

### Impaired Judgment – Correcting Misconceptions About Drug Treatment Court

June 25, 2012 - Justice Kofi Barnes on behalf of the CADTCP.

The Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals (CADTCP), the national representative of all Drug Treatment Courts (DTC) across Canada, wishes to respond to the HIV/AIDS Legal Network Report entitled: *Impaired Judgment: Assessing the Appropriateness of Drug Treatment Courts as a Response to Drug Use in Canada, October 2011*. DTCs operate provincially (most with federal funding support). CADTCP's representatives have come together to provide an informed response, in consultation with independent evaluators of DTCs in Canada.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this report in advance of its circulation. We agree with the following points as outlined in your report:

- addiction is a chronic disease that needs to be treated;
- there should be greater access to drug treatment services;
- adequate funding should be provided so DTCs can address the needs of target populations;
- an effective national DTC evaluation strategy is needed.

Our response to the report is based on, and limited to, the mandate of Drug Treatment Courts: to provide a justice alternative for high risk/high needs addicted offenders charged with a criminal offence or offences, where addiction is the underlying cause of the criminal behaviour.

We would also like to take this opportunity to correct some of the statements specific to DTCs in Canada made in the report. Outlined below are principal areas of correction we must address:

#### **DTCs respect the Charter of Rights**

DTC participants are represented by lawyers who protect the participants' rights as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Any waiver of rights occurs only with the informed consent of a participant. Participants are free to leave the DTC program at any time and thereafter be governed by and sentenced under the Canadian Criminal Code sentencing provisions.

DTC policy in Canada follows the "twelve key principles" for court directed treatment as outlined by, among others, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. These stipulate, *inter alia* and in brief:

- an integrated, non-adversarial approach offering a broad spectrum of prompt, individualized treatment and rehabilitation services;
- ongoing interaction between the participant and the DTC judicial /legal and treatment team with consistently applied incentives and rewards; and
- the development of partnerships between DTC teams with local, specialized service providers.

We assure you that the DTCs respect, and fully protect, the privacy and due process rights of all participants.

#### **DTCs promote abstinence in conjunction with harm reduction strategies**

DTCs require that abstinence be attained by the time of graduation, but apply harm reduction principles during the course of treatment. DTCs do not "punish relapse", but instead recognise, and actively address, relapse when it occurs in the addiction treatment and recovery process.

#### **DTCs are voluntary**

DTC participants choose to enter DTC after receiving the advice of counsel. Participants voluntarily agree to the restrictions and obligations of the DTC program; they can withdraw from the program if they do not wish to continue. The criminal justice system does not purport to be a treatment provider for individuals with addiction, but when individuals commit crimes as a consequence of their addictions and, as a result, end up in the criminal justice system, DTCs are a far more humane, rehabilitative option than traditional sentencing alternatives.

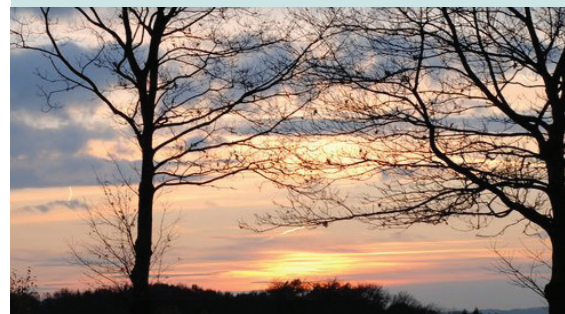
#### **DTCs are non-discriminatory**

DTCs recognize that the disease of addiction does not discriminate. DTCs work with high risk/ high needs addicted individuals involved in the criminal justice system regardless of socio economic class, colour, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation; DTCs are sensitive to and address these realities. DTCs do not – and cannot by the very nature of their mandate – discriminate.

**Continued on Page 4**

CADTCP supports ongoing practitioner-focussed discussion forums, national alumni discussion and support forums, periodic newsletters, evaluation results, and other DTC and Problem-Solving Court news.

Point your browser to **[www.cadtc.org](http://www.cadtc.org)** for additional details.



### IN THIS ISSUE...

- **Impaired Judgment - Correcting Misconceptions About Drug Treatment Court**
- **Edmonton DTC Thanksgiving, Graduation & Ukraine Visitors**
- **Ottawa DTC Success**
- **Memberships are due**
- **Edmonton DTC Update**
- **Kiki's Letter to the Vancouver DTC**
- **Kitchener Report**
- **Winnipeg DTC Housing Initiative**
- **A Women's Journey Through the Calgary DTC**
- **Growing Capacity in the Calgary DTC**
- **"Word on the Street", Calgary DTC**

**2013 CADTCP Conference – Vancouver is the chosen site for the 2013 conference.**  
**October 22 & 23 - Pre-Conference Workshops, October 24 to 26 - Conference, at the Westin Bayshore.**  
**Please check the website for further updates. [www.cadtc.org](http://www.cadtc.org)**

## Edmonton Drug Court Thanksgiving 2012

On October 13, 2012 the Edmonton Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court hosted its 6th annual Alumni/Participant Thanksgiving Dinner. The festivities were well attended with an estimated 80 program participants, alumni, staff (past and present) and program supporters enjoying what can only be described as a feast. Attendees enjoyed turkey and ham complete with all the fixings as well as a plethora of desserts, all provided by those in attendance. A special thank you is extended to alumni member Dave Comrie and his lovely wife Donna for all of their hard work preparing several turkeys and hams for the meal. The evening's events included speeches thanking outgoing Executive Director Doug Brady for his many contributions to EDTCRC over the past 5 years, a welcoming aboard of new Interim Executive Director Brad Clark, as well as addresses by both Mr. Brady and Mr. Clark. All in all the night was a chance for the EDTCRC family to enjoy a great meal, appreciate each other's company and share the many success stories of EDTCRC participants both past and present. We are already looking forward to this year's Christmas event that is tentatively scheduled for December 11, 2012 (exact details will be known shortly).

