

ACHIEVING POSITIVE OUTCOME - REDUCING RECIDIVISM WITHIN TORONTO'S MENTAL HEALTH COURT SUPPORT PROGRAM: THE MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE

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This paper investigates the recidivism of Mount Sinai Hospital mental health court support program in Toronto, Canada among patients involved in the criminal justice system. It also looks to find relationships between recidivism and factors including gender, age and ethnicity.

Method: Follow up periods of up to 48 months after the time of initial admission to the program was conducted and the frequency of re-offense was observed. Comparisons for the significance of risk factors were analyzed using t-tests and Chi-square tests.

Results: 191 clients were admitted to the Mount Sinai Hospital Court Support Program between September 2001 and June 2007. At first admission, the mean \pm s.d. age was 35.8 ± 9.8 years (range=18-74 years; n=184). The median age was 35 years. The modal age was 34 years. Of the 191 clients, 16 (8.4%) reoffended. Two of them (12.5%) had a third offense; and 1 (6.3%) had a total of four offenses within this tracking period. It appears that re-offense is more likely between 13 and 24 months. No re-offense was noted beyond the 48 months. The gender distribution was not significantly different between reoffenders and non-reoffenders. The mean age at first admission also did not differ between reoffenders and non-reoffenders. The distribution of ethnic groups among reoffenders and non-reoffenders did not differ.

Conclusions: The findings seem to indicate that recidivism has no relationship with gender, age and ethnic groups. The comprehensive and length of support services seem more important in preventing recidivism.