

VERMONT RESULTS FIRST INITIATIVE - PRELIMINARY RESULTS COMPARING the BENEFITS and COSTS of CRIME REDUCTION

Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative: The Results First Initiative, a project of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts, works with states to implement an innovative benefit-cost analysis approach that helps states invest in policies and programs that are proven to work and are cost effective. The model uses the best available research to predict the outcomes of each program, based on the state's unique population characteristics. It calculates the cost to produce these outcomes including separate projections for benefits that would accrue to taxpayers, through the reduction of criminal justice system resources used, and to society, through the reduction of victimizations.

How to Use Results First

The **Program Inventory** is a catalog of programs within a given policy area matched to rigorous national research to help determine its level of effectiveness. The Program Inventory can be used as a tool to identify and prioritize programs that need evaluation or replacement.

The **Benefit-Cost Model** takes this a step further by providing the comparison between the specific benefits and costs of programs in the state. The model also provides information on programs not currently running in the state offering an additional menu of options that might make sense to add to current programming.

The Results First Model uses "**Marginal Cost**" to describe how costs are calculated. Marginal Cost is the amount the total agency budget changes when there is a small change in the workload of the agency as one additional person is being served. Although some Vermont programs calculated their marginal cost as zero, recidivism has a cost overall and reducing recidivism produces savings. We recognize that using cost per participant would lead to a different result.

Obtaining Vermont Program Costs - In order to get useful and reliable results with this initiative, determining the cost of current programs in Vermont is crucial. To obtain this information, service providers in Vermont were surveyed to obtain the costs of the Vermont criminal justice programs. The Vermont calculations are reflected in Table 1.

The **Joint Fiscal Committee** provided funding for this work and has been instrumental in moving it forward. **Crime Research Group, Inc. (CRG)** can help determine the effectiveness and costs of an existing program using the model, explore the benefits and costs of a new evidence-based program, and conduct evaluations.

Data Sources

In Vermont data was gathered from a variety of sources. The Cost-Benefit Working Group compiled the costs of one additional offender entering the various steps of the Vermont criminal justice system in [2014](#). Offender recidivism trends were calculated from Vermont Crime Information Center criminal histories. -- The costs of the programs currently offered in Vermont are based on Vermont specific data, while the cost of prospective programs not currently offered in Vermont were approximated using Washington State data. Washington State's actual or estimated costs are used by the Results First Model when state data is not available.

An Example of How Programming Can Help

Therapeutic Communities for offenders with co-occurring disorders are highly structured communities where offenders gain responsibility as they progress. In Washington State, treatment costs \$3,717 per participant and the Results First model shows it can potentially net savings of \$5,520 through reducing each offender's chance of recidivating by 22% annually. Vermont would realize the same savings assuming the costs are similar as applied to the VT population. The graph below illustrates the effect of participation in this program.

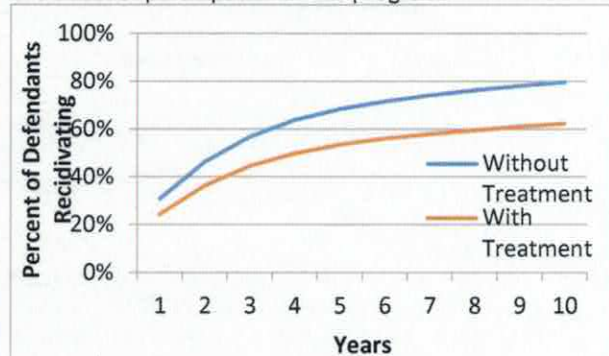


Table 1: Estimated Benefits & Costs of Current & Prospective Adult Criminal Justice Programs in Vermont

