

Evaluation of the Post-Release Status of Substance Abuse Program Participants

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Illinois officials have implemented numerous prison drug treatment programs due to the strong link between criminal behavior and substance abuse. To find out whether these programs have any substantial effect on the post-release drug-using behaviors of their targeted populations, the development of impact evaluations is necessary. The purpose of the current project was to investigate the post-release status of offenders who participated in two such programs: 1) the Dixon Springs Impact Incarceration substance abuse program, and 2) the Gateway Substance Abuse Program at the Dwight Correctional Center. Both of these programs — and evaluations — have been

supported through funds administered by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

The two evaluations were quite similar in scope. The major aim of both was to determine if program participants differed when compared to a traditional prison comparison group in their rates of return to prison. Another goal was to find out whether specific demographic or offense characteristics influenced these rates of return. To allow for a suitable length of stay in the community, recidivism analyses were conducted after both one and two years of release. The populations of both groups were used; statistical significance tests were not conducted because sampling error was not a consideration.

To clearly describe the major findings of the evaluations, results of each study will be presented here separately.

IMPACT INCARCERATION PROGRAM (IIP)

For the IIP evaluation, three major comparison groups were identified. They are as follows:

- 1) IIP graduates;
- 2) IIP failures (consisting of administrative removals and those who quit the program); and
- 3) A matched group of traditional prison releasees.

Of the IIP graduates, offenders were further divided based on their level of assessed drug abuse. Within days of arrival, they were assessed at one of the following three levels of substance abuse treatment need:



Level I: These inmates have no identified substance abuse problem.

Level II: These inmates are *considered* to be probable substance abusers.

Level III: These inmates *have been determined* to be probable substance addicts.

Based on analyses concerning these comparison groups, the following major findings were discovered:

- In both 12- and 24-month follow-ups, IIP graduates exhibited lower rates of return to prison for new offenses than those offenders who failed to complete IIP, or a matched comparison group of general prison releasees.
- Among the three groups, the variables of offense type and age emerged as indicators of increased return rates.
- Within the IIP graduate group, those who were assessed at Level III returned to prison at a higher rate than those assessed at either Level II or Level I.
- Within the IIP graduate group — based on level of assessed drug abuse — original offense type, age, and committing county emerged as indicators of increased rates of return to prison.

GATEWAY SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM AT DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER

For the Dwight Gateway evaluation, two major comparison groups were identified. They included:

- 1) Gateway program participants; and
- 2) A matched group of traditional prison releasees.

Within the Gateway population, offenders were further divided based on the amount of time they spent in the treatment program.

Based on analyses concerning these comparison groups, the following major findings were discovered:

- Although the return rates of Gateway participants and the comparison group were quite similar, when controlling for length of time in treatment, differences appeared. Offenders who spent less time in Gateway returned to prison at a higher rate than those who remained in the program for a longer period of time.
- Among Gateway participants, age and prior incarceration emerged as indicators of increased rates of return to prison.
- Gateway recidivists were in the community

longer prior to being returned to prison than those in the traditional comparison group. This indicates a longer period before violating their release agreement or committing a new crime.

- Gateway recidivists were less likely to return to prison on a drug offense than their comparison counterparts. But whether the commission of a new offense was motivated by drug abuse is not known.

Although both evaluations resulted in positive findings, given the small number of subjects comprising the populations, the results are still somewhat tenuous. The findings did, however, provide insight into the post-release behaviors of both populations and allowed for the development of policy and research recommendations.

Part 1 Illinois Impact Incarceration Program:

THE POST-RELEASE STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing realization that substance abuse is strongly linked to crime, prison drug treatment has become a central concern in corrections. Despite longstanding beliefs that rehabilitative efforts aimed at substance-abusing offenders are relatively ineffective, "significant research results indicate that correctional drug treatment programs can have a substantial effect on the behavior of chronic drug-abusing offenders" (Anglin and Hser, 1990: 427). And because it is uncommon for criminals to voluntarily seek treatment in the community, these prison programs may be the only chance to treat this population (Illinois Task Force: 1993). To help break the substance abuse-crime cycle, Illinois has implemented several treatment programs. One such program is within the Dixon Springs Impact Incarceration Program (IIP), which began in October 1990.

Commonly referred to as a shock incarceration or boot camp program, IIP aims "to interrupt the drug abuse-crime-arrest cycle by offering an array of team, individual, and group counseling and treatment"

(Karr, S.P. and Jones, R.J., 1994). But there has been a lack of research evaluating this objective. In fact, nationwide there have been very few detailed descriptive or evaluative studies on substance abuse programs in shock incarceration environments (Cowles, E.L., Castellano, T.C., and Gransky, L.A., forthcoming). This study provides an evaluation of the post-release behavior of IIP graduates treated for substance abuse problems.

The substance abuse services provided to inmates at Dixon Springs IIP have been nationally recognized because of the continuum of services available there. Unlike many similar programs, the type of treatment provided is based on an assessment of the offender's substance abuse problem rather than on a legal mandate that all inmates participate. More than one type of treatment is available.

Within one week of arrival at IIP, inmates are assessed for treatment needs and individual treatment plans are developed. From these assessments, inmates are assigned to one of three levels:

Level I: These inmates have no identified substance abuse problem. They participate for two weeks in drug education classes, which include information on identifying drugs and their effects.

Level II: These inmates are considered to be probable substance abusers. They receive four weeks of drug abuse treatment in which issues of denial and family support are emphasized. Additionally, they receive two weeks of drug education (see Level I). Prior to graduation, community treatment referrals are arranged.

Level III: These inmates have been determined to be probable drug addicts. They receive 10 weeks of drug treatment services in which issues such as relapse, co-dependency, behavioral differences, and addicted families are addressed, in addition to denial and family support. These inmates also receive two weeks of drug education (Level I treatment). As with Level II inmates, these offenders receive treatment referrals prior to graduation to continue treatment after release.

