



Progress Report

We have been working very hard to promote the need for law and medicine professionals to work together. Most recently we have developed a resource guide for the justice system, entitled "Alcohol and Other Drug Problems: A Public Health and Public Safety Priority." The PLNDP leadership determined early on that we needed to bring what we have learned in the medical field about treating substance use disorders to the justice system to aid them in their decision-making. We also wanted to clarify some of the recent developments in the research regarding the neurobiology of addiction to dispel some of the myths. Judges and attorneys in our leadership also felt that a comprehensive overview of an introduction to this public health problem was needed. In response, PLNDP, in coordination with The National Judicial College, and a

Justice Education Advisory Council made up of judges, researchers, attorneys and medical experts, has created a website that provides a PDF of the guide, update of the activities, and a mechanism for people from the justice community to submit questions to a substance abuse advisory committee that we established (www.plndp.org). This provides judges and others in the justice system a mechanism to submit confidential questions to a panel of experts in the substance abuse field. We hope to coordinate with PLNDP Justice Advisory Leaders Judge William Dressel, President of The National Judicial College, and Judge Barbara Rothstein, Director of the Federal Judicial Center, to have this resource and website available to all who come to their sites if possible.

Useful Links on Our Website

This link will take you directly to the PLNDP resource guide website:

http://www.plndp.org/resource_guide/

This link will take you directly to information on training activities with the pilot sites, including a few photos: http://www.plndp.org/intro_training.html

This link will take you to where you can order a FREE copy of the guide or download a PDF: http://www.plndp.org/intro_guide.html

All of these links and an introduction to the project are on the first page of the PLNDP website www.plndp.org

Justice Education Project

Early in the project we identified multi-disciplinary teams from the justice system from three states to work with, which include MA, RI, and WI. Our goal was to work with them to take the concepts from the guide and try to translate them into practice within their regions. We wanted to see what challenges they would need to overcome and what would be needed to change behaviors and attitudes in the process.

NJC Training

Multi-disciplinary teams from each of the pilot sites went to The National Judicial College (NJC) to be trained on topics from the justice resource guide, to discuss the final plans for developing the guide, and outline activities for each pilot to accomplish locally. Presentations were made on the following: screening and assessment research with another session on adolescent needs; co-occurring disorders; treatment including focus on pharmacotherapy and the neurobiology of addiction, as well as the need for Integrated Systems of care for treatment and prevention. Following the training each team from the pilot sites held regular conference calls to plan their local training activities and define their goals.

Pilot sites – WI, MA, and RI

In each of our pilot sites, we have succeeded in building collaborative efforts between law and medicine to promote the use of evidence-based practices.

Team Wisconsin

Under the leadership of PLNDP Justice Advisory member Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson, a multi-disciplinary team of justice personnel was formed to work with PLNDP. From the beginning the WI Team was well organized and ready to move forward. Their goal was to begin by expanding the training to all judges throughout WI, educating them on the primary topics of the PLNDP Justice Resource Guide with hopes of expanding the use of evidence-based practices state-wide. Since the project began, PLNDP leaders have trained WI Supreme Court members, representatives from Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Public Health, Corrections, Policy and other key leaders from the state level followed by two statewide meetings in 2009 to train district court judges. These meetings focused on substance abuse and mental health disorders, the broad array of treatment options, including the use of pharmacotherapy, and recent research advances in the neurobiology of addiction. These meetings were well-received by the judges and other staff. Chief Justice Abrahamson has been extremely supportive. Further training of justice personnel will continue throughout the state. Law and medicine relationships have been formed as a result of these meetings for future collaborations.

Team Massachusetts

Chief Judge Martha Grace, who is also a member of the PLNDP Justice Advisory Council, pulled together a multi-disciplinary team for the juvenile courts of MA. Their plan was to train all juvenile court judges in MA on how to effectively treat co-occurring disorders and gain a better understanding of the use of pharmacotherapy as they are both highly stigmatized, the most difficult to treat, and the most complex concepts to understand. The judges felt the meeting was extremely useful and identified the need to have more discussions with the Department of Mental Health about how they can work more closely and effectively with the courts.

Chief Judge Grace is working to schedule a meeting with the MA Secretary of Health and Human Services as well as key leadership from the Departments of Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Police and Education to discuss further plans.

