Mental Health Courts

Program description:

Mental health courts divert offenders with mental health issues from incarceration to community-based treatment. These courts utilize mental health assessments, individualized treatment plans, and judicial monitoring to address the mental health needs of offenders and public safety concerns.

Typical age of primary program participant: 28

Typical age of secondary program participant: N/A

Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes Measured	Primary or Second-ary Partici-pant	No. of Effect Sizes	Unadjusted Effect Sizes (Random Effects Model)			Adjusted Effect Sizes and Standard Errors Used in the Benefit-Cost Analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
			ES	SE	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Crime	P	6	-0.22	0.07	0.00	-0.22	0.07	30	-0.22	0.07	40

Benefit-Cost Summary

	Program Benefits					Costs	Summary Statistics			
The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2011). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in Technical Appendix 2.	Partici-pants	Tax-payers	Other	Other Indirect	Total Benefits		Benefit to Cost Ratio	Return on Invest-ment	Benefits Minus Costs	Probability of a positive net present value
	$0	$4,998	$12,937	$2,489	$20,424	-$2,935	$6.96	64%	$17,488	100%

Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

	Benefits to:				
Source of Benefits	Partici-pants	Tax-payers	Other	Other In-direct	Total Benefits
Crime	$0	$4,998	$12,937	$2,489	$20,424

Detailed Cost Estimates

	Program Costs			Comparison Costs			Summary Statistics	
The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta-analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in Technical Appendix 2.	Annual Cost	Program Duration	Year Dollars	Annual Cost	Program Duration	Year Dollars	Present Value of Net Program Costs (in 2011 dollars)	Uncertainty (+ or – %)
	$2,656	1	2006	$0	1	2006	$2,938	10%

Source: Ridgely, M. S., Engberg, J., Greenberg, M. D., Turner, S., DeMartini, C., & Dembosky, J. W. (2007). Justice, treatment, and cost: An evaluation of the fiscal impact of Allegheny County Mental Health Court. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Cumulative Net Cash Flows Over Time (Non-Discounted Dollars)
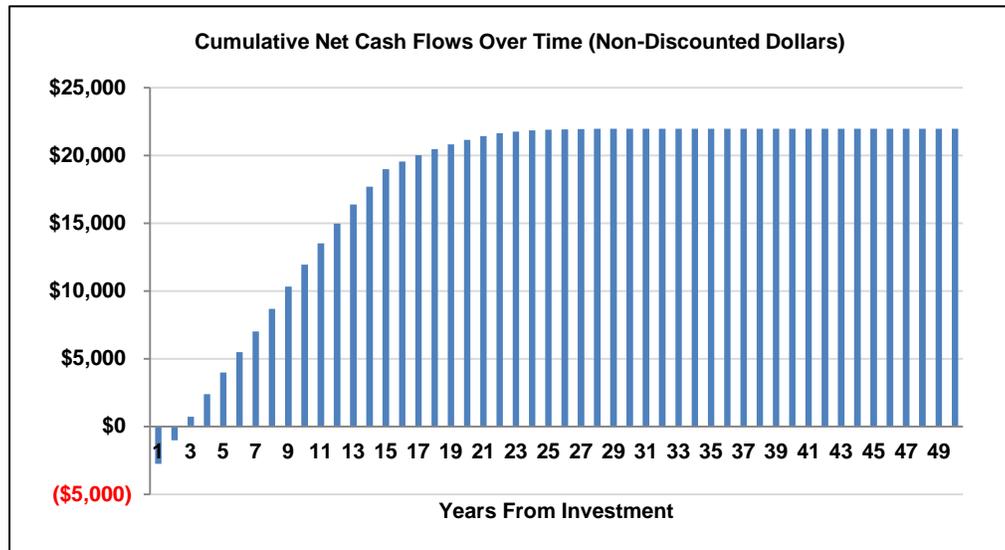
Multiplicative Adjustments Applied to the Meta-Analysis

Type of Adjustment	Multiplier
1- Less well-implemented comparison group or observational study, with some covariates.	1.00
2- Well-implemented comparison group design, often with many statistical controls.	1.00
3- Well-done observational study with many statistical controls (e.g., instrumental variables).	1.00
4- Random assignment, with some implementation issues.	1.00
5- Well-done random assignment study.	1.00
Program developer = researcher	0.36
Unusual (not "real-world") setting	0.50
Weak measurement used	0.80

The adjustment factors for these studies are based on our empirical knowledge of the research in a topic area. We performed a multivariate regression analysis of 96 effect sizes from evaluations of adult and juvenile justice programs. The analysis examined the relative magnitude of effect sizes for studies rated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 for research design quality, in comparison with a 5 (see Technical Appendix B for a description of these ratings). We weighted the model using the random effects inverse variance weights for each effect size. The results indicated that research designs 1, 2, and 3 should have an adjustment factor greater than 1 and research design 4 should have an adjustment factor of approximately 1. Using a conservative approach, we set all the multipliers to 1.

In this analysis, we also found that effect sizes were statistically significantly higher when the program developer was involved in the research evaluation. Similar findings, although not statistically significant, indicated that studies using weak outcome measures (such as technical violations) were higher.

Studies Used in the Meta-Analysis

Christy, A., Poythress, N. G., Boothroyd, R. A., Petrila, J., & Mehra, S. (2005), Evaluating the efficiency and community safety goals of the Broward County Mental Health Court. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law, 23*(2), 227-243.

Cosden, M., Ellens, J., Schnell, J. & Yamini-Diouf, J. (2004, July). *Evaluation of the Santa Barbara County Mental Health Treatment Court with intensive case management.* Santa Barbara: University of California, Santa Barbara; Gervitz Graduate School of Education.

Dirks-Linhorst, P. A., & Linhorst, D. M. (2010). Recidivism outcomes for suburban mental health court defendants. *American Journal of Criminal Justice.* Advance online publication. DOI 10.1007/s12103-010-9092-0

McNiel, D. E., & Binder, R. L. (2007). Effectiveness of a mental health court in reducing criminal recidivism and violence. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 164*(9), 1395-1403.

Moore, M. E., & Hiday, V. A. (2006). Mental health court outcomes: A comparison of re-arrest and re-arrest severity between mental health court and traditional court participants. *Law and Human Behavior, 30*(6), 659-674.

Steadman, H. J., Redlich, A., Callahan, L., Robbins, P. C., & Vesselinov, R. (2011). Effect of mental health courts on arrests and jail days: A multisite study. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 68*(2), 167-172.