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Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW)

Tucson Police Department Deflection Program 6 Month Evaluation Findings

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The Tucson Police Department (TPD) Deflection Program

The TPD Deflection Program aims to address misuse of opioids and other substances as well as related issues, such as criminality, by identifying individuals with substance misuse issues, encouraging them to get treatment, and immediately transporting them to a treatment provider. The Deflection Program has three main components. (1) Under the Deflection Program, police officers have the discretion to deflect individuals with substance misuse problems who are willing to consider treatment. That is, they encourage them to seek treatment in lieu of arresting them, which includes transporting them immediately to a partnering treatment provider when possible. (2) A subcomponent of the Deflection Program is the Angel Program, where police officers help individuals get connected to substance misuse treatment providers when they approach police officers in the community or at a TPD facility and ask for assistance. (3) A third key component of the Deflection Program is the law enforcement/behavioral health peer support co-responder teams who are conducting active outreach in the community focused on encouraging people to seek substance misuse treatment or to re-engage in treatment if they had been in treatment before.

TPD implemented the Deflection Program July 1, 2018. The University of Arizona’s SIROW began the evaluation of the Deflection Program November 1, 2018 upon the award and initiation of a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Services Administration (SAMHSA, 1H79TI081559). This report summarizes findings of the 6-month evaluation of the TPD Deflection Program utilizing data collected November 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019.

TPD Connection of Individuals with Substance Misuse Problems to Treatment & Services

Across the three components of the Deflection Program...

362 unique individuals with substance misuse problems were identified and encouraged to get treatment through the Deflection Program.

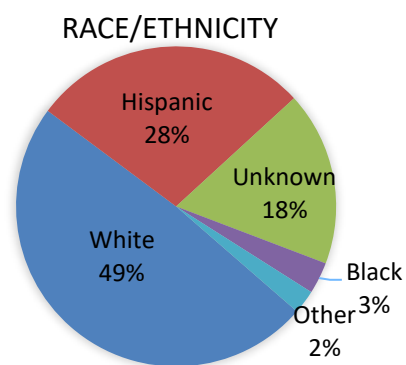
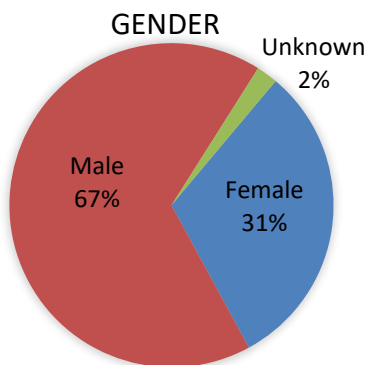
Deflections	Angel Program Referrals	Outreach
281	7	74

Officer Utilization of the Deflection Program

Officers deflected **281** unique individuals. **306** total deflections, with **22** individuals deflected more than once.

Description of Deflected Individuals¹

Age ranged from 18 to 78 with an average age of 33.



¹ Gender and race/ethnicity are based on officer perceptions.

Individuals' Initial Reaction to Deflection to Substance Misuse Treatment (of the 306 total deflections)

Definitely wanted to do it	Undecided/unsure	Definitely not interested
137 (45%)	79 (26%)	75 (25%)

49 (32%) of these 154 individuals were persuaded by officers to get treatment

Individuals Not Offered Deflection

Officers completed surveys regarding 1,698 drug related cases that occurred during the 6 month period and did not result in deflection.

Reasons why Individuals were not Offered Deflection

Individual choice	587 (35%)
Individual not interested or willing to participate in treatment	160 (9%)
Individual said that she/he did not have a substance use problem	280 (17%)
Individual said she/he did not need treatment	110 (7%)
Individual already in treatment	19 (1%)
Individual seeking services on own	18 (1%)
Individual characteristic	107 (6%)
Individual was in crisis	26 (2%)
Individual was not coherent	67 (4%)
Individual was hospitalized or taken to crisis center	14 (1%)
Individual ineligible because of type of crime or criminal history	828 (49%)
Individual non-compliant (e.g., lied, fled, fought officers)	176 (10%)
Officer choice to not offer deflection	170 (10%)

137 (8%) of the individuals who were not deflected were given printed information about substance misuse treatment or other resources, including the officer's business card.

Utilization of the Angel Program

2 individuals went to a TPD facility and asked for assistance getting treatment.

5 individuals approached police officers in the community and asked for assistance getting treatment.

Outreach Activities

Interactions with Multiple Individuals during an Outreach Activity

TPD officers and the behavioral health peer support co-responders visited community areas identified as areas where individuals who misuse substances tend to hang out and use substances to identify people who have substance misuse issues and encourage them to seek treatment.

Location of outreach activity	Number of outreach activities	Number of people reached	Informational materials distributed ²	Narcan distributed
A park	18	98	165	45
An area where homeless individuals live	3	9	10	2
Other area	2	5	8	3
Total	23	112 (74 unique individuals)	183	50

Outreach to Single Individuals

Reason for Outreach

Reason	Number
Referral from officer or other interaction with law enforcement	7
Came across individual while in community—they approached me	7
Came across individual while in community—I approached them	38*
Follow up after subject disengaged from substance misuse treatment	1
Community member requested assistance with family member or friend	3
Total	56

*These individuals were approached during an outreach activity with multiple individuals.

What Happened during Outreach?

Interaction outcome	Number
Talked to individual about substance misuse treatment	54
Individual provided informational materials ²	40

Identification of Individuals with Substance Misuse Problems (of the 56 outreached individuals)

Did not need treatment	Currently receiving treatment	Need treatment
15 (27%)	2 (4%)	39 (70%)

Encouraged to continue treatment

35 (90%) offered immediate transport to treatment provider. 4 (10%) not offered transport because individuals needed hospitalization or was not interested, or officer had arrestee to transport.