Once a Level II or III inmate has completed treatment, but not yet graduated, she or he can participate in Alcoholics Anonymous, or Narcotics Anonymous, or both, at the IIP facility (Karr, S.P., & Jones, R.J., 1994).

Preliminary recidivism results of IIP graduates released during fiscal year 1992 and fiscal year 1993 indicated that of 1,125¹ IIP graduates released, 175 (15.6 percent) returned to prison within a year. Of the IIP participants who failed to graduate (quitters and

disciplinary removals) and were released during this time period, 304² also were studied. Of these, 53 (17.4 percent) returned to prison within one year. IIP recidivists were in the community for an average of 5.2 months before reincarceration, while IIP failures released from traditional prison spent 6.7 months before returning to prison. This indicates that IIP graduates who returned to prison did so at a faster pace than those who failed both in the IIP and in the community, probably because IIP graduates received three months of close, electronically monitored community supervision, and thus were more likely to have crimes and technical violations detected.

Only slight differences in recidivism were seen across the three levels of substance abuse education and treatment. For IIP graduates who received Level I services, 14.5 percent returned to prison within a year of release, while Level II and III graduates returned at a rate of 16 percent. More variation occurred with return rates for IIP failures. Failures assessed at Level III had the highest return rate (18.8 percent), followed by those in Level I (17.1 percent). Failures assessed at Level II had the lowest (15.3 percent).

Additional analyses were necessary to determine if there are significant differences among graduates and failures based on various demographic and offense characteristics. Furthermore, analyses by various characteristics of recidivism among IIP graduates who completed different levels of treatment also were necessary.

The purpose of this evaluation was twofold:

- 1) To determine if IIP graduates, IIP failures and a comparison group of traditional prison releasees differed in rates of return to prison based on original offense type, age, committing county or race; and,
- 2) To assess if the recidivism rates of IIP participants differed based on the level of assessed treatment need by original offense type, age, committing county or race.

By performing these analyses, a detailed profile of the IIP participants with substance abuse histories could be obtained and the impact the treatment program has had on recidivism could be determined.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a quasi-experimental design comparing FY 1992 and FY 1993 IIP graduates with two groups:

- 1) Offenders who were sent to IIP, but failed to graduate. These inmates were released from traditional prisons during FY 1992 or FY 1993. Failures

include both quitters (voluntary) and disciplinary removals (involuntary); and

2) Offenders who were criteria-based eligible for IIP placement, but were never sent, and were released from traditional prisons during FY 1992 or FY 1993. Specific IIP eligibility criteria include the following: The offender be between the ages of 17 and 29; must be incarcerated in an adult institution for the first time; must have committed an IIP-eligible non-violent Class 1 or lesser offense; and must have a one- to five-year sentence.

A 12-month follow-up analysis was conducted on FY 1992 and FY 1993 populations. These years were combined to increase the size of the population studied. Additionally, a 24-month analysis was conducted on FY 1992 IIP graduates.

For the first research purpose, the return rates of IIP graduates, IIP failures and traditional parolees were assessed based on various demographic and offense characteristics. For the second research purpose, only IIP participants were used. First, the return rates of IIP participants assessed at differing levels of treatment based on various demographic and offense characteristics were determined. Second, once inmates had been identified as being recidivists, an inquiry was made as to whether their new commission was based on a technical violation or a new crime, and upon what the re-commission was based. From that information, the post-graduation substance use-crime cycle of this population was determined.

Since there has been some controversy regarding the use of tests of statistical significance when the population rather than a sample is being studied, no such tests were conducted for this analysis (nor were they conducted for the accompanying study of the Dwight Gateway Substance Abuse Treatment Program). One of the assumptions made when conducting mean difference tests is that a randomly drawn sample from the population will be used (Hinkle, Wiserma and Jurs, 1988). But samples will not be drawn from any of the comparison groups. In such instances, according to Blalock (1972), "...tests of significance would seem inappropriate since no sampling error would be involved" (p. 238). (For more information, see: *Understanding Significance Testing*, by Lawrence B. Mohr [1990].)

TWO YEARS OUT: A GENERAL COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM RATES

During FY 1992, there were 595 graduates released from IIP, 215 IIP failures released from general population prisons (170 quitters and 45 disciplinary removals), and 3,350 releasees from

traditional prisons.³ Although these subject sizes are not equal, since the population is being studied, there is less concern for inaccurate interpretation. But because all variables may not be evenly distributed within the populations, caution is necessary.

Of the 524⁴ graduates released during FY 1992, 32.3 percent (n = 169) were returned to prison within two years. Within the IIP failure group, 64 individuals were returned to prison, a return rate of 29.9 percent. When broken down by type of failure, the data indicate that of the 64 failures, 49 were quitters while 15 were disciplinary removals. Of the traditional prison releasees, 957 (28.6 percent) returned as well.

It is expected that the IIP graduates would exhibit a higher return rate, due in part to the intensive supervision they are under after release. This group is, then, more likely to receive technical violations than the other two groups. To control for this difference among groups, only offenders who committed a new offense, as opposed to a technical violation, will be considered a recidivist.

Data indicate that of 169 IIP graduates returned to prison, almost as many were for new crimes as were for technical violations: 81 were returned for a new crime, 88 for a technical violation. As presented in Table 1, the one-year return to prison rate for FY 1992 IIP graduates convicted of a new offense was 15.5 percent. When considering the other groups, the difference between new crime and technical violations was not so slight. Of the 64 IIP failures who returned to prison, 53 were for new offenses, while only 11 were for technical violations; of the 957 releasees returned, 883 were for new crimes and 74 were for technical violations. Therefore, the new offense recidivism rates for these two groups were 24.7 percent and 26.4 percent, respectively.

