



Forensics Services in Connecticut

State of Connecticut
Department of Mental Retardation

Kathryn duPree, Deputy Commissioner

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Background

- DMR has a statutory role in the criminal justice system regarding one's competence to stand trial.
- Historically, placement was required for individuals found not competent.
- Resulted in an un-funded mandate and inappropriate institutional placements.
- Community system development created more challenges
 - institutional placement no longer feasible
 - community system had limited capacity to respond
 - limited resources for people on the waiting list were needed to serve forensic population.



Background

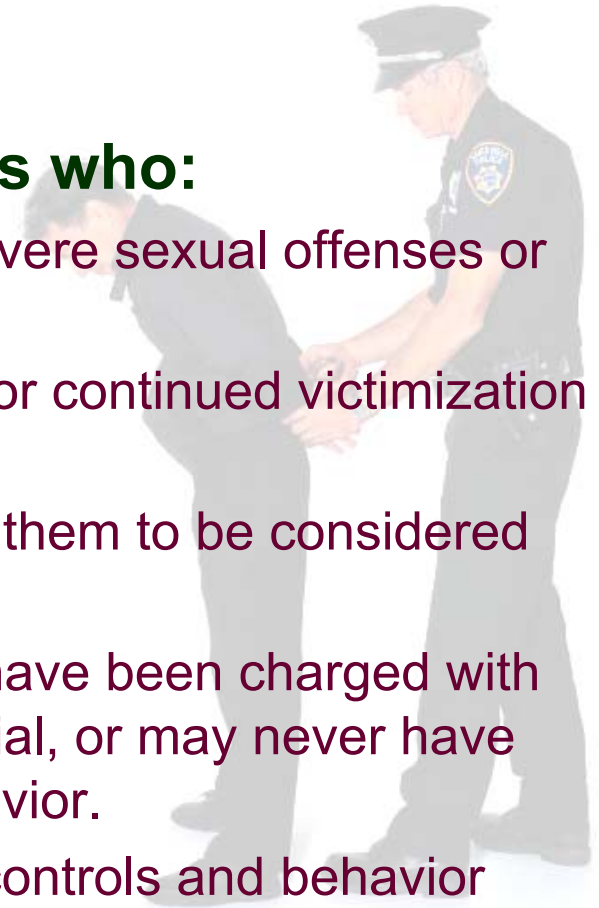
- The Connecticut legislature in 1998 created a specific account to provide discrete funding for forensic services developed primarily by private sector providers. First year funding was \$750,000. FY 04 funding is \$14,162,571.
- The department was expected to develop the program in cooperation with Corrections and Mental Health.
- DMR developed a Secure Treatment Transitional Unit to serve four individuals.



Current Services

Forensic services are for individuals who:

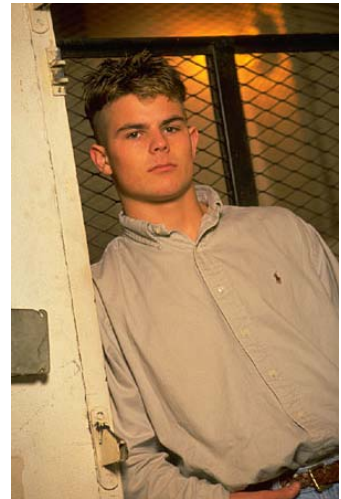
- Have committed serious or violent acts, severe sexual offenses or arson.
- Remain at a high risk for re-offending and/or continued victimization of others.
- Have impulsive deviant behaviors causing them to be considered predatory.
- May have been convicted of crimes; may have been charged with crimes but found not competent to stand trial, or may never have been formally prosecuted for criminal behavior.
- Have not benefited from traditional social controls and behavior management approaches.



Current Services

Forensic services are currently offered to those individuals for whom DMR is legally obligated to serve:

- Individuals found not competent, not restorable.
- Individuals leaving correctional facilities who require DMR services and supports.
Mandated groups include:
 - persons placed under the direction of the commissioner
 - persons in DMHAS facilities who are no longer in need of hospitalization
 - persons aging out of DCF who require support from DMR.
- Consideration is given to the person's current and historical legal relationship to DMR.



Current Services

People Served

Number of Consumers

44

55

27

4



Cost Range

Under \$100,000

\$100,000-\$199,999

\$200,000-\$299,999

\$300,000>

Average Cost: \$148,000

Total Served 130

95% are males

5% are females

40% have a co-factor of substance abuse

Number of Providers: 15

The vast majority of consumers have been involuntarily placed by the courts.

Current Services

Services Include

- Risk Assessment
- Legal Responsibility Assessment
- Restoration Training
- Service Coordination
- Residential Support
- Vocational Training or Supported Employment
- Individual and Group Therapy



