A Summary Checklist of Evidence-Based Drug Court Treatment Practices

Prepared by Roger H. Peters, Ph.D., University of South Florida

This checklist is designed to assist in reviewing drug court programs’ treatment services to determine whether they reflect the use of evidence-based treatment practices. The checklist should be used in conjunction with a companion document entitled “Drug Court Treatment Services: Applying Research Findings to Practice - Issues Commentary and Resource Brief”.

____ (1) Are participants placed in treatment immediately following eligibility screening?

____ (2) Does the drug court program use standardized screening instruments that have been validated for use with offenders?

____ (3) Does the drug court program use a standardized psychosocial assessment instrument that has been validated for use with offenders?

____ (4) Does the program assess all participants for mental disorders and history of trauma/PTSD?

____ (5) Does the program provide a risk assessment for all participants?

____ (5a) (If responded yes to item #5): Are your drug court participants assessed to be at “high risk”?

____ (6) Is the duration of substance abuse treatment at least 6 months and no more than 18 months?

____ (7) Does drug court treatment include the following elements of cognitive-behavioral and social learning models?

___ Cognitive restructuring
___ ‘Criminal thinking’
___ Problem-solving
___ Self-control/self-management strategies
___ Skill-building

____ (8) Does the drug court program focus on the following criminogenic needs, in addition to substance abuse?

___ Antisocial attitudes/personality
Antisocial peers
Family/marital problems
Education
Employment
Prosocial leisure activities

(9) Does the drug court program use any of the following evidence-based treatment interventions?
Contingency management
Medication-assisted treatment
Motivational enhancement therapy
Relapse prevention

(10) Are specialized treatment approaches used to address the following?
Co-occurring mental disorders
History of trauma/PTSD
Gender-specific issues
Juveniles/young adults

(11) Are manualized curricula used to guide drug court treatment?

(12) Is there a focus on outpatient treatment, with residential treatment reserved for those who have experienced multiple relapses or who are at risk for harm to self or others?

(13) Are there aftercare services in place?