

ODADAS CROSS-DISCIPLINARY TRAINING*

TERI GARDNER**

This is the eighth article in a series about effectively dealing with mentally ill offenders in the criminal justice system. Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, Supreme Court of Ohio, has had a longtime interest in developing solutions to this problem and has formed the Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Mentally Ill in the Courts for that purpose.

The inter-disciplinary committee has learned that one of the key factors contributing to the success of all programs for the mentally ill is collaboration. The cross-training program highlighted in this article is an excellent method of furthering inter-disciplinary understanding and cooperation. The training is funded by ODADAS, so it is available to your court free of charge.

I. WHAT IS CROSS-DISCIPLINARY TRAINING?

Cross-Disciplinary Training (CDT) is a training event that is planned, developed, and facilitated by trained professionals for personnel in agencies, communities and institutions that work with the substance abusing offender. Criminal Justice and Substance Abuse Cross-Disciplinary Training is designed to foster understanding and mutual respect, develop partnerships and working agreements. CDT is designed to:

- Forge interdisciplinary cooperation among substance abuse, mental health, human services and criminal justice professionals.
- Identify areas of potential conflict and support.
- Encourage criminal justice and substance abuse treatment professionals to work more effectively and efficiently together.
- Provide a forum for better understanding of each system.
- Develop an Action Plan to support coordination and collaboration.

Building “cross-disciplinary training” understanding requires learning about and developing an appreciation of the missions and philosophies of the systems, including the identification of common grounds, while retaining the specific strengths and goals of each individual system.

Copyright © 2004, Terry Gardner.

* Republished with permission.

** Training Officer, Ohio Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction Services.

II. CROSS-DISCIPLINARY TRAINING CURRICULUM

The curriculum consists of 15 modules (hours vary based on need) providing over 40 hours of training content. Several of the modules were revised last year and include both content and experiential information and material. The curriculum offers a two-day training that addresses the interface between substance abuse, mental health, and criminal justice for dually diagnosed clients. Module 15 Mental Illness and Substance Abuse in Offenders: Overcoming Barriers to Successful Collaboration Between Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Criminal Justice Staff includes:

- Overview;
- Screening and Assessment;
- Treatment and Management Strategies; and
- Systems Coordination.

Additional curriculum topics include:

- Retrospective and Rationale;
- System Mapping;
- Team-Building Across Systems;
- Benefits of Corrections-Based Treatment;
- Profile of the Substance Abusing Offender;
- Effective Collaborative Approaches; and
- Models of Treatment.

Since ODADAS initiated CDT in 1996, over 70 facilitators have been trained and more than 1,500 professionals have experienced the CDT process. In 2002, CDT's were facilitated for Summit County ADM Board, Cuyahoga County TASC, Adult Parole Authority (Chillicothe Region), Lorain County Alcohol and Drug Board and Sandusky County Family Drug Court. The ODADAS training officer facilitated presentations for the Ohio Association of Drug Court Professionals and Ohio Drug and Alcohol Studies Institute. For additional information or to schedule a meeting to discuss your CDT needs, contact ODADAS' CDT Officer at (614) 466-7585 or gardner@ada.state.oh.us.