

STATUS REPORT: PERFORMANCE-BASED EVALUATION

Prepared by
The Center for Applied Research and Analysis
The Institute for Social Research
University of New Mexico

June, 1998

Prepared for Community Corrections
Probation and Parole Division,
New Mexico Corrections Department

Robert J. Perry, Cabinet Secretary, NMCD
Kevin H. Dooley, Director, Probation and Parole Division
Erma Sedillo, Community Corrections Administrator

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In compliance with the Institute for Social Research's (ISR) contract with Adult Community Corrections, a performance-based evaluation system has been under study beginning in June 1997. At this time, a comprehensive literature search was begun to ascertain precise explanations and definitions of what a comprehensive performance-based evaluation system would look like. This search included gathering information on theoretical perspectives on community corrections and actual documentation on not only the process involved in conducting a performance-based evaluation but also in implementing appropriate outcome-measuring tools. The literature search was completed in September 1997. In conjunction with the performance-based evaluation literature search, a comprehensive unit-cost preliminary study was also concluded. Of primary concern was the scarcity of programs that have employed a performance-based evaluation system; consequently, there is a lack of variety of implementation options available.

By November 1997, the ISR began to work closely with the Probation and Parole Division (PPD) and the Community Corrections Program (CCP) to identify their mission statement, values, goals and activities in order to begin developing appropriate performance-based measures. At this time, it was discovered that both PPD and CCP did not have clearly definable values. In addition, several of their goals were either too broad to be effectively measured, or specified certain unmeasurable components. By December, ISR staff met with PPD and CCP staff in an attempt to rectify the above outlined problem. This clarification process has been ongoing throughout this contract year.

At the end of January 1998, PPD had clarified its values and mission statement. CCP, working within this clarification, had adopted a specific set of goals and activities. At this time, ISR staff stressed the importance of all members of the PPD and CCP to be aware of these changes. The development of a performance-based evaluation system is predicated on all members of the agency having full knowledge of the values, mission statement, goals and activities in order to be useful. CCP complied by disseminating all information to members of CCP. In addition, the new values, mission statement, goals and activities were verbally discussed at the Community Corrections Advisory Panel (CCAP) meeting which ISR staff attended in February, 1998. Finally, working in conjunction with other ISR staff, performance-based evaluation questions were included on a survey of all Probation and Parole Officers.

In April 1998, an additional problem with full implementation of a performance-based evaluation system became apparent. Within PPD and CCP there are both state and private providers. Both types of providers operate under different goals and activities. In addition, each CCP client moves throughout three functionally different phases while in the program. This may require the development of several performance-based evaluation systems for the different components of ACC. This may also lead to very specific problems in database design and data entry. ISR staff met with ACC staff to discuss this problem.

By June 1998, ISR staff met again with PPD and CCP staff. At that time, it was decided that the full design and implementation of a performance-based evaluation system for all of PPD would be too complex due to the variety of programs (CCP, Drug Court, et. al.) with unique goals and activities as well as private providers. After much discussion, it was decided that CCP would be the primary and only target for the performance-based evaluation system. It was further decided that the two different types of providers (state vs. private) could be incorporated

under CCP's goals and activities. Finally, it was decided that the three different phases that each client may enter could be easily incorporated into the overall performance-based evaluation system.

Beginning in July 1998, the performance-based evaluation system will begin its design. In conjunction with the design, a specific database to track relevant information for each client will begin. As the overall performance-based evaluation system will eventually be applied to all of PPD, the design will work as much as possible within the larger institutional framework of PPD while emphasizing the unique structure of CCP.