

Examining Mental Health Court Graduates: Factors Impacting Recidivism Risk During MHC Participation and After Graduation

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Background

- Goal of mental health court (MHC) treatment is to reduce risk of recidivism
- MHC graduates have significantly lower number of arrests when compared to:
 - ✓ Non-graduates (Gill & Murphy, 2017; Hiday et al., 2016)
 - ✓ Individuals on supervised pre-trial release (Hiday et al., 2013)
 - ✓ Traditional offenders (Lowder et al., 2016)

Background

- What else impacts risk of recidivism?
 - ✓ Stable housing (Case et al., 2009)
 - ✓ Lower pre-treatment level of risk (Lim & Day, 2014; 2016)
 - ✓ Other potential variables not empirically examined?
- Lack of research examining these potentially confounding variables

Current Study

- The current study examined the relationship between:
 - Housing status
 - Employment status
 - Violence risk
 - Number of psychiatric diagnoses
 - Severity of substance use & alcohol use
- And arrest data during MHC participation and after graduation
- **Hypothesis:**
- It was expected that clients with unstable housing, unstable employment, higher violence risk, a greater number of psychiatric diagnoses, and higher SMAST and DAST total scores would have higher odds of being arrested.

Methods: Inclusion Criteria

- Queens TASC Mental Health Diversion Program
 - 01/01/2016 – 08/15/2018
 - Referred to TASC for an ATI disposition by the Queen's County District Attorney's Office
 - Age 18 or older at the time of referral
 - Evaluated by TASC staff
 - Accepted for an ATI program
 - Case reached its conclusion with TASC
 - Post-graduation data collected from NYC Department of Correction's Inmate Lookup Service

The Sample ($N = 73$)

*All participants successfully completed their mandated treatment

	Range	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	21 – 87 years	41.2	13.3
Time to Mandate Completion	155 – 928 days	432.2	128.1
Post-Graduation Arrest Data	1 – 21 months	11.3	6.4

Gender	%	<i>n</i>
Male	68.5	50
Female	31.5	23

Ethnicity	%	<i>n</i>
Latino	8.2	6
Non-Latino	91.8	67

Race	%	<i>n</i>
Black/African American	50.7	37
White	38.4	28
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.0	8

Methods: Variables Examined

- Demographics (age, race, ethnicity, & gender)
- Court mandate
- Employment history
- Housing history
- Psychiatric history
- Substance use history
- Violence history
- Arrest history
- Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS; Brennan & Oliver, 2000)
- Short Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (SMAST; Selzer et al., 1975)
- Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST; Skinner, 1982)

Results: During MHC Participation

- A total of 7 participants (9.6%) were arrested
- COMPAS General Recidivism Risk
 - Low = 4
 - Medium = 1
 - High = 1
 - Missing = 1
- COMPAS Violence Recidivism Risk
 - Low = 3
 - Medium = 2
 - High = 1
 - Missing = 1
- A logistic regression was performed to predict participants' odds of being arrested during MHC participation using housing status, employment status, violence history, non-compliance history, general recidivism risk score and level on the COMPAS, violent recidivism risk score and level on the COMPAS, number of psychiatric diagnoses, SMAST total score, and DAST total score as predictors. The model demonstrated an overall good fit, Nagelkerke's $R^2=1.00$. The predictors were an improvement over the default model, $\chi^2(16)=33.51$, $p=.006$. However, none of the predictors contributed significantly to the model ($p>.05$). Despite this, classification accuracy improved from the base rate (90.9%) to the model with the predictors (100%).

Results: After MHC Graduation

- A total of 12 participants (16.4%) were arrested
- COMPAS General Recidivism Risk
 - Low = 8
 - Medium = 0
 - High = 3
 - Missing = 1
- COMPAS Violence Recidivism Risk
 - Low = 9
 - Medium = 0
 - High = 2
 - Missing = 1
- A second logistic regression was performed to predict participants' odds of being arrested after MHC graduation using the same predictors as above. The model demonstrated an overall good fit, Nagelkerke's $R^2=.812$. The predictors were an improvement over the default model, $\chi^2(16)=35.86$, $p=.003$. The COMPAS violence recidivism risk score was the sole predictor to significantly contribute to the model. For every one point increase in the COMPAS violence recidivism risk score, the odds of being arrested after MHC graduation increased by a factor of **18.35**, $b=2.91$, $Wald=3.97$, $p=.046$, $OR=18.35$, 95% CI [1.05, 321.18]. None of the remaining predictors contributed significantly to the model ($p>.05$). Notably, classification accuracy improved from the base rate (83.6%) to the model with the predictors (96.4%).

Discussion

- During MHC participation, non-significant predictors of arrest:
 - Housing status
 - Employment status
 - Violence risk
 - Number of psychiatric diagnoses
 - Severity of alcohol use & substance use
- After MHC graduation, only significant predictor of arrest:
 - COMPAS violent recidivism risk score
- Limitations:
 - Sample size!
 - Follow-up period
 - Other confounding variables?

Discussion

- What can mental health diversion programs do?
- Based on current study, thoroughly assess for future risk of violence
 - COMPAS
 - Other measures?
- Thoroughly assess desire to engage in treatment and motivation to adhere to treatment requirements
- Provide treatment recommendations targeting individual factors that will reduce participants' recidivism risk



Thank you!

Contact Information

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