

Addressing the Health and Social Needs of Justice-Involved Young Adults

*Strategies to Achieve Alignment, Collaboration, and Synergy Across Delivery and
Financing Systems*

*Research-In-Progress Webinar
Wednesday, September 16th, 2020
12:00-1:00 pm ET/9:00-10:00am PT*

- Welcome:** **Chris Lyttle, JD**
Deputy Director for Systems for Action
- Georges Naufal, PhD**
- Presenters:** *Texas A&M University*
- Emily Naiser, PhD, MPH**
Texas A&M University
- Geoff Burkhart**
Texas Indigent Defense Commission
- Q&A:** **Chris Lyttle, JD**



Georges Naufal, PhD



Georges Naufal, PhD is an Assistant Research Scientist at the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University and a research fellow at the IZA Institute of Labor Economics. George is also a Visiting Scientist at the Center for Outcomes Research at Houston Methodist. Previously he was the Technical Director at Timberlake Consultants. He was also an Assistant/Associate Professor of Economics at The American University of Sharjah (2007 to 2014) in the United Arab Emirates. George earned his PhD in Economics in 2007 from Texas A&M University. His area of expertise is applied econometrics with applications to labor economics including criminal justice, and public health.



Emily Naiser, PhD, MPH



Emily Naiser, PhD, MPH has over ten years of research experience as a project director at PPRI. She has collaborated on projects in a range of disciplines, including public health, education and criminal justice. Emily uses both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to ascertain program effectiveness and develop best practice recommendations to state-level policymakers. She has conducted community needs assessments and evaluations of various programs aiming to improve the health and well-being of women and children with special health care needs and has years of experience conducting research with vulnerable populations.

Addressing the Health and Social Needs of Justice-Involved Young Adults

- Does a community-based services program led by team-based decision-makers improve emerging adults physical and mental health and reduce recidivism compared to the current criminal justice system? (RCT)
- What features of the program are driving these outcomes? How has the program changed over time? (Process Evaluation)

- Criminal justice system is failing emerging adults
 - Emerging adults (17 to 24) make up 11% of Texas' population but account for 29% of arrests
 - Distinct health needs are being ignored
 - Substance abuse
 - Co-occurring disorders
 - Emotional and physical trauma

- Criminal justice system is failing emerging adults
 - Underlying factors leading an individual to engage in criminal behavior are not being addressed → recurring criminal activity and arrests
 - Criminal justice system is overwhelmed

- Arrested emerging adults in treatment group will receive:
 - A needs assessment to determine factors contributing to criminal behavior
 - A case review team (CRT) will review the assessment and propose community-based services to best address these factors
 - The CRT will devise an Individual Care Plan (ICP) for each defendant
 - Each defendant will have a case management team (CMT) that will act as a liaison between the defendant and the CRT
 - Each defendant will be in the program for up to 18 months
 - The CRT will liaise with the county's criminal justice stakeholders

- Eligibility
 - Any defendant between 17 and 24 arrested in Williamson County with an eligible offense
- Selection/Enrollment Process
 - Program manager and a defense attorney will inform and consent eligible defendants
 - Assignment occurs through random selection
 - We expect 12 enrollees per month; data collection will last for one year
 - Expect about 144 participants

- Recidivism
 - Defined as arrest within a specific period
- Health outcomes
 - Collect quarterly surveys using SF-12
- Potential other outcomes
 - Employment
 - Educational attainment
 - Housing

- Criminal justice data from the county
 - Allows us to compute recidivism
- Health data
 - At initial enrollment; \$15 gift card for agreeing to participate in study and provide contact information
 - Collect a baseline survey via a web-link and/or phone survey
 - Quarterly surveys for up to 2 year
 - Participants receive a \$15 as a thank you for each completed survey

- Administrative data
 - Health care utilization
 - Employment
 - Educational attainment

- Essential component of the study – better understand
 - What factors are most associated with the outcomes
 - How the proposed system has changed over time
- Use a thorough approach
 - Document analysis
 - Semi-structured interviews with all involved/affected stakeholders
 - Focus groups
 - Direct observation

- IRB process
 - Full board review
 - Started with shell application
 - Multiple amendments
 - One concern was the role of district attorney in eligibility of offenses
 - Was able to overcome that after a significant delay
 - Another concern is including 17-year olds in the study

- COVID-19 shut down the program and the county removed all non-essential personnel from the jail
- On March 29, 2020, the governor of Texas issued an executive order (No. GA-13) relating to detention and personal bond
- The executive order and changes due to COVID-19 also impacted the list of eligible offenses putting further concerns on sample size

- Restricted access to defendants in the control group who are now inmates at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice
 - Personal visits are not allowed
 - Phone system is overwhelmed with calls from family and relatives
 - Regular mail is allowed (no self addressed mail and no monetary incentives)

- County recently decided to take the program management in-house rather than rely on an external entity
 - Concern that the program fidelity will be impacted
 - Currently working with the county on transition

Progress to Date

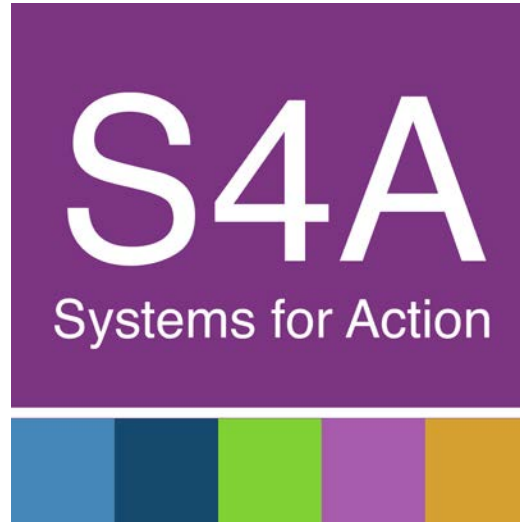
- IRB application approved
- IRB training for program staff
- All paperwork and documents have been created
 - Research protocol, consent documents (in English and Spanish)
 - Research process for program staff

- Change the whole process from in-person to virtual intake to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions
 - Acquire necessary approvals from the county and then IRB
 - Adjust protocol and steps to accommodate virtual intake and enrollment

Geoff Burkhart

Texas Indigent Defense Commission

Questions?



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September 30th | 12pm ET

[Using Regional Governing Boards to Align Services for Rural Children of the Opioid Crisis](#)

Alicia Bunger, PhD, The Ohio State University

October 14th | 12pm ET

[Connecting Vulnerable Seniors to Nutrition Assistance Through a Managed Care Plan](#)

Ashley Humienny, MBA and Suzanne Kinsky, Benefits Data Trust

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