RECIDIVISM AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1 presents the recidivism rates and population size of each comparison group based on original offense type, age, committing county, and race. Across the three groups, several differences were observed with respect to original offense type. Of the IIP graduates, property offenders returned to prison at the highest rate (20.2 percent). But when considering IIP failures, drug offenders, who exhibited the lowest rate of return for IIP graduates, were most likely to return (30.2 percent), followed by property offenders (25.8 percent). Of the traditional prison releasees, property offenders returned at the highest rate (28.5 percent), followed by drug offenders (25.3 percent).

Offenders between the ages of 17 and 21 had the highest rates of return to prison for offenders among

all three groups. However, when considering the committing county, some differences appear. For example, although Cook County offenders had the highest rates of return to prison for IIP graduates and prison releasees (16 percent and 30.4 percent), IIP failures committed from downstate counties returned at a slightly higher rate than their counterparts from Cook County.

The final variable considered was race, and, as was the case with offense type, the three groups

exhibited numerous differences.

Among IIP graduates, Hispanics returned to prison at the highest rate. But when looking at IIP failures and releasees, the data indicate that blacks returned more often. Additionally, 22.2 percent of all white IIP failure cases returned, as did 22 percent of all Hispanic traditional releasees. Among IIP graduates and releasees, whites returned at the lowest rate, as did Hispanics when considering failures. (Care must be taken when interpreting these results due to the low number of Hispanics in the populations.)

Table 1. Two-Year Recidivism Rates Based on Release Status by Offense Type, Age, Committing County and Race

	IIP GRADUATES	IIP FAILURES	TRADITIONAL RELEASEES
ORIGINAL OFFENSE TYPE	% Recidivating	% Recidivating	% Recidivating
Person	12.0% (9)	16.7% (9)	23.1% (153)
Property	20.2% (46)	25.8% (25)	28.5% (482)
Drug	11.8% (26)	30.2% (19)	25.3% (243)
AGE			
17 to 21	18.4% (61)	30.5% (40)	29.9% (501)
22 and older	10.4% (20)	17.6% (13)	22.9% (380)
COMMITTING COUNTY			
Cook	16.0% (58)	24.4% (39)	30.4% (633)
Downstate	14.2% (23)	25.5% (14)	19.7% (250)
RACE			
Black	15.9% (52)	27.4% (40)	31.9% (661)
Hispanic	20.6% (7)	7.1% (1)	22.0% (72)
White	13.7% (22)	22.2% (12)	15.8% (148)
TOTAL	15.5% (81)	24.7% (53)	26.4% (883) ⁵

RECIDIVISM AND TREATMENT TYPE

As indicated previously, IIP participants were assessed for need and placed into one of three levels of drug education and treatment. Of the 595 graduates, 524 were assessed at IIP, as were 56 of the failures. Because they were never sentenced to IIP, regular releasees were not assessed.

Of the 81 IIP graduates who were recommitted for a new offense, 12 had completed Level I education, and 28 had completed Level II. The remaining 41 graduates had completed Level III drug treatment. Some IIP failures were also assessed for treatment need. But of the 53 offenders who were returned to prison for a new offense, very few had been assessed. Of those who were, seven were assessed at Level I, three at Level II, and six at Level III. The remaining 37 offenders were not assessed at any point.⁶

To determine if the recidivism rate of IIP participants differs based on the level of assessed treatment need

by the variables of interest, the following analysis was conducted.

As presented in Table 2, property offenders returned at the highest rate across all three levels of treatment. Within the three treatment groups, Level II returnees showed some variation: While 30.2 percent of Level II property offenders returned, only 14.3 percent of the person offenders and 15.3 percent of the drug offenders committed new offenses. Although the same may be said of Level I offenders, Level III offenders demonstrated little variability across offense type.

Across all three levels, offenders between the ages of 17 and 21 returned to prison at a higher rate than their older counterparts. Such similarity was not found, however, when considering committing county. The data indicate that Level I and Level II IIP graduates originally committed from downstate counties returned at a higher rate than those from Cook County. For Level III returnees, the picture was reversed. Offenders originally committed from Cook County who completed Level III treatment returned at higher rates than those from downstate counties.

The final variable considered was race. For Level I and Level II graduates, whites returned to prison at the highest rate (8.3 percent and 25.7 percent) within their level. Of all Hispanics receiving either Level II or Level III treatment, approximately one-fourth returned as well. Of all black graduates, 7.6 percent treated at Level I, 18.8 percent at Level II, and 23.6 percent at Level III returned to prison.

THE DRUG ABUSE-CRIME CYCLE

Once IIP graduates

were identified as being recidivists, the class and type of their new offense were studied. Of the 81 recidivists, 20 were recommitted for a Class X or a Class 1 felony. Broken down by level of treatment provided, the data indicate that all 20 had received either Level II or Level III treatment. The remaining 61 recidivists were returned for a Class 2, Class 3, or Class 4 felony. Of these individuals, 54.1 percent had received Level III treatment.

When considering the new offense type, the data reveal that of the 26 prison returnees originally

Table 2. Two-Year Recidivism Rates Based on Level of Treatment by Offense Type, Age, Committing County, and Race.

	LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
ORIGINAL OFFENSE TYPE	% Recidivating	% Recidivating	% Recidivating
Person	4.3% (1)	14.3% (3)	16.1% (5)
Property	10.5% (6)	30.2% (16)	20.3% (24)
Drug	5.9% (5)	15.3% (9)	15.6% (12)
AGE			
17 to 21	9.6% (11)	23.4% (22)	22.8% (28)
22 and older	2.0% (1)	15.4% (6)	10.1% (13)
COMMITTING COUNTY			
Cook	6.1% (8)	10.4% (18)	23.6% (32)
Downstate	12.1% (4)	25.0% (10)	10.1% (9)
RACE			
Black	7.6% (10)	18.8% (16)	23.6% (26)
Hispanic	0.0% (0)	25.0% (3)	30.8% (4)
White	8.3% (2)	25.7% (9)	10.8% (11)
TOTAL	2.3% (12)	5.3% (28)	7.8% (41)

convicted of a drug offense, 19 (73.1 percent) were returned on an additional drug offense. Of the remaining new drug offenders, six were original property offenders, and one was originally incarcerated for a crime against a person. As presented in Table 3, considering all three types of original offenses, the data indicate that the greatest percentage of original drug offenders returned for similar offenses. It was less common for a property offender to return on a property offense (67.5 percent), or for a person offender to return on a person offense (55.6 percent), than it was for a drug offender to return on a drug offense (73.1 percent).

