

Meeting Summary

Task Force on Specialty Courts

Meeting #4

[Link](#) to Task Force on OLIS



LPRO
LEGISLATIVE POLICY
AND RESEARCH OFFICE

Meeting Information

Date/Time August 23, 2024 ([recording](#))

Attendees

Present

Chair Clara Rigmaiden
Shane Alderson
Chris Behre
Kathy Brazell Sevos
Joseph Garcia
John Haroldson
Heidi Moawad
Matt Phillips
Laura Ruggeri
Ken Sanchagrin
Jay Scroggin
Anne Marie Simmons
Chris Wig

Excused

Kimberly Keller
Lisa Nichols

Absent

Heather Crow Martinez
AJ Gosney
Jason Van Meter

Presentations

**Monitoring and
Evaluating
Specialty Treatment
Courts**

*Dr. Doug Marlowe,
Senior Scientific
Consultant, AllRise*

[Slides](#)

Dr. Doug Marlowe presented on the best practices for monitoring specialty court operations, including what metrics to look for and how to monitor programs.

Presentation Summary

Why and How to Monitor Program Performance and Evaluate Participant Outcomes. Use of best practices is associated with 50–100% improved outcomes in specialty courts and monitoring

improves specialty court outcomes by around 50%, increasing net cost-benefits by around 100%.

Why Measure and How to Make Measurement Easy and Affordable. To achieve cost-effective monitoring, treatment courts must collect at minimum these three types of data: (1) Program Charts & Records; (2) Administrative Databases; (3) Staff Surveys (e.g., [BeST Assessment](#)).

Key Performance Indicators: The [Core KPIs](#) established by AllRise are easy and inexpensive to measure, produce better outcomes, provide points of comparison between programs and populations, and reflect both program-level and participant-level performance.

Examining Sociocultural Equity and Inclusion. Equity analyses are critical to achieving outcomes and can be conducted using published assessments (e.g., [Racial and Ethnic Disparities Program Assessment Tool](#), [Equity and Inclusion Assessment Tool](#))

Establishing Causality of Program Effects. Use comparison groups to evaluate outcomes, but avoid or account for potential biases, resource obstacles, and errors.

Selecting Competent and Objective Evaluators. A designated and trained person should oversee data collection and reporting, such as an evaluator, trained coordinator, or graduate student with faculty supervision.

Staff Training and Accountability Mechanisms. Various accountability measures are useful for monitoring, including annual reports, certifications, data entry requirements, database requirements, data collection training, and causal outcome evaluations.

Reasonable Funding is necessary for adequate program monitoring.

Questions

Dr. Marlowe responded to Member questions on the following topics:

- Measuring Recidivism
- Impact of Small-Scale Fluctuations in Crime Levels on Outcome Measurement
- Arrests Measurement Timeline



- Housing Stability as an Outcome Measure
- Importance of Testing as Part of Monitoring

A member noted that the Task Force could recommend centralized funding for testing.

**State Spotlight:
Council of
Accountability
Court Judges of
Georgia**

*Taylor Jones,
Executive Director,
Georgia Council of
Accountability Court
Judges (CACJ)*

*Josh Becker,
Assistant Director,
CACJ*

*Rachel Meyer, Data
and Research
Program Manager,
CACJ*

[Slides](#)

The Executive Director’s office of the Council of Accountability Court Judges of Georgia (CACJ) presented to the task force on the structure of Georgia’s treatment court model and how they ensure program effectiveness. The CACJ is made up of the presiding judges from each of Georgia’s 190 accountability courts (treatment courts).

Presentation Summary

Presenters covered three main subject areas: (1) CACJ structure and operation; (2) accountability mechanisms; and (3) data collection, reporting, and analysis.

CACJ Structure and Operation

Objectives, Mission, and Principles. The purpose of the CACJ is to develop and enhance accountability courts under the guidance and expertise of the judges that run them. It is an independent judicial agency that straddles the judicial and executive branches.

Scope and Membership. The CACJ is made up of the presiding judges of those courts and operates through various committees made up of council members to perform specific roles (e.g., executive, training, standards and certification).

Technical Assistance. The CACJ offers technical assistance to accountability courts for certification and peer review, treatment fidelity monitoring, training and education, data collection and analysis, and medication assisted treatment.

Accountability Mechanisms

Standards. Georgia law requires courts to follow and to demonstrate that they are following best practice standards developed and adopted by the CACJ to receive state funding. The standards are based on national best practices and tailored to each court type.