## GRADUATION AND UKRAINE VISITORS!

The Edmonton Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court celebrated two events on June 6. Our 61st graduate was supported by many friends and family members as she graduated with honours. Michelle is reunited with her family, she has her son in her care and is employed full time. Michelle coaches her son's soccer team.



We hosted 12 delegates from Frankivsk, a city in western Ukraine, who represented different government agencies and ministries involved in youth justice. They were here as part of a study tour funded by the Canadian International Development Agency to provide participants with a practical exposure to key elements of the the Canadian Youth Justice System.

The delegation requested the opportunity to observe our pre-court meeting and the drug court session.

## Ottawa DTC Shows Success in Reducing Criminal Behaviour and Drug Use

The Ottawa Drug Treatment Court and Rideauwood's Evaluation and Data Team are currently involved in an evaluation spanning January 1, 2009 through January 1, 2012. This evaluation endeavors to identify characteristics of the clients who have participated in our program, the services they received while in our program, and client outcomes. Through this evaluation DTCO hopes to be able to add to the growing body of literature on Canadian DTC's, identify our own strengths and weaknesses, as well as discover if there are "predictors of success" that can be targeted to better help clientele succeed.

Although still early in our evaluation process, preliminary data has been positive. The outcomes of all clients between January 1, 2009 and April 1, 2011 have been compiled. It was found that about 1 of every 3 clients, who passed the 30 day assessment window, graduated from DTCO. Regardless of whether or not they graduated, these clients spent an average of more than 200 days participating in the DTCO program. However; in programs like DTC, which deal with clients who possess some of the most intense and long standing substance abuse issues, graduation from the program should not be viewed as the only measure of success. Reducing drug use and improving quality of life are also valuable indicators of success. While in the program, clients are required to submit to at least two urine drug tests (UDTs) every week. During the period being assessed, 87% of all attended UDT's were found to be clean, thus providing evidence of a massive reduction in substance

use. Prior to entry into the program, the average client reported that they spent approximately \$9,200 each month on substance use with, 70% of clients reporting crack as their drug of choice and 30% reporting opiates. Preliminary results suggest that the average spending of a client in DTCO was reduced from \$310.00/day prior to entry into the program, to as low an average as \$3.50/day while in DTCO.



Unsafe housing and homelessness are significant barriers to treatment and are one of the first obstacles that DTC staff tackle when admitting a client into the program. Upon entry into the program more than half of our clientele were homeless (56%) and an additional 10% were in unstable/high-risk housing, leaving only a third of our clientele (34%) living in suitable housing conditions. By the very first week of treatment the number of clients who were in suitable housing had more than doubled, with almost three quarters (71%) of our clients living in a suitable housing arrangement, only 2% living in inadequate (unstable or high risk) housing, and homelessness had reduced to 27%.

These promising preliminary results – 1 in 3 graduation rate, significant reduction/elimination in substance use, and improved housing – reflect the meaningful changes and progress that DTCO clientele make in their lives.



## MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE!

**PLATINUM MEMBERSHIPS**  
**\$70 a year or \$700 for organizations.**

**GOLD MEMBERSHIPS**  
**\$60 a year or \$600 for organizations.**

**Among other benefits, memberships include discounts to our annual conference next year in Vancouver, B.C. Go to [www.cadtc.org](http://www.cadtc.org) to sign up or renew today!**

### Edmonton Update

It's been at least a couple of years since I've written for our newsletter and a lot has happened in the last year in the Edmonton Drug Treatment Court (EDTCRC). We celebrated our 69th graduation this month (October) and had our 12th healthy baby born. In May of this year the Edmonton Drug Treatment Court was fortunate to attend the world's largest conference on substance abuse, the 18th Annual NADCP Training Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. There were over "4300 Drug Court Professionals, celebrities, veterans, national experts, policy leaders and administration officials". As a team, we were able to attend numerous informative workshops, listened to heartwarming stories from graduates and did some exceptional networking.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the Norlien Foundation, a private, pro-active organization that initiates projects to enhance the quality of life for all. The Norlien Foundation has supported me personally by allowing me the opportunity to participate in the three year Recovery from Addiction Symposium, attending the Betty Ford Professionals in Residence Training (2010 & 2011), and I am presently working on Module 3 of the Certified Sexual Addiction Therapist (CSAT) Program. Without the generous support of the Norlien Foundation none of these experiences would have been possible. These experiences have enabled me to share what I have

learned with colleagues, the community and most importantly the participants that I work with.

The Norlien Foundation has developed the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (AFWI) website which has been invaluable in locating resources, programs, and up to date research on addictions. The website is located at [www.albertafamilywellness.org](http://www.albertafamilywellness.org).

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt goodbye to Mr. Doug Brady, former Executive Director of the Edmonton Drug Treatment Court. I have learned a lot from Doug, had a lot of laughs, and will take away many happy memories.

On a happier note, I know I speak on behalf of our whole team when I say how lucky we are to welcome our new Interim Executive Director, Mr. Brad Clark, who joined the Edmonton Drug Treatment Court in September.

