Goldilocks – A Crime Prevention Initiative

Identifying the ‘Just Right’ Intervention

The Problem

Deschutes County has a drug problem - each year the number of drug arrests grows. This rise is primarily due to known offenders being rearrested for drug possession or committing other crimes such as theft. Our recidivism rates are high because our traditional prosecution strategy too harshly penalizes individuals with addictions and is too lenient on individuals manufacturing and selling drugs. The current criminal justice model has created a revolving door and it is time to make a change.

The Solution

Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel, in collaboration with law enforcement, launched Goldilocks: a three-tiered program that targets the intervention that is just right for each criminal suspect.

1. **Clean Slate:** Pre-charge diversion for people suspected of possession of a controlled substance (PCS). Eligible participants are screened and placed in Clean Slate Level I or II based on the results of risk assessment screenings (Texas Christian University Drug Screen, the Adverse Childhood Experiences, and the Connor-Davidson Resiliency Scale). Level I participants receive referrals to services. They are not charged with a crime regardless of whether they avail themselves of the services. Level II participants are directly referred to a participating primary care provider at one of two federally qualified health centers (Mosaic or La Pine Community Health Center). If Level II participants participate in and substantially benefit from their treatment, and if they remain crime free for a year, they are not charged with a crime and their original arrest record is expunged.

2. **Boost:** For suspects who were not successful in Clean Slate, or who are charged with a drug crime more severe than PCS. These individuals are prosecuted via the “traditional” criminal justice system model. If eligible, and subject to availability, people in this tier can enter the Circuit Court’s Family Drug Court program.

3. **Deter:** District Attorney seeks the maximum prison sentence for individuals with a history of drug dealing who are charged with a commercial drug offense or with selling drugs to a minor.

This county-wide collaborative program, involving law enforcement, behavioral health, primary care physicians, drug counselors, and public defenders will decrease the number of individuals in the criminal justice system, reduce recidivism rates, and create a safer and healthier community.

Distinct Goldilocks Attributes

The Goldilocks model is unique and positioned for success due to: 1) Comprehensive three-tiered approach; 2) Partnership with federally qualified health centers to ensure access to complete medical care as opposed to merely addiction treatment; 3) Focus on quick entry into drug treatment; 4) Defense attorney involvement that includes expungement of arrest record; 4) Tougher penalties for drug dealers who are taking advantage of our community.

Evaluation

Program participants will be screened, tracked, and monitored throughout this pilot initiative to determine which program elements are effective in reducing recidivism and which components need to be adjusted or scraped.