Meeting the Challenges of Rural Problem-Solving Courts

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Learning Objectives:

- Examine challenges that are unique to, or accelerated in, rural problemsolving courts
- ► Examine Problem-Solving Court Standards and Best Practices in the context of operating in under-resourced areas
- ► Through shared experiences of panel members and audience members, learn of potential solutions to challenges in meeting Standards and Best Practices in rural problem-solving courts

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Standards and Best Practices

- ► Illinois Supreme Court Problem-Solving Courts Standards
- ► NADCP Best Practice Standards, Volumes I and II

http://www.illinoiscourts.gov.

https://www.nadcp.org/standards/adu drug-court-best-practice-standards/

Drug Testing Case Study

Mayberry County Drug Court uses a color system for testing its drug court participants. The testing is done by urine samples and is administered by the probation office, which consist of a full-time probation officer and an administrative assistant, both of who are female. Male participants are observed if a court security officer happens to be available.

Drug court participants are placed on a color system, in which they are required to call in each weekday between 8:00-10:00am and report before 4:00pm if their color is testing on that day. The drug court has 5 phases. Participants in Phases 1 and 2 are tested 2 times/week, and participants in Phases 3 and 4 are tested 1 time/week. Participants in the final phase are not tested.

Does this testing protocol meet Standards and Best Practices? How could it be more effective?

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Supreme Court PSC Standards, Sect. 4.5, 8.0 and 8.2(d)

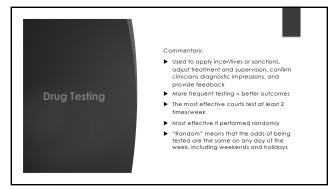
- ✓ Random, observed urinalysis
- Approved drug testing methodology
- ✓ Sufficient frequency to meet current researched-based recommendations

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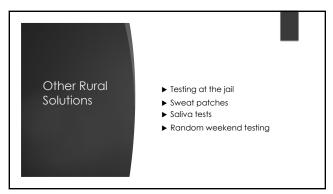


NADCP Best Practices Standards, Vol. II, and Commentary:

- Frequently enough to ensure substance use is detected quickly and reliably
- ► At least 3 times/week until last phase
- ▶ Should be observed
- ► Provide rapid results (within 48 hours)
- Specimens provided within 8 hours of notification



Challenge: How do we establish a testing protocol that meets the standards and best practices? Example: Richland County testing protocol



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Supreme Court Standards, 4.7 Program Sustainability

Sustainability

Each PSC shall develop a plan for longterm sustainability. Resources for
operations, including staffing and
treatment shall be identified. A budget
shall be developed and regularly
reviewed and modified

Drug Court Ten Key Components, Component 10

Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community based organizations (to) generate local support and enhance drug court program effectiveness

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Challenge:

How do we get community support, financial and otherwise?

Examples: Jefferson County support organization Crawford County support organization Lawrence County support organization

Other ideas:

- ▶ Presentations to civic groups
- ▶ Fundraisers
- ▶ Work Days
- ▶ Publicity for commencement ceremonies
- ► Reach out to businesses, community colleges, universities
- ▶ Other ideas?

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- ➤ Supreme Court Standards 6.1 Members: The PSC fearn shall include, but not be limited for the judge, a prosecutor, a public of the public of
- NADCP BP: A. TEAM COMPOSITION: The Drug Court team comprises representatives from all partner agencies involved in the creation of the program, including but not limited to…law enforcement officer.
- Drug courts are allowed, but not required to have a law enforcement rep. on the team. Studies show that having a law enforcement representative on the team produces better outcomes.

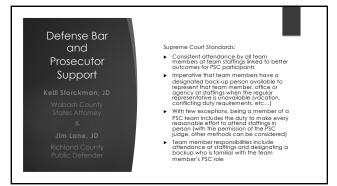
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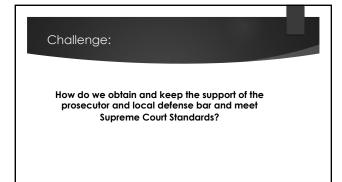
Challenge:

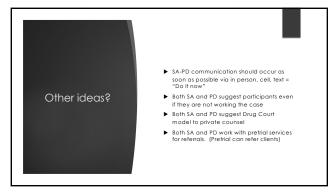
How do we obtain, and keep, the support of law enforcement?