After six and a half years with the Edmonton Drug Treatment Court I look forward to many years to come and to continue learning from our participants and alumni. The changes they make in our program inspire me to continue in this field.

Debbie O'Neil-Nugent, RN, BScN  
*Treatment Case Manager, EDTCRC*

### Touching More Lives than Just Participants

There is an old saying, "You can take the farmer off the farm but you can't take the farm out of the farmer". Never is this saying truer than with the people who have worked in and with a drug treatment court.

In the field of drug treatment generally, the annual staff turnover rate is very high. The average annual turnover rate in treatment organizations is 33.2% for counselors and 23.4% for clinical supervisors compared with 19.6% annual turnover rate for all health and human services (Eby et al., 2010). This means that treatment organizations are replacing a third of their staff yearly. While figures are not available for Canadian drug treatment courts, it is a reality in the drug courts of the United States.

Interestingly, those who leave drug treatment courts return to attend graduations, alumni functions, or in some way remain connected. The same is true with judges, crown prosecutors, and other members of the Criminal Justice System including police.

No matter what your involvement has been, drug treatment court makes a lasting impact on your life. It is one of those unintended consequences that not only changes the attitudes and behaviour

of the participant but also of everyone involved in the program. A survey of former drug court judges in the United States reports their experience in drug court has made them better judges in the new courts they serve.

Why does this occur? It occurs because of the changes we see in our participants. It is the only Criminal Justice program where we actually see change. These people have been through the Criminal Justice System often. Drug treatment courts provide the framework for change to happen. Participants rekindle relationships and allow them to pursue dreams not possible under the clutches of drug addiction.

Graduates of the program now have families of their own, are employees and employers, are attending and completing school, and are truly productive members of the community. These changes are so dramatic that anyone who has ever been involved with drug treatment courts continues as an advocate for the program. It is truly remarkable and the experiences remain with you forever.

Doug Brady  
*Former Executive Director  
Edmonton Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court*



# Impaired Judgment – Correcting Misconceptions About Drug Treatment Court Cont'd

## DTCs help reduce justice and other societal costs

DTC programs also target high risk/high needs offenders with histories of non-compliance with court orders, often frequent past failures at treatment, and criminal records and offences that could otherwise compel a significant jail sentence.

The cost of incarceration is high: Statistics Canada notes the one year per person cost in provincial institutions is approximately \$52,000 in 2005-06; federally it was 69% greater, at \$88,000, and had increased to \$106,600 by 2008-09. Additional societal costs include: cost of stolen goods; police hours; court-related services; health-related service use (e.g. emergency departments); and social services costs (such as child protective services; income support). DTC programs are designed to:

- assist criminally-involved addicts in coming to terms with their drug addiction;
- end or reduce their criminal recidivism;
- assist their social re-integration (through education, employment and volunteering); and
- thereby, reduce both the direct (and indirect) personal and societal costs of their addictions.

## DTCs' participants' needs are assessed and triaged

DTC programs offer a continuum of drug, alcohol, criminal thinking, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services, either on their own, or with existing and/or contract services; participants are triaged into detox, residential, and day programs as their needs require and space becomes available.

## DTCs are evidence-based, and follow internationally recognised, well-established 'Best Practices'

DTCs in Canada follow the key principles for court directed treatment as outlined by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and recently restated by the Organization of American States. DTCs are part of the national harm reduction and drug control strategies in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean and Latin America.

DTCs have operated in the United States longer than in any other jurisdiction. As a result, the overwhelming majority of research is based on U.S. DTCs. This research has been extensively reviewed and critiqued over a 20 year history, with the following results:

## Recidivism

- In a recent address, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said: *....Fully three quarters of drug court graduates nationwide are able to avoid re-arrest for at least two years after the program. Studies suggest drug courts can reduce crime as much as 45 percent more than any other sentencing options.* (NADCP website, May 24, 2012).
- Five meta-analyses have been conducted. The most recent, comprehensive published meta-analysis, based on 154 independent studies, concluded that DTC participation reduced recidivism by 12%, on average (Mitchell et al., 2012).

## Costs

- In the same address Holder also remarked: *...and for every dollar spent, three tax dollars are saved. Even more critically, you're illustrating that they can reunite families, help communities feel safer and more secure - and make lives whole again.* (NADCP website, May 24, 2012).

• In testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Douglas B Marlowe, J.D. Ph.D. Chief of Science, Law and Policy, NADCP, said: *... A recent cost-related meta-analysis performed by the Urban Institute concluded that drug courts produce an average of \$2.21 in direct benefits to the criminal justice system for every \$1 invested - a 221% return on investment.* (Bhati et al., 2008).

## DTCs in Canada and a National Evaluation Framework

No national evaluation framework exists for Canadian DTCs at this time. We are working hard with federal and provincial governments to structure a national strategy. Nevertheless, Canadian DTCs were evaluated, with requirements and strategies for their conduct (Department of Justice of Canada, 2006), during their three-year start-up periods (and since then) by independent evaluators.

Although a framework will be useful, results for Canadian DTCs are available. Briefly summarised, these are just some excerpts from Canadian evaluations about the shared objectives of reducing drug use and criminal recidivism, social re-integration, and associated costs:

## Drug Use Reduction

- In Edmonton, a comparison of the DTC's participants with court-involved clients of residential treatment program found 100% of the DTC participants were abstinent at follow-up vs. only 64% of those who had received addiction treatment but were without the other supports and supervision available from a drug treatment court program.
- Calgary's DTC found about one-third of DTC participants remained clean and sober for a year.
- Ottawa's DTC reports 'in program' frequency of drug use declining from an average of 28.5 days per month to only 0.8 days per month.

