Alaska Results First

Benefit-Cost Findings: Adult Criminal Justice Programs

Presented to: 
Alaska Criminal Justice Commission 
June 15, 2017
A Brief Introduction

ALASKA RESULTS FIRST
Alaska’s Results First Initiative

• State of Alaska applied to join *Results First*
  – Tri-branch agreement to pursue this work
    • Alaska Legislature
    • Office of the Governor
    • Alaska Court System

• In 2015 Alaska became the 19th jurisdiction to partner with Pew-MacArthur *Results First*

• Alaska Justice Information Center (AJiC)
  – Tasked with conducting data collection, analyses, and dissemination of findings
An Overview

STEPS IN THE PROCESS
The Results First Process

• **Program Inventory**
  – Comprehensive listing of all programs provided in a particular policy area (e.g., criminal justice)

• **Match state programs to the evidence base**
  – Results First Clearinghouse Database; Results First Ratings Database
  – *How effective are programs that are provided?*

• **Pew-MacArthur Benefit-Cost Model**
  – Estimates benefit-cost ratios for programs that have been rigorously researched/evaluated
Step 1: Program Inventory

- 54 adult criminal justice programs identified
- Separated into 8 groupings:
  - Chaplaincy services
  - Domestic violence (DV)
  - Vocational and general education (VGE)
  - Re-entry services
  - Sex offender
  - Substance abuse
  - Technology-assisted
  - Therapeutic courts

- 36 adult criminal justice programs were funded wholly or in part by the State of Alaska
  - $25.5 million annually

- 18 adult criminal justice programs in the inventory did not receive dedicated state funding allocations

Distribution of State Investments in Adult Criminal Justice Programs

- Substance Abuse $10.1M
- Sub. Abuse $10.1M
- Tech. Assisted $3.8M
- Therapeutic Courts $4.5M
- Chaplaincy $0.6M
- VGE $3.1M
- Sex Offender $1.7M
- Reentry $1.3M
- DV $0.5M

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Step 2: Program Matching

- Compare Alaska adult criminal justice programs with programs that have been rigorously evaluated
  - Program features
    - Program content/curriculum
    - Program structure/process
  - Locus of Treatment
    - Prison vs. community
    - Inpatient vs. outpatient
  - Target population/eligible participants
- Key Findings
  - 32 of 54 (59.3%) adult criminal justice programs matched to evidence base
  - Of the 32 programs matched, 26 funded wholly or in part by State of Alaska ($23 million)
  - 90% of state investment in adult criminal justice programs directed to programs matched in evidence base
Step 3: Populate *Results First* Benefit-Cost Model

- **Prerequisite steps:**
  - Estimate per-participant program costs
  - Estimate criminal justice resource use and cost parameters
    - Probability of resource use for prison, community supervision
    - Marginal costs of: police ($ per arrest), courts ($ per conviction), prison ($ per inmate), and community supervision ($ per offender)
  - Estimate recidivism parameters for Alaska program-eligible populations
    - 2007 cohorts
      - 9 cohorts in total
    - 8-year recidivism estimates

- **THEN**...populate the *Results First* benefit-cost model to estimate *benefit-cost ratios* for programs
Step 3 (continued): Populate *Results First* Benefit-Cost Model

- Not all of Alaska’s evidence-based programs were put in the model
  - Evidence not about recidivism
    - For example: 12-step programs >>> relapse
  - Evidence insufficient to determine a reliable recidivism reduction effect
    - Too few studies
    - Studies of substandard scientific rigor
  - No dedicated, program-specific funding
    - For example: Ignition interlock (self-pay)

- Total programs entered into the model: 19
Programs Included in Model

- **ASAP**: Alcohol Safety Action Program (DHSS)
- **BIP**: Batterer Intervention Program (DPS via CDVSA)
- **EM**: Electronic Monitoring (DOC)
- **IOPSAT**: Intensive Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment (DOC)
  - Community-based
  - Prison-based
  - Dual diagnosis
- **PACE**: Probation Accountability with Certain Enforcement (DOC)
- **PsychEd**: Psych-Educational Substance Abuse Program (DOC)
- **RSAT**: Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (DOC)
- **SOTX**: Sex Offender Treatment (DOC)
  - Community-based outpatient
  - Prison outpatient
  - Residential (therapeutic community)
- **TC**: Therapeutic Courts (ACS)
  - Anchorage Municipal DUI Wellness Court
  - Felony DUI Wellness Courts
  - Hybrid DUI/Drug Wellness Courts
  - Anchorage Felony Drug Court
  - Mental Health Courts
- **VGE**: Vocational/Adult General Education
  - Vocational education
  - Adult general education
Benefit-Cost Ratio

• A monetary metric for assessing “return on investment”

