National Drug Court Institute
Drug Court Training

Adapting Your Court Structure

Presented by: Carolyn Hardin

©NDCI, December 2012.
The following presentation may not be copied in whole or in part without written permission of the author or National Drug Court Institute. Written permission will generally be given without cost, upon request.
Behaviors Related to CODs

- Limited attention span
- Difficulty understanding and remembering information
- Not recognize consequences of behavior
- Poor judgment
- Disorganization
- Not respond well to confrontation
Court Adaptation 1: Team
Expand the Team

• Mental Health Professionals
  – Psychiatrist
  – Psychologist
  – Licensed and/or Masters in Clinical Social Workers
• Higher staff-to-client ratio
Expand the Team

- Identify consumer groups
- Dual-Diagnosis Support Groups
- Family Members
Team Training Needs

- Cross Training:
- Mental Health Treatment
- Substance Abuse Treatment
- Trauma
- What Else?
Court Adaptation 2: Process
Court Hearings and Judicial Monitoring

- More frequent court hearings may be needed
- Hearings provide a good opportunity to recognize and reward positive behavioral change
- Specialized dockets
  - Less formal, smaller, more private
  - More frequent
  - Greater interaction between judge and participants
Different Tracks

- Specialized Tracks for Co-Occurring
- Separate Mental Health Court Dockets
- Different Times
- Different Days
Court Adaptation 3: Treatment

Drug court aims to join treatment and justice
Case Management

- Intensive
- Smaller caseloads
- Identify existing services
- Reduce conflicts between providers
- Assist the client (consumer)
- Consistent messaging about recovery
- Money management
Preparing Clients For Meds

• Encourage clients to:
• Express concerns
• Ask questions
• Take notes
• Take as prescribed
• Open to medication prescribed
Working with the Family

- Counseling
- Community Support
- Engage
- Non-traditional
Court Adaptation 4: Supervision
Community Supervision

- Smaller and specialized caseloads
- Problem-solving approach
- Rapid crisis response capability
- Monitor medication compliance
- Home visits
- “Fugitive” warrants receive priority
- Taper supervision over time
Court Adaptation 5: Phase Requirements

Learning Flexibility
Adjust Expectations

- Lifelong engagement in treatment is necessary and desirable.
- Highly structured program
- Abstinence not always linked to graduation time frame, more like “behave appropriately”
Phase Adjustments

Proximal Goals

Distal Goals

Right NOW

coming later
Flexible Incentives and Sanctions

• No zero tolerance
• Wide range of rewards/incentives
• Considerations:
  – Housing
  – Medications
  – Treatment participation

NDCI: A Professional Services Division of NADCP
Considerations in Responding to Participant Behaviors

- WHERE are they in the program (i.e., what phase)?
- WHICH behaviors are we responding to (i.e., are they proximal or distal for both disorders)?
- WHAT is the response choice and magnitude?
- HOW do we deliver and explain the response?
This project was supported by Grant No. 2012-DC-BX-K091 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice.