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The Effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program on Offender's Supervised in the District 39 Probation and Parole Office to Determine if the Method of Referral Effected the Relapse Rate

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By

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SIGNATURE PAGE

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John M. Ritz

Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor and Graduate Program Director

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. Smith was placed on supervised probation for an alcohol related felony offense. Within a few months, he was charged with alcohol-related assault and battery. This offense resulted in a probation violation. The defense attorney asked for a twenty-eight day treatment program for his alcohol program. The Court granted the request and Mr. Smith was sent to Boxwood Treatment Program. Two weeks after successfully completing the program, Mr. Smith was arrested for assault and battery. At the time of arrest, his blood alcohol content, was .24. The legal limit in Virginia is .08. Mr. Smith is now facing another probation violation and possibly revocation of the original suspended sentence (Anonymous Interview, 2002).

This story is real and recently occurred in the District 39 Adult Probation and Parole Office in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Not every substance abusing adult offender on probation relapses so quickly and severely, but it does occur. The majority of adults on probation in the District 39 office have a substance abuse problem or were convicted of offenses related to drugs and alcohol. Nationally, approximately two-thirds of all probationers are characterized as alcohol or drug involved offenders (Mumola, 1998). In Virginia, data reported to the General Assembly in 2001 revealed that a significant number of offenders entering the Virginia criminal justice system have substance abuse problems (SABRE Executive Summary, 2001). Probation officers have a variety of options to offer offenders with substance abuse problems. Typically, outpatient treatment and self-help groups are used because they are less restrictive and allow the offender to

maintain employment and home life. For offenders with more serious substance abuse problems, in-patient treatment is the next option. Boxwood Treatment Program is a twenty-eight day residential substance abuse program used by the District 39 office and by the Rockingham County and Page County Circuit Courts as a sentencing option.

Although there is an obvious need to treat offenders who have substance abuse problems, is a twenty-eight day program enough to ensure success throughout the remainder of the probation period? It was not enough in the case of Mr. Smith, who relapsed less than one month after completing the program. With other options like the court ordered Diversion and Detention Centers that are each six-month intensive in-patient programs, should Virginia continue to spend money on the short-term programs like Boxwood? This study will look at the relapse rate of probationers from the District 39 office that are sent to the Boxwood Treatment Program for a substance abuse problem. It will also attempt to determine if these offenders are more successful if they were court ordered or sanctioned by the probation officer to complete treatment.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program on offender's supervised in the District 39 Probation and Parole Office and to determine if the method of referral effected the relapse rate.

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis will guide this research project:

H_0: Offender's are just as likely to relapse when court ordered to complete Boxwood Treatment Program as when they are sanctioned to complete the program by their probation officer.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

This researcher began to wonder about the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program last year. A woman was released from jail to supervised probation. In her file it was noted that she was court ordered to complete Boxwood Treatment Program, but was terminated due to positive drug screens for cocaine while in the program. If offenders are using drugs while in treatment, then what is the point in sending them for treatment? Are offender's more likely to remain sober if the Court ordered them into treatment as part of their sentence? Also, if someone were so addicted to drugs and alcohol that they could not abstain for twenty-eight days, perhaps long-term treatment would be better rather than a short-term program.

Drug use among criminal offenders has increased since 1989 (Harlow, 1998). A national study of adult probationers conducted in 1995 found that 70% of offenders had used drugs; 32% used drugs a month before their offense occurred; and 14% were on drugs when they committed their offense (Mumola, 1998). Alcohol use was even more prevalent. Forty-seven percent of probationers admitted to being under the influence of alcohol at the time of their offense (Mumola, 1998). The need for treatment is obvious among probationers. The problem is to determine which type of treatment produces the best results. If Boxwood is an effective treatment for probationers in the District 39

office, then it should be used on a regular basis. If it is not effective, then other options should be addressed.