Certification. Georgia uses a certification process to demonstrate that courts are following the standards. Courts submit documentation supporting their adherence to the standards to receive certification. Standard certification lasts for two years, but new courts can apply for a six-month certification waiver, and courts in their preliminary stages can apply for a three-to-six-month provisional certification.

Peer Review. Peer reviews are used to help monitor court operations on the ground. They are typically a two day, in-person or hybrid visit with team member interviews, participant focus groups, and an exit interview. The reviewers complete a report, gather feedback, and publish a final review.

Data Collection, Reporting, and Analysis

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): The CACJ uses 11 KPIs and trains court staff to collect the data.

Quarterly Data Reporting and Program Reports. The CACJ and accountability courts use a central case management system to track participants and services provided and to inform a quarterly performance monitoring report.

Statutorily Mandated Data Points: The following data points are required by statute to be collected and reported on.

- Moderate- and high-risk participants
- Drug test results
- Employment
- Graduates and terminations
- Recidivism, based on rearrest

Data Collection Compliance. To receive grant funding, accountability courts must collect data and demonstrate use of the case management system to make decisions. The CACJ provides a variety of data collection and utilization resources to train and guide courts and publishes an annual statewide performance measures report.

Questions

Presenters responded to Member questions about the details of the CACJ funding structure, including a 15% match requirement, and the certification applications for ongoing and new courts.



Measuring Best Practices: Certification and Strategic Planning

Kelly Van DeVelde, Associate Director, Recovery and Reform, Center for Justice Innovation

[Slides](#)

Kelly Van DeVelde presented on her work in developing certification and strategic planning guidelines for treatment courts to better measure best practices. The Center for Justice Innovation (CJI) is a nonprofit working on criminal justice and legal reform that creates operating programs, performs original research, and provides expert assistance.

Presentation Summary

Strategic Planning. Strategic planning can be used at both the statewide level and for individual courts and can be targeted to specific areas or broadly review best practice standards. CJI assists programs with moving through each step of the strategic planning process, which involves (1) creating the planning committee; (2) performing a needs assessment; and (3) holding a strategic planning workshop.

Statewide Certification. CJI created a toolkit to lay out a generalized process for creating a specialty court certification program to monitor court adherence to best practice standards and to target training and technical assistance.

CJI walked through in detail the **Certification Program Development Process**, including *pre-implementation* (advisory committees and readiness assessments), *development* (creation of certification documents, applications, and certification review), *implementation* (rollout and education), and *optional steps* (peer review and site visits).

Peer Review in Specialty Courts

Dr. Juliette Mackin, Co-President, Director of Policy and Training, NPC Research

[Slides](#)

Dr. Juliette Mackin presented on peer review processes for specialty courts generally. In peer review, team members from different treatment courts gather information and conduct a site visit to ensure alignment to best practices, share successful practices with each other, and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Presentation Summary

Purpose. NPC described a variety of benefits peer review programs can provide to treatment courts. She also noted that peer reviews are intended to be an educational tool rather than an audit. They can benefit both reviewer and reviewee by facilitating



ideas exchange. Different jurisdictions set up their reviews in different ways, but NPC Research has a generalized process.

Process. The peer review process involves pre-site visit work, such as scheduling, the site visit itself for observation and interviews, and post-site visit items such as releasing the final report and any follow-up.

Resources from NPC. NPC shared a variety of resources for the peer review process. They provided guidance documents for each role in the process; example forms, including checklists, logistics forms, schedule and signup forms; and interview guidelines, focus group guidelines, observation documentation, assessments, and report templates.

*Rachael Mark,
Treatment court
Analyst, Oregon
Judicial Department
(OJD)*

*Justine Kilsby, Family
Treatment Court
Analyst, OJD*

[Slides](#)

Rachael Mark and Justine Kilsby presented on the peer review process for specialty courts in Oregon specifically.

Presentation Summary

Accountability Continuum in Oregon

- Local Program Observations (both peer and statewide)
- In-State Training and Technical Assistance from the Office of the State Court Administrator
- National Training and Technical Assistance
- Feedback and Mentor Applications
- Peer Reviews

History. Oregon has conducted several peer review projects, including the CJC adult drug court peer reviews in 2014 and 2015, the juvenile drug court reviews in 2020 and 2021, and the current Family Treatment Court peer review pilot project.

