



Waukesha County Criminal Justice Collaborating Council
Evidence-Based Decision Making Pretrial Workgroup Minutes
Wednesday, March 15, 2017

Team Members Present:

Judge Jennifer Dorow (Chair)	Sam Benedict	Laura Lau
Mary Wittwer	JoAnn Eiring	

Team Members Absent:

Sue Opper	Craig Kuhary
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Also Present:

Rebecca Luczaj	Janelle McClain	Amy Rendall
Abbey Nickolie	Anna Keys	Daniela Imig

Benedict called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. The meeting began with introductions amongst the committee members and guests present.

Approve Minutes from February 15, 2017 Meeting

Motion: Eiring moved, second by Lau, to approve the minutes from February 15, 2017. Motion passed unanimously.

Dorow arrived at 12:15 p.m.

Update on Data Collection Project

Rendall distributed and reviewed the updated spreadsheet containing data from the first week of every month between September 2015 and September 2016, with information for each in-custody case on specific court dates. The purpose of the data collection project is to examine the correlation between the risk score and the outcome of the case at the initial appearance (i.e. were low risk individuals given cash bail and were high risk individuals given signature bonds, which individuals were ordered to supervision, etc.).

There could be multiple reasons why a risk score is not listed. If there is a “?” in the field, it means that there was no risk assessment completed.

Luczaj will e-mail the spreadsheet to NIC Consultant, Mimi Carter, for review, asking for her input on what specifically should be analyzed from this data before the next meeting.

Review and Discuss February 20 Pretrial Observation Findings

Luczaj distributed, and Dorow reviewed, a memo from Carter detailing her observations/findings from the Waukesha pretrial services site visit on February 20, as well as the Wisconsin EBDM Initiative Pretrial Pilot Protocol.

On February 20, Luczaj and Carter observed pretrial screening interviews at the jail, intake court for both out-of-custody and in-custody defendants, as well as pretrial supervision appointments at the WCS offices.

Carter was concerned that the out-of-custody defendants had not been screened, although the in-custody defendants had. The workgroup discussed possible reasons for this, such as that “book and release” defendants can be in and out of the jail in less than an hour. Adding second shift screeners would not necessarily solve the problem, as this is a busy time for jail staff and screeners would still most likely not catch this population for screening.

Judicial officers will need to be trained on the use and purpose of whichever pretrial screening tool we implement in the Pretrial Pilot.

Dorow explained that data collection is a challenge for all counties.

Matt Raymer at the WI Department of Justice (DOJ) had mentioned to Luczaj that the struggle with the Arnold Foundation’s PSA tool is that the timelines of when the state needs it versus when we can get it, do not match. If we are unable to utilize the tool from the Arnold Foundation, the state may identify a small selection of available tools, and the counties could choose from that.

The workgroup determined that it would be beneficial to gather data on the pretrial screening process, such as how many cases there are on a daily basis, and how long it takes to complete an average screening. WCS will conduct a short-term study to gather the data.

Carter’s findings from the pretrial services site visit were mostly minor, but improvements still need to be made to have fidelity to best practices.

Discuss Substance Use Language Used on Pretrial Screening Report

Pretrial screeners are noting specific information on the risk assessment reports to the court, such as how often illegal drugs are being used, and the information is being used against the defendant later in the court process. WCS will address this with the screeners, as it is a training issue. Benedict also recommended that an MOU may solve this issue. The group will ask Carter at the next meeting if there is recommended language to use on the screening report when substance use is identified.

Discuss Next Steps

The workgroup will continue to discuss the memo from Carter at the next meeting, starting with number 16.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.