Table 3. New Offense Type by Original Offense Type

	Original Person	Original Property	Original Drug
Returned on Original Offense	55.6% (5)	67.5% (31)	73.1% (19)
Not Returned on Original Offense	44.4% (4)	32.5% (15)	16.9% (7)

ONE YEAR OUT: A GENERAL COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM RATES

During fiscal year 1992 and fiscal year 1993 there were 1,187 graduates released from IIP, 492 IIP failures released from general population prisons (378 quitters and 114 disciplinary removals), and 6,817 traditional releasees released from general population prisons. As indicated previously, although these subject sizes are not equal, since the population is being studied, there is less concern for inaccurate interpretation. But because all variables may not be evenly distributed within the populations, caution must be exercised.

Results indicate that of the 1,090⁷ IIP graduates released during this two-year period, 14.9 percent (n = 162) were returned to prison within one year. When considering the IIP failure group, 77 individuals were returned to prison, a rate of 15.7 percent. Broken down by type of failure, the data indicate that of the 77 failures, 58 quit the program, while 19 were removed for disciplinary reasons. Therefore, recidivism rates for these two groups were 11.8 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. Of the traditional prison population, 936 (13.7 percent) were returned.

As stated previously, it was expected that the IIP graduates would exhibit a higher return rate, due in part to the intensive supervision they were placed

under after their initial release. Therefore, to control for this difference among groups, only the offenders who returned to prison for a new offense were included in further analyses.

The data indicate that of the 162 IIP graduates who were returned to prison, 107 were sent back for technical violations and 55 were recommitted for new offenses. Therefore, the actual one-year return to prison rate for IIP graduates was 5.1 percent. For the other groups, there were fewer technical violations. Of the 77 IIP failures, 68 returned to prison for new crimes, while only nine returned for technical violations. Similarly, for the 936 releasees, 797 were for new crimes, while 139 were for technical violations. Therefore, the actual return rates for these populations are 13.8 percent (failures) and 11.7 percent (releasees).

RECIDIVISM AND DEMOGRAPHICS

As presented in Table 4, original property offenders exhibited the highest one-year rate of return to prison across all comparison groups, with IIP failures returning most often (17.7 percent).

IIP graduates and failures who were between the ages of 17 and 21, or who were originally committed from downstate counties, exhibited higher one-year rates of return to prison than their older or Cook County counterparts. Of all releasees 22 years and older, approximately 10 percent returned, as did almost 14 percent of those between 17 and 21. Based on committing county, the data indicate that releasees originally committed from Cook County returned at a rate of 12.6 percent, compared to that of 10.2 percent exhibited by releasees originally committed from downstate counties.

The final variable was race, and here some differences appeared. While blacks exhibited the highest rates of return to prison for IIP graduates and releasees, white IIP failures were more likely to become recidivists than their Hispanic or black counterparts. Furthermore, although the percent of Hispanics and whites that returned was very similar within IIP graduates (3 percent Hispanic and 3.6 percent white) and releasees (8.9 percent Hispanic and 8.5 percent white), a greater proportion of whites became recidivists among the IIP failure group: 16.4 percent of all whites returned, as did only 7.7 percent of all Hispanics.

RECIDIVISM AND IIP TREATMENT LEVEL

As indicated previously, IIP participants were assessed for need and placed in one of three levels of drug education and treatment. Of the 1,187 graduates, 1,090 were assessed at IIP, as were 71 of the failures. Because they were never sentenced to IIP, none of the releasees were assessed.

Of the 55 IIP graduates who were returned, 10 had completed Level I drug education, and 13 had completed Level II treatment. The remaining 32 graduates had completed Level III drug treatment. Few IIP failures were assessed for treatment need. Of the 68 offenders who were returned to prison, seven were assessed at Level I, five at Level II, and nine at Level III. The remaining 47 offenders were not assessed.⁸

To see if the recidivism rate of IIP participants differs based on the level of assessed treatment need by the variables of interest, an analysis of one-year recidivism rates based on treatment level was conducted.⁹

As indicated in Table 5, Level II and Level III offenders were similar with regard to original offense type. Those originally committing property offenses were most likely to return to prison, followed by drug offenders and then person offenders. But among IIP graduates, the picture changed. Of these offenders, those originally committed for a person offense exhibited the highest rate of return to prison. Drug offenders returned at the second highest rate, and property offenders returned least often.

Across all three levels of treatment, black and younger offenders were more likely to return to prison than their white or Hispanic or older (22 and older)

Table 4. One-Year Recidivism Rates Based on Release Status by Offense Type, Age, Committing County, and Race

	IIP GRADUATES	IIP FAILURES	GENERAL RELEASEES
ORIGINAL OFFENSE TYPE	% Recidivating	% Recidivating	% Recidivating
Person	3.1% (5)	9.4% (9)	10.5% (149)
Property	7.4% (32)	17.7% (38)	13.6% (456)
Drug	3.6% (18)	11.7% (21)	9.3% (182)
AGE			
17 to 21	6.4% (44)	15.0% (47)	13.7% (467)
22 and older	2.7% (11)	11.8% (21)	9.7% (327)
COMMITTING COUNTY			
Cook	4.8% (36)	12.6% (46)	12.6% (535)
Downstate	5.5% (19)	17.3% (2)	10.2% (262)
RACE			
Black	6.0% (41)	13.4% (46)	13.7% (575)
Hispanic	3.0% (2)	7.7% (2)	8.9% (58)
White	3.6% (12)	16.4% (20)	8.5% (163)
TOTAL	5.1% (55)	13.8% (68)	11.7% (796)

counterparts. Specifically, within Level I and Level III, blacks returned most often, followed by whites, while Hispanics returned at the lowest rate. Such similarity does not exist, however, when results are compared by committing county. Of all IIP graduates and traditional releasees, those originally committed from Cook County were more likely to return than those from downstate counties. For the IIP failures, however, those originally committed from downstate counties exhibit higher prison return rates.