## Recidivism

- In a recent peer-reviewed evaluation of the Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver, Somers and colleagues at Simon Fraser used a matched comparison group (n=180 each for DTCV cohort and comparison) design, and found that drug court participation resulted in *significantly greater reductions in offending, ... including reductions in offences involving drug violations.*
- In Regina, the evaluation tracked and compared participants while with the DTC and for up to 18 months afterwards; 86% of the graduates were either crime-free, or had substantially reduced the amount and seriousness of their criminal charges, along with 35% of discharged participants who were also crime-free.
- Winnipeg's DTC evaluation found that 87% of graduates had remained crime free, while 60% of discharged cases had not committed a predatory or drug-involved crime.

## Social re-integration & Quality of life

- Ottawa states that providing employment/ education preparation services shows

impressive outcomes.

- Calgary reports that **approximately 50% of DTC participants re-establish** a connection with supportive family members after program entry.
- Regina's DTC evaluation found that participants' satisfaction with their lives overall improved substantially, from an average score of 1.8 on admission to 7.8 at 9-12 months.

## Costs

- In Ottawa, DTC involvement resulted in an annual estimated reduction of \$3 million spent on drugs, with criminal activity required to support that drug use (such as goods stolen and/or drugs trafficked) estimated at another \$9 million, for a total estimated savings of approximately \$12 million.

## Conclusion

Drug Treatment Courts have proliferated in response to burgeoning numbers of offenders with drug-related problems (Huddleston, Marlowe and Casebolt, 2008). Growth in DTCs is most apparent in the United States, where it is estimated over 2,000 DTCs now function (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2009), but they are also now established in the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean and Latin America.

DTCs are designed to facilitate the treatment of substance use disorders and to provide opportunities for diversion from incarceration (Najavits, 2002). The structure and operation of DTCs have been described and promoted by overarching professional organizations (such as the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, 1997). DTCs are informed by the practice of therapeutic jurisprudence (Hora, 2002), encouraging non-adversarial approach alongside the integration of drug treatment with administration of justice.

We believe in the continued potential of Canadian DTCs to improve public safety through the reduction of drug use, criminal recidivism, and the associated direct and indirect personal and societal costs. We welcome working with those genuinely interested in creating a national evaluation framework for Canada. And we will continue to work hard optimizing DTCs and applying evidence-based 'best practices' or key principles to meet the needs of men and women who are addicted criminal offenders, their families, and the communities across Canada they impact.

We thank you again for the opportunity to respond to this report.

Justice Kofi Barnes on behalf of the CADTCP.

Quotes from participants about DTCs

- *"Getting into this program saved my life. ... This program got me away from coke, which I thought I'd never be able to do. The program's awesome: really, it's changed my life."*
- *"I know I've got a long way to go still, but it's a known fact: if it weren't for this program, I'd either be locked up for a really long time - and wouldn't have learned anything - or I'd be in a grave."*

## Kiki's Letter to the Vancouver DTC

On May 22, 2012, the Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver celebrated its 200th graduation. The DTCV's Judge Jocelyn Palmer presided for the graduation of Kiki Gee in Vancouver Provincial Court.

Kiki was a typical drug addict, living on the streets of Vancouver's downtown east side. Kiki's participation in the DTCV was special. She entered the DTCV by pleading guilty on February 1, 2011 to two counts of Possession of Cocaine for the Purpose of Trafficking. Her recovery from an active addiction to cocaine was remarkable and inspiring. This is Kiki's letter to the DTCV:

"May 22, 2012: Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver

*This is a letter that I am honoured to write about what this program has had to offer me that I could not get nor find anywhere else. This program has opened my eyes and had a huge impact on my life. The teachings that it has given me have helped in my day-to-day life. Now with the knowledge that I know from this program, I have been able to accomplish the things that I thought were the most impossible goals to reach. I can't even call them goals. They were my dreams. Before Drug Court showed me how to achieve these goals, all I could do was wish and fantasize about doing the things that I am doing in my life now.*

*Since I have been in my addiction at the age of 11, I have always loved to dance and loved the stage. I used to get high and go to underground raves just to be able to dance on the DJ stage because everyone would love to watch the DJ. Now, just in the one year that I have been in the program, I have achieved and reached that dream of mine in the right way and gained the confidence to do it. Now I am proud to show off my gold and silver medals that I have won in a dance competition.*

*I have also always wanted the courage to get into martial arts. I have always liked the morals of the arts, to always achieve happiness with hard work and patience. We can always better ourselves in some way.*

*This program has also taught me how to deal with life affecting situations, like*

*the past relationships that my addiction has ruined, that I wanted to repair but didn't know how. The courses that I took in the Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver have made it very easy to learn, to help my conscience and me as well. This Drug Treatment Court program does not just offer courses to be able to achieve the goal of getting over my addiction, it gives me resources to get my eyes checked, to get glasses that I need to wear but was too caught up in my addiction to make or be able to keep an appointment. It has given me the sense of being able to actually have a normal life again, make and keep commitments and fulfil my responsibilities.*

*What I'm the most grateful for, is to have my little girl back in my life. The counsellors and probation officers all being there to help me with that particular accomplishment couldn't have been better. This Drug Treatment Court program and the knowledge it has given me, showed me that whatever I wish to do in my life, can be accomplished. It taught me that we can't give up just because we went down the wrong path. I went from being a heroin and cocaine addict for 14 years, to making my dreams come true in just one year by making it on the stage with a gold medal, started a martial arts class, having my daughter in my life to see her every week, starting school for my Grade 12, getting a tutor to help me, and getting trauma counselling to help me with the troubling issues from my past.*

*Sometimes I would share my daily teachings at the recovery house, because staff in the recovery houses don't teach some of what I think would help a lot of people in their recovery. "Addictive Criminal Thinking" therapy is not a part of the recovery house teachings.*

*This is why I am thankful for taking this program."*



## Kitchener Report

On February 2, 2011, the Kitchener, Ontario, Drug Treatment Court (hereinafter referred to as "DTC") commenced.