Team Rhode Island

While engaging the leadership within RI's justice system has been by far the most challenging, now that we are IN they seem to love us. We find ourselves meeting with their justice leadership on a regular basis. They have several projects underway and plan to keep PLNDP involved and busy for what seems to be a lifetime.

The Chief Judge of RI's District Court and the Chief Justice of the RI Supreme Court closed courts for a day to have all judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and other personnel attend an all-day PLNDP meeting. The meeting had panels of law and medicine professionals present on the complexities of handling co-occurring disorders and provided a better understanding of evidence-based practices. This meeting convened about 300 participants and received rave reviews.

Following the conference several new initiatives have evolved, including the following:

- 1) We developed training for Providence Police on crisis intervention and how to handle clients with mental and substance abuse disorders.
- 2) We are in discussions with the Mayor of Providence, District Court personnel and others about the possibility of developing a model program for introducing the different ways that Police and Fire personnel can handle substance use disorders. We would like to create a training program for police that could be used in an ongoing manner.
- 3) The Chief Judge of RI has created an agreement with Providence Police to have every person who presents a mental disorder in the jail to first be assessed by a clinical specialist before being booked. If they are in a psychotic state, they will be transferred to a medical facility first. This memorandum of understanding provides deferred prosecution for those struggling with serious mental health illness and avoids sending them to the courts. We hope a state-wide initiative will be instituted.
- 4) We provided an MPH student from Brown to work with the courts to expand and update their database in order to make tracking and research more comprehensive and useful. This student focused her thesis on this project and provided the courts with an expertise they could not afford and helped them create outcome data used for securing ongoing support.
- 5) We have been asked to help facilitate a meeting of the leadership from all treatment providers in the state of RI to discuss how the system needs to change to better meet the needs of the community. We are also trying to help put together an acute care system that will divert people with mental health and substance abuse problems from the ER and send them to community health centers.

Maine Judges

During the summer of 2009, PLNDP trained all judges in Maine as well as their law clerks. The Superior Court Chief Justice closed all courts for the day and mandated that everyone attend. Now that's the way to make sure folks attend training—have a Chief Justice send the invitation. Presentations included the effects of alcohol and other drugs on the brain, how this relates to the legal community, and the importance for judges to understand how this impacts their work and why evidence based practices are needed. The training was well-received, and, in fact, several judges approached the sponsoring judge, Judge Kevin Cuddy, at the end of the training and asked for more in the very near future. A major emphasis of the presentation was focused on how all judges need a basic understanding of alcohol and other drugs and how to better utilize what few resources we have.



PLNDP and the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (AAAP)

In early March 2009, the leadership of PLNDP and the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry met and discussed our overlapping interest and work in educating the justice system. Many of the PLNDP leaders who have been the key presenters for most of our trainings are also AAAP members so it was determined that if we could engage more Addiction Psychiatrists in reaching out to the justice community, we would be much more effective and efficient. These two organizations have agreed to join together in all efforts relating to justice education, highlighting the expertise of both organizations. Joining with AAAP's 1,000 members nationwide will better position us locally to support justice professionals in learning more about evidence-based practices for handling these problems.

Videotaping – Case Studies

PLNDP in coordination with the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry

We filmed Addiction Psychiatrists, many of whom are PLNDP leaders, responding to legal case studies provided by The National Judicial College. The physicians were asked to give their perspectives on how they would address the medical aspects of the individual's substance use disorder and, in some cases, co-occurring disorders (mental and substance use). These case studies with medical experts will be placed on our website to help provide the judges with examples similar to those they face in their daily practices, in order to assist them in their decision-making about how to best handle cases involving substance use disorders. We are also considering putting the cases on DVDs to hand out to judges and other justice staff following our training. We are currently in discussions with a legal education firm on how to use our various training resources that we have created for a national initiative to train justice professionals.

