
INTRODUCTION

The Editorial Board is pleased to present the first issue of volume five of the *Drug Court Review* (Volume V, 1). This issue of Volume V examines three important areas to the drug court field: *how expungement is dealt with in drug court, the detection window for cannabinoid testing, and further research and evaluation on drug court programs*. Each of these areas has a critical impact on drug courts throughout the United States.

These issues, and the information we are able to uncover about them, are important to the continued development and evolution of the drug court model.

In this issue:

- ◆ David S. Festinger, Ph.D., David S. DeMatteo, J.D., Ph.D., Douglas B. Marlowe, J.D., Ph.D., and Patricia A. Lee, M.S., take a look at the issue of charge expungement in drug court. Long thought to be a primary “carrot” for the inducement of drug court participation, this article examines the extent to which: expungement is a primary motivator for involvement; clients take advantage of their right to expungement after graduation; courts facilitate the expungement process.
- ◆ Paul L. Cary, M.S. presents a careful review of relevant marijuana elimination research to reveal a reliable cannabinoid detection window. The establishment of this window puts to rest conventional claims that marijuana remains detectable in urine for 30 days or longer following smoking. This widely held assumption has complicated the interpretation of testing results, likely resulted in the delay of therapeutic intervention and judicial sanctioning, and fostered the denial of marijuana usage by drug court participants.

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- ◆ This issue of the *Review* concludes with a “Research Update” that synthesizes reports on three studies in the field of drug court research and evaluation: Evaluation of Program Completion and Rearrest Rates across four Drug Court Programs; Evaluation of Outcomes in Alaska’s Three Therapeutic Courts; and Process Evaluation of Maine’s Statewide Adult Drug Treatment Court Program.

THE DRUG COURT REVIEW

Published semi-annually, the *Review*'s goal is to keep the drug court practitioner abreast of important new developments in the drug court field. Drug courts demand a great deal of time and energy of the practitioner. There is little opportunity to read lengthy evaluations or keep up with important research in the field. Yet, the ability to marshal scientific and research information and "argue the facts" can be critical to a program's success and ultimate survival.

The *Review* builds a bridge between law, science, and clinical communities, providing a common tool to all. A headnote and subject indexing system allows access to evaluation outcomes, scientific analysis, and research on drug court related areas. Scientific jargon and legalese are interpreted for the practitioner into common language.

Although the *Review*'s emphasis is on scholarship and scientific research, it also provides commentary from experts in the drug court and related fields on important issues to drug court practitioners.

THE NATIONAL DRUG COURT INSTITUTE

The *Drug Court Review* is a project of the National Drug Court Institute. NDCI was established under the auspices of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and with the support of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice.

The National Drug Court Institute's mission is to promote education, research, and scholarship to the drug court field and other court-based intervention programs.

Historically, education and training in the drug court field have only been available at regional workshops and the annual national conference; analysis and scholarship were largely limited to anecdotes and personal accounts.

That situation has changed. Evaluations exist on dozens of drug court programs. Scholars and researchers have begun to apply the rigors of scientific review and analysis to the drug court model. The level of experience and expertise necessary to support such an institution now exist.

Since its creation in December 1997, NDCI has launched a comprehensive practitioner training series for judges, prosecutors, public defenders, court coordinators, treatment providers, and community supervision officers; developed a research division responsible for developing a scientific research agenda and publication dissemination strategy for the field, as well as developing a series of evaluation workshops; and published a monograph series on relevant issues to drug court institutionalization and expansion.

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