In 2010, prior to its establishment, Provincial assistant Crown Attorney, Lynette Fritzley, and I, Federal Prosecutor Kathleen Nolan, had both been extremely interested in the concept of DTCs and sought to create such a court in our community. Unknown to each of us, we independently approached our local administrative Judge at the time, and he advised us that he was supportive of the idea. There were, however, some major concerns that both Ms. Fritzley and I had, particularly relating to the availability of funding, housing, drug testing, counselling and treatment services, medical support team, personal support workers, dedicated duty counsel and police officers for the court. We had some fears that the dearth of some of these services in our region might be fatal to creating a DTC in the near future.

Ms. Fritzley and I then began in earnest to explore the viability of a DTC for our region. We met with and explored legions of community members and services. We travelled to other jurisdictions that had existing DTCs and met with their teams and Judges, and observed their pre-court meetings and DTC courts.

We also held several DTC court meetings at our courthouse to advise the legal community and the community at large of our progress. Finally, we felt we were ready to begin.

Currently we are unfunded. However, due to a wealth of generosity from members of the public and legal community we have been able to function. Further, one of our community agencies, The Working Centre, has agreed to accept financial donations from the community to our DTC.

Since we are not formally funded we have limited the number of participants in our program to eight. We currently have eight participants, four Federal and four Provincial, with six on the waiting list. We meet every Wednesday and we hold our pre-court meetings from 10:00 am until noon and, then, open court at noon.

Our judiciary provided us with a dedicated DTC Judge, Justice Colin Westman. Legal Aid has also provided us with a dedicated Duty Counsel for DTC each week.

We have two personal support workers, one of whom is also a bail supervisor, and the other is a retired police officer who works with the Canadian Mental Health Association. We have a dedicated doctor from our local methadone centre who has generously agreed to conduct, supervise and analyse the results of the twice weekly urine testing required for our program. He and his staff also provide expert addiction counselling and support to our participants. We also have a doctor who works with The Working Centre and assists any of our participants who do not have a family doctor. Our dedicated DTC nurse works with the Psychiatric Outreach Project and she provides health care and medical assessments to the participants.

Many other local agencies also give generously of their time and services, including our local hospital withdrawal management centre, Probation and Parole, the Salvation Army, and local homeless and housing associations.

While not quite at the ten month point, we have, none the less, garnered much notoriety not only in our community but in other communities, too. Most weeks our court is full of members of the community who have heard of our court and wish to attend and/or support us, including local churches, schools and medical students. We ourselves have now been visited by people from other jurisdictions wishing to observe our DTC and perhaps establish a DTC in their community. It has truly come full circle.

Although we have faced some expulsions and withdrawals from our DTC so far, we have also had our first graduation from our program on October 26 of this year. There was a huge celebration to mark his graduation that was held in our DTC courtroom. It was attended not only by his family and friends, but by several members of our local legal community, including other Judges, Provincial and Federal Crown Attorneys, and defence counsel. It was a full-house. One of our other participants even graced the ceremony with a song she performed with great gusto.

In summary, we have been simply overwhelmed and incredibly moved by the positive progress and impact of our court on so many people. The generosity of our community has also left us awed. I know I speak not only for myself but for Justice Westman, Ms. Fritzley, and the whole DTC team when I say that the experience in creating and being a part of our Drug Treatment Court has been profound and has forever changed us for the better.

## Winnipeg Drug Treatment Court's Housing Initiative

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, housing falls under the first quadrant of essential human needs. Through evaluating and listening to the participants it was made apparent that housing was essential to experiencing a successful recovery. Without housing it would be difficult if not impossible for a participant to reach the self-actualization stage, or even the esteem needs stage. The entire purpose of the WDTTC Housing Pilot Project is to link safe housing with a successful recovery.

The process of adding a housing component to the program began in 2011 when Winnipeg Drug Treatment Court's Program Manager Wayne Lloyd applied for funding from the Human Resource and Skills Development Canada. The aim was to assist and house participants who find themselves in unstable and unsafe housing situations. Participants of WDTTC are often faced with suspect housing situations upon release from custody; as a result some may not remain in the program for long returning to drugs or crime (Weinwrath, 2012). Additionally other cases can experience a "housing crises" due to relationship breakdowns or hardships in their living situations while in the program. These hardships have occurred despite the WDTTC putting effort into finding suitable accommodations for its participants. WDTTC believes they can improve program retention and success if it can provide better housing support for its participants (Weinwrath, 2012).

### Housing Barriers for WDTTC participants

Winnipeg Rehabilitation Housing shows that in Winnipeg the average 1 bedroom apartment at market rent is \$665 a month. The average 2 bedroom rents for \$890 a month. Individuals who are on Social Assistance are allotted \$285 a month for rent and \$220 for their personal expenses. This amount would not cover the rent for a bachelor suite anywhere in Winnipeg. We find that many individuals who come to WDTTC on Social Assistance are in need of safe housing. Some participants do not have relatives, or they have burned bridges and finding a place to live grows ever more difficult. Manitoba Housing wait lists are a minimum of nine months. Many of those coming into WDTTC from custody are faced with the challenge of finding suitable accommodations. They are the ones with the least amount of resources and supports.

