

THE GLASGOW DRUG COURT

EUROPEAN CITIES AGAINST
DRUGS

OSLO, MAY 2005

Sheriff Linda M Ruxton

Two Drug Courts in Scotland

Glasgow Drug Court

- November 2001
- Based within very busy courthouse in large urban area
- 2 year pilot
- 2004 Pilot extended

Fife Drug Court

- September 2002
- Based in 2 country courthouses - smaller towns, rural area
- 2 year pilot

Drug Treatment and Testing Order “DTTO”

- Introduced in Scotland in 1998
- Court to be satisfied that
 - (i) the offender is dependent on, or has a propensity to misuse, drugs;
 - (ii) his dependency or propensity is such as requires and is susceptible to treatment; and
 - (iii) he is a suitable person to be the subject of such an order.

OBJECTIVES

- Reducing the level of drug-relating offending behaviour
- Reducing or eliminating the offender's dependence on or propensity to misuse drugs
- Clear public interest element

....DTTO

- court supervised treatment
- drug testing
- regular reviews
- new role for judge in keeping active over-view of progress and entering into direct dialogue with participants
- formed the foundation for the subsequent development of the Drug Court

Profile of Participants

- Long-standing addiction
- High tariff offenders - with multiple custodial convictions
- Lengthy history of acquisitive crime associated with drug misuse
- Almost all use diamorphine as primary drug of abuse
- Benzodiazepines and Cocaine
- "Crack" Cocaine increasingly a problem

Model of Drug Court developed in Scotland

- operates within existing legislation
- post-conviction model
- direct alternative to custody
- strict entry criteria and assessment
- fast-tracking
- regular court reviews
- pre-review meetings to discuss progress
- regular drug testing
- direct dialogue between participant and Sheriff
- multi-agency approach

Facts and Figures...

- Orders imposed usually for 18 months
- The average age of participants was **31** (from age range 21 to 52)
- **92%** of those placed on Drug Court Orders, were male

Supporting Framework for the Drug Court

- **Dedicated Supervision and Treatment Team**

- Social Workers, Addiction Counsellors, Doctors, Nurses, Administrative staff

- **Multi-agency Management Team**

- Judges, Co-ordinator, Prosecutor, Senior Social Worker, Senior Doctor, Police, Court Clerk, Defence Lawyer, Representative from Voluntary sector

- **Co-ordinator** to oversee and facilitate the operation of the court

Treatment

Treatment plan prepared for each participant, following assessment

- Includes: counselling (individual and group), prescribing, access to day programmes, primary medical care, access to residential programmes, abstinence-based programmes
- Harm reduction model (methadone maintenance and methadone reduction)

Supervision

- Carried out by Criminal Justice Social Workers
- Oversee progress on Orders
- Prepare written reports for court
- Attend regular pre-review meetings with judge, along with medical and addiction staff

Pre-review meeting

- Sheriff chairs meeting with authors of the reports
- medical / nursing
- addiction workers
- supervising officers
- solicitors (but not the offender)

Types of Drug Court Orders

- Drug Treatment and Testing Order “DTTO” - 74%
- “Enhanced” Probation Order with conditions of drug treatment and testing
- Concurrent Probation and DTTO
- Structured Deferred Sentence
- Combined with other community disposals e.g. Restriction of Liberty Order (tagging)

Non-compliance

- Order can be **varied, revoked or breached**
- Prosecutor brings together all outstanding charges and any new offences before Drug Court
- **Interim sanctions** - fine, 40 hours of community service or imprisonment up to 28 days.
- Fail review

Facts and Figures....

In the period from October 2001 until end March 2005

- 289 people were referred to the Court
- 163 persons were placed on Drug Court Orders
- 211 Orders were made
- 110 Orders have terminated
- 49 successfully completed (45%)
- 17 were revoked (15%)
- 35 breached (32%)
- 9 other (8%)