Vocational and Life Skills Initiative: Data Tracking and Evaluation

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Background

• VLS was created by LB907 in (2014), with these tracking requirements:

  ➢ How many individuals received programming?
  ➢ Types of programming received
  ➢ Cost per individual for each program, service, or training provided
  ➢ How many individuals successfully completed their programming?
Evaluation Questions

• It takes time to track recidivism and employment, but as our data improves, our research questions include:

  1. What works? (effectiveness)
  2. For whom? (responsivity)
  3. For how much? (cost-effectiveness)
NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

• Developed and maintain online data management system

• Benefits to stakeholders:
  
  ➢ **Grantees**: provided database system and T/TA, enhancing capacity to do their work
  
  ➢ **NDCS**: can see real-time data
  
  ➢ **NCJR**: can ensure that data is accurate, timely, complete, and uniform
NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

• As a result of new data system:
  ▪ Programs have data updated monthly
  ▪ Created a common language about data
  ▪ Grantees see data system as a tool and not just something to meet grant requirements
  ▪ Grantees are now regularly talking about data and how it relates to their programming
NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

- Provide monthly, quarterly, and annual data reports
- Website developed that provides access to all reports (justiceresearch.unomaha.edu)
- Data sharing with outside agencies (e.g. NDCS, Probation, Dept. of Labor)
Description of Participants
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

- Data analysis reflects 2,661 “individual participations” by 2,179 unique individuals.
Gender Distribution
Males: 2125  Females: 536

20% Male
80% Female
Racial Distribution

White: 1399
Black: 749
N. Am./Alaskan: 110
Other: 297
Unknown: 21
More than one: 85
Ethnic Distribution
Hispanic: 290  Non-Hispanic: 2348

- Hispanic: 11%
- Non-Hispanic: 89%
Marital Status

- Married: 321
- Divorced: 380
- Separated: 57
- Single: 1860
- Widowed: 17

- Married: 71%
- Divorced: 14%
- Separated: 2%
- Single: 1%
- Widowed: 1%
Education

Less than HS: 282
HS/GED: 1576
Some college: 489
Vocational: 38
Associate’s: 57
College+: 36
Intake Status

Inmate: 1550
Parolee: 259
Probationer: 300
W/in 18 mos.: 118
Work release: 433

- Inmate: 58%
- Parolee: 10%
- Probationer: 16%
- W/in 18 mos. of discharge: 11%
- Work release: 5%
Reason Program Ended

Successful Comp: 1499
Term. by program: 75
Term. by self: 252
Moved: 56
Referral: 6
Term. employ: 11
Other: 38
Barriers to Employment
Survey data: April-Oct. 2017

- Substance abuse: 25.7%
- Mental health: 13.8%
- Job or life skills: 20.3%
- Disability: 15.1%
- Housing: 24.1%
- Childcare: 33.1%
- Transportation: 6.4%
- Social support (family/friends): 13.2%
- None of these: 25.7%
Complexity of Tracking Data

• Multi-site evaluation:
  - 7 grantees
  - 33 program areas with unique interventions
  - 10 correctional facilities and the community

• Programs vary widely:
  - Length, programming type, location, risks/needs, resources available

• Voluntary participation
Future Directions

1. Performance measures for programs
   - Created in agreement with NDCS and grantees
   - Clearly specify performance expectations
   - Provide “measuring stick” to assess monthly, quarterly and annual progress
Future Directions

2. Outcome data:

- Continue to track and expand outcome data for participants

- Consider short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes

- Match appropriate outcomes to program areas both in institutions and community
Future Directions

3. Evidence-based practices
   - Principles of Effective Interventions (PEI)
   - Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR)
Thank you!
Questions?

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