Table 5. One-Year Recidivism Rates Based on Level of Treatment by Offense Type, Age, Committing County, and Race.

	LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
ORIGINAL OFFENSE TYPE	% Recidivating	% Recidivating	% Recidivating
Person	4.8% (2)	2.7% (1)	2.4% (2)
Property	2.7% (2)	8.1% (8)	8.5% (22)
Drug	4.4% (6)	3.6% (4)	3.2% (8)
AGE			
17 to 21	5.0% (9)	6.0% (10)	7.4% (25)
22 and above	1.4% (1)	3.8% (3)	2.8% (7)
COMMITTING COUNTY			
Cook	4.0% (8)	4.2% (7)	5.6% (21)
Downstate	3.7% (2)	7.6% (6)	5.2% (11)
RACE			
Black	4.4% (9)	6.6% (10)	6.7% (22)
Hispanic	0.0% (0)	4.5% (1)	3.1% (1)
White	2.8% (1)	2.8% (2)	4.0% (9)
TOTAL	.917% (10)	1.193% (13)	2.936% (32)

Table 6. New Offense Type by Original Offense Type

	Original Person	Original Property	Original Drug
Returned on Original Offense	40.0% (2)	65.6% (21)	66.7% (12)
Not Returned on Original Offense	60.0% (3)	34.4% (11)	33.3% (6)

THE DRUG ABUSE-CRIME CYCLE

Of the 55 IIP graduates who were returning to prison for a new offense, one was convicted of murder, five of a Class X felony, and four of a Class 1 felony. When broken down by the level of treatment provided, the murder convict had received Level III, as had four of the Class X offenders, and two of the Class 1. All other individuals in these three classes had received Level II treatment. The remaining 48 offenders were returned to prison for either a Class 2, Class 3, or Class 4 felony. The majority of these individuals—57.8 percent—had received Level III drug treatment.

As presented in Table 6, when considering the new offense type, the data indicate that of the original 18 drug offenders, two-thirds (n = 12) returned due to a similar offense. Of the person offenders, 40 percent returned under the same offense, as did 65.6 percent of all property offenders.

SUMMARY

Because of the heightened level of surveillance placed upon IIP graduates as compared to that provided to IIP failures and traditional releasees, return to prison could not be used as a general definition of recidivism. If both technical and new offense violations were included, the rate at which IIP graduates returned would be inflated due to the increased probability of

technical violations being discovered. To control for this, recidivism was defined as any new commission to an adult institution based on a new offense only.

While preliminary recidivism results,¹⁰ including technical violations, indicated that IIP graduates returned to prison at a rate similar to or higher than that of IIP failures, the picture changed once new offenses alone were analyzed. In both the 12- and 24-month follow-ups, IIP graduates exhibited the lowest levels of return to prison for new offenses among the three groups.

In regard to whether there were any differences among the groups based on original offense type, age, committing county or race, the data indicated that the type of offense and age of releasee were the greatest determinants of return to prison, while the county from which each individual was committed did not make much difference. There often were too few subjects in individual race categories to arrive at any general conclusions.

Other key findings included the following:

1) In both follow-ups, of all original drug offenders, the proportion of IIP graduates who returned to prison for a new offense was lower than that exhibited by IIP failures or traditional releasees.

2) In both follow-ups, offenders in all three groups between the ages of 17 and 21 exhibited higher rates of return than their older counterparts.

3) In the 24-month follow-up, Hispanic IIP graduates appeared to be returning at a higher rate than their black or white counterparts, while the opposite was true for IIP failures (blacks returned at the highest rate, followed by whites, then Hispanics).

4) In the 12-month follow-up, IIP graduates exhibited lower rates of return to prison for each race category than IIP failures or releasees. In fact, while the range in rates of graduates returning based on race was 3 percent to 6 percent, the range in rates for the other two groups was 7.7 percent to 16 percent.

5) In both follow-ups, the committing counties differed little in how many IIP graduates they returned. In the 24-month follow-up, traditional releasees, originally committed from Cook County, returned at a much higher rate than their downstate counterparts. In the 12-month follow-up, the same was true for IIP failures; failures committed from downstate counties returned at a higher rate than those from Cook County.

Analyses based on level of assessed substance abuse treatment need were also conducted on IIP graduates only, and the data indicated that those

assessed at Level III (the most serious substance abusers) returned at the highest rate. While original offense type and age again appeared to be indicators, so did committing county. Since the graduate population was further divided into one of three levels of treatment, as was the case above, often there were too few subjects in some of the race categories to arrive at any general conclusions. But specific additional findings included the following:

6) In the 12-month follow-up, drug offenders assessed at Level I returned to prison at a higher rate than those assessed at either Level II or Level III.

7) In the 12-month follow-up, property offenders assessed at Levels II or III returned to prison at higher rates than their counterparts convicted of either person or drug offenses; in the 24-month follow-up, property offenders at all three levels exhibited the highest rates of return to prison.

8) In both follow-ups, offenders at all three levels between the ages of 17 and 21 exhibited higher rates of return than their older counterparts.