Preliminary Results Programs Offered in Vermont (Results are reflected in 2014 Dollars)	Projected Change in VT Recidivism ¹	Total Benefits to Vermont ²	Estimated Marginal Cost (based on VT costs)	Net Benefits (VT)	Chance of Positive Net Present Value ³
Drug Courts (as alternative to incarceration)	-18.4%	\$15,409	\$10,549 ⁴	\$4,860	100%
Drug Courts (as alternative to probation)	-27.8%	\$8,673	\$10,549 ⁵	(\$1,876)	3%
Correctional industries in prison	-5.7%	\$4,919	0 ⁶	\$4,919	100%
Correctional Education (basic or post-secondary)	-25.3%	\$15,950	\$11,564 ⁷	\$4,368	86%
Mental Health Courts (as alternative to incarceration)	-16.1%	\$14,667	\$10,549 ⁸	\$4,018	81%
Mental Health Courts (as alternative to probation)	-24.8%	\$8,769	\$10,549 ⁹	(\$1,880)	24%
Vocational education in prison	-16.3%	\$13,732	11,564 ¹⁰	\$2,168	80%
Electronic Monitoring (in lieu of incarceration) ¹¹	-22.8%	\$2,610	NA ¹²	NA	NA
DUI Courts ¹³	-13.5%	\$6,582	NA	NA	NA
Supervision with Risk-Need Responsivity High Risk Prison Offenders ¹⁴	-17.6%	\$4,175	NA	NA	NA
Therapeutic Communities (Tapestry) ¹⁵	-8.7%	\$4,054	NA	NA	NA
Housing Supports ¹⁶	-5.2%	\$2,460	NA	NA	NA
Restorative Justice (as alternative to traditional probation) ¹⁷	-12.5%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ignition Locks (in lieu of incarceration) ¹⁸	-33.4%	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 2:
Estimated Benefits & Costs of Programs Not Currently Offered in Vermont for Defendants with Substance Abuse

Programs Not Currently Offered In Vermont and Modeled in Results First - Targeting Defendants with Substance Abuse Needs	Projected Change in VT Recidivism	Total Benefits to Vermont	Estimated Cost (based on WA costs)	Net Benefits (WA and VT)	Chance of Positive Net Value
Outpatient/non-intensive drug treatment (community)	-9%	\$1,457	\$592	\$865	84%
Therapeutic communities for chemically dependent offenders (community)	-17.4%	\$2,992	\$2,464	\$528	72%
Inpatient/intensive outpatient drug treatment (community)	-3%	\$1,162	\$941	\$221	60%
Swift and certain/graduated sanction case management	-30%	\$4,677	\$4,815	(\$138)	53%
Other case management for substance abusing offenders	-9%	\$1,728	\$4,840	(\$3,112)	1%
Naltrexone treatment in addition to Probation ¹⁹	-61.4%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Naltrexone treatment for incarcerated individuals ²⁰	-48.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Methadone treatment in addition to Probation	-44.4%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Methadone treatment for incarcerated individuals ²¹	-31.8%	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 3:

Estimated Benefits & Costs of Programs Not Currently Offered in Vermont for Defendants with Mental Health Needs

Programs Not Currently Offered In Vermont and Modeled in Results First - Targeting Defendants with Mental Health Needs	Projected Change in VT Recidivism	Total Benefits to Vermont	Estimated Cost (based on WA costs)	Net Benefits (WA and VT)	Chance of Positive Net Value
Therapeutic Communities for Co-Occurring Disorders (incarceration)	-21.8%	\$9,237	\$3,717	\$5,520	97%
Jail Diversion-Post Booking (community)	-2.3%	\$1,067 ²²	(\$4,701)	\$5,768	75%
Offender Re-entry supports for Dangerously Mentally III ²³	-51.8%	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 4: Programs Not Offered in Vermont – Miscellaneous Programs

Programs Not Currently Offered In Vermont and Modeled in Results First - Miscellaneous Programs	Projected Change in VT Recidivism	Total Benefits to Vermont	Estimated Cost (based on WA costs)	Net Benefits (WA and VT)	Chance of Positive Net Value
Employment Training/Job Assistance in the Community	-9%	\$1,606	\$138	\$1,468	97%
Work Release	-5.3%	\$2,551	\$689	\$1,862	97%
Intensive Supervision (treatment)	-23%	\$4,426	\$8,021	(\$3,595)	0%
Day Reporting Centers	-20.1%	\$4,478	\$3,922	\$556	NA

¹ The formal definition of recidivism in Vermont is laid out in Act 41, the “War on Recidivism” bill which passed in 2011 which states “In order to target sentences and services effectively to reduce recidivism, the department of corrections shall calculate the rate of recidivism based upon offenders who are sentenced to more than one year of incarceration, who, after release from incarceration, return to prison within three years for a conviction for a new offense or a violation of supervision resulting, and the new incarceration sentence is at least 90 days.” The calculation that the Results First Model uses is based on a new conviction for defendants released or sentenced to probation. This allows a recidivism calculation for those diverted from the criminal justice system into programs, for those sentenced to probation, as well as those incarcerated. This is reported as an annual rate.