Another barrier of our participants is the requirement of damage deposits. Because many individuals are on the wait list for subsidized housing some participants choose to look privately but once again are faced with the issue of damage deposits. Social Assistance will allow damage deposit once for private or subsidized units. Most of our participants have used up this one time deal. Many private places that exist will process your application with much more seriousness if one can provide a damage deposit up front. This is an impossible barrier for individuals who have burned bridges as a result of their criminal and addictive lifestyle; thus creating a vicious cycle.

Credit checks are an additional barrier for individuals looking to rent privately. Generally speaking individuals in the WDTTC program either have atrocious credit, or they have no credit. Most private landlords or rental agencies require a credit check before they approve an application for a residence. Many individuals in the WDTTC program can not find a place because of this issue. A small portion of the participants do have access to a co-signer but they are unfortunately not the norm.

### Transitional House

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada has funded the WDTTC initiative of a Transitional Housing program, including hiring

a Housing Support Worker. WDTTC has worked hard with various other agencies in obtaining a residence, which did not come easy. Various sites had been identified and negotiations made only to be unsuccessful (Weinwrath, 2012). Finally through a process of working in collaboration with Teen Challenge, and Manitoba Green Retrofit WDTTC was able to obtain a house. WDTTC worked in close contact with Momenta, an organization that WDTTC utilized to oversee the community living of the house. WDTTC also worked closely with Manitoba Green Retrofit, an organization that is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the house, as well as making sure leases are signed and rents are paid. Currently there are two mentors and two participants living in the house.

### Assessing Risk

There was a period of time where a prototype Housing Needs Intake Assessment had been developed by WDTTC evaluator Michael Weinwrath, and the Housing Support Worker. The assessment tool currently being used attempts to capture both present housing situations and the housing history of applicants (Weinwrath, 2012). The project is now up and running its progress is constantly being tracked and evaluated by Michael Weinwrath along with the Housing Support Worker.

### Conclusion

This project has highlighted the need for a housing component to be added to all Drug Courts. Having this component will result in greater success and will better serve the needs of all participants.

### References

Weinrath, M. & Bellan, M. (2012) Drug Court Evaluation 2011-12. Winnipeg, MB. Prepared for Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

## From Cici to Chrystal

My name is Chrystal Côté; in the past I was called Cici. Coming to Ottawa drug court changed a lot of things about me and my life. Although, I'll admit when I first got into Rideauwood I saw it as a get out of jail free card. I was very close-minded and resistant at first.

Somewhere along my journey something inside me changed. I noticed that my case manager Vanessa Robinson actually believed in me and that gave me the hope and motivation I needed to get clean and stay clean.

Now here I am almost 9 months later, I have 8 ½ months clean, I go to 12 step meetings regularly, and I am working on getting my GED, and I have the privilege of graduating next week! Rideauwood has helped me to be more positive. I'm almost always smiling now, I have self-respect now, and I actually believe in myself. I've also learned how to be assertive and set healthy boundaries. My family also trusts me again, which to me is priceless.

If Rideauwood didn't take a chance on me, I'd most likely still be an insecure woman who depended on drugs for comfort. So I would like to thank everyone at Rideauwood for guiding me in my journey of recovery.

Chrystal Côté



# A Woman's Journey through the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program



May 2012 - My personal problems of addiction began when I was about 22 years old. Back in that time, I never really thought that maybe having too many drinks at a party was paving the way for future problems because I was young, unencumbered, and had zero responsibilities as far as having work, school or children. As I got older, my drinking stopped but was soon replaced by drugs.

At first I thought it was harmless. "It's just a little weed, no big deal." I used to look at the kinds of people who were doing harder drugs, like crack cocaine and using intravenous drugs like morphine and would think to myself, "At least I'm not one of them!" But as I got older, the problems in my life I was facing, like losing my children, not working and dropping out of college, came to surface in the most harmful of ways.

Suddenly I was homeless, my relationship was over, and I had no prospects. Drugs became my life and the only escape that I cared about. Somebody turned me on to crack cocaine and that was it. At first spending \$40 or \$50 didn't seem like a lot of money, but as my addiction grew so did my need for finding ways to afford my drugs, which led me to my criminal path.

## **How my criminal thinking and behaviour affected my life**

As I began getting deeper and deeper into the drug culture, I found myself doing things that I never would have thought of doing before to sustain my habit. This included prostitution, gambling and what was known on the street as 'hustling' for dealers. "You bring me customers, I'll hook you up". Eventually I got introduced to someone who said to me that I didn't need to be selling my body anymore to get drugs. All I had to do was start selling drugs. For him. This began to affect my life in ways that were extremely stressful because once other people know that you're selling drugs, the craziness begins and doesn't end. The constant need to keep addicts supplied, the money that you'd better make sure you have for the guy you're working for, getting beaten up, robbed, jacked up by the cops and all the while using like crazy. Going back and forth to jail and everyone knowing that you are now dealing; everyone wants something and it gets to a point that you can't stop. They won't let you stop. The ramifications of all this craziness would eventually be my downfall and lead me to how I eventually wound up in the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program.