9) In the 12-month follow-up, offenders who received Level II treatment and were originally committed from downstate counties returned to prison at a higher rate than those at Level II from Cook County. But the differences across counties exhibited by those in Level I or Level III were minimal.

10) In the 24-month follow-up, those at Level I and Level II originally committed from downstate counties returned to prison at a higher rate than their Cook counterparts.

The opposite was true for those assessed at Level III: Of all at this level, those originally committed from Cook returned to prison at a much higher rate than those from downstate counties.

11) In the 12-month follow-up, blacks returned at the highest rate across the three levels. When turning to the 24-month follow-up, different results were obtained. Whites assessed at Levels I or II returned to prison at a higher rate than their black or Hispanic counterparts. When considering those who received Level III, the data indicated that Hispanics returned at the highest rate.

12) In both follow-ups, of those who returned for a new crime, those who were original drug offenders returned most often for a similar offense.

It should be stressed that the results presented above should be interpreted cautiously due to the small number of subjects in various categories. Because of the small numbers in the population of some

groups (Hispanics, for example), the rates of return measured may be inflated. Actual numbers were included in the tables to alert the reader to potentially misleading rates of return.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Given the increased rate at which Level I drug offenders returned to prison for the commission of an additional offense, special attention should be given to them during assessment. It is recommended that they not only be placed in drug education, but also should receive some treatment. Both education and counseling are necessary to help the offender realize the ramifications of his or her illegal activities. Furthermore, often a drug offender will be assessed only as a user, when in fact he or she is a dealer/distributor.

2) It is recommended that an in-community risk assessment be conducted on all IIP graduates, especially younger property offenders, to find out the levels of surveillance and treatment that are necessary to assist them in breaking their drug-crime cycle. Because of the high number of technical violations committed by these inmates, the imposition of penalties may be necessary both to protect the community and to deter the offender from further violations. This is especially true because many times these offenders deny their drug abuse problem and do not comply with the conditions of their release.

3) All IIP failures who are assessed at Level III should be given priority for substance abuse treatment in the prison to which they are transferred. Furthermore, once released into the community, they must get more intensive aftercare than just monthly contacts with Illinois Department of Corrections agents.

4) Additional analyses should be conducted as data from future years become available. In particular:

a. Continued outcome analyses based on assessed levels by other variables of interest;

b. Process evaluations concerning the assessment and treatment processes (these are necessary to ascertain whether the processes used are clinically relevant and theoretically informed);

c. Since IIP criteria have changed to include those who are older, who have a maximum sentence of up to eight years, or who have one prior adult incarceration, evaluations should take these factors into consideration and compare releasees based on old versus new criteria; and

d. To delineate a profile of an IIP recidivist, analyses concerning multiple variables need to be conducted. But this cannot take place until the population size increases.

Part 2 The Dwight Gateway Substance Abuse Treatment Program:

THE POST-RELEASE STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

INTRODUCTION

Criminal justice professionals have estimated that between 75 percent and 90 percent of all female offenders in Illinois have a drug or alcohol problem (Illinois Department of Corrections: 1993). Incarceration offers a unique opportunity to treat this traditionally under-served population.

To provide intensive treatment to female offenders, Illinois established a residential treatment program at Dwight Correctional Center. The program is operated by Gateway Foundation of Chicago and began in September 1988. The goal of Gateway is "to reduce recidivism among female offenders by providing intensive treatment services to those with serious substance abuse histories" (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority).

The primary criteria for participation in Gateway are a history of substance abuse and at least a minimal desire to become actively involved in treatment. The program is offered to women at all security levels.

The Gateway program at Dwight uses a therapeutic community environment—one in which inmates live and work together and do not mix with the general offender population. While in Gateway, participants take part in the following activities:

1) Education: The Dwight program provides education on a wide variety of topics related to substance abuse including the physical effects of abuse, effects on families, AIDS, daily living skills, and stress management;

2) Daily group therapy: Group therapy is directed toward understanding the factors relating to the participant's use of substances and developing alternative coping skills. Other specific groups focus on the participant's behavior within the program as a means of identifying and changing negative attitudes and behavior patterns; and,

3) Individual counseling: All participants receive individual counseling and are required to develop a detailed plan of how they will structure their lives upon release to remain drug-free.

Preliminary recidivism results indicate of the 146 Gateway participants released between July 1, 1989 and June 30, 1991, 64 (44 percent) returned to prison within two years of release. Comparing these results to 175 traditional prisoners released during this same period (matched on substance abuse histories, age, race, gender, and time remaining on sentence), 48 percent returned to prison within two years. Gateway recidivists were in the community for an average of 9.2 months before reincarceration, while those in the traditional releasee comparison group spent 7.9 months out of prison.

Additional analyses are necessary to determine if there are significant differences between Gateway participants and a traditional comparison group of matched offenders. Due to the time frame under which this study was conducted, an additional fiscal year of releasees will be studied, thereby increasing the size of the populations.

The purpose of this evaluation was twofold:

- 1) To determine if Gateway participants and a comparison group of traditional prison releasees differ in their rates of return to prison; and
- 2) To determine if Gateway participants and a comparison group of traditional prison releasees differ in their rates of return to prison based on various demographic and offense characteristics.

These additional analyses will allow for a more detailed profile of those female inmates with substance abuse histories served by the Dwight program, and a determination of the impact this program had on subsequent returns to prison.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a quasi-experimental design. It compared the combined population of fiscal years 1990 through 1992 Gateway participant releasees with general population offenders released during this same period who were eligible for Gateway but were unable to be placed due to a lack of available treatment slots. These offenders were matched to the Gateway participants on the following variables: substance abuse history, age, race, and time remaining on sentence. Additionally, a desire to receive treatment was controlled for because all comparison group members had indicated they wanted to be placed in Gateway.

