Drug Treatment Outcomes for Correctional Settings

(The Prison Journal, September/December, 1999)

❖ 1.8 million inmates were in U.S. jails & prisons in 1998 – that’s 461 per 100,000 adults (up from 292 in 1990)

❖ Drug offenses are a leading cause of these increases

❖ Approximately 2 out of 3 arrestees have drugs in urine

❖ Approximately 2 out of 3 inmates admit drug histories, but under 15% receive systematic treatment in prison


Note from the Editors

The latest outcome studies for In-prison Therapeutic Community (ITC) drug treatment programs in California, Delaware, and Texas were recently published in The Prison Journal (1999). They examine 3-year outcomes based on new arrests, drug use, return to prison, and cost effectiveness of treatment. Other related studies include an extensive review of the literature on program effectiveness for correctional populations, a risk-assessment protocol, and a cognitive intervention that can raise treatment readiness and engagement. Highlights of findings are summarized here, but readers are encouraged to examine the published articles for more detailed results.

D. Dwayne Simpson, Ph.D., Director of the IBR & S. B. Sells Professor of Psychology
Kevin Knight, Ph.D., Research Scientist
**Delaware/Crest Program:**

3-Year Re-Arrest & Drug Use Rates

(Martin, Butzin, Saum, & Inciardi, 1999, *The Prison Journal*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>No New Arrests</th>
<th>Drug Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Treatment (n=210)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC Dropout (n=109)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC, but no Aftercare (n=101)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC + Aftercare* (n=69)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**California/Amity Program:**

3-Year Return-to-Custody Rates (%)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Return-to-Custody</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Treatment (n=189)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC Dropout (n=73)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC, but no Aftercare (n=154)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC + Aftercare* (n=162)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Texas/New Vision Program: 3-Year Return-to-Custody Rates (%)
(Knight, Simpson, & Hiller, 1999, The Prison Journal)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Treatment (n=103)</th>
<th>Aftercare Dropouts (n=122)</th>
<th>Aftercare Completers* (n=169)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcomes for Special Comparisons

- High Problem Inmates (n=282)
  - No Treatment: 52
  - Aftercare Dropouts: 66
  - Aftercare Completers: 26

- Technical Violations (n=163)
  - No Treatment: 53
  - Aftercare Dropouts: 65
  - Aftercare Completers: 76

- Only New Offenses (n=394)
  - No Treatment: 19
  - Aftercare Dropouts: 22
  - Aftercare Completers: 6
General Findings and Recommendations

1. **Duration, setting, & training** are fundamental for *In-prison TC programs*
   - ITC is defined as 6-12 months in a residential (segregated) treatment unit
   - Staff training should follow a “modified TC” therapeutic regimen
   - On-going monitoring & evaluation serves management & accountability need

2. Engagement in **transitional “aftercare”** is crucial for effectiveness

3. ITC is most cost effective for high-problem cases (Griffith et al., 1999)

4. **Intensive TC approaches** are most effective (Pearson & Lipton, 1999)
   - Boot camps & periodic drug-focused counseling have poor outcomes
   - Programs that use agonists (such as methadone) show promise
   - Selective education, 12-step, & cognitive-behavioral therapies show promise

5. **Inappropriate placements** in ITC reduce its effectiveness & efficiency

6. **Risk assessments** should guide selections for treatment (Hiller et al., 1999)

7. **Induction** strategies can raise treatment engagement (Blankenship et al., 1999)

*(All citations are from *The Prison Journal*, September/December 1999)*

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**In-Prison Treatment**

**DRUG PROBLEMS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting/Intensity?</th>
<th>Stages: Induction Engagement Compliance Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (education)</td>
<td>Transition To Aftercare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (groups)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (modified TC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Problem Severity?**

**Selection of Treatment [Needs/Intensity]**

*in segregated unit*