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MISSION Diversion & Recovery for Traumatized Veterans (MISSION DIRECT VET): Early Findings and Lessons Learned

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Baseline Participant Data - Pilot Site - First Year

What is MISSION DIRECT VET?

MISSION DIRECT VET is a SAMHSA- funded, court based diversion program targeting veterans in Massachusetts with trauma-related mental health and substance use problems.

- ❖ MISSION-DIRECT VET seeks to:
 - * Reduce criminal justice involvement
 - * Treat mental health, substance abuse and other trauma related symptoms
 - * Use a systematic wrap-around model
 - * Provide care coordination, peer support and trauma informed services
 - * Develop interagency partnerships to serve veterans with co-occurring disorders

Background

- ❖ The MISSION (Maintaining Independence and Sobriety through Systems Integration, Outreach, and Networking) model has successfully reduced chronic homelessness in veterans through:
 - * peer support
 - * case management
 - * integrated mental health and substance abuse treatment
- ❖ This model was adapted for criminal justice involved veterans.
- ❖ Program Pilot site: Worcester District Court

| Recruitment Numbers as of September 10, 2010 | |
|--|----|
| Number Screened | 27 |
| Number Screened as Eligible | 25 |
| Number Diverted to MISSION (by Judge) | 16 |
| Number Currently Receiving Services | 14 |
| Number Currently Enrolled in Evaluation | 14 |

| Military Histories | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Honorable Discharges | 11 |
| Service era (not exclusive): | 10: Persian Gulf era; 8: Iraq/Afghanistan era; 5: post - Vietnam; 1: Vietnam |
| Military branch (not exclusive): | 8: Army; 1: Navy; 1: Airforce; 5: Marines; 1: National guard |
| Deployments | Range: 1-7; 7 were deployed for more than one tour of duty |
| Active Combat | 10 |

| Prior Criminal Justice Involvement | |
|--|--|
| Jail | Range: 1-4 times in jail |
| Age of 1 st arrest | Range: 10-51 years old, 52% before the age of 18 |
| Probation | 12 |
| Prior convictions; ≥ 2 prior convictions | 8; 6 |
| Restraining Order | 9 |

| Client Demographics | |
|---------------------|--|
| Age Range | 24-61 |
| Education | 10: ≤ high school degree; 3: B.A. |
| Employment | 6: employed full or part time |
| Finances | 3: federal disability; 8: veterans benefits; 2: unemployment |
| Living Situation | 9: live in own home/apartment |

| Mental Health Treatment and Symptoms | |
|---|-------|
| Prior outpatient treatment | 11 |
| Prior inpatient treatment | 8 |
| Witnessed another seriously injured or killed; same, before the age of 18 | 12; 9 |
| Engaged in physical violence with someone they did not know; same, before the age of 18 | 11; 6 |
| First encounter mental health services before the age of 18 | 3 |

| Substance Abuse Treatment and Symptoms | |
|--|------|
| In the last month, used alcohol/drugs 2 or more days | 11/6 |
| Prior inpatient treatment | 8 |
| Prior outpatient substance abuse treatment | 4 |
| Prior inpatient substance use treatment | 9 |
| Average age at 1 st substance abuse treatment | 23 |

Lessons Learned

- ❖ Clients are both service and crisis intensive.
- ❖ Clients; high service need raises issues regarding treatment team caseload capacity.
- ❖ Critical events include: re-arrests, probation violations, hospitalization and suicide threats. Referrals ebb and flow; still looking for patterns and reasons why.
- ❖ Efforts to optimize referrals have included training criminal justice personnel, having treatment team presence in court, increasing program visibility, addressing incentives/disincentives with prospective participants, and networking with other veteran outreach programs

Next Steps

- ❖ Expansion to Lawrence District Court: November, 2010
- ❖ Options for program expansion include alternative diversion intercept points and further interagency partnering.



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