For the first research purpose, the 24-month return rates of Gateway participants and the comparison group were assessed. Additionally, the Gateway participants were divided based on length of treatment time. Their return rate also were assessed, and comparisons and contrasts were discussed among the various groups.

For the second research purpose, the return rates of the two comparison groups were analyzed by original offense type, original type of admission, age, and time in the community. Once an inmate was identified as returning to prison, an inquiry was made as to what the re-commission was based upon. From that information, an indication of the post-graduation substance use-crime cycle of the Gateway population was determined.

TWO YEARS OUT: OVERALL COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM RATES

During FY 1990 through FY 1992, 168 of the female offenders who participated in the Gateway program were released from Dwight Correctional Center. Additionally, from this same time period 247 other women with identified substance abuse problems were released from traditional prisons. Although these women had indicated a desire for treatment, placement in Gateway was not possible due to a lack of treatment beds.

As presented in Table 1, results indicate that of the 168 Gateway participants, 41.4 percent were returned to prison within two years. In the comparison group, 104 were returned as well, a rate of 42.1 percent. Because all Gateway participants did not spend an equal number of days in the program, further analyses were conducted.

Table 1. Two-Year Recidivism Rates of Gateway Participants and Comparisons: 1990-1992

	Number in Population	Number Returned
Gateway Participants	168	69 (41.4%)
Non-Gateway Comparisons	247	104 (42.1%)

As presented in Table 1a, differing amounts of time in treatment were controlled for by dividing the Gateway population into two groups: a) those who spent fewer than 90 days participating in the program;

and, b) those who spent a period of 90 days or more in the program.

TWO YEARS OUT: VARIABLE-SPECIFIC COMPARISONS OF RETURN RATES

Table 1a. Gateway Participant Recidivism Rates Based on Number of Days in Program: 90 Days

	Number in Population	Number Returned
Completed Fewer than 90 Days	n = 100 (59.5%)	n = 45 (45.0%)
Completed 90 or More Days	n = 68 (40.5%)	n = 24 (35.3%)

Results indicate of the 168 Gateway participants, almost 60 percent spent less than 90 days in treatment, while 40.5 percent spent more than 90 days. Offenders who spent less time in the program were more likely to return to prison than those who remained in the program a longer period. Of those offenders who spent fewer than 90 days in the program, 45 percent returned, as compared to 35.3 percent of those who were in Gateway for 90 days or more.

As presented in Table 1b, the Gateway group was further divided according to who completed the program. An offender was considered to have completed the Gateway program if one of the following two¹¹ conditions had been met: a) she had spent more than 270 days (nine months) in the program and remained in Dwight, or b) she had spent more than 180 days (six months) in the program and was immediately released from Dwight.

Table 1b. Gateway Participant Recidivism Rates Based on Number of Days in Program: 180/270 Days

	Number in Population	Number Returned
Completed 270 or More Days /or/ Completed 180 Days and Released	n = 19 (11.3%)	n = 5 (26.3%)

Approximately 11 percent of all Gateway participants were considered to have completed the program. Of those, a little more than one-fourth returned to prison within two years of release. When comparing tables 1a and 1b, data support the belief that the longer offenders remain in treatment, the less likely it is they return to prison.

Table 2 presents the recidivism rates and return population sizes of Gateway participants and comparisons based on age, original admission type and original offense type.

For the Gateway group, all differences within the above-mentioned variables were more than 7 percent. For example, younger offenders returned at a rate of 36.7 percent, while older offenders returned at a rate of 43.9 percent — a difference of 7.2 percent. For the traditional comparisons, similar differences existed. Those admitted to prison for the first time returned at a rate much lower than those with prior prison records. The same was observed with respect to original offense type. Of all traditional comparisons, person and property offenders returned at a much higher rate than those originally convicted of a drug offense. However, unlike the Gateways, the age variable did not seem to impact the rate at which a traditional comparison offender returned to prison.

Across all variables, very few differences were observed between the two groups. Gateway participants under the age of 31 exhibited lower rates of return than their older counterparts, and the same was true for the comparison group. Furthermore, in both groups offenders who were admitted for the first time, or were originally convicted of a drug offense, returned to prison at lower rates than counterparts who returned after being incarcerated for person or property offenses previously.

The final variable was time in the community. This was defined as the number of months between the time an offender was released until she was returned to prison. As indicated in Table 3, Gateway participants who subsequently returned to prison spent an average of 9.68 months in the community. Their comparison counterparts averaged 8.93 months. Since the standard deviations associated with time in the community were quite high for both comparison groups, the median also was calculated. For the Gateway participants, the median number of months out was nine, while the comparisons were in the community for eight months.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW OFFENSES

To obtain information relating to the further substance use-crime cycle of the Gateway population, once offenders were identified as being recidivists,

their type of new offense was investigated. This information is presented in Table 4.

The data revealed that of the 69 Gateway participants who were returned, almost two-thirds were recommitted on a property offense. Furthermore, person offenders accounted for 13 percent, while drug offenders comprised 10.1 percent of these recidivists. The remaining offenders were convicted for sex or other offenses. In comparison to the original offense types, while the order of the three most common offenses remained the same, new offenses were more often property crimes, and less often drug or person crimes.

When turning to the non-Gateway comparisons, results indicate of the 104 recidivists, 68.3 percent returned for a property offense. Additionally, approximately 13 percent of those returning were convicted of either drug or person offenses. The remaining offenders recommitted were returned for sex or other offenses. Unlike their Gateway counterparts, the order of type of new crime changed. Although the majority of recommissions were based on property offenses, there were more new drug offenders than person offenders. While the percent of new person offenses dropped 27 percent, there were only 3.2 percent fewer offenders committed on drug offense than were incarcerated originally.