Research on substance abuse treatment has had opposite results. A study comparing seven-day detoxification to fourteen-day and twenty-one day residential programs found that equal proportions of each group relapsed within twelve weeks (Foster, 2000). Another study evaluating Baltimore's drug treatment programs found a 60% decrease in the use of alcohol, cocaine, and heroin amongst participants (Sugg, 2002). A third study interviewed people five years after completing substance abuse programs and found a 21% decrease in drug use and a 14% decrease in alcohol use (Marwick, 1998). However, this study also found that incarceration among the participants went up 17% and probation violations went up 26% (Marwick, 1998). A research project developed by the National Development and Research Institute has discovered that individuals with medium to severe substance abuse problems have better results after completing long term treatment programs (DATOS Introduction, 2001).

Despite the conflicting results, these studies all indicate an overwhelming problem facing this country. There are over one million American adults behind bars and approximately 80% of them are involved with drugs and alcohol and the crimes these substances spawn (Belenko, 1998). There are over three million adults on probation and two-thirds of them are involved in alcohol and drugs (Mumola, 1998). With these staggering numbers, the criminal justice system needs to determine which programs are the most effective with a substance abusing criminal population.

On a more local level, this study could provide important information to the Rockingham County and Page County Circuit Courts, which are the sentencing Courts

for the District 39 probation office. The Court relies on information and recommendations of the probation officer at sentencing and on probation violations. If a probation officer recommends a particular course of action, the Court may consider the suggestion. They do not want to waste time and money sending an offender to a program that is ineffective. They also do not want to keep trying a variety of programs in the hopes that one will benefit the offender. If a program works or does not work, the Court needs to know so appropriate sentences can to rendered.

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations to the findings of this study, which may effect the results. The first is the motivation of the participants. All the participants are convicted adult felons on supervised probation. They are sent for treatment as a sanction for using drugs and alcohol or for committing offenses directly related to substance abuse. Not all may want or believe they need treatment and this lack of motivation could cause a quicker relapse. On the other hand, some participants may claim to have a substance abuse problem in order to avoid a jail sentence. It is known that the Court will make an attempt to provide treatment if it is asked for and it is an appropriate sentence.

Another limitation to determining the effectiveness of Boxwood may be the offender's criminal record. A person with no criminal record or a minor one may be more receptive to treatment and changing their lifestyle than someone deemed a "hardened criminal." The extent of the participant's addiction may be unknown. Unless the offender admits to having a substance abuse problem or is convicted of a drug-related offense, an addiction may go unchecked. Also, an offender may try to mask a substance

abuse problem by trying to defraud drug screens. This recently happened in the District 39 office, where two offenders were caught smuggling in a substitute urine sample to avoid testing positive for illicit drugs. Many offenders would rather go to these extremes than admit to having a problem and asking for help. It is also possible for an offender to use alcohol and drugs on an occasional basis, like on weekends, and not get caught. It would be possible for someone who has to report once a week for drug screens to use drugs after the urine screen and have it out of their system by the next drug test. This behavior is also a limitation when determining relapse. The offender could use the day after being released and it may go undetected for weeks. Eventually, most offenders who use drugs and alcohol are caught; either by new law violations, drug screens, concerned family and friends, or physical proof in their homes or vehicles.

ASSUMPTIONS

In this study, there was a need to make a few assumptions regarding the data, because of a lack of direct and convincing evidence. One assumption made in this study is that the participants have a substance abuse problem based on their offense and sentence, self reported claims, and behavior while on probation. Although some offenders claim to have a substance abuse problem to avoid jail sentences, for the purpose of this study it will be assumed that these are true claims.

It is also assumed that each participant receives the same kind of treatment while in the program. As Boxwood is located in Culpepper, Virginia, it is not possible to personally observe the offenders while they are in treatment and note whether they are treated the same. Boxwood sends the probation office a discharge report that summarizes

the offender's progress or lack thereof and makes recommendations about follow-up care. A final assumption is that offenders that did not have a documented relapse did indeed remain sober.