Example: Crawford County

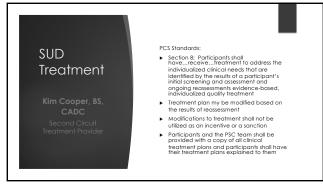


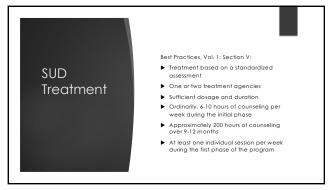


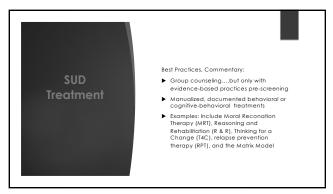




Green Acres County Drug Court has determined that they get the best results from participants who complete a residential program, so they require all drug court participants to complete a residential treatment program and a halfway house program before returning to the community. When they return, the treatment provide puts everyone into a weekly group session and sees them individually one time per week until a participant reaches stage 3 (of a 5 stage drug court program), at which time treatment goes to bi-weekly. If a participant is doing well, they may have their treatment frequency reduced as an incentive. Is Green Acres following Standards and Best Practices for their treatment program? How could they be more effective?

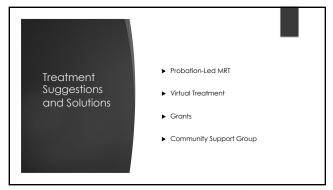






Challenge:

How do we meet these standards with the limited resources that are often available to rural courts?



SUD Treatment Case Study

Green Acres County Drug Court has determined that they get the best results from participants who complete a residential program, so they require all drug court participants to complete a residential treatment program and a halfway house program before returning to the community. When they return, the treatment provider puts everyone into a weekly group session and sees them individually one time per week until a participant reaches Stage 3 (of a 5 Stage drug court program), at which time treatment goes to bi-weekly. If a participant is doing well, they may have their freatment frequency reduced as an incentive.

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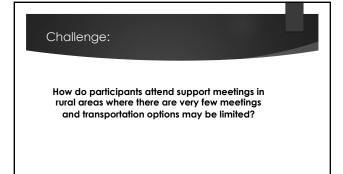


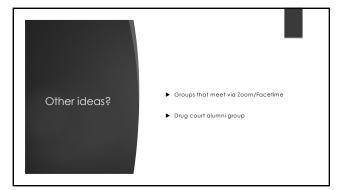
NADCP Best Practices Standards:

V. SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT

I. Peer Support Groups

I. Peer Support Groups
Participants regularly attend self-help or peer support groups in addition to professional counseling. The peer support groups follow a structured model or curriculum such as the 12-step or Smart Recovery models. Before participants enter the peer support groups, treatment providers use an evidence-based preparatory intervention, such as 12-step facilitation therapy, to prepare the participants for what to expect in the groups and assist them to gain the most benefits from the groups





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Best Practices Standards, Commentary
D. Team Communication and
Decision Making

In Drug Courts, the multidisciplinary team serves essentially as a panel of "expert witnesses" providing legal and scientific expertise for his judge. Learn members have an obligation to contribute relevant observations and insights and to offer suitable recommendations based on their professional knowledge, experience, and training. A team member who remains silent in staffings or defers habitually to group consensus is violating his or her professional obligations to participants and to the administration of justice. The judge may ultimately overwice a team member's assertions, but this lact does not about the team member from articulating and justifying an informed opinion.

Challenge:

How do we handle team chemistry issues to ensure communication and cooperation among team members when asking for another individual from probation, the S/A's office, the treatment agency, etc.... is not an option?

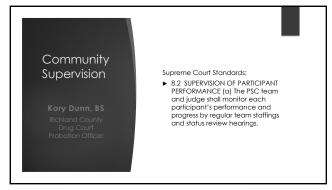
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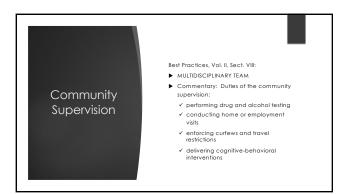


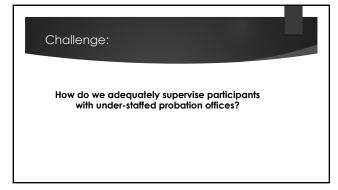
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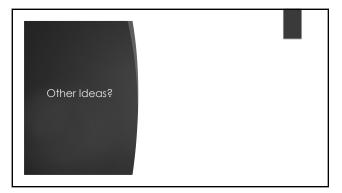
Ground Rules

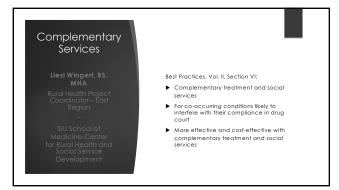
- ▶ Be on time.
- ▶ Be prepared.
- ▶ Be ready to participate.
- Be engaged throughout the session.Be mindful of your lane.
- Be mindful of your lane.
 Be respectful of other team members and of participants.
- ▶ Be thorough but succinct.
- ▶ Be professional.
- ▶ Be available.