• Consists of two elements

\[ \frac{\text{Benefits}}{\text{Costs}} = \frac{(\text{Avoided CJ Costs}) + (\text{Avoided Victimization Costs})}{\text{Program Costs}} \]

• Note: Benefits are triggered by recidivism reduction achieved by each adult criminal justice program

• The ratio can be made larger by...
  • \(\uparrow\) benefits
  • \(\downarrow\) costs
Interpretation

• *How does one interpret a benefit-cost ratio?*

• *Ratio greater than 1.0*
  – Benefits exceed costs
  – Example: 3.07 >>> $1 investment by state produces $3.07 of benefits

• *Ratio of 1.0*
  – “Break even”
  – $1 invested by state produces a return of $1 of benefits

• *Ratio greater than 0.0, but less than 1.0*
  – Positive return with tangible monetary benefits, but not equal to amount invested
  – Example: 0.80 >>> $1 investment by state produces $0.80 of benefits

• *Ratio of 0.0*
  – No return on investment

• *Ratio less than 0.0*
  – Negative return
  – State investment lost, plus additional costs produced
  – Example: -0.96 >>> $1 investment by state lost, and an additional $0.96 in costs incurred
Results First Model Results

BENEFIT-COST RATIOS
ADULT CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS
Benefit – Cost Ratios
Adult Criminal Justice Programs

1. PsychEd ($23.80)
2. Adult General Education ($10.58)
3. Vocational Education ($7.11)
4. Sex Offender: Community Outpatient ’17 ($6.33)
5. IOPSAT: Dual Diagnosis ($4.89)
6. IOPSAT: Prison ($4.87)
7. Sex Offender: Community Outpatient ’15 ($4.43)
8. PACE ($3.07)
9. EM: Post Prison ($3.03)
10. Sex Offender: Prison Outpatient ($2.38)
11. RSAT ($1.97)
12. ASAP ($1.51)
13. IOPSAT: Community ’17 ($1.32)
14. Anchorage Fel Drug Court ($1.22)
15. Mental Health Courts ($1.16)
16. IOPSAT: Community ’16 ($1.08)
17. Hybrid Courts [as Drug] ($0.80)
18. Sex Offender: Residential ($0.72)
19. Hybrid Courts [as DUI] ($0.69)
20. Fel DUI Wellness Courts ($0.60)
21. Anchorage Misd DUI Court ($0.34)
22. BIP: Community-Based (-$0.96)
Benefits vs. Costs
(Alternate View)

Per-Participant Program Benefits (via recidivism reduction)

Per-Participant Program Costs

Alaska Results First: Adult Criminal Justice Programs
Expected Recidivism Reduction

Adult Criminal Justice Programs

1(t). Sex Offender: Community Outpatient ‘15 (32.44%)
2. Batterer Intervention (5.13%)
3(t). Anchorage Felony Drug Court (26.31%)
4. Hybrid Courts [as Drug] (26.31%)
5. Adult General Education (23.41%)
6. Vocational Education (21.94%)
7. PACE (21.82%)
8. Mental Health Courts (20.63%)
9. Anchorage Misd DUI Court (20.24%)
10(t). Fel DUI Wellness Courts (19.97%)
10(t). Hybrid Courts [as DUI] (19.97%)
12(t). Sex Offender: Residential (17.72%)
12(t). Sex Offender: Prison Outpatient (17.72%)
14(t). IOPSAT: Prison (17.35%)
14(t). IOPSAT: Dual Diagnosis (17.35%)
16. PsychEd (15.20%)
17. RSAT (11.91%)
18. ASAP (8.89%)
19. EM: Post Prison (3.15%)
20(t). IOPSAT: Community ‘16 (2.45%)
20(t). IOPSAT: Community ‘17 (2.45%)
22. BIP: Community-Based (-5.13%)
SUMMARY
“3 Things”

1. 90% of state investment in adult criminal justice directed to programs matched in evidence base
2. Of the 19 adult criminal justice programs modeled, all but one produced positive returns
   – 14 benefits exceeded costs
   – 4 positive return with tangible monetary benefits, but not equal to amount invested
   – 1 negative return
3. Benefit-cost ratios are not fixed!
   – “Return on investment” – that is, the monetary performance – of a program can change
   – Increase benefits (e.g., program elements, participants)
   – Decrease costs (e.g., capacity, contracting/procurement)
1. Results First findings are intended to be used as a decision making TOOL, not a decision making rule

2. What are our expectations, RE: “return on investment” when it comes to the delivery of public services?

3. Model estimates could be improved
   – Program level
     • Programmatic data collection and compilation
       – Collect/compile data with research/evaluation in mind
   – Policy level
     • Establish a program (and culture) of rigorous program evaluation and assessment, and institutionalize a paradigm of continual process improvement
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