Individuals' Reaction to Offer of Immediate Transport to Treatment Provider (of the 35 offered transport)

Definitely wanted to do it	Undecided/unsure	Definitely not interested
9 (26%)	21 (60%)	5 (14%)

7 (27%) of these 26 subjects were persuaded by officers/co-responders to get treatment

14 (40%) individuals were transported immediately to a treatment provider.

² These materials included cards for CODAC's MAT clinic, pamphlets describing services at CODAC, Arizona Complete Care resource cards, Naloxone pamphlets, men's services brochure, pamphlets describing services at Cornerstone, and officer's or Outreach Engagement Specialist's business card.

Engagement in Substance Misuse Treatment & Related Services

71 individuals received a full assessment of physical, mental, and behavioral health problems and needs from CODAC.

34 individuals were identified as having opioid use disorder and appropriate for medication-assisted treatment.

69 individuals were identified as having a use disorder for a substance(s) other than opioids.

40 individuals are currently engaged in longer-term substance misuse treatment at CODAC.

10 individuals are currently engaged in medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder.

30 individuals are currently engaged in other type of outpatient substance misuse treatment for opioid or other drug use disorder.

33 individuals are currently engaged in substance misuse treatment at another treatment provider, such as Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI).³

Individuals' Reaction to the TPD Deflection Program⁴

Ann was deflected in November 2018 when she was 30 weeks pregnant. She has been engaged in medication-assisted treatment for her opioid use disorder ever since (6 months). As a result, she has reunited with her parents and her son.

Her note to deflecting officer: *I just want to say thank you and because of you I was able to get off of the streets and go home to my parents....I have been clean and now have a relationship with my son again....I have been coming to CODAC every day. Thank you again, you changed my life tremendously.*

Cindy was deflected in December 2018 and has been engaged in medication-assisted treatment for her opioid use disorder ever since (5 months).

Her note to deflecting officer: *Just wanted to thank you for changing and saving my life!*

Laura was deflected in April 2019 and has been engaged in medication-assisted treatment for her opioid use disorder ever since (1 month).

Her note to deflecting officer: *Thank you for referring me to the diversionary program. I am going on 3 wks clean from heroin. I don't think I could have done this w/out this program.*

David, deflected in February 2019, remarked that he was pleasantly surprised that the officer offered them the option of treatment instead of taking them to jail. He noted that *"obviously putting us in jail is not working and treatment is better."*

Juan, deflected in February 2019, explained that when the officer approached them, the intensity level was high. The officer asked about the drug paraphernalia. When Juan said that it belonged to him, the intensity level of the conversation lowered significantly and the officer began to discuss treatment options. Juan said that *"this is the first time I was not treated like a criminal. I was treated like a human."* Juan said that it was clear from the interaction that the officer had been through training. Juan noted several times that he was *"shocked"* by the officer's behavior because he had never been treated that way by the police before. Juan thinks that the Deflection Program will benefit the community.

Starting prior to October 2018, officers started assisting Rob's parents in trying to get Rob into substance misuse treatment. They provided information and encouragement to Rob and his parents. Rob had been using

³ This information is based on individuals' reports supplemented by provider reports when available.

⁴ Real names of these individuals are not used to protect their identities.

opiates and other drugs since he was a teenager. He had lost custody of his son because of his substance use and was homeless. As a result of officers' continued encouragement and assistance, Rob has been engaged in medication-assisted treatment for his opioid use disorder ever since October 2018 and is working on repairing his relationships with his family and on being reunified with his son. Rob wants to do what he can to help TPD help others like they helped him.

Key Findings

The results indicate that officers are identifying subjects who are willing to consider treatment and have been successful at encouraging them to get connected with treatment providers.

- **61%** of the 306 individuals offered deflection, agreed to be deflected.
- **40%** of the 35 individuals offered immediate transport to a substance misuse treatment provider during outreach agreed to be transported.

The majority of officers appear to be utilizing the Deflection Program and considering the deflection program eligibility criteria as well as subject willingness for substance misuse treatment when they are deciding whether or not to offer deflection.

- Most of the reasons why officers did not offer deflection reflected the eligibility criteria (49%), subject choice regarding treatment (35%), subject non-compliance (10%), or a subject limitation at the time, such as the subject being hospitalized (6%).

Results indicate Deflection Program success in terms of individual engagement in substance misuse treatment and response to the program.

- **71** Deflection Program participants were assessed by CODAC clinical staff to determine their physical, mental, and behavioral health problems and needs – a critical first step to getting appropriate treatment and services.
- **40** Deflection Program participants are currently engaged in substance misuse treatment at CODAC; an additional **33** are reported to be currently engaged in substance misuse treatment at another treatment provider.
- Deflection Program participants have expressed positive reactions to the program, such as gratitude for the assistance, respect, and encouragement provided by officers.

Results also indicate the challenge of engaging in substance misuse treatment and reducing substance misuse even when treatment is available and individuals recognize the substantial negative impact substance misuse has on their lives and relationships with other people. These results highlight the need for continued outreach to individuals identified through the Deflection Program as having substance misuse issues.

- **22** individuals were deflected more than once.
- **40 of the 232 (17%)** who agreed to go to treatment (either immediately or as soon as they could make arrangements) are currently engaged in substance misuse treatment at CODAC, with an additional **33 of the 232 (14%)** reported to be currently engaged in substance misuse treatment at another treatment provider.

Conclusion

The Deflection Program has been successful at identifying individuals with substance misuse problems and connecting them with treatment providers. These efforts have resulted in a significant number of individuals getting substance misuse treatment. Continued coordinated efforts by the officer/behavioral health peer support co-responders and treatment providers could lead to increased engagement in treatment.

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