

# Summary Debriefing

November 10, 2009



## Access to Services:

- **There are no waiting lists for participants to receive Individual Out-Patient (IOP) treatment with Northern Wyoming Mental Health, or for Psychiatric services.** Participants are entering IOP treatment immediately and are getting high quality services.
- **Johnson County Court Supervised Treatment Program (hereafter court supervised treatment program) utilizes services in the community.** For example, if a participant enters the program and is behind in school and needs something outside of traditional education, the court supervised treatment program reaches out to other community partners, such as the Sheridan County Opportunities Project for Education (SCOPE) program to ensure participants are getting the best possible outcomes.
- **Treatment provides families of the participant's tools for success.** Families are also encouraged to attend counseling and are appreciative of this opportunity to mend family relationships.
- *There might be a greater need for services in this community.* There is only one treatment provider in Johnson County and another choice might be helpful.
- *There is an opportunity for more intakes in the court supervised treatment program.* The team hopes to raise the capacity level to 12 participants, and are currently operating at only 7, with two of those placed outside of the county.



## Quality of Services including support for recovery:

- The court supervised treatment program **always puts the participant's interests first;** before territorial or inter-agency issues. It was very clear throughout the review that staff always take the families into consideration first and by doing so, avoid issues with other community organizations.
- **Legal council is provided throughout a participant's involvement with the court supervised treatment program.** The program has a volunteer attorney available to any participant who has any questions about the legal aspect and implication of the court supervised treatment program. This is a free service to both court supervised treatment program and the participant.
- **There is a high level of cultural understanding** within the court supervised treatment program; individual strengths, family strengths and culture is naturally considered and the court supervised treatment program staff displays tolerance and acceptance to all walks of life.

- **A healthy relationship between the treatment and probation aspect of the court supervised treatment program exists.** While maintaining this balance can be difficult for any group, this program is well-balanced and staff work well together.
- *There is an opportunity for sanctions to be consistent among participants.* Multiple individuals felt that sanctions can differ from participant to participant and creating and/or following policy on consequences to all participants who violate the court supervised treatment program rules will continue to be helpful.



## Collaboration:

- **The Department of Family Services (DFS) and the court supervised treatment program have improved their relationship;** Collaborating with DFS was an issue identified in the prior SYNC review. The court supervised treatment program and DFS have worked out their differences and are now working well together. While there appears to be some minor policy issues that may need worked out, both agencies are pleased at the collaboration.
- **The Johnson County School District and the court supervised treatment program work together as a unified front.** The collaboration between the education system and treatment court contributes to the instant accountability in the educational component of this program. Treatment court staff can access grades to all students online and have an open policy to call the assistant principal with concerns, and vice versa. This has remained a consistency even with three school superintendent changes over the last few years.
- **Law enforcement and the court supervised treatment program** work together as a unified front. Local law enforcement is provided a list of program participants and notifies the probation officer at any point of contact with these participants.
- **DFS and the court supervised treatment program share resources for unified services;** such as drug testing and IOP services. While some concerns were expressed about minor policy issues, it seems that this is partially due to DFS being so new to the program team and these kinks are expected to be worked out.

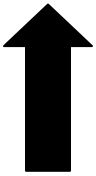
# Johnson County Court Supervised Treatment Program (JCCSTP)

Buffalo, Wyoming  
November 2009



## Overarching Principals as reported from review participants and others:

- Johnson County Court Supervised Treatment Program (hereafter referred to as court supervised treatment program) reflects true wrap-around services amongst the participants, families and the local service providers. Based on previous reviews gaining buy-in and support from other agencies has been a difficult task, however the program seems to have overcome this hurdle. This is the case particularly with the local high school, treatment provider, law enforcement and alternative education providers.
- The treatment provider felt that although employed through the local mental health center, she considers herself part of the court supervised treatment program.
- Both of the participants interviewed felt strongly that the treatment court staff were personally vested in their success and wanted to do well in the program because they valued the professional relationship between each other. One of the individuals interviewed stated, *"If I ever relapsed, even while still in the treatment court program, I would not hesitate to contact [probation officer] or [treatment provider] or both."*
- All professionals involved with the court supervised treatment program expressed a sense of equality and felt comfortable expressing their opinions and trusted that they would be listened to and heard.
- All parties with the court supervised treatment program have come to an agreement that if youth are upfront and report relapses on their own, sanctions will be mild and the program will focus on treatment more-so than sanctions.
- All individuals interviewed agreed that the court supervised treatment program doesn't have any "territorial" issues with other agencies that are involved with this youth population.
- Court supervised treatment program staff are able to engage parents even if they are initially resistant to being involved in the program.



