The criminal justice system affords a unique opportunity to intervene with dysfunctional drug abusers in the state. Drug courts provide a way to identify and divert those juvenile and adult arrestees who might benefit from drug treatment to treatment programs coupled with drug testing and supervision. While the operation of drug courts varies, studies have demonstrated some successes among the more than 1,300 programs across the country. Because drug courts hold people accountable for their progress in treatment, participants typically have high retention rates — ranging from 65-85%.61

Recommendation #1: Expand Drug Courts

What’s happening in Maryland?

• Maryland has 15 drug courts, 10 of which are fully implemented. Six of the 15 are for juveniles, one is for families.62

• Those who complete treatment commit fewer crimes, reduce drug use, and are less likely to recidivate than dropouts.63,64

• The Baltimore City Drug Court had a 38% reduction in positive urine drug tests compared to a control group in a three-year follow-up study.65

• The Maryland Drug Court Commission has been tasked with developing a statewide system of drug courts and providing support to local jurisdictions planning drug courts.

• Governor Ehrlich has allocated an additional $1M for a juvenile drug court initiative in the FY 2004 budget.66

What else can Maryland do?

- Expand adult and juvenile drug and rehabilitation courts to all jurisdictions
- Monitor and evaluate existing programs to determine the essential ingredients of effective drug courts
- Review the literature on best practices in drug courts around the country
- Convene a statewide conference on drug courts to share information and review best practices
- Create statewide standards that will be linked to Maryland’s developing performance measurement system for drug treatment programs
Recommendation #2: Expand Drug Treatment

What’s happening in Maryland?

• Maryland has introduced a statewide effort to bring strategic planning and performance accountability to its treatment community.69
• Maryland’s Drug and Alcohol Council is overseeing the introduction of a statewide performance measurement system that will be web-based and modified to track results-oriented information from individual treatment providers.70 The entire effort is expected to take no more than 5 years, depending on resource availability, and will result in Maryland becoming a national leader in the management and oversight of its treatment system.
• Buprenorphine, a medication that is effective for reducing heroin dependence, has been recently approved by the FDA and is now available in Maryland.71
• Treatment is being facilitated through Maryland’s system of Drug Court programs (see Recommendation #1, Drug Courts).
• To respond to the treatment gap, Maryland’s treatment system has begun to expand.72
• Research studies on needle exchange initiatives have shown they are effective in reducing the transmission of HIV infection while not increasing crime rates or needle usage.73
• ADAA, in collaboration with CESAR and HIDTA, has conducted treatment outcome studies showing that treatment completion is associated with increased employment and decreased arrests.74

What else can Maryland do?

• Continue funding treatment expansion with a special focus on residential treatment for adolescents and adults
• Promote and sponsor training and continuing education in effective research-based clinical practices
• Offer continuing technical & management assistance to jurisdictions to develop an integrated continuum of care
• Develop a financial and administrative structure to expand and sustain programs for people with co-occurring disorders
• Expand performance measurement efforts to improve program effectiveness
• Evaluate treatment effectiveness with respect to cost savings (e.g., reductions in crime, increases in employment)

Effective drug treatment should last at least ninety days and be delivered by trained professionals who are up-to-date on the latest advances in psychotherapeutic techniques, case management, and pharmacotherapy.67 Aftercare, or continued contact with clients after treatment, is critical.68
Recommendation #3: Use Evidence-Based Prevention Programs

What’s happening in Maryland?

The University of Maryland, College Park, partnered with the State to receive funding for a federal State Incentive Grant.78 This effort aims to promote systemic changes to improve the strategic planning, funding, and delivery of prevention and youth programs. Steps have been taken to consolidate and focus funding streams and to implement innovative programs on the state and local level including:

• County Safe and Drug Free Schools Programs79
• Maryland Student Assistance Programs (MSAP) in public middle and high schools80
• Faith-based partnerships81
• Public awareness campaigns82
• Continuing education opportunities for prevention professionals through MAPPA and the ADAA

The Maryland Blueprints document was developed by national prevention experts. It includes programs and policies that have been shown by research to reduce or prevent substance use/abuse, crime, delinquency, and/or antisocial behavior.82 In addition, the Johns Hopkins University Prevention Research Center83 is active in understanding the antecedents of substance abuse and other deviant behaviors.

Evidence-based drug prevention aims to address the causes and consequences of substance use.75 Proven and promising science-based programs meet the criteria established by the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention’s (CSAP) National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs76 or the University of Maryland’s Maryland Blueprints programs.77

What else can Maryland do?