PROCEDURES

To determine the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program, the files of all the participants will be studied. The District 39 office keeps case files on all offenders for five years after their release from supervision. The files contain all the sentencing orders from the Court, treatment records, and log notes made by the supervising officer. To determine who was court ordered into Boxwood, the Circuit Court computer records will be accessed. The computer lists all convicted felons in Virginia and their sentence. It also lists all probation violations and the outcomes. The District 39 office maintains a record, for billing purposes, of offender's who are sanctioned to Boxwood by the probation officer. Once a list of offender's is compiled, their individual case files will be examined to determine if there was a documented relapse after completing the program.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were used in this study and are defined to assist the reader in understanding information:

1. District 39- The probation and parole office that supervises convicted adult felons in Harrisonburg and Rockingham and Page counties.
2. Offender- Refers to adults convicted of felony offenses and on supervised probation.

3. Boxwood- A twenty-eight day residential substance abuse program located in Culpepper, Virginia. The Court and probation office utilizes it for offenders who require in-patient treatment for drug and alcohol abuse.
4. Relapse- A return to drug or alcohol uses after completing the twenty-eight day in-patient substance abuse program. A relapse will be determined by a positive drug screen, by the admission of the offender, or if the offender obtains new drug/alcohol related criminal charges.
5. Effectiveness of Treatment- Effectiveness will be determined by the length of time an offender remains drug and alcohol free after completing the Boxwood Treatment Program.
6. Probation Violation- When an offender is returned to court for violating any special conditions ordered by the Court or any of the normal conditions of supervision. Probation violations are usually initiated due to new criminal convictions, using drugs and alcohol, failing to complete a court ordered treatment program, or absconding from supervision.
7. SABRE- Substance Abuse Reduction Effort. A program established by the Commonwealth of Virginia to deal with substance abusing offenders through a system of treatment services and criminal justice sanctions.
8. Long-term Residential Treatment- Inpatient substance abuse programs with a minimum stay of three months.
9. Short-term Residential Treatment- Inpatient substance abuse with a maximum average stay of thirty days.
10. Outpatient Drug-free Treatment- Programs such as 12-step and support groups.

11. Code of Virginia- Contains all the laws passed by the Virginia legislature.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

There is a large number of adults incarcerated and on probation in this country. An overwhelming number of these individuals have substance abuse issues. Effective treatment programs need to be established and utilized to help these people and reduce the crime rate. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine effective treatments to combat substance abuse, but they are not in agreement with regards to their findings. Some have found twenty-eight day programs to be effective and others have found them ineffective.

This study hopes to determine the effectiveness of one particular substance abuse program to determine if it is an appropriate treatment option for convicted felons in the Harrisonburg, Rockingham and Page County area. The study also hopes to determine if there is a difference between treatment that is court ordered or sanctioned by the probation officer. In order to accomplish this, all the files of offenders sent to Boxwood Treatment Program will be examined to determine the method of referral and whether there was a documented relapse after completing the program.

The next chapter will be Review of Literature, which will look at information obtained from government reports, prior research projects, and relevant journal articles. Chapter III will review the methods and procedures used to collect, tabulate, and analyze the data. Chapter IV will reveal the finding of the data and Chapter V will contains conclusions about the data and findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to review literature that was related to the problem statement and hypothesis. This review included information obtained from journal articles, government reports, and from the Boxwood Treatment Program.

TREATMENT STUDIES

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has funded three national longitudinal studies on drug abuse treatment outcomes to try and determine the effectiveness of treatment programs (DATOS Background, 2002). The first study was called the Drug Abuse Reporting Program or DARP (DATOS Background, 2002). DARP studied 44,000 individuals admitted into 139 treatment programs between 1969 and 1972 (DATOS Background, 2002). The DARP study determined that the amount of time spent in treatment was a major indicator of a successful outcome (DATOS Background, 2002). Treatment programs of ninety days or longer had significantly better outcomes (DATOS background, 2002). Individuals who stayed in programs for ninety days or longer were less likely to return to daily drug use (DATOS Background, 2002).