² The benefits include those to VT taxpayers and benefits to victims from avoided crimes and the associated costs.

³ When the benefit-cost analysis is repeated 10,000 times with small random variation in inputs, this is the chance of net positive benefits.

⁴ The costs are derived from the 2009 NPC Evaluation of the Rutland Treatment Court and in consultation with the Court Administrator's Office Treatment Court Coordinator. In Vermont, drug court participants could receive a sentence to incarceration or probation so for this reason both calculations were included.

⁵ Costs are derived from the 2009 NPC Evaluation and in consultation with the CAO Treatment Court Coordinator.

⁶ The Department of Corrections reports that this program is self-funded and costs DOC no taxpayer dollars to run resulting in a marginal cost of zero.

⁷ The costs are derived from total program budget for the Community High school divided by the total number of graduates in both the Vocational and High School Programs. Costs do not reflect the recent reorganization of the Community High School of Vermont. Source: DOC Vantage Report:

<http://doc.vermont.gov/about/reports/department-of-corrections-budget-documents/fy-2016-doc-vantage-reports-final/view> p. 5

⁸ Costs are derived from the 2009 NPC Evaluation and in consultation with the CAO Treatment Court Coordinator. The marginal cost for probation as reported by DOC is zero, it raises the cost to run the program with probationers.

⁹ Costs are derived from the 2009 NPC Evaluation and in consultation with the CAO Treatment Court Coordinator.

¹⁰ Costs do not reflect the recent reorganization of the Community High School of Vermont. The new costs for FY'16 are not yet available. Source: DOC Vantage Report: <http://doc.vermont.gov/about/reports/department-of-corrections-budget-documents/fy-2016-doc-vantage-reports-final/view> p. 5

¹¹ Original projections of the Windham Electronic Monitoring program using Results First showed a positive impact. The program has been implemented in lieu of detention and is currently being evaluated. Vermont costs are in the process of being determined. The initial benefit-cost projection was completed in 2013 and can be found here: http://leg.state.vt.us/jfo/issue_briefs_and_memos/Electronic_Monitoring_Issue_Brief.pdf

¹² N/A pertains to programs where there is not enough information to run the benefit-cost model at this time.

¹³ The DUI Court participated in a process evaluation in 2015. A benefit-cost analysis has not been completed.

¹⁴ This program is equivalent to the Second Chance Offender Re-entry Grant received by DOC in 2014. The program is currently in the early stages of implementation.

¹⁵ Vermont costs have not been determined. The annual budget is \$350,000. Source: DOC Vantage Report: <http://doc.vermont.gov/about/reports/department-of-corrections-budget-documents/fy-2016-doc-vantage-reports-final/view> p. 149

¹⁶ Vermont costs have not been determined. Annual budget is \$6.3 million. Source: DOC Vantage Report <http://doc.vermont.gov/about/reports/department-of-corrections-budget-documents/fy-2016-doc-vantage-reports-final/view> P. 150

¹⁷ Vermont costs have not been determined. The annual budget (including non-restorative justice programs) is \$2.5 million.

¹⁸ Costs are paid by participants. The benefit-cost analysis cannot be completed at this time because the program has not yet been added to the Results First model by Washington State and Pew/MacArthur Results First.

¹⁹ The trade name for Naltrexone is Vivitrol. Neither Vermont nor Washington have readily accessible cost estimates for Medication-assisted Treatment (MAT). Note: this effect is for criminal recidivism not substance use. The effect on substance use will be presented in the Substance Abuse Brief.

²⁰ The Vermont Department of Health has recently received a Federal grant for a pilot to provide Vivitrol to inmates re-entering the community. It is unknown at this time if this program is the same program as those in the Results First model and so has not been moved to the Vermont table yet. Note: this effect is for criminal recidivism not substance use. The effect on substance use will be presented in the Substance Abuse Brief.

²¹ DOC continues to provide inmates with MAT if they are expected to be released in 30 days or less and in many facilities that is the continued practice. In the demonstration sites, the Northwest and Chittenden facilities, DOC extended the period up to 90 days. It is unknown at this time if this program is the same program as those in the Results First model and so has not been moved to the Vermont table yet. Note: this effect is for criminal recidivism not substance use. The effect on substance use will be presented in the Substance Abuse Brief.

²² Benefits include expected benefits for earnings and decreased hospitalization based on WA data.

²³ WA has not yet developed cost estimates for this program.