**

1. Develop a state-level strategy to review, manage, and improve data and outcomes
  - a. Review SCOT and Action Planning examples
  - b. Develop a COPSC SCOT and Action Planning process
  - c. Share proposal with Advisory Committee
  - d. Share proposal with Coordinators group
  - e. Pilot with urban, rural, ADTC, DWI, VATC
2. Develop an individual court strategy to review, manage, and improve data and outcomes
  - a. Develop a proposed data set for evaluation. Consider including only individual court data or individual data and statewide data for comparison.
  - b. Test data analysis with urban, rural, ADTC, DWI, VATC
  - c. Provide coordinators with systems training– how to do it, why to do it, provide a way for them to receive on-going support to utilize the system
3. Supervision is at the local level, so need to train judges and district administrators
4. Prioritize how to utilize the process and outcome evaluation to improve practice and outcomes
  - a. Encourage each court to develop an annual action plan, and share that plan with COSCAO to develop a baseline for court practice.
  - b. Determine how to best utilize action plans for measurement of reaching goals and program accountability

**Goal 5: Engage and expand partnerships for state and local planning**

**Rationale:** The Key Components of Drug Courts indicate that “forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness”. Strong partnerships between the drug court, community organizations and government agencies facilitate efficient use of each entity’s resources and personnel.

## **Objective: Develop a Means of Engaging Stakeholder Support**

### **Activities: Develop a Means of Engaging Stakeholder Support**

1. Identify and engage other stakeholders to be engaged in Strategic Planning
2. Identify and engage other stakeholders to be engaged in COPSC Advisory Committee.
  - a. Include a mental health expert (especially trauma and developmental treatment, TBI, learning disabilities)?
  - b. Include Colorado Coalition for the Homeless; other “boundary spanning” groups? Public health, housing, others?
3. Develop recommendations for local PSC stakeholder engagement
  - a. Local courts should ensure all core stakeholder groups are represented and then consider other “recovery-oriented systems of care” stakeholders
4. Develop a model for training stakeholders for involvement in COPSCs
5. Develop outreach and communication strategies to support COPSCs.
  - a. Create a resource page on Judicial Net that outlines successful program elements.
  - b. Create a media strategy kit that local courts can use to educate their key stakeholders and community at large
  - c. Help local courts use their data to tell their story

## **Objectives: Expand Advisory Committee Subcommittees**

### **Activities: Refine and assign activities for PSC Advisory Committee Subcommittees**

1. Training Subcommittee
  - a. Develop statewide education plan for CO PSCs
  - b. Access and implement evidence-based, promising, and best practices - ensure training resources to support practices
  - c. Proactively address capacity building issues – ensure training resources to support strategies
2. Funding Subcommittee
  - a. Develop a PSC planning process
  - b. Access and implement evidence-based, promising, and best practices - ensure funding resources to support strategies
  - c. Develop a staffing model
  - d. Develop a funding model
  - e. Engage and expand partnerships for state and local planning
3. Fidelity Subcommittee
  - a. Finalize Problem Solving Court Guidelines
  - b. Create a fidelity strategy
  - c. Identify (Access) and implement evidence-based, promising, and best practices
  - d. Proactively address capacity building issues – develop tools and policies to support strategies
  - e. Develop a CQI protocol

4. Administrative Issues Subcommittee
  - a. Engage and expand partnerships for state and local planning
5. Management Information Systems Subcommittee
  - a. Guide state and local level strategies to review, manage, and improve data
  - b. Guide the utilization of the state evaluation to improve practice and outcomes
6. Treatment Subcommittee
  - a. Identify evidenced based treatment programs and recommendations for treatment services for drug court participants
  - b. Develop strategies for ensuring quality, individualized and culturally competent treatment services are available and provided