The second study was called the Treatment Outcome Prospective Study or TOPS (Ethridge, Craddock, Dunteman, & Hubbard, 1995). TOPS collected data from 11,750 individuals admitted to forty-one treatment programs across the United States between 1979 and 1981 (Etheridge et al, 1995). The TOPS study found that individuals who were forced into treatment by the legal system were just as likely to benefit from the program as those without such pressure. People with legal involvement were more likely to

remain in treatment longer (DATOS Background, 2002). As with the DARPS study, TOPS also found that length of treatment was a key factor in more successful outcomes (Ethridge et al, 1995). The third and most recent project was the Drug Abuse Treatment Outcome Study or DATOS. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of community-based substance abuse treatment in the United States (DATOS Introduction, 2002). DATOS collected information from 10,010 individuals in ninety-six treatment programs throughout the country from 1991 to 1993 (DATOS Introduction, 2002). The results were similar to the previous studies in that the length of time spent in treatment was related to improvements in follow-up outcomes, especially for individuals with three months or more in treatment (Simpson, Joe, Broome, Hiller, Knight, & Rowan-Szal, 1997). At the one year follow-up, people who had completed six months in long-term residential and outpatient drug-free experienced a 50% reduction in weekly or daily drug usage, a 50% reduction in criminal activities, and a 10% increase in full-time employment (Hubbard, Craddock, Flynn, Anderson, & Etheridge, 1997).

As determined in the TOPS study, individual motivation whether internal or external, had an effect. People who were in treatment because of personal motivation or pressure from the legal system were more likely to stay with the program for a longer period of time, especially those legally motivated (Knight, Hiller, Broome, & Simpson, 2000). Personal motivation led to quicker responses to treatment and more willingness to participate (Simpson, Joe, Rowan-Szal, & Greener, 1997).

Of the 10,010 participants in the DATOS study, half had not received prior treatment. The other half had participated in other treatment programs (Anglin, Hser, & Grella, 1997). Individuals with prior treatment experience were associated with more

severe substance abuse addictions, IV drug use, and criminal activity. People in short-term and outpatient drug free programs had shorter and less severe substance abuse histories (Hser, Grella, Hsieh, Anglin, & Brown, 1999). They were also less likely to have had prior treatment. Those in long-term residential programs had more severe addictions and were more likely to have participated in other treatment programs (Hser et al, 1999). Long-term residential treatment of ninety days or longer was used most often for individuals with multi-drug use, medium to severe usage, alcohol dependence, criminal activities, unemployment, and low social support. Short-term residential was most frequently used for less problematic cases (Anglin et al, 1997). It was noted that regardless of the type of program, crack cocaine users are the most difficult to engage and retain in treatment (Rowan-Szal, Joe, & Simpson, 1997). Researchers took the information gathered in DATOS and focused on crack cocaine users. Of the 902 individuals enrolled in thirteen long-term programs, 51% dropped out of the program within ninety days (Rowan-Szal et al, 1997).

DRUGS AND CRIME

For many drug users, the road from initial use to addiction is accompanied by criminal activity (Farabee, Joshi, & Anglin, 2001). In 1995, the United States Department of Justice conducted a national survey of 2,000 adults on probation. Nearly 70% of probationers reported using illicit drugs, with 32% using a month prior to their offense. Fourteen percent admitted to using drugs when they committed the offense (Mumola, 1998). Over 20% of all probationers with prior drug usage received some type of substance abuse treatment. This percentage rose with the severity of prior drug use (Mumola, 1998).

A similar survey was performed with 6,000 current jail inmates in 1996. Eighty-two percent of all jail inmates reported using illegal drugs. Half of the convicted offenders in jail reported using drugs in the month prior to their offense and 36% said they were using drugs at the time of the offense (Harlow, 1998).