PLNDP, AAAP, American Bar Association's (ABA) Standing Committee on Substance Abuse and ABA Commission on Lawyer's Assistance Programs

These organizations are in discussions to create training materials tailored specifically for practicing attorneys. We propose to create case-based scenarios and provide specific advice for each specialty attorney—family law, employment law, and prosecutors and defense attorneys on how to better understand the issues around substance abuse, addiction and co-occurring disorders when handling their cases and clients' issues. We have held several meetings and will be interviewing attorneys from each specialty to gain more insight into their practices. We have been fortunate to have attorney Louise Thomas, JD from Maine working with us in this effort and we are hoping to develop a grant to provide funding for dissemination of the training program once it has been completed.

Physicians and Lawyers for National Drug Policy

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In Conclusion

The more we work with the justice community, the more opportunities we envision for expanding our work beyond judges and attorneys. Our work with police has shown us that there is a tremendous need to have police better prepared much earlier in the process as well as better educated in making decisions with regard to individuals with substance use disorders and mental health disorders because most often the police are the first on the scene in dealing with these issues.

We also believe that educating probation and parole officers is needed. In RI, a large proportion of individuals in the jails/prisons are there because of so-called "technical violations" – violating a condition of probation or parole that does not involve committing a crime. If probation/parole officers better understand relapse, the broad array of treatment options available, and how addiction impacts the brain, we believe they would be better prepared to address individual needs. We are also researching opportunities to work with the DWI courts. RI has one of the highest rates of alcohol fatalities in the country. More has to be done in this area and the current approach simply is not working. We are researching opportunities to potentially work in this area on a local level as a pilot study for a national initiative.

Health Care Reform

PLNDP is a founding member of the Whole Health Campaign, a coalition of over 100 national organizations in mental health and addiction working together to reform our health care system. This coalition has produced action-oriented policy papers, met with administration and Congressional members and conducted Congressional briefings on Capitol Hill. We work closely with the Coalition for Whole Health, based at the Legal Action Center, which helps fashion specific language for the bills being drafted now by Congress. See the website of the Whole Health Campaign (www.wholehealthcampaign.org) for our advocacy principles and copies of our position papers.

Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) for Alcohol Problems

PLNDP has been involved with numerous projects promoting the use of Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) for alcohol problems, working closely with PLNDP Leader Larry Gentilello and PLNDP advisors Eric Goplerud and Dan Hungerford. As mentioned in earlier communications, PLNDP leadership played a major role in strategic planning for SBI on a national level and also with developing educational materials for the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma. In addition, PLNDP was the successful applicant for reimbursement codes to allow physicians to be compensated for routine screening for alcohol and other drug problems.

Funding

As you know, our funding sources most recently have been JEHT Foundation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, supporting the justice education project. In January 2009, we were notified by the JEHT Foundation that, as a result of the arrest of Bernard Madoff, their financial advisor, the foundation would be closing. Fortunately, PLNDP was able to complete our project funded by JEHT Foundation by the end of summer 2009. While our funding remains limited, we are thankful that we have the ability to continue our work. In conclusion, we appreciate your continued support and many contributions. We have worked with many of you individually as we have helped educate the justice system and build law and medicine teams. There is truly a need for much more to occur. We are currently in discussions with the leadership of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry about ways to engage their members who have state and regional representatives who could work with local justice staff in this effort.

We cannot adequately express our appreciation and gratitude for the ongoing support and many contributions of so many of you. Without you, this project and endeavor would never have been possible. In particular, our co-chairs Richard Bonnie, JD, and George D. Lundberg, MD, and our Board of Directors David Lewis, MD, David Rosenbloom, PhD, Thomas Murray, PhD and Robert Gonzales, JD..

We would also like to acknowledge the many contributions of several of our PLNDP leaders who have graciously donated their time and expertise to present at these trainings. Those individuals include: Drs. Hoover Adger, Kathleen Brady, Charles O'Brien, David Lewis, Robert Swift, Larry Gentilello, George Lundberg and attorneys Richard Bonnie and Richard Boldt, and judges Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson, Chief Judge Martha Grace, Judge Barbara Rothstein and Judge William Dressel.

We will continue to do our best to keep you better informed for the future and we encourage you to contact us with your ideas and suggestions, as you are why this project is successful.

In order to continue our efforts to educate the justice system, we need new funding sources. Can you contribute? If you know of other individuals and/or organizations that may support our educational goals, please contact Kathryn Cates-Wessel, Executive Director of PLNDP by emailing plndp@brown.edu or calling (401) 863-6641.