

The University of Arizona

Southwest Institute for Research on Women

U-MATTER

Deflection Decisions Evaluation Findings

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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

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Results Summary

Data collected October 16, 2018 to November 23, 2018 using the Deflection Decisions Survey. 241 surveys completed.

Deflections

38 surveys completed regarding deflections.

Who first mentioned deflection?

Officer: 33 (87%)

Subject - wanted more information: 4 (11%)

Subject – specifically requested it: 1 (3%)

What was subject's initial response when offered deflection?

Definitely not interested: 0 (0%)

Undecided/unsure: 9 (24%) – 100% of these were encouraged to deflect and then deflected

Definitely wanted to do it: 29 (76%)

31 (82%) of deflected subjects self-identified as needing substance use treatment

Subjects Arrested for Narcotics-related Offence

203 surveys completed regarding narcotics-related offenses.

Offered Deflection

16 (8%) of these subjects were offered deflection

1 (6%) subject first mentioned deflection, but was not interested in it and was not encouraged by officer

15 (94%) officer first mentioned deflection

9 (60%) were definitely not interested; 7 (78%) of these were encouraged by officer

6 (40%) were undecided/unsure; 5 (83%) of these were encouraged by officer

4 (25%) of these subjects self-identified as needing substance use treatment

3 (19%) of these subjects were given printed information about substance use treatment

Not Offered Deflection

187 (92%) of these subjects were NOT offered deflection

Did the officer talk about deflection with the subject?

No: 160 (86%)

Yes, officer mentioned it: 25 (13%)

Yes, subject asked about it: 2 (1%)

Yes, subject specifically requested it: 0 (0%)

Why wasn't subject offered deflection?

Subject choice	58 (31%)
Subject not interested or willing to participate in treatment	17 (9%)
Subject said that she/he did not have a substance use problem	33 (18%)
Subject said she/he did not need treatment	3 (2%)
Subject already in treatment	3 (2%)
Subject seeking services on own	2 (1%)
Subject characteristic	6 (3%)
Subject was in crisis	0 (0%)
Subject was not coherent	4 (2%)
Subject was hospitalized	2 (1%)
Subject appeared to be selling	20 (11%)
Had more than 15 illicit pills	1 (3%)
Had a combination of drugs greater than 2gm	13 (7%)
Selling narcotics	6 (3%)
Subject violent	8 (4%)
DV offense	3 (2%)
Had a DV warrant	1 (1%)
Involved in crime of violence at time of contact	3 (2%)
Arrested for a crime of violence in last 12 months	1 (1%)
Is on probation/parole for a violent offense	0 (0%)
Subject non-compliant	9 (5%)
Subject ran	5 (3%)
Subject lied/was noncompliant	4 (2%)
Other criminal activity	52 (28%)
Subject was charged with other charges/crimes	14 (7%)
DUI offense	2 (1%)
Involved in sex trafficking	0 (0%)
Had a felony warrant	30 (16%)
Involved in the exploitation/victimization of minors, elderly, or vulnerable adults	1 (1%)
Voluntary disclosure of non-reported criminal acts	0 (0%)
Is on probation/parole	3 (2%)
Gang-related activity	2 (1%)
Type of substance use	12 (6%)
Marijuana related arrest	10 (5%)
Non-opioid drug	1 (1%)
CODAC advised they do not take meth users	1 (1%)
Officer characteristic or choice	15 (8%)
Officer not trained	1 (1%)
Officer off duty	3 (2%)

Officer forgot	1 (1%)
No reason	3 (2%)
Deflection was not requested	2 (1%)
Deflection was not appropriate	6 (3%)
Other	6 (3%)
Subject has ongoing problem	5 (3%)
Did not meet criteria	1 (1%)

15 (8%) of these subjects self-identified as needing substance use treatment

19 (10%) of these subjects were given printed information about substance use treatment

Key Findings and Recommendations

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.

- 70% of the 54 subjects offered deflection, agreed to be deflected.
- Of the 54 people offered deflection, 29 (54%) definitely wanted to do it.
- 46% of the 54 subjects offered deflection were initially not interested or were unsure of whether that wanted to be deflected to substance use treatment. Officers have been able to change the minds of 36% of these subjects and encourage them to be deflected to treatment.
- During their investigations, officers are determining subjects' views regarding their own substance use and need for treatment. 82% of subjects deflected told officers that they needed substance use treatment and for 31% of subjects not deflected, officers knew about subject's choice related to substance use treatment.

The majority of officers who completed the survey appear to be considering the deflection program eligibility criteria as well as subject willingness for substance use 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 (31%), or a subject limitation at the time, such as the subject being hospitalized (3%).

More training, information, and guidance might help officers identify people appropriate for deflection and encourage them to consider being deflected to treatment.

- Of the 24 subjects who were undecided/unsure about or definitely not interested in deflection, officers were unable to encourage 15 (63%) to be deflected.
- It is possible that some of the 53 subjects who were not offered deflection because they did not self-identify as needing treatment or did not want treatment could have been convinced to be assessed by a treatment provider.

Further consideration of and more training and guidance regarding deflection program eligibility criteria and role of CODAC as a treatment provider might help to improve eligible subjects' participation in the deflection program.

- Consideration of deflecting incoherent subjects as a way to connect them with needed services.
- Consideration of eligibility criteria distinguishing users from sellers. Often times users sell as a way to obtain drugs for use. For some, selling might be a direct result of their substance use problems.
- Consideration of equating subject non-compliance with ineligibility for deflection. Non-compliance in an interaction with law enforcement might be more of a reflection of the situation as opposed to an unwillingness to consider substance use treatment.
- 14 subjects were not offered deflection because they were charged with other crimes. Although the survey results lack information regarding details of the other crimes, the results suggest that at least some of these were misdemeanors listed in the eligibility criteria. This raises the question of whether some officers are choosing to deflect (and effectively not charge subjects with crimes) only when the pending charge is a narcotics charge.
- Although the focus of U-MATTER is on addressing opioid use in particular, the deflection program is focused on addressing issues with substances beyond opioids, and CODAC provides treatment for all substance use issues. This might not be clear to all officers.
- Any reminders of the deflection program and its eligibility criteria will help to keep the program at the forefront of officers' minds, which can increase their consideration of the program for subjects.

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