VIRGINIA'S RESPONSE

In a response to the growing number of substance abusing offenders, the Commonwealth of Virginia established the SABRE program (SABRE Introduction, 2001). SABRE is a drug reduction program of enforcement, treatment, and prevention, which is aimed at drug dealers and drug users. The goal of SABRE is to effectively deal with substance abusing offenders through an integrated system of treatment and criminal justice sanctions. SABRE provides funding for treatment services for offenders who are incarcerated or under supervision in the community (SABRE Introduction, 2001).

The Code of Virginia has provisions for substance abuse screening and assessment located in 16.1-273, 18.2-251.01, 19.2-299, and 19.2-299.2 (SABRE Executive Summary, 2001). All felons convicted in circuit court are subject to screening and assessment. Individuals convicted of Class 1 misdemeanor drug offenses are also targeted. In addition, a judge may order screening and assessment for any offender if substance abuse is suspected (SABRE Executive Summary, 2001). The Department of Corrections staff and probation and parole officers usually administer screening and assessment instruments (SABRE Executive Summary, 2001). The Simple Screening Instrument consists of sixteen questions. If the screening indicates a substance abuse problem, the Addiction Severity Index assessment instrument is then used. The Addiction Severity Index is a detailed evaluation of the offender's substance abuse

history. In 2001, over 60% of adult felons screened had a substance abuse problem that required further assessment. Nearly 62% of those assessed needed treatment beyond the substance abuse education found in many outpatient programs (SABRE Executive Summary, 2001).

LOCAL TREATMENT OPTIONS

In Virginia when an offender is in need of inpatient treatment to non Department of Correction programs, referrals are made to the local community service boards. A qualified substance abuse counselor will reassess the offender and recommend an appropriate treatment program. For the District 39 probation and parole office, Boxwood Treatment Program is the inpatient program commonly used for offenders. Boxwood Treatment Program is a twenty-eight day substance abuse program of the Rapahannock-Rapidian Community Services Board, located in Culpepper, Virginia (Boxwood Pamphlet, 2002). The Virginia Department of Corrections provides funding for offenders admitted to the program. The cost of treatment is currently four hundred dollars per person. Offenders in District 39 can be sentenced by the Court to enter and complete the program or they can be referred by their probation officer through the local community services board.

Boxwood Treatment Program provides residential substance abuse treatment and social detoxification for males and females ages 18 and older. The treatment includes lab work, tuberculosis testing, comprehensive assessments, educational films and lectures (Boxwood Pamphlet, 2002). Treatment plans are developed for each client and are tailored to address each person's specific needs. Boxwood uses a group therapy treatment model, although individual therapy is available as needed. Clients with mental

health and mental retardation issues are acceptable for admission as long as they are not actively suicidal or psychotic (Boxwood Pamphlet, 2002). Admission priority is given to pregnant women, IV drug users, and HIV/AIDS patients due to the nature of their medical condition. All patients must be abstinent from substance use prior to admission. Alcohol and marijuana users should have seven days abstinence. Cocaine, amphetamine, and heroin users should have ten days abstinence (Boxwood Pamphlet, 2002). The length of stay at Boxwood is usually two weeks to sixty days, depending on the referring agency recommendations. Once a client has successfully completed the program, they are referred back to the local community services board for continuing counseling and aftercare treatment (Boxwood Pamphlet, 2002). If a client is terminated from the program, they may be eligible to return to the program depending on available bed space. This researcher requested statistical information, in addition to basic program information from Boxwood and the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Community Services Board, however no statistical information was made available at this time.

SUMMARY

The review of literature indicated that there is a growing problem with substance abuse, especially among criminal offenders. National studies of substance abuse treatment conducted over the last thirty years shows that length of stay in treatment is a good indicator of outcome success. Long-term residential treatment of at least ninety days is more effective for individuals with medium to severe substance abuse histories, especially for crack-cocaine users. The Commonwealth of Virginia has taken steps to ensure treatment for all offenders convicted of drug offenses and substance abuse

screening and assessment for all convicted felons. Virginia provides funding for a number of treatment options from the long-term therapeutic communities located within prisons to outpatient programs in the local community services boards and hospitals. Boxwood Treatment Program represents a short-term inpatient program used by the Circuit Court and District 39 probation and parole office. It is not known at this time whether there are statistics on the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program.