## **Entering the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program**

In 2010 I was living in a down town shelter in an area of Calgary that was proliferated with drugs and crime. I had actually been homeless now for a number of years and had been selling drugs for a while. But in 2010 the newspapers were beginning to write about problem areas in the city that were dealing with some serious issues, one of which was drug dealers. The word on the street was that the police were sending out undercover cops to make drug buys in an effort to crack down (no pun intended!) on the drug scene. I had heard about the different police operations designed to address the issue of drug dealing; "Operation Endeavor" and the one that I would eventually get caught in, "Operation Irene". I was out on bail from my very first 'trafficking charge' which occurred in January of 2010. Of course the idea never crossed my 'addict's mind that I should stop what I was doing, and as soon as I was released, I was right back to my old criminal behaviour. This meant selling drugs and staying high. The dealer I was working for began giving me more and more drugs to sell and the cycle continued. Addicts want what they want, when they want it. I thought I would be safe, as long as I knew who I was selling to. I can still remember them; the two guys I hadn't ever really seen around 'the scene' but I made a choice to sell to. My dealer was on the phone with me telling me to hurry up with his money, so I sold them some drugs and it was pretty much at that moment that my fate was sealed. Off to jail. I ended up spending 68 days at the Calgary Remand centre and while there, another inmate was telling me about "Drug Court". I actually hadn't heard of it before so I began to ask more about it and what it would involve. Eventually I found out that you could apply to this "Drug Court" if you were serious about changing your life and old criminal ways. I applied for and was accepted into the program in February, 2011.

## **The Drug Court Experience**

My experience in Drug Court has shown me a new, positive way to live my life and to deal with many issues in a different way. Although everyone's experiences are different, the hopeful end-result is the same; to become a productive member of society again. As with any new experience, there were positives and negatives.

There were definitely times when I first began Drug Court that I thought it

would be easier to just do my time in jail. Part of that thinking stemmed from the fact that I had to complete a five-month treatment program at a residence full of other women facing similar substance abuse issues. I had to learn how to live with complete strangers in a place where there were so many rules, they had a handbook!!

I can say that for me, that was the hardest part. Getting through a five-month treatment program, learning how to live with and respect others, following rules, going to court every Thursday, being compliant and trying to deal with all of the reasons I was in treatment in the first place. It was hard. I won't try and sugar-coat it; it was freaking hard. Girls were dropping like flies and believe me I had my days where I didn't think I was going to make it. I felt angry at myself for not being able to handle all of the new feelings that I was experiencing in treatment; angry for having to deal with stuff straight; angry for so many things. When I first began the program I ran into my lawyer one day who actually told me that he'd had reservations about me completing the program. THAT pissed me off. It made me want it all the more because deep down I knew I wanted to change; that I was capable of change and for addicts, change is uncomfortable. But I needed a new way to live because the way I was living previously was not working for me.

I found that what worked best for me was knowing that I had a whole team of people behind me, rooting for me to succeed, including: my Case Manager (thanks Nicole!), my Probation Officer, my Duty Counsel and the Judge. It helped tremendously knowing that there was a whole team of people behind me; who believed in me; who believed that I was worth it; who believed that I could be someone new. Today, I like to think that I am the living, breathing proof that drug courts work!

## **Gratitude**

I am thankful for so many things. I am thankful that there is a Drug Treatment Court program at all. Thankful that there are persons out there who believe that there has to be a better way of dealing with the re-occurring addict/criminal, who want to change but because of circumstances in their lives are never afforded the opportunity to embrace change. We should not all end up sad statistics, destined to live the rest of our lives surrounded in misery, hopelessness, homelessness and unemployed, uneducated and addicted.

I am thankful that I live in a country where such programs are able to exist in partnership with the very communities that, as a former "detriment to society", I was participating in, for the worst. I am thankful I was given the opportunity to re-evaluate my life and at age where, when people believe in you, you're never too old to become "new". I am thankful for being given a second chance at becoming the person I knew I could be if only given a chance. Well I got that chance. A lot of other people I knew never made it out of their addictions alive and perhaps they might still be here today, if they had been given a chance to access a Drug Treatment Court program.

But you have to want it. And I mean, really want it!

Today I am clean and sober and I recently celebrated and received my ONE Year Sobriety Medallion. I live in my own apartment, am employed and am applying to a post-secondary education program to pursue my personal dream of helping others.

I AM somebody, I always was. Recovery is ONE DAY AT A TIME.

Sharon Ballantyne

March 2012

GRADUATE of the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program

## **Update September 2012**

Sharon is now enrolled as a fulltime student at a local post-secondary institution. She is pursuing her Aboriginal Addictions Services Counseling Certificate and has received full funding for her educational pursuit through her Band. When her time permits, she attends Drug Court on a voluntary basis as a program alumnus and provides inspiration to others in the program. She continues to apply the skills she has learned through her involvement with the Calgary Drug Treatment Court and remains clean & sober; living an empowered life, one day at a time.

Diana Krecsy

CEO, Calgary Drug Treatment Court

# Growing Capacity in the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program



*"I skate to where the puck is going to be,  
not where it has been."*

**Wayne Gretzky**

In March 2012 the Alberta Government's Minister of Justice and Attorney General, through its Safe Communities Secretariat, committed ongoing and increased funding to the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program (CDTC) till March 2013. In alignment with the CDTC strategic plan to expand its capacity, the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Society is excited to announce the piloting of a new and innovative Day Program within the treatment and rehabilitative component of the court program.

In anticipation of an increased demand for program services, due in part to the passing of Bill C-10, the decision to expand treatment services is timely and proactive. The CDTC remains committed to treat the offending addict from a holistic perspective using a model of collaboration and coordinated services by key stakeholders to best meet the needs of participant; ensure effective program delivery and cost effectiveness; serve the High Need-High Risk to re-offend population; and to adhere to the 12 Key Components of Drug Treatment Courts.

