

## Cook County Mental Health Court – Early Outcomes

### The Program

The Cook County Mental Health Court program was launched in the Circuit Court of Cook County in April 2004. The program’s goal is to increase successful probation and community reentry for felony probationers living with chronic mental illness, most of whom have co-occurring substance use disorders. The program model, which utilizes a “systems approach” to identify eligible individuals early and link them to community-based services, includes intensive treatment, interventions, and supervision. The program aims to decrease subsequent arrests, incarcerations, and hospitalizations of the target population.

### Early Outcomes

- There were 28 participants who had been active in the CCMHC program for at least one year as of August 30, 2006.
- Among these 28 participants, the average number of **arrests** per participant decreased from a pre-participation rate of 4 in the year prior to admission to .43 in the year after enrollment. This was a reduction of 3.57 days per participant, which represents an 89.3% decrease.
- Among these 28 participants, the average number of **days incarcerated** per participant decreased from a pre-participation rate of 124 in the year prior to admission to 26\*\* in the year after enrollment. This was a reduction of 98 days, which represents a 79.0% decrease.
- The **public cost savings** associated with the reduction of incarceration days for these 28 participants was dramatic. The average pre-participation cost of incarceration\* per participant in the year prior to admission was an estimated \$8,680, compared to \$1,820 in the year following enrollment. This was a reduction of at least \$6,860 per participant (or \$191,380 total), which represents a 79.0% decrease.
  - This estimate does not take into account the potential cost savings associated with arrests and adjudication that may have been prevented because of the program.
  - This estimate does not take into account the cost savings associated with participants who had been in the program for less than one year but still minimized their contact with the criminal justice system in terms of arrests and incarceration days compared with their pre-enrollment levels.

### Comparing Year Prior to and Year Post Admission: Reduction in Arrests, Days Incarcerated, & Incarceration Costs Among CCMHC Participants Enrolled at Least One Year, August 2006

Measure	Year Prior to CCMHC Admission		Year Post CCMHC Admission		Reduction Differences	
	Aggregate	Per Participant (Avg)	Aggregate	Per Participant (Avg)	Aggregate	Per Participant (Avg)
Numbers of arrests	112	4.0	12	.43	100	3.57
Days incarcerated	3,475	124	741	26**	2,734	98
Public cost of incarceration*	\$243,250	\$8,680	\$51,870	\$1,820	\$191,380	\$6,860

\*Costs are based on lowest estimate of \$70/day cost of general population; it is assumed that daily costs for CCMHC population are significantly higher based on special needs and costs of medication.

\*\*This reflects the per-participant average number of days incarcerated for new crimes as well as symptomatic regression or non-compliance with treatment. When only new-crime incarceration days are counted, the per-participant average was 8.

Note: The total number of CCMHC participants who had been enrolled for at least one year as of August 30, 2006, was 28.

Sources: Braude, L. (2005). The Cook County Mental Health Court: Development, Implementation, and Initial Implications. *Offender Substance Abuse Report*. Volume V, No. 5, Sept/Oct 2005.

State's Attorney's Office, Cook County, Illinois. (2006). Personal Communication. August 30, 2006.

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**Prepared by TASC, Inc.** TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) is a not-for-profit organization that provides recovery management services for individuals with substance use and mental health disorders. Serving more than 30,000 clients in Illinois each year, TASC's statewide infrastructure is designed to intervene when alcohol or other drug use has caused people to become involved with the criminal justice system, juvenile justice system, corrections, child welfare and/or public aid. Pursuant to Illinois statute and administrative rule, TASC is the agency designated to assess offenders with substance abuse issues and make treatment recommendations and referrals for the Illinois criminal justice system. For more information visit [www.tasc.org](http://www.tasc.org).

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