Two Types of Peer Review Models. OJD described two types of peer review models: Matched Team Exchange, where different teams are matched and review each other, and Reviewer Pool, where a pool of peer review courts is formed that travel to different courts to conduct reviews, each with its own pros and cons.

Benefits, Improvement Opportunities, and Considerations.

OJD described the benefits of the peer review programs that have been used in Oregon as well as improvement opportunities, lessons from the Family Treatment Court Pilot (e.g., tailoring the process to the specific court type), and implementation considerations.



Performance Transparency

Caroline Wong,
Senior Deputy District
Attorney, Multnomah
County

[Slides](#)

Caroline Wong presented on how the Multnomah County District Attorney's office (MCDA) used specialty court performance measurements to promote transparency and program operation for the Multnomah County STEP (Strategic Treatment and Engagement Program) Court. STEP Court targets violent crime.

Presentation Summary

What Drove the Decision to Publish the Data. MCDA was driven by a spirit of transparency, a need to demonstrate the effectiveness of STEP court, and a desire to explain effectiveness to community organizations in publishing their data. They built data collection and analysis into the program model from the start, integrating it in the program description and documentation.

Examples of Data Sharing. MCDA shared with the Task Force a variety of examples of how they shared data, including in presentations to community groups, leaders, and practitioners, as well as on social media and in grant applications.

Impacts of Data Sharing. Sharing the data resulted in the Eliot Neighborhood Association writing a letter of support for full funding of the program. It also created interest in the program, including research funding from Portland State University.

Reasons for Rearrest as Recidivism Metric

MCDA's analysis used a one year rearrest definition of recidivism to balance a need for accuracy and quick turnaround in data communication. In communications, they were careful to note the limitations for comparing their analysis to other recidivism reports.

Member Discussion

Accreditation Compared to Current System

Shane Alderson
Chair Clara
Rigmaiden

The Task Force used the few remaining minutes in the meeting to discuss the presentations.

Task Force member Shane Alderson asked: **What are the pros and cons to having an accreditation system as opposed to what we have now?**

Task Force members discussed the various models for accountability that they heard presentations on. Topics included the resource requirements of the different models, the burden that different models place on individual courts, the value of an accreditation system, and what an accreditation system might look like. A member asked about how far Oregon's specialty courts are



from best practice standards and what kind of lift it would be to bring them into practice. The members also discussed who would conduct and run an accreditation program, what benefits it would have, and what financial burdens review programs could have on courts.

**Stand-Alone
Treatment Court
Office**
Joseph Garcia

Task Force member Joseph Garcia asked: **Does anyone know how many states have a standalone treatment court office like Georgia's?**

The members discussed the merits of the Georgia model, the resources that it would require in Oregon, and the burden that model would place on programs.

Meeting Materials

Staff

[Aug 23 Timeline Overview – Tisha Pascone \(presentation\)](#)
[July 26, 2024 Meeting Summary](#)
[Member Discussion Topics \(revised\)](#)
[Oregon Specialty Court Standards](#)
[Recommendation Proposal Form](#)

Dr. Doug Marlowe

[Best Practices Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Improvement – Doug Marlowe \(presentation\)](#)
[Core KPI Standards \(dataset\)](#)
[Scientific Monitoring and Evaluation \(manual\)](#)

Taylor Jones

[Council of Accountability Court Judges of Georgia – Taylor Jones \(presentation\)](#)
[CACJ Annual Report](#)
[CACJ Economic Impact Study](#)
[CACJ Processes and Outcomes \(report\)](#)

Dr. Juliette Mackin

[Peer Review in Specialty Courts – Juliette Mackin \(presentation\)](#)
[Best Practice Assessment \(sample\)](#)
[Best Practice Assessment Report \(sample\)](#)
[Peer Review Checklist \(reviewer\)](#)
[Peer Review Checklist \(site receiving\)](#)
[Peer Review Checklist \(state facilitator\)](#)
[Peer Review Process Family Treatment Courts \(overview\)](#)
[Peer Review Roles and Timelines](#)
[Site Visit Process Family Treatment Court \(overview\)](#)



<i>Rachael Mark</i>	<u>Peer Review in Specialty Courts – Rachael Mark (presentation)</u>
<i>Kelly Van DeVelde</i>	<u>Measuring Best Practices Certification and Strategic Planning – Kelly Van DeVelde (presentation)</u>
<i>Caroline Wong</i>	<u>Performance Transparency – Caroline Wong (presentation)</u>

