

2018 LWV Ten year Update on the 2008 Study Regarding the need of a Drug Treatment Court in Manitowoc County

The Manitowoc County Pre-trial Drug Treatment Court began operation in August 2018 after receiving a competitive state grant. Eligibility was contingent upon the creation of a Manitowoc County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) whose membership holds specific leadership roles in the county. The county resolution forming this council passed the county board May 20, 2014. The Council mission enhances the safety of the community through collaboration to foster innovation in policy, programming and operational decision making within the criminal justice system.

Three grant applications for funding were written with the third one being successful for a five year period. An extensive mapping process of the decision points of the actual practices of the criminal justice system in the county, cities and villages with a focus on the criteria for those decisions helped all stakeholders understand the picture locally. A Drug Court Team Coordinator was hired in January 2017.

The Manitowoc County Human Service Director manages the WI State Justice Assistance grant's yearly award of \$142,000.00 for the 5 year period with the additional expenditure each year of \$47,466.00 from county funds. A full renewal application must be filed by the coordinator, each year, though no increased funding from that grant is possible. All necessary supervision and quarterly state reports are provided by Human Services Director.

Members of the League of Women Voters, RUTH and other community organizations continue to be involved at all public meetings of the executive and full CJCC providing input. The meeting process is open and attending citizens are asked to contribute. CJCC leadership is elected by and from its membership. Its founding chairperson is District Attorney Jacalyn LaBre.

As of March 2018, the 10 participants served by the Drug Court Team appear before the presiding judge on Wednesday at 9 am each week as a group and individually present themselves during the forty five minute session. The public is encouraged to attend and provide support for the participants.

Each week, prior to the session in court, the Team meets to discuss and chart the week for each participant, what the person's goals were, what the plan of meetings, treatments, appointments, associations kept or not kept and results of the random "drug pee tests" were.

Attendees include judges, district attorneys, state public defender, probation officers; human service clinical services director and two substance abuse counselors, drug court coordinator and law enforcement officers.

In Drug Court the first question asked of each participant after being called up after a friendly greeting is "have you been clean and sober this week"? If their answer is yes and if that is also affirmed by the drug court team who worked with the individual, then the supporters, families and general interested public respond with a loud round of applause. This is most affirming and a very positive element of the whole drug court effectiveness.

If a participant needs to be sanctioned by incarceration for a violation for a period of time, they can be led off to a jail. The approach of the judge encourages good conduct with high expectations but enforces the behavior that is necessary for recovery while out in the community.

Another most positive element of this treatment approach to individuals is the enthusiastic reception by the public who clearly want these folks to be drug free, contributing members of our community and are there in the courtroom weekly to cheer them on. The participants are the children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors here in Manitowoc County who has willingly participated in Drug Court as a way to do the tough work of recovery and changing their lives

Elements working together to make this a successful program include engaged judges and district attorneys providing support and sanctions when necessary, a drug court team who use the evidence based treatment approach to drug rehab.

State grants continue to be sought to provide services lacking within the county. Manitowoc County did receive in July 2017 a state grant of \$99,695.00 to fund needed expanded services thru April 2018 in response to the opioid crisis in the county. The county human service department is currently awaiting word on a February 2018 application for an extended opioid treatment grant of \$244,305.00 from the WI Department of Health Services, Bureau of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery, Division of Care and Treatment Services.