## Strength Findings:

- Findings from the last review indicated that maintaining a relationship with the local Department of Family Services (DFS) probation program was difficult. For the 2009 fall review, the court supervised treatment program and DFS probation not only work together, but have integrated to a point of sharing resources such as drug testing and individual out-patient services.
- Staff meetings include representatives from the court supervised treatment program staff and coordinator, the mental health facility, Judge Jarvis, the local high school assistant principal and participant attorney. This encourages the great collaborations established, to continue.
- This court supervised treatment program works with a local private defense attorney who is available for all youth in treatment court that have legal questions regarding this process. This particular attorney volunteers his time to these youth, so this is a service that is free of cost to both the participants, and the program. He also attends the staff meetings as well.
- There is no waiting list for any individual outpatient treatment, nor is there a wait for any psychiatric medications.
- The treatment aspect of the program seems to have improved since the last review. Previously, a participant moving up in court supervised treatment program levels was completely dependent on the treatment provider's decision. This is no longer the case, and a participant's progress is based on the program team as a whole.
- This court supervised treatment program understands that while one requirement to graduate the program is to obtain a high school degree (if age appropriate), a handful of youth exists where this goal is not realistic. The program has collaborated with the Sheridan County Opportunities Project for Education (SCOPE) program that serves youth who have dropped out of high school to obtain a GED. This program also assists with independent living skills, job life skills, assistance in completing the FAFSA, resume and cover letter experience, career interest profiles, anger management, conflict resolution and decision making.
- With the support and treatment provided through this court supervised treatment program, many family structures have been repaired, which has largely contributed to the success of individual participants.
- Judge Jarvis expressed that the individuals of the team all can have different ideas; however the team as a whole is able to reach consensus and everyone is

able live with team decisions. He reports trying to stick with the team decision, even if he doesn't necessarily agree with it.



### **Opportunities for Improvement:**

- While the court supervised treatment program and DFS have seemed to resolve most issues between the offices and work well together, there does appear to still be some policy issues that need to be worked out for more effective collaboration. An example includes: “DFS probation requires that a participant cannot associate with other persons on probation, however the program probation requires a list of persons the youth is allowed to associate with; which might include an individual who is involved with the court supervised treatment program probation, but is doing well.”It is expressed that this is something that both the program and DFS are interested in resolving; however it seems to be an upper level policy issue that might take some time.
- While there is no waiting list currently for IOP Treatment; there is also only one provider, so there is no diversity in the service providers in this community. It was felt that a variety of services might be helpful in this community.
- There appears to be a gap between Northern Wyoming Mental Health Center billing and the court supervised treatment program. A family reported receiving a bill for services when it should have gone to the program fiscal manager. It is the sense among some people interviewed that sometimes the billing department of the local mental health center is not aware of who the court supervised treatment program participants are. This issue has already been addressed and the program team has developed a form that will be faxed to the mental health center upon intake to be placed in the participant's file.
- One of the weakest components of the court supervised treatment program both locally and throughout the state is the aftercare component. Efforts have been made to create an aftercare program in the court supervised treatment program, but without funding these efforts have been unsuccessful.
- There is an opportunity for more court supervised treatment program referrals. The Wyoming Citizen Review Panel encourages the gate keepers of the program to allow more juveniles into this program. The program currently has 7 participants, 2 of which are residentially placed and are not currently active in the program.



### **General Findings:**

- The community culture in Buffalo, WY is that everyone usually knows the youth population and is helpful in holding them accountable and know what the youth are doing.
  - While there are significant benefits to living in a small "close-knit community," it was expressed in interviews that confidentiality can be difficult to protect under these circumstances.