

Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Program 2014 Participant Outcomes and Cost-Benefit Report (2007-2013)

Executive Summary

July 2014

A full version of this report is available at uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/about/staff/van-stelle-kit.htm

The evaluation of the TAD Program was conducted by the *University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute* to document implementation of alternatives to incarceration in nine Wisconsin counties from 2007-2013. All nine TAD sites provide participants with evidence-based case management, substance abuse treatment, drug testing, and monitoring, but vary in program model/approach, length, treatment intensity, and target population. Four of the TAD projects are adult drug treatment courts: Burnett County (in collaboration with the St. Croix tribe), Washburn County, Wood County, and Rock County. Five of the TAD projects use diversion models: Milwaukee County, Washington County, Dane County, Ashland County, and Bayfield County.

→The evaluation reveals that TAD projects successfully divert non-violent offenders with substance abuse treatment needs from further criminal justice system involvement

→During the first seven years of TAD implementation a total of 3,093 participants were admitted and 2,895 participants were discharged from TAD projects

→Two-thirds (66%) of TAD participants successfully completed program requirements, which is at or above many national rates of completion

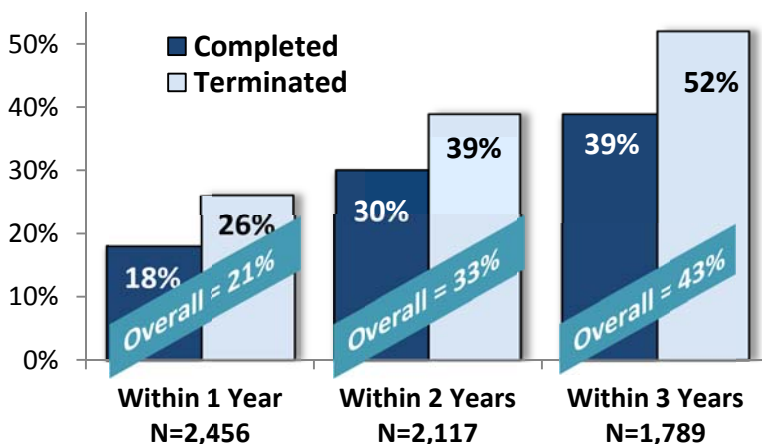
→TAD participation successfully impacts subsequent criminal conviction (see below) -- 39% of TAD completers committed a new crime within 3 years after TAD discharge, better than the national 3-year rate of 45% described by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in a 2014

Incarceration Days Averted Through TAD
2007-2013



TAD participants were averted from a total of 231,533 days of incarceration

Any New Criminal Offense Within 1, 2, and 3 Years After TAD Discharge Which Resulted in Conviction



→TAD participation successfully impacts subsequent state prison admissions with 90% of TAD participants **not** admitted to state prison for a new offense or a revocation within 3 years of TAD discharge

→TAD has a three-year recidivism rate of 17% --- only 17% of all discharges committed a new offense within 3 years after TAD exit for which they were later convicted and sentenced to either probation supervision or state prison



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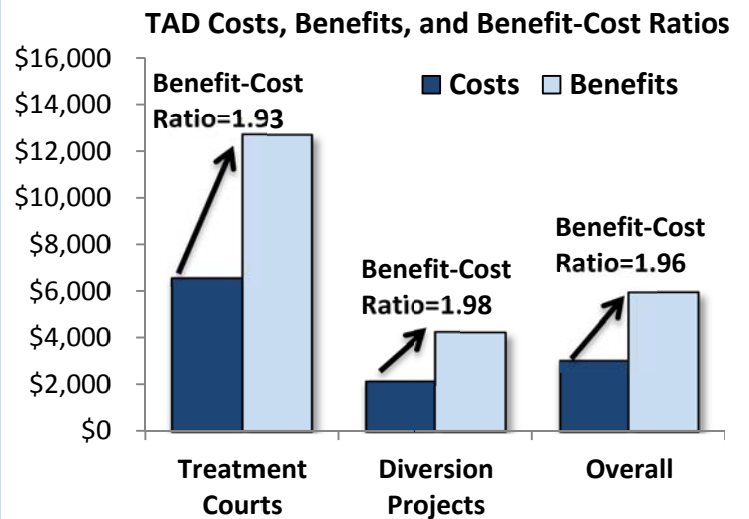
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TAD is a Collaboration of The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC), The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), and The Director of State Courts Office (SCO)



Cost-benefit analysis confirms that TAD continues to be a cost-effective option for taxpayers, with every \$1.00 invested in TAD yielding benefits of \$1.96 to the criminal justice system through averted incarceration and reduced crime

“Net benefits” (program benefits minus program costs) can provide a more complete picture of the relationship between costs and benefits and are often more informative for decision-making. Overall, TAD has a net benefit per discharge of \$2,912. Net benefits are \$6,141 for each treatment court discharge and \$2,090 for each diversion project discharge.



A multi-pronged effort by diverse stakeholder groups has resulted in the expansion of TAD funding and capacity. At the time of this report, TAD has expanded from nine Wisconsin counties in December 2013 to 36 counties/tribes in mid-2014, with a total portfolio of \$4.08 million.

Many critical factors have played a role in the success of the TAD Program to date. The collaborative partnership among state agencies has been essential to monitor project implementation, provide guidance to TAD sites, and advocate for alternatives to incarceration among state policymakers. The dedicated local project staff who engage and serve TAD participants, advocate for TAD services among county stakeholders, and assure fidelity to evidence-based practices have provided the foundation for the four-fold expansion. The fundamental design of the TAD approach as one that allows counties to respond to local needs with a wide array of projects has also been part of the program’s success. The active role of the TAD Advisory Committee has contributed to the successful operation of the program by providing invaluable guidance to sites regarding evidence-based practices, implementation, and program fidelity. The TAD Program has been greatly enhanced by the independent evaluation that documents project activity and outcomes, conducts ongoing data quality monitoring, and provides formative evaluation feedback to local sites and state agency partners.

Overview of Recommendations Going Forward

#1 Collaboration is Critical. Continue the historical collaboration among local, county, state, and national partners that has been the foundation of TAD’s success and the primary stimulus behind the recent expansion. The collaboration should include joint decision-making and information-sharing related to program implementation and focus, the development of an integrated data system, and partnerships to increase TAD’s emphasis as an alternative to revocation (ATR) to most directly impact prison populations.

#2 Administrative and Evaluation Support During Expansion is Critical. The expansion of TAD from 9 to 36 counties/tribes within the first six months of 2014 has provided an exceptional opportunity to advance diversion in Wisconsin, but has also created challenges. Legislative support for both administrative functions within DOJ and for continued evaluation of the TAD Program is needed to continue the successful implementation of TAD, particularly during expansion phases when (a) new projects require technical support to assure fidelity to evidence-based practices and (b) impartial monitoring of progress and outcomes is essential to document program effectiveness. Maintaining the current evaluation approach will assure that consistently high-quality information will remain available to policymakers for use in decision-making.

The full evaluation report contains additional recommendations to continue the success of the TAD program.