Therefore, based on new offense type, data indicated that the Gateway drug program may have had an effect on the type of new offenses committed by those returning to prison. While these offenders may still have returned to prison at a rate almost equal to their non-Gateway counterparts, those who participated in the program were less likely to return to prison for the commission of a drug offense. But whether the treatment program has affected individual drug use behavior is not clear. In other words, it may be the case that an offender's post-release illegal activities are still motivated by drug use (that is, stealing to obtain drugs or drug money).

SUMMARY

The research goals of the current project included the following: 1) determining if

Table 2. Recidivism Rates and Comparisons Based on Age, Admission Type, and Offense Type

	Gateway Participants	Non-Gateway Comparisons
AGE		
Younger (30 and under)	36.7% (n = 33)	41.5% (n = 54)
Older (31 and above)	43.9% (n = 36)	43.1% (n = 50)
ORIGINAL ADMISSION TYPE		
1st Admission	32.6% (n = 28)	32.4% (n = 48)
2nd (+) Admission	47.1% (n = 41)	63.6% (n = 56)
ORIGINAL OFFENSE TYPE¹²		
Person Offender	30.4% (n = 7)	39.5% (n = 17)
Property Offender	47.5% (n = 48)	53.1% (n = 77)
Drug Offender	23.5% (n = 8)	16.7% (n = 7)

Table 3. Months in the Community

	Average	Standard Deviation	Median
Gateway Participants	9.68	6.50	9.0
Non-Gateway Comparisons	8.93	5.62	8.0

Table 4. Recidivists: New Offense Types

	Gateway Recidivists ¹³	Comparison Recidivists ¹⁴
Person	9 (13.0%)	13 (12.5%)
Property	45 (65.2%)	71 (68.3%)
Drug	7 (10.1%)	14 (13.0%)

Gateway participants and a comparison group of traditional prison releasees differed in their rates of return to prison, and 2) determining if various offense or demographic characteristics influence the rates in which these offenders return to prison. Additional information relating to time in the community and type of new offense was also collected for those who returned to prison.

Data revealed that the return rates of Gateway participants and the comparisons were quite similar. In fact, there was less than a 2 percent difference between the two groups. But when controlling for length of time in treatment, differences appeared. Offenders who spent less than 90 days in Gateway returned to prison at a rate of 45 percent, compared to 35.3 percent for offenders who were in Gateway more than 90 days. Furthermore, offenders who were considered to have completed the program returned to prison at an even lower rate, 26.3 percent. Although the population sizes associated with these groups became quite low as further analyses were conducted, these results are consistent with national research that has indicated that time spent in a therapeutic community does have a positive impact on the post-release behavior of program participants (De Leon: 1989).

Of the Gateway participants, when considering the offense and demographic variables, data revealed that older inmates (31 years and older), and those who were previously incarcerated, exhibited higher two-year rates of return to prison than their younger or first-time incarcerated counterparts. Of all Gateway returnees, the majority were original property offenders. Similar results were obtained from the traditional comparison group.

Gateway recidivists were in the community longer prior to being returned than those in the traditional comparison group. This indicates a longer period in the community before violating their release agreement or committing a new crime. Of the new crimes committed, Gateway recidivists were less likely to return based on a drug offense than their comparison counterparts. The majority of both groups committed property offenses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) As the data become available, this study should be replicated to determine whether similar results are obtained;

2) Due to the increased risk of recidivism for those offenders who only spend a short time in Gateway (because of mandatory release dates), it is recommended that to put treatment beds to their best use, offenders who have more than 90 days left in

prison should have priority placement into Gateway;

3) As the population sizes increase, it is recommended that continued analyses relating to length of time spent in Gateway and rates of return to prison be conducted;

4) Process evaluations concerning the treatments should be provided to offenders to ascertain whether they are clinically relevant and theoretically informed. By encouraging treatment program structure and composition to be in accordance with what has been found to be effective in previous studies, program efficacy may be increased;

5) To further understand the drug use-crime cycle, in-depth interviews of Gateway recidivists should be conducted to obtain information on their motivations to commit new crimes;

6) Conduct further outcome analyses based on other variables of interest (for example, prior arrest record, type of aftercare provided); and,

7) To delineate a profile of a Gateway recidivist, analyses concerning multiple variables need to be conducted. This profile would include multiple offender characteristics which when taken together describe those Gateway individuals who appear to be most likely to return to prison. ■

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ENDNOTES

¹ This includes 94.8 percent of the population.

² This includes 61.8 percent of the population.

³ This number is larger than others reported in similar reports prepared by the Illinois Department of Corrections because escape risk and supervision level were not included when developing this comparison group.

⁴ Information was not available for 71 IIP graduates. All analyses will refer to 524 inmates, which is the population of IIP graduates who were assessed for treatment need.

⁵ The population of traditional releasees returned to prison for a new offense is 883. For all categories that do not equal that amount, information is missing.

⁶ Because IIP failures cannot count their time in IIP toward their sentence, they remain in prison longer. Therefore, a large number of individuals in this group were sent to IIP prior to formal assessment and

released during fiscal 1992.

⁷ Information was not available for 71 IIP graduates. All analyses will refer to 524 inmates, which is the population of IIP graduates who were assessed for treatment need.

⁸ Because IIP failures cannot count their time in IIP towards their sentence, they remain in prison longer. Thus, a large number of individuals in this group were sent to IIP prior to formal assessment and released during FY 1992 and FY 1993.

⁹ Given the small number of assessed IIP failures who returned to prison for a new offense, they were excluded from the following analysis.

¹⁰ Including analyses beyond what was presented in this report.

¹¹ "Program completion" was defined by a treatment provider at Dwight Correctional Center via a telephone conversation with Robert J. Jones, research scientist, Illinois Department of Corrections.

¹² The original offense type of six Gateways and three controls was "other."

¹³ Eight of the Gateway offenders who returned to prison received new convictions for sex or "other" offenses.

¹⁴ Six of the controls who were returned to prison received new convictions for sex or "other" offenses.

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