The next chapter, Chapter III, will cover the methods and procedures used to collect the data used in this study. It will also explain the instrument design and administration.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In order to conduct this study in an organized manner, a quasi-experimental research design was implemented. The study was designed to answer the following null hypothesis. H_0: Offender's are just as likely to relapse when court ordered to complete Boxwood Treatment Program as when they are sanctioned to complete the program by their probation officer. In this chapter, the population, methods for collecting data and the procedures for analyzing the data will be presented.

POPULATION

The population of this study consists of a sample of seventy-five adults, eighteen and older, convicted of a felony offense by the Rockingham County and Page County Circuit Courts and placed on supervised probation. In addition, all members of the sample were ordered, either by the Court or by a probation officer, to enter and complete Boxwood Treatment Program as a condition of probation. All adults convicted of felonies by Rockingham County and Page County serve supervised probation through the District 39 Probation and Parole Office located in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

METHODS OF COLLECTING DATA

For this study, the Circuit Court records for Rockingham County and Page County were accessed by computer. Each file was checked for a Court order to Boxwood Treatment Program. In addition to the Court files, the District 39 billing record for offender's referred to Boxwood by the probation officer was checked. Once a list of

cases was compiled, the individual file was examined for a documented relapse after completing the program. No individual names were used and no information was taken from the files, which could reveal the identity of the offender.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

After reviewing the case files, two factors were determined. The first was method of referral to Boxwood Treatment Program; offenders were either court ordered or sanctioned by the probation officer. The second factor was whether the offender relapsed after completing the program. The statistical significance of the frequency of these factors was determined through Chi-square analysis.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, the methods and procedures that were used to collect data for the study were outlined. The information collected encompassed District 39 offenders from 1999 to 2002. This information was used to answer the research questions outlined in this paper. Chapter IV will discuss the findings of the data collected in this research project.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS

The problem of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program on offenders in the District 39 Probation and Parole Office and if the method of referral had any effect on the relapse rate. After reviewing the Rockingham County and Page County computer files for court ordered Boxwood sentencing referrals, forty-five cases were found that met this criterion. The District 39 record for Boxwood billing revealed thirty cases that were sanctioned into the program by the probation officer. The total number of cases found that met both criteria was seventy-five; 60% of the cases were court ordered and 30% were ordered by the probation officer.

EFFECTIVENESS OF REFERRAL SOURCE

Once the seventy-five cases were found, the individual files were examined for a documented relapse. A relapse occurred when the offender tested positive during a urinalysis for illegal drugs or alcohol, admitted to using illegal drugs or alcohol, or were charged with new drug/alcohol related criminal offenses, such as Driving While Intoxicated. Out of the forty-five court ordered cases, thirty-seven had a documented relapse, which translates into 82% relapsed and 18% remained sober. Ten of the thirty offenders sanctioned to Boxwood Treatment Program by the probation officer had a documented relapse. That means 67% relapsed and 33% remained sober. Table 1 shows the raw data that was collected.

TABLE 1
Raw Data

Relapse/Court-order	Sober/Court-order	Relapse/PO sanction	Sober/PO sanction
37	8	20	10

RELAPSE RATE

Out of seventy-five cases, fifty-seven or 76% relapsed. Eighteen or 24% of offenders remained sober. When the data from the method of referral was added, the chi-square analysis of all the data indicated that the calculated x^2 value was 24 as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Chi-square Factor Analysis

	Court Ordered	PO Sanction
Relapse	37	20
Sober	8	10

N= 75 $X^2 = 24$.