• Promote and evaluate targeted research-based prevention programs and strategies to engage high-risk youths in early intervention programs

• Support prevention as part of a continuum of services provided by the Department of Juvenile Services and ensure appropriate services are provided to youths whose cases are resolved at intake

• Develop an online prevention community to facilitate information sharing and coordination of resources to create and sustain effective policies and programs

• Support innovative local campaigns to build public awareness about the chronic nature of chemical dependency and the societal benefits of prevention and intervention
**Recommendation #4: Combat Drug Trafficking and Crime through Law Enforcement**

**What’s happening in Maryland?**

Maryland law enforcement agencies have embraced community policing, prosecution, and supervision. Proactive law enforcement efforts can help reduce recidivism and better allocate police and community resources. The Washington-Baltimore HIDTA coordinates the efforts of federal, state, and local law enforcement units. Current programs for adult and juvenile offenders include:

**Adult Offenders**
- Pretrial drug testing
- Adult drug courts
- Jessup Drug Free Prison
- Correctional Options Programs
- Offender re-entry initiatives to provide education, job skills, and mentoring
- Break the Cycle

**Juvenile Offenders**
- Risk/needs assessments at intake
- Teen courts
- Juvenile drug courts
- Police-sponsored youth and community events
- Choice Program

**What else can Maryland do?**

- Provide full medical diagnostic assessments and treatment plans for all offenders entering state facilities
- Use technology to support interagency monitoring of offenders and services provided
- Expand pretrial services and technology for drug testing to all jurisdictions
- Develop statewide standards for drug testing for use by programs throughout Maryland
- Expand the DJJ Intensive Aftercare Program to link services to local programs
- Continue to evaluate strategies to reduce drunk and drugged driving
- Use geo-targeting to focus resources on neighborhoods with the biggest problems
**Recommendation #5:**
Continue to Monitor the Drug Problem

**What’s happening in Maryland?**

- During the past 13 years CESAR has built the premier statewide program for monitoring drug trends in Maryland. The Maryland Drug Early Warning System (DEWS) uses state-of-the-art methods to keep abreast of developing drug problems. Through regular interviews of knowledgeable drug professionals (Drug Scan) and juvenile offenders (OPUS), and examination of available statistics, DEWS staff are constantly reviewing changing drug patterns.87
- The CESAR library and clearinghouse gathers the latest governmental and scientific information and responds to requests for information from government agencies, concerned citizens, policymakers, and other researchers.
- The DEWS Action Team, composed of researchers, representatives from state and local governments, and practitioners (like the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA), meets periodically to review and interpret the accumulated information. The latest information is disseminated widely through the DEWS and CESAR faxes, specialized websites and newsletters, and scientific reports.

**What else can Maryland do?**

- Monitor information to inform Maryland’s strategic planning process
- Support the creation of a web-based drug monitoring collection and dissemination system
- Enhance the exchange of and use of drug information by schools, faith-based organizations, and other community groups

**Maryland Responds Early to Rise in Ecstasy Use**

DEWS detected the rise in ecstasy use among youths in Maryland before the drug’s rise showed up in national and school surveys. The DEWS information was used by Maryland to develop a state ecstasy action plan that coordinated actions for law enforcement and prevention and treatment agencies. Maryland thereby developed the nation’s first ecstasy-targeted public service announcements for theatres, as well as an ecstasy prevention video and educational materials for use by Maryland schools.88
A State Drug Control Strategy establishes goals and objectives to reduce drug use and its damaging consequences. It brings together criminal justice, prevention, treatment, and research experts to achieve significant and long-lasting results. It is community-oriented, uses technology to monitor performance, and monitors substance abuse trends and programs through research.

Recommendation #6: Develop a State Drug Control Strategy

What’s happening in Maryland?
A successful strategy involves five activities: monitoring the drug problem, identifying and implementing practical responses, providing training and other support, monitoring performance, and evaluating outcomes. Maryland has several important programs underway:

- The Drug and Alcohol Council focuses primarily on drug treatment services. A recent survey by the Council showed a great need for strategic planning in many jurisdictions in Maryland.89
- The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration provides training on strategic planning.
- The State Incentive Grant90 enables state and local agencies to develop a State Prevention Plan.
- Training and threat assessments conducted by the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA guide and support federal, state, and local law enforcement.
- The DEWS Drug Action Plan identifies practical, cost-effective steps for law enforcement, treatment, prevention, education, and research agencies to respond to specific drug trends.91
- Maryland’s Results for Child Well-Being92 report summarizes critical issues affecting youths, including substance abuse.

What else can Maryland do?

- Coordinate a statewide effort to formulate a comprehensive drug control plan that ensures that limited resources are put to best use to achieve long-term results for Maryland’s citizens
- Utilize statewide performance outcomes so that jurisdictions can use resources cost-effectively
- Conduct evaluations to understand the impact of policies and programs
- Increase access to training for law enforcement, treatment, and prevention professionals
- Coordinate efforts among the DC/Baltimore HIDTA, local and federal agencies to ensure effective responses

“A State Drug Control Strategy establishes goals and objectives to reduce drug use and its damaging consequences. It brings together criminal justice, prevention, treatment, and research experts to achieve significant and long-lasting results. It is community-oriented, uses technology to monitor performance, and monitors substance abuse trends and programs through research.

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