



STANDARD IX: CENSUS AND CASELOADS

©NADCP

The following presentation may not be copied in whole or in part without the written permission of the author of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. Written permission will generally be given upon request.

CENSUS AND CASELOAD

The Drug Court serves as many eligible individuals as practicable while maintaining continuous fidelity to best practice standards.



DRUG COURT CENSUS

- What is the population of your target area
 - What is the local need
 - How many treatment spots do you have
 - What resources are available.
-
- Too few- no impact on Public Health or Public Safety
 - Too many- not successful and may cause harm



MAGIC NUMBER

- There is no magic number but anything over 125 comes with a caution.
- In a multi-site study programs over 125 showed a steep decline in effectiveness.
- Drug Courts under 125 were more than 5 times effective in reducing recidivism over courts that had a census over 125



WHY DOES THAT HAPPENS?

- Drift from best standards
- Judges spent half as much time with participants
- Team members were less likely to attend pre-court staffing
- Treatment and law enforcement were less likely to attend status hearing
- Drug and alcohol testing occurred less frequently



WHY DOES THAT HAPPEN?

- Treatment agencies were less likely to communicate with the court about participant performance via email or other electronic means
- Participants were treated by a large number of treatment agencies with divergent practices and expectations
- Team members were less likely to receive training on Drug Court best practices



UPON REACHING 125

- Trigger a careful reexamination of adherence to best practices
- Monitor to make sure Judge is spending an average of 3 minutes per participant
- Drug and alcohol testing is performed randomly at least two times weekly
- All team members attend both staffing and court
- All team members are receiving training on best practices



REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN

- Hire more staff
- Schedule status hearing on more days of the week
- Purchase more drug and alcohol test
- Look at what is off course and get back on track



CASELOAD SIZES



TOO

Much Work

TOO

Little Time



SUPERVISION CASELOADS

Duties:

- Perform drug and alcohol testing
- Conducting home and employment visits
- Enforcing curfew and geographic restrictions
- Delivering cognitive-behavioral interventions
- Complete criminogenic risk assessments
- Develop case plans

Other considerations-size of supervision area



SO WHAT IS THE PERFECT CASELOAD SIZE

- Supervision Officers in Drug Courts are unlikely to accomplish their court functions of monitoring participants accurately, applying effective behavioral consequences and sharing important compliance information with Drug Court team members if their caseload exceeds 50:1.
- Studies suggest that long-term reductions in criminal recidivism are most likely to be achieved for high-risk and high-need participants when caseloads stay at or below 30:1.



CONSIDERATIONS

- Quality of services and time needed to complete must be realistic.
- Extra duties of contributing critical observations and information during pre-court staff meetings and status hearings
- Optimal is primary assignment to Drug Court and is not burdened substantially with other professional obligations.



CLINICIAN CASELOAD

- Substance Use Disorder Counselors, social workers, psychologist, or clinical case managers are typically responsible for assessing participant needs, delivering or overseeing the delivery of treatment services, charting treatment progress and reporting progress information to the Drug Court team.



CLINICIAN ROLE

- Clinical Case Manager
- Treatment Provider
- Combined Clinical Case Management and Treatment Provider



CASELOAD SIZE

- Patients receive fewer services
- Patients are more likely to abuse illicit substances
- Clinicians are more likely to behave punitively toward patients
- Clinicians are more likely to report significant job burn out and dissatisfaction



CASELOAD SIZES

- Clinical Case Manager- 50:1 to 75:1
- Individual Therapy or counseling- 40:1 to 50:1
- Combination- 30:1



BOTTOM LINE

- Must take a look at job duties/ expectations of both supervision officers and clinicians
- After consideration, determine the courts max capacity to serve our participants without watering down services.
- Too many, watered down and could be ineffective or cause harm
- Too few and not impacting recidivism and public safety





QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

©NADCP

The following presentation may not be copied in whole or in part without the written permission of the author of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. Written permission will generally be given upon request.