SUMMARY

Seventy-five cases that completed Boxwood Treatment Program were used in this study. Forty-five cases were court ordered into treatment and thirty went as a probation officer sanction. Out of the total number of cases, fifty-seven or 76% relapsed. Eighteen

or 24% of the offenders remained sober. Factoring in method of referral, there were thirty-seven relapses with court ordered offenders, or 82%. Eighteen percent of court ordered offenders remained sober. Sixty-seven percent of offenders sanctioned by the probation officer relapsed or twenty total cases. Ten cases, 33%, remained sober. The chi-square analysis of this data indicated a calculated x^2 value of 24. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations about this result are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Boxwood Treatment Program on Offenders in the District 39 Probation and Parole Office and to find out if the method of referral had any impact on the relapse rate. It was hypothesized that offenders who were court ordered to complete Boxwood were just as likely to relapse as offenders sanctioned to Boxwood by their probation officer.

SUMMARY

This study is significant because national research indicates that drug use among criminal offenders has increased since 1989. Most offenders on adult probation have used illegal drugs. A large percentage of offenders are on probation due to alcohol and drug related crimes. Locally, illegal drugs are also a significant problem. In the District 39 area, a large number of adult probationers have substance abuse problems. Finding effective treatment is important in helping offenders avoid incarceration. Research on substance abuse treatment has had opposing results. Some studies advocate short-term treatment, while others maintain that long-term treatment is the only way to decrease the relapse rate.

The results of this study may have been effected by its limitations. The main limitation is determining a relapse. Depending on the supervising probation officer, the offender could have relapsed without being detected. There is a greater chance of detecting a relapse if the offender is tested and seen more frequently. Another limitation that may have effected the results is motivation. An offender may be more motivated to

change or attend treatment as a way to get out of jail or to avoid going to jail. This motivation can be effected by the offender's criminal record. Someone with a minor criminal record may be more responsive to treatment than someone who has been in and out of prison most of their life.

The population of this study consisted of seventy-five adult offenders on probation with the District 39 Probation and Parole Office. The Rockingham County and Page County Circuit Courts had convicted all the offenders for various felony offenses. The data were collected in two ways. For court ordered treatment, the Rockingham County and Page County Circuit Court computer files were accessed. The file listed all offenders ordered, by the judge, to attend Boxwood Treatment Program as part of their sentence. For probation officer sanctions, the District 39 office keeps a record of offenders sanctioned to Boxwood by the probation officer. This record is for billing purposes. After finding the Boxwood referrals, the individual files were examined for a documented relapse. The raw data were placed in a matrix and a Chi-square analysis was conducted.

CONCLUSIONS

This study was guided by the following null hypothesis: Offenders who are court ordered to complete Boxwood Treatment Program are just as likely to relapse as offenders sanctioned to Boxwood by their probation officer. Using chi-square analysis, $x^2 = 24$. Since this is greater than 5.410 at the .01 level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. Based on the results of the research, there is no significant difference in the relapse rate when offenders are court ordered into Boxwood Treatment Program as

opposed to being sanctioned by the probation officer. The data indicates that regardless of the method of referral, 76% of offenders relapsed after complete Boxwood Treatment Program. For District 39 probation officers and the local circuit court judges, this could suggest that a long-term treatment program might be more useful.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study indicate that completing Boxwood Treatment Program does not significantly reduce the relapse rate of offenders on probation in the District 39 Probation and Parole office. It is recommended that instead of using a twenty-eight day program such as Boxwood, offenders should be ordered to complete treatment programs that are four months or longer in duration. If a long-term program is not readily available, it is recommended that upon completion of a short-term program, such as Boxwood, offenders be required to attend intensive outpatient treatment with a local Community Services Board.

This study does not find that Boxwood Treatment Program is ineffective, but that more research is needed to determine what type of treatment is most effective for adult offenders on probation. A study comparing relapse rate for twenty-eight day programs to six-month programs would be helpful to the Court and probation officers. More variables should be included in future studies, such as the time that elapsed between completing a treatment program and relapsing, gender, and prior treatment history.

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