



Nebraska Probation: Moving Forward

Community Safety Impact Model

MAY 2008

Components of Successful EBP Implementation

The 10 Components

1. Leadership
2. Environmental Factors
3. Staff
4. Training and Technical Assistance
5. Communication
6. Change Agent
7. Integration
8. Resources
9. Time
10. Fidelity

*We are a system that
exceeds
expectations.*

Successful implementation of Evidence-Based Practices requires organizations to re-think the way they do business. Making this major change in the way our system operates requires charting a new course for the future. In practical terms this process could be compared to trying to change the course of a river while standing in the middle of it. A change of this magnitude is a challenging and daunting task for any organization.

The good news is Nebraska State Probation in its quest for excellence is well on its way to successful implementation utilizing the 10 components to successful EBP implementation as a guiding tool, (Burrell, 2008)¹. During the next few months each of these components listed below will be discussed in detail highlighting Probation's implementation efforts in each area.

- **Leadership.** Leadership is achieved through an organization's visible commitment to the changes being implemented. In the last two years Probation's leadership has adopted "The Integrated Model," which consists of Organizational Development, Collaboration and Evidence-Based Principles as a blueprint for change. Work is in progress to assure all of Probation's new and existing services and programming are consistent with the goals outlined in its vision and mission.
- **Environmental Factors.** The Nebraska Probation System believes in the value of support from both its internal and external stakeholders. Amidst significant barriers and challenges, the system engaged in collaboration with all branches of government at the state and local levels to produce such services as a statewide Fee for Service Voucher Program, a Standardized Model for the Delivery of Substance Abuse Services and seven reporting centers. The key to this success is the continuous education of both internal and external stakeholders through training, meetings, and collaboration.
- **Staff.** Critical to Probation's successful EBP implementation is staff buy-in. Staff was involved in the change process from the very beginning. Committees and EBP Teams are empowered to draft policy and provide feedback regarding what works for the system and for the probationer. Through this, staff has had the opportunity to affect change, and increase their overall skill level.
- **Training and Technical Assistance.** A vital component to the success of implementation, skill-based training provides an opportunity for staff to learn and apply the principles and methods of EBP in their daily work. With technical assistance from the Vera Institute, and the National

Institute of Corrections in addition to support from Nebraska's Judicial Branch Education Division and the Community Corrections Council, expertise and/or funding was made available to present basic and advanced evidence-based training for probation officers, cross system training for service providers and management training for supervisors.

*How we find Unity will
determine where
we go.*

- **Communication.** Effective communication is critical in order to fully implement change. Finding ways and means to communicate information is always a challenge. Nebraska Probation continues to strive to meet this challenge, through methods of communication such as strategically focused management meetings, topic-driven committees of both line staff and management, administrative memorandums, e-mails, face-to-face district visits, and newsletters.
- **Change Agent.** Change Agents, or better said "Change Champions," drive an organization to where it needs to go. No matter what level of the organization, change agents are necessary to the organization's success. Across the system, change agents are participating in committees, working on EBP teams, and supporting fellow staff on a daily basis.

Road Map towards EBP: Complete Planning and Move into Implementation



In May the EBP teams from each district are gathering to continue this path towards full implementation. Each team has been tasked with leading its district through this process. Teams have completed the planning stage, which included evaluating the district for caseload type and risk level. This was done in order to focus officer time and talent in appropriate areas. With this knowledge, teams will now begin to implement change through specialized approaches to supervision and investigation, to include case planning and individualized assessment. The teams have developed a timeline to use as a tool in detailing the steps they plan to take in the implementation process.

Probation will then move toward Quality Assurance to evaluate our approach. Quality Assurance will allow us to illustrate that the services provided to probationers are meeting our goals of reducing recidivism.

- **Integration.** Probation's vision of excellence is based on "The Integrated Model." Research shows that effective justice organizations have this model in place. Through using this model to integrate EBP into the Nebraska Probation System, we are guided to continue to build relationships, be a learning organization with a strong infrastructure, and utilize research in working with probationers.
- **Resources.** Funding follows research and proven success. By implementing changes based on research, Probation was able to begin to create risk reducing innovative strategies that work with probationers. There are a number of examples of new resources including Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision, Day and Evening Reporting Centers, Fee for Service Voucher Program to name just a few.
- **Time.** Probation Administration's initial 5-year plan was developed in January 2006 and set the foundation for statewide EBP transformation. In the past 2 ½ years the Nebraska Probation System has achieved beyond any reasonable expectation and is well on its way to completing the primary template and infrastructure necessary for future change.
- **Fidelity.** Fidelity means doing what we said we were going to do and sticking to this approach. This is quality assurance, which allows Probation to gather necessary data that supports the decisions we've made as a system. Probation's management, EBP teams and its Nebraska Probation Management Information System division (NPMIS) will continue to collaborate to meet our quality assurance goals.

Look for Nebraska Probation's Progress and Struggles with Leadership in the June 2008 issue of *Nebraska Probation: Moving Forward*.