

A STRATEGY FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

ONE LESS, Second Edition E-News

FALL 2012

What is EBDM?

"Evidence-based decision making" (EBDM) is the practice of using research findings to inform or guide decisions across the justice system

An Initiative of the National Institute of Corrections: A Collaborative Project Among the Center for Effective Public Policy, Pretrial Justice Institute, Justice Management Institute and the Carey Group.

YOUR LOCAL EBDM EXECUTIVE TEAM:

The Honorable David Bottger, Chief Judge, 21st Judicial District

Craig Henderson, County Court Judge, 21st Judicial District

Pete Hautzinger, District Attorney, 21st Judicial District

Stan Hilkey, Sheriff, Mesa County (Co-Chair)

Chantal Unfug, Mesa County Administrator

Susan Gilbert, Chief Probation Officer, 21st Judicial District

Dennis Berry, Director, Mesa County Criminal Justice Services Department

Trish Mahre, Chief Deputy District Attorney, 21st Judicial District

Bert Nieslanik (Co-Chair), Deputy Director, State of Colorado Alternative Defense Counsel,

Jennifer Sheetz, Criminal Justice Data Analyst, Mesa County Criminal Justice Services

Department/ DA's Office.

Contact: Sue Gormley, Local Initiative Coordinator, sgormley23@gmail.com

Mesa County—On the Brink of Innovation

"I believe in innovation and the way you get innovation is you fund research and you learn the basic facts." - Bill Gates

The Mesa County criminal justice system has taken Bill Gates's advice and is pursuing new and better ways to assist our local law enforcement in making arrest decisions. Using the Proxy Triage Assessment (PTA), a three question risk assessment tool, law enforcement officers will soon

be able to identify how likely an individual is to violate the law in the future and make a better informed decision about whether to warn, summons or arrest.

Before turning the deputies loose with this new tool steps were taken to make the assessment reflect our local criminal justice population. Over the course of six months 1,277 assessments were completed on individuals in the First Appearance Center and in the

Mesa County Detention Facility. The data resulting from these assessments was then analyzed and split into scoring categories for each of the three questions and a numerical score ranging from 2 to 8 was calculated for each individual. The number ranges represent a "risk spectrum" for future law violations. Scores ranging from 2-4 represent "low risk" individuals, scores of 5 and 6 represent "medium risk" individuals and scores of 7 or 8 represent "high risk" individuals. Our 6 month

EBDM

The Evidence-Based Decision Making
in Local Criminal Justice Systems Initiative



sample produced the following risk distribution:

- 37.4% were "low risk"
- 48.3 were "medium risk"
- 14.3% were "high risk"

All the individuals participating in this project will have their criminal justice involvement tracked and new charged law violations will be recorded and analyzed in an effort to provide additional clarity to what "low", "medium" and "high" risk means and what the differences between the categories are.

It is planned that by December 1, 2012 Mesa County Sheriff's Office patrol deputies will be using this tool on the streets.

A basic summarization of the

data is below:

- Of the 1,277 defendants assessed:

CURRENT AGE:

1/3 were between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of arrest

1/3 were between the ages of 26 and 35 at the time of arrest

The final 1/3 were 36 years or older at the time of arrest

AGE OF FIRST ARREST

1/3 were under the age of 18 when first arrested

1/3 were between the ages of 19 and 22 when first arrested

The final 1/3 were 23 years or older when first arrested

NUMBER OF PRIOR ARRESTS:

1/3 had either never been arrested/summonsed before or had only one prior arrest/summons before the current incident.

1/3 had 2 or 3 previous arrests/summons before the current incident

The final 1/3 had 4 or more previous arrests/summons before the current incident.

For more information, contact Jennifer Sheetz
Criminal Justice Data Analyst

Pretrial Success!!!!

The Pretrial EBDM group consists of system stakeholders from every major system angle, including Judges, defense attorneys, public defenders, district attorneys, Pretrial Services officials and Sheriff's office staff. This group has been meeting for about 18 months now and has made significant progress, particularly in the area of collaborative problem-solving. It has been said that collaboration is the most

important element regarding moving forward with evidence-based practices, because without it, it is hard to move forward with anything with lasting change. Although many competing perspectives are at the table, in a system that is adversarial in nature, this group has been able to collaboratively produce products such as a new evidence-based Pretrial Services report, a supervision model that reflects known best

practices (i.e. more supervision to higher risk defendants, and little to no supervision of lower risk defendants). This tool is called the SMART Praxis. What is a "Praxis"? A praxis in this context implies the system developed and implemented based on the known best practices in the Pretrial field. Simply defined - a "Praxis" is our current implemented Pretrial supervision

EBDM

The Evidence-Based Decision Making
in Local Criminal Justice Systems Initiative



methodology. SMART = Supervision Matrix Assessment and Recommendation Tool. This tool was developed and is currently being revised through the collaborative work of the Mesa County Pretrial EBDM work group. This tool tells Pretrial Services when to recommend Pretrial

Supervision on defendants. This tool also defines the methodology of supervision, which provides four levels, from low level supervision to higher level of supervision, which is based on the CPAT risk scores and the crime. The group is currently working on a proposal for a new Bonding

Practice system that will incorporate these practices into a bond schedule. The work from this group has been recognized by Pretrial practitioners on a national level, including the National Institute of Corrections and the Pretrial Justice Institute.

The Pre-Sentencing Investigative Report Group (PSIR)

The PSIR Group finalized the Revision to the Pre-Sentencing Report and held its first training on the new form on October 24th. The training was attended by members from the defense bar, DA's office, CJSJ and Public Defender's Office. They are working on setting a

date to train DA'S that were not able to attend the training on the 24th. It is hoped to train the bench at the District Court Judges meeting this month and will train the probation officers at an all-staff meeting scheduled for November 21st. It is expected use of the new format will begin on Dec. 1st.

For more information, please contact Susan M. Gilbert, Chief Probation Officer.
susan.gilbert@judicial.state.co.us

EBDM MEETING CALENDAR

PRETRIAL WORK GROUP – NOVEMBER 14, 2012, CJS BRIDGER BUILDING, 5:00 P.M.

SENTENCING ALTERNATIVE GROUP – NOVEMBER 29, 2012 JUSTICE CENTER, COURTROOM #6, NOON TO 1:30.

EBDM EXECUTIVE MEETING – DEC, 6, 2012, JUSTICE CENTER, COURTROOM #6, 7A.M.

FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO A COLLEAGUE!