



### Courts as Problem-Solvers

- Effective trial courts are responsive to emergent public issues such as drug abuse...A trial court that moves deliberately in response to emergent issues is a stabilizing force in society and acts consistently with its role of maintaining the rule of law.

### What Is A Drug Court?

- A common sense approach
- Drug/Alcohol offender
- Expedite time interval to get offenders into accountability and treatment QUICKLY
- To keep the individual engaged in treatment LONG ENOUGH to receive treatment benefits.

### 10 Key Components

- Integrate treatment in justice processing
- Non-adversarial approach
- Identify clients early
- Continuum of services
- Frequent testing to ensure sobriety
- Coordinated strategy of responses to client behavior
- Judicial intervention
- Program evaluation
- Continuing education
- Partnerships and Collaboration

### A Coordinated Effort

- Judge
- Coordinator
- Prosecutor
- Defense attorney
- Treatment
- Mental health
- Law enforcement
- Researcher
- Advocates

### Research

- Drug Courts provide the most comprehensive and effective control of drug-using offenders' criminality and drug usage while under the courts supervision.
- Over 350,000 clients have been admitted to U.S. drug court programs since 1989 with a 67-71% retention rate.
- Drug Courts outperform virtually all other strategies that have been attempted for drug-involved offenders.
- Over 3000 Drug or problem solving courts in the United States

## Best Practices

- ✦ Objective evidence based screening and assessment instruments for eligibility and suitability
- ✦ Screening should be done with standardized instruments for drug use severity, major mental health problems, motivation for treatment, and offenders criminal thinking patterns
- ✦ Easy to administer, score and clinically interpret that are accurate, reliable and valid

## Treatment and Drug Court Goals

- ✦ Elimination or reduction of alcohol and other drug use
- ✦ Improved health and function
- ✦ Reduction in public health and public safety threats

## What is Evidence Based Treatment?

- ✦ No single treatment is appropriate for all individuals
- ✦ Effective treatment attends to multiple needs of the individual
- ✦ Remaining in treatment for an adequate period of time for treatment effectiveness
- ✦ Counseling and behavior therapies are critical components
- ✦ Medications are an important element of treatment for many
- ✦ Delivered by individual with specialized training
- ✦ Individuals acquire skills
- ✦ Positive motivational enhancement

## New Mexico Problem Solving Courts

- Use collaborative treatment-based Drug Court model to work with repeat offenders whose criminal activity is driven by underlying substance abuse or mental illness
- NM include four types of drug courts: Adult, Juvenile, Family Dependency, DWI, Mental Health
- Currently 50 active problem solving courts: 17 adult/felony, 17 juvenile, 4 family dependency, 7 DWI/drug courts, 5 treatment

## NM Sentencing Commission- Metropolitan DWI/Drug Court

- ✦ Approximately 75% graduation rate
- ✦ 17.7% terminated, 8.8% absconded
- ✦ Average stay 332 days: longer for graduates
- ✦ Age at intake and being male increased odds for re-arrest for DWI
- ✦ Probation comparison group 69.7% more likely to recidivate
- ✦ Overall, drug courts are effective in reducing recidivism and improving treatment retention

## Performance Measures

- ✦ NM Drug Court recidivism rate- 7.9%; nationally 27.5%; non drug court participants is 40-60%
- ✦ NM Drug Court cost per day FY09- \$25.50; incarceration \$85.39
- ✦ NM Drug Court graduation rate 63%:

**Drug Courts save lives by  
blending justice, treatment, and  
social service systems to  
actively intervene and break  
the cycle of substance abuse,  
addiction and crime!**