Current Services

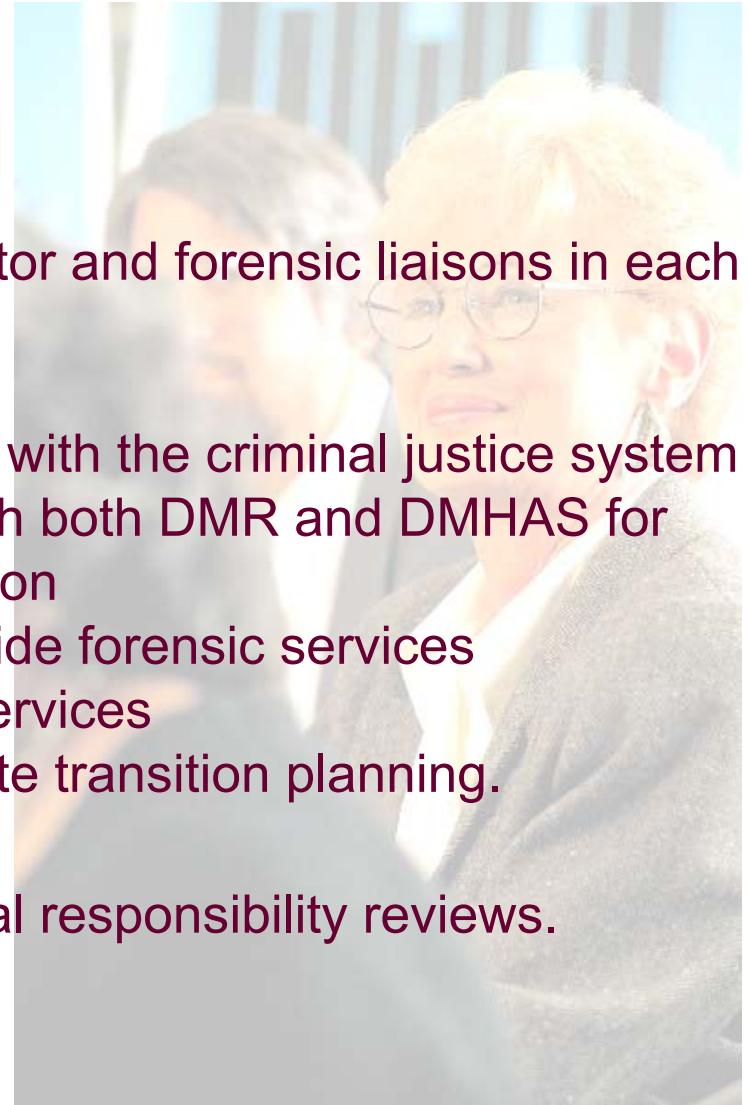
- Establishment of a forensic coordinator and forensic liaisons in each region.

The forensic coordinator:

- coordinates the agency's interface with the criminal justice system
- coordinates restoration training with both DMR and DMHAS for individuals with mental retardation
- develops provider capacity to provide forensic services
- determines eligibility for forensic services
- interfaces with Corrections to initiate transition planning.

Forensic liaisons

- conduct risk assessments and legal responsibility reviews.



Interagency Initiatives



- Attorney General and DMR developed a memorandum for superior court judges and the Chief Court Administrator delineating the agency's responsibilities in criminal justice proceedings.
- Training for judges and criminal justice staff.
- Development of a competency restoration program in collaboration with the Court Diagnostic Clinics and DMHAS.
- Monthly interagency meetings with DMHAS to plan transitions for individuals in restoration training programs or placed with the Psychiatric Security Review Board.



Interagency Initiatives

Interagency Task Force (Department of Corrections, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Office of Protection and Advocacy of Persons with Disabilities, Department of Mental Retardation and community advocacy groups) established in 1996. Recommended the creation of a secure treatment facility, assessment services and appropriate community options.

Interagency Initiatives



Current initiative sponsored by the UCE

- criminal justice grant to address the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities
- focus on individuals who are victims and those who are perpetrators
- participants include:

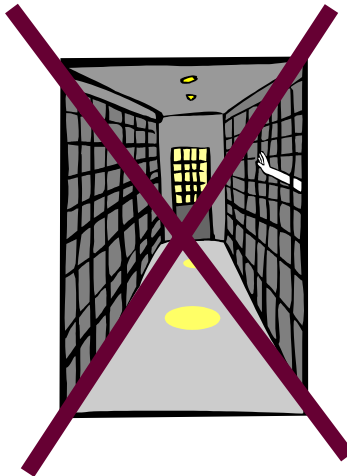
State Agencies: Office of Protection and Advocacy of Persons with Disabilities, Department of Mental Retardation, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Social Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Children and Families, Office of the States Attorney General, Department of Public Safety, Connecticut Board of Parole, Division of Public Defender Services.

Advocacy Groups

- The goal is to improve supports to individuals who interface with the criminal justice system through training initiatives and improved interagency collaboration.

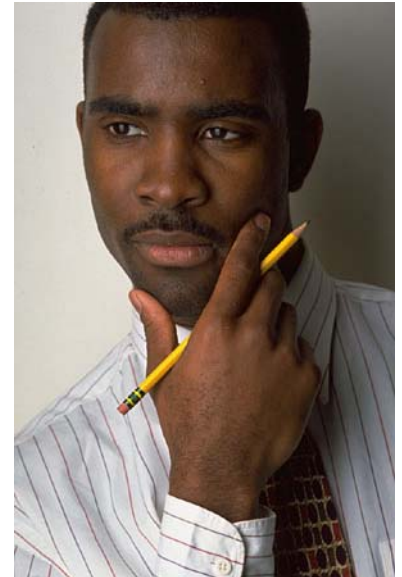
Current Themes

- Consider a jail diversion program.
- Link individuals who are arrested with advocates immediately to secure bail when possible.
- Share databases between DMR and Corrections to identify shared clients.
- Provide technical assistance/educational support to individuals in jail.



Remaining Challenges

- Defining the population to be served.
- Deciding DMR's responsibilities to assure public safety.
- Addressing the individual rights of people receiving forensic services.
- Continuing to find effective therapeutic approaches to serving individuals who are sexual predators.
- Establishing an Assessment Unit.
- Achieving cost effective service delivery.
- Deciding what role secure treatment plays within a spectrum of forensic services.



Remaining Challenges

Questions to Guide Our Deliberations:

- What are our absolute legal responsibilities?
- What are our legal limitations?
- What are our legal risks?
- What does the public expect?
- What are the fiscal implications?
- What is in the best interests of the consumer and his/her family?
- What does the court expect? Adult Probation and the Department of Corrections (DOC)?
- What are the relative risks to the public?
- What are the alternatives?

