



## Park County Adult Drug Court 2009 SYNC Review

- **PC-ADC-2009-034**
  - *“It’s the people that make this work.”*
- **PC-ADC-2009-018**
  - *“When you are in drug court, you have to apply what you learn. That is what has made the biggest impact in my life.”*

# Summary

- Park County Adult Drug Court (PCADC) began operation in 2002 and has maintained consistent leadership and management since its inception.
- ASI (Addiction Severity Index) evaluations are completed promptly and services are offered quickly once the client has been sentenced.
- Much consideration is put into the selection of clients and clients who are being accepted into this program appear to be very appropriate; because this process and program work so well, perhaps there are additional clients, who could be considered for and benefit from the PCADC program.
- PCADC is averaging 17-20 participants.
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) were considered very helpful in this community by both PCADC staff and clients.
- The treatment provider through PCADC is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). That person is able to address some mental health (MH) concerns, which is important in this community because access to MH services is somewhat limited.
- The reviewers noticed a great deal of positive rapport between the staff members as well as between staff and clients.
- Religious support, both morally and financially, was evident in this community.
- In this community, housing availability is a problem. This has had a negative impact on PCADC clients.
- PCADC receives clients from municipal, circuit and district courts as long as they are not violent felony cases.
- Client cost for participation in PCADC is \$25.00 per month.
- The average length of time in PCADC is 15-18 months with a minimum of 12 months.
- The success rate of PCADC is 60% in terms of clients who are re arrested based on current information.



### **Access to Services:**

- The participant initially learned about the program through other inmates suggesting it while incarcerated. This demonstrates the “buy-in” and “demand” for the program within the community.
- Clients access services not only through their own networks, but also through the PCADC community, including participants and staff.
- Clients reported enjoying the life skills group, and felt it was very beneficial in both their personal life, and with their sobriety.
- The clients were very pleased with the accessibility of the program. One client reported entering the program the same day the client got out of jail.
- Some clients live in Powell, which has made travel arrangements difficult. Drug court staff has made a “huge effort” to assist these clients.
- Clients felt that services through PCADC are accessible. For services associated with PCADC, the staff generally know who to go to; in the rare occasion staff does not know who to contact to access a service they will find out for the client.
- There are no costs for an ASI; these are done in-house, and if they have recently been done elsewhere, PCADC will accept that evaluation.
- The judge is responsive to getting clients in when needed.
- Once the client has graduated from the program, they are allowed to continue seeing their counselor as needed. These services are offered as long as the client seeks them. There are participants who have graduated over a year past, and then came back and were offered services.

### **Quality of Services Including Recovery Support:**

- One of the clients interviewed had financial assistance from PCADC in getting a housing situation stable until the client was able to self-sustain.
- Participants reported receiving the PCADC handbook and felt that they knew what the requirements were, and were comfortable with them.
- Both clients interviewed felt that their cases were unique, and reported the services as being “individualized” for them.
- PCADC assisted one client with getting enrolled into college.
- Clients appreciate the flexibility PCADC offers, while still holding them accountable; the judge is reported to firm but willing to listen to clients.
- A client reported that despite being heavily institutionalized in the past, PCADC is the first time the client has been able to develop trust and rapport with any type of staff members.
- Participants with seniority in the program have been able to take a mentorship role and this encourages sobriety with both participants entering the program, and the participant in the mentor role.
- Part of drug court requirements are for the client to be enrolled in school full-time or to have a full-time job; staff assists the clients with finding employment in the community.
- One of the strengths of PCADC court is the case management for clients.



### **Coordination:**

- It was very clear that this is one unified team that coordinates continuously and seamlessly.
- The PCADC team seems to be aware of services available in the community and understands how to access them for clients.
- The PCADC has a good relationship with the police department and appreciates and wants to continue that relationship while building upon it with joint services.
- The PCADC team utilizes each other's expertise to provide the best services possible. This was particularly evident between the case worker and probation officer.
- PCADC has a good relationship with the rest of the community. Most employers are agreeable to hiring PCADC clients, and PCADC does offer reduced rate drug testing for various employers.
- The clients rely not only on staff for support, but other group members as well.
- Clients often have children; coordination with and support from the Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) seems to be working well for the program.



### **Access to Services:**

- One of the Mental Health centers used by professionals in this community is Yellowstone Behavioral Health in Cody. The waiting list for referrals for this particular center is three to four months. This causes a significant issue when psychiatric services are needed.
- PCADC does not have the resources to fund psychiatric medications and the clients must either pay up-front for these medications or have insurance. Most, if not all clients, do not have the ability to access these medications when needed.
- If there is a mental health concern, such as depression, these concerns are addressed by a family medical doctor.
- There is a lack of long term, state funded, in-patient treatment; however Central Wyoming Treatment has just opened so PCADC is hopeful this will be a resource that will soon be available to their clients.

### **Quality of Services Including Recovery Support:**

- No issues identified.

### **Coordination:**

- Municipal court is the only court of referrals where the judge does sentencing after drug court is completed; all other courts complete sentencing prior to entering drug court.
- As with most systems, delays exist with the filing of appropriate paperwork in a timely fashion.

### **Systemic:**

- There are some members of the community who do not take drug court seriously and feel that drug court is too easy on the clients. These tend to be individuals who do not have any direct relationship with drug court or drug court clients. The



treatment perspective is not always embraced and some feel that a more punitive approach is best.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This lack of community awareness is not unique to Park County; it exists in most communities where treatment courts operate. It is an issue that needs to be addressed, statewide, though an aggressive promotional campaign.