

# South St. Louis County DWI Court, MN

## Fact Sheet

July 2014

### What are DWI courts?



The purpose of DWI courts is to guide DWI offenders identified as alcohol-addicted into treatment under intensive judicial supervision that will reduce alcohol dependence, reduce recidivism, improve public safety and improve the quality of life for them and their families.

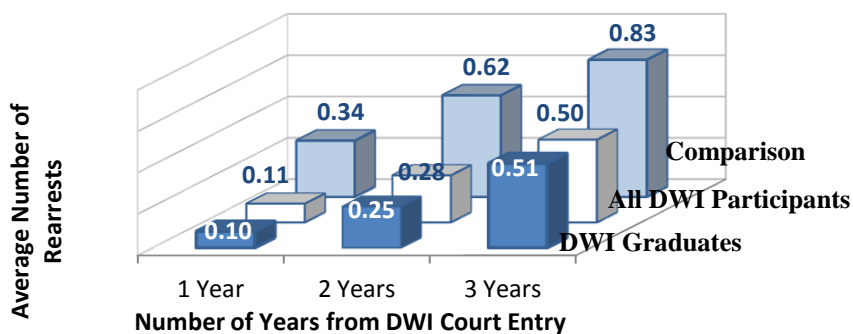
There are two key policy questions of interest to policymakers about DWI courts. The evaluation of South St. Louis County's DWI Court (SSLC) provided answers to

these questions. This study included participants who entered the program between 2006 and 2011, and a matched comparison group of DWI offenders who were eligible but were not referred to the program. All participants were assessed as high-need (100%) and two-thirds were high risk (66%). Participants had an average of 3.4 DWI arrests in the ten years before DWI court entry.

### Does the DWI court reduce recidivism?

**YES!** SSLC program participants were rearrested significantly less often than offenders who were eligible for the program but did not participate ( $p < .01$  in Year 1).

#### DWI Court Participants had Fewer Rearrests Each Year



Participants one third as many rearrests (for any charge) as the comparison group in the first year after DWI court entry, less than half as many in the second year and 40% fewer after 3 years.

**DWI recidivism.** DWI court participants also received **40% fewer new DWIs** in the three years after DWI court entry, an indicator of reduced driving while using alcohol, and **increased public safety**.

### Does the DWI court result in savings to the taxpayer?

**YES!** There were substantial cost savings due to DWI court participants' positive outcomes.

The total cost related to recidivism 2 years post DWI court entry per participant (regardless of graduation status) was \$11,392, while the cost per comparison group member was \$16,206. This results in a total cost savings of **\$4,814** per SSLC participant. This translates to resources (such as jail beds) that are now available for other purposes.

#### Cost Savings by Agency

Agency	Savings per Participant
District Court	\$89
City Attorney	\$24
County Attorney	\$65
Defense Attorney	\$80
Department of Corrections	\$850
Regional Corrections	\$2,262
Law Enforcement	\$203
Crashes	(\$2,402)
Victimizations	\$3,643
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,814</b>

All agencies experienced savings, although SSLC participants had one more crash than the comparison group. When the yearly per participant savings is multiplied by the capacity of the program per year (approximately 50 offenders), the total amount "saved" by the program per year due to positive outcomes for its participants (i.e., lower recidivism) is **\$120,350**, which can then be multiplied by the number of years the program remains in operation and for additional cohorts per year. After 5 years, the accumulated resource savings come to over **\$1.8 million**. \*These savings do not include program investment costs

These results demonstrate that the SSLC is effective in reducing recidivism and drug use and uses fewer criminal justice system resources.



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