

Title of Presentation: Lessons Learned in a COSIG-funded Screening and Identification of Co-Occurring Disorders for Forensic Populations

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Pennsylvania's Co-Occurring Systems Integration Grant (COSIG) focuses on the development of six unique demonstration programs, two of which include pilot forensic programs in local counties that have three service delivery systems working together to identify and support individuals with COD (Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Criminal Justice). This presentation will focus on these two Co-Occurring Disorder (COD) forensic programs that have targeted screening and assessment of persons entering the jails; including both an urban and a mixed rural-suburban model. The screening and assessment intervention targets both men and women who were incarcerated, on average, for a 3-4 month period. The program interventions provided both jail-based COD services and community-based forensic COD services that included: 1) Identification; 2) Screening and Placement; 3) Treatment; and 4) Transition into the Community.

Individuals in these forensic programs have continually screened positive for COD at a higher rate than in traditional community COD programs. For example, in one program approximately 600 persons have been screened to-date for COD in their initial entrance into the facility as a component of their overall jail intake process; over 60% screened positive for COD. This COD screening and assessment data indicated that: women were highly over-represented in the treatment population compared to the male population; women screened and assessed at a much higher rate for mental health disorders as their primary disorders; and that men screened and assessed at a higher rate for substance abuse disorders. These gender and disorder-based differences will be discussed to explore possible explanatory factors contributing to this higher rate, i.e. criminal history, reported PTSD or other behavioral health diagnoses.

Clinical and programmatic outcomes from these programs will be described. Lessons learned, both for screening and assessment as well as for future program planning for residential interventions and community reintegration efforts, including transition planning and release preparation, will be described.