

Response of Drug Abuser Parolees to a Combination of Treatment and Intensive Supervision

The initial phase of the long-term assessment of incarcerated and paroled drug abusers in Maryland involved conducting an evaluation of social support intervention and weekly urine monitoring for up to 1-year post-incarceration to parolees with a history of either narcotic addiction or heavy cocaine use. Designed to augment routine parole procedures, social support included individual and group counseling, client advocacy, and case management as prominent features. In addition to defining and determining the extent of successful outcome, this report deals with the characteristics of responders to the program. The intent of this report is to identify the predictors and correlates of successful outcome over the 1-year period. For classification of successes and failures, the evaluation considered the following major disciplinary actions as an indication of failure: parole violation, arrest, the issuance of a warrant for arrest, and reincarceration. The principal assessment instrument used in this determination was a questionnaire covering the 1-year period of parole supervision, which was completed for each individual by research staff personnel on the basis of information obtained from the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation. Of 237 male and female drug abuser parolees assigned to parole procedures enhanced by weekly drug abuse counseling and urine monitoring, 118 were considered successes and 119 were considered failures at the end of 1 year on the basis of whether they had received a major sanction during the year. Success and failure cases were distinguishable on the basis of both concurrent (while on parole) and past characteristics. Greater treatment retention and amount of time used during parole and greater amount of time used and less deviance displayed prior to the first (ever) episode of heavy drug use were the principal correlates of success. The correspondence generally found between intensity of supervision and amount of deviance detected, the variability of the impact of detected drug use on the determination of sanctions, and the relationship of parole outcome to gender are discussed.