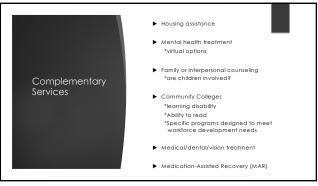


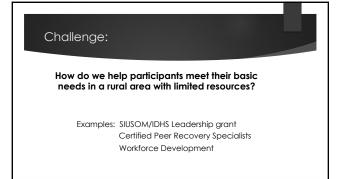














Advantages of Rural Drug Courts Small town = everyone knows everyone Prior relationships with the participants are common Increased personal relationships with team members Employers know us and trust us Shared transportation to meetings and court appointments Smaller groups make it easier to hold each other accountable

General resources National Drug Court Resource Center https://ndrcc.ord/ https://alrise.ora (formerly the National Association of Drug Court Professionals) Illimois Association of Problem-solving Courts https://www.labsc.org/oroblem-solving-courts/resources/. National Drug Court Institute https://www.ndci.org/ Alcoholics Anonymous https://aa. Life Ring https://lifering.org/. ► Illinois Probation https://www.probation.illinoiscourts.gov/ NTIDS://smartrecovery.org ► Rural Drug Court Listserv RURALDRUGCOURT-L@LISTSERV.AI

► Narcotics Anonymous https://na.org

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GROUND RULES FOR THE BEST TEAM CHEMISTRY

1. Show up on time, prepared and ready to participate.

All staff members should have read the Report and other relevant material, *including Recaps from prior staffings*, have considered any problems and issues that need to be resolved, and be prepared to offer suggestions, solutions, and ideas for decisions that need to be made. For major issues, it is best to have shared your ideas and position before staffing.

2. Stay engaged during staffing and during Court Reviews.

Drug court staffings are worthy of your undivided time and attention. *Anything less is disrespectful to the other team members and counterproductive to our goal of producing the best possible results for our participants.* Drug court reviews are important to the participants, and they should see by your actions that you are engaged with them in their recovery.

3. Weekly Reports should be distributed by noon the day before staffing.

Receiving all relevant information the day before staffing allows everyone ample opportunity to read, digest, and form ideas and opinions. When everyone reads the Report, there is no need for the Report to be read aloud during staffing.

4. Except for last-minute events, there should be no new information disclosed at staffing.

Any significant events occurring between the distribution of the Report and staffing should be shared as soon as possible but definitely before staffing.

5. Stay in your lane.

Though all members of the staff have the same goal, each person has an area of expertise and focus, and that should be respected. However, that doesn't mean that members shouldn't form opinions and advocate for their point of view. Non-adversarial doesn't mean non-advocacy.

6. Stay on topic.

Interesting side stories can be shared before or after drug court.

7. Avoid side conversations and distractions during staffing and reviews.

(See #2 above)

8. Be thorough but succinct in your comments and in advocating for your position.

9. Do not interrupt and don't take comments made by other staff members personally.

Don't take poor choices made by participants personally, either. Whatever caused the participant to relapse, miss an appointment, provide a positive drug test, or make whatever bad decision, it probably wasn't done to spite the staff or make our lives more complicated.

- 10. Remember there is a place for subjective information, but decisions are based on objective information. Objective information should be the main focus.
- 11. All members should stay for the court review after staffing unless there are special circumstances.
- 12. Since drug court is court, the judge should wear a robe and attendees should stand when the judge enters for Court Reviews.

There is some informality in drug court, but it is still court and participants should remember that. *Drinks and food are fine for staffings but should be put out of sight for court.*

- 13. When participants appear by Zoom, they should be given ground rules to follow. These rules could include:
 - a) Be at a location with stable internet service and manageable background noise.
 - b) Mute yourself upon entry and do not unmute until the judge calls for you.
 - c) Be dressed appropriately for court and act like you're in court. Don't eat, drink or smoke, don't have a radio or television on in the background, and don't be reclining.
 - d) Be at a location or room with lighting that allows you to be seen.
 - e) Do not leave the Zoom room until being advised by the judge to do so.
 - f) Remember that appearing by Zoom, and not in person, is a privilege.
- 14. After the Court Review, stick around to discuss anything that might have come up during the Review.

If time allows, a recap of assignments/goals should be stated.

GENERAL RESOURCES

National Drug Court Resource Center https://ndcrc.org/

https://allrise.org (formerly the National Association of Drug Court Professionals)

Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts https://www.ilapsc.org/problem-solving-courts/resources/

Illinois Probation https://www.probation.illinoiscourts.gov/psc

Narcotics Anonymous https://na.org

National Drug Court Institute https://www.ndci.org/

Alcoholics Anonymous https://aa.org/

Life Ring https://lifering.org/

Women for Sobriety https://womenforsobriety.org/

Smart Recovery https://smartrecovery.org/

Rural Drug Court Listserv: RURALDRUGCOURT-L@LISTSERV.AMERICAN.EDU

Illinois Helpline https://helplineil.org

IDHS - Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29759

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) https://www.samhsa.gov/

SAMHSA online meeting registry

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