Traditionally, all participants accepted into the CDTC program were expected to attend a *residential* treatment program. And while this valued treatment path will continue to be a component of our program, it is not without its own issues and challenges. An overall increased need from the corporate sector, private sector, health sector and the federal parolee and provincial community corrections sector, have synergistically contributed to an increased demand for services to a limited number of residential addiction beds with a corresponding increased wait time for access. In addition, CDTC participants are repeat offenders, many whom have successfully completed treatment in the past yet have not been able to sustain any degree of sobriety time once back in the community; or they have "failed" and/or been asked to "leave and are not welcome to come back to", several residential treatment programs, thus further limiting their access to future options for treatment.

The driving force behind the CDTC decision to implement a Day Program is grounded in evidence-based knowledge that treatment success is more likely to occur when the treatment plan and the needs of the individual are matched. The CDTC Day Program is primarily being developed for those participants who have attended numerous residential programs and whose pattern it is to be successful while in treatment but then relapse while in the community. Typically these men and women continue to find themselves back living on the streets, using drugs and returning to drug-driven crimes. They leave treatment understanding they are addicts, attending 12 Step programs but for various reasons they are drawn back to their former life.

One potential participant for the new CDTC Day Program acknowledged attending at least 7 treatment programs to date. His problem is not being a good residential client but rather, his problem is that upon completion of the residential phase he is not able to handle living in the community with all its temptations, old habits, and limited supports. Within our day program this participant will be provided with safe housing and a safe place to come to on a daily basis. Further, he/she will be guided through their time in Drug Court with the help of mandated expectations, accountability to court, and a team of dedicated people to help support the participant to be successful. Other potential candidates for the day program include those men and women, accepted by the Crown, who are employed, supporting a family and have probation approved housing. All participants in the day program will be required to attend day programming and drug court 4 out of 5 days during the week. Participants will have one day during the week to attend scheduled outside appointments. Finally, yet another category for inclusion into the day program are those offenders, the majority being women, who reside in safe haven residential programs providing life-skills programming, but lacking in specific addictions treatment and criminogenic-thinking programs.

Participants accepted into the CDTC program will be assessed by the treatment team and will be appropriately triaged and placed into either the residential or day program treatment stream based upon the individual needs of the

participant; and in alignment with existing resources for housing and staffing. Capacity in the day program will be incrementally increased and strategically capped at a maximum, so that staff will have the opportunity to work closely and individually with each participant. The day program is designed as a 12 to 16 week program with a strong emphasis on the integration of criminogenic thinking and addictions treatment curriculums. Content and approach is trauma-informed and includes gender specific cognitive behavioral therapy inclusive of cognitive restructuring, interpersonal problem-solving and anger-control training. A further focus will be on healthy relationships, various process addictions, and of course relapse-prevention. Utilizing key resources from the local community, experts will be utilized in the delivery of the program in specialty areas, i.e. First Nations-Aboriginal programming, 12 Step Recovery programming etc.

The CDTC Day Program is scheduled to begin implementation in October 2012 and through the collaborative efforts of all members of the multi-disciplinary court team; Treatment, Judge, Crown, Police, Probation/Community Corrections, Duty Counsel and Alberta Works Employment, we are positioned to grow the capacity of the Calgary Drug Treatment Court program and provide much needed services to the addicted-offender who is committed to creating a new drug free and crime free life.

Diana Krecsy RN, BN, M. Ed.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Calgary Drug Treatment Court

Donna Dupuis, MSW, RSW, TEP  
Clinical Director

## "Word on the Street"

The Calgary Drug Treatment Court program is proud to announce its new public-education partnership with the Calgary Police Services (CPS) Drug Unit.

Both informal research within Calgary Police Service (CPS) and recent academic reports suggest that traditional methods of drug education are ineffective and are not generally well received by student audiences. Review of Calgary Drug Treatment Court participant case histories indicate that the majority, if not all, of the participants in the drug court program begin their substance use in childhood or early adolescence.

"Word on the Street" is a portable drug education display funded by the Calgary Drug Treatment Court program and created by Constable Tracy Starchuk of the CPS, that provides a visual presentation and explanation of what would generally not be experienced by the general public (i.e. marijuana grow house, drug paraphernalia). The display includes a large doll house whose interior and exterior are outfitted to serve as models of typical indoor marijuana grow house, a drug house and a methamphetamine lab. Small placards containing segments of information about illegal drugs are placed throughout the model. In addition, brochure holders will be added to the display in future to provide 'take-away information' regarding the Calgary Drug Treatment Court program and other related services. The intention is to spark a primary prevention, informed and open conversation on drugs, and to educate students, parents and the general public on the impact of drug addiction to individuals, families and communities.

The display is designed to function as a stand-alone educational display "parked" in highly frequented public areas such as shopping malls and sports facilities; yet is also mobile enough to be transported by representatives of the CDTC to speaking engagements.

Currently, "Word on the Street" is on view at the Calgary Police Interpretive Centre. During the months of May, June and July 2012 a total of 936 children and 199 adults interacted with the display and increased their understanding of the downward spiral caused by drug use. It is hoped that each of these **1,135 individuals** will tell one person, who will tell one more person and so on; and the 'word on the street' will spread that the Calgary Drug Treatment Court Program and Calgary Police Services are working together to stop the negative cycle of drug addiction-drug related crime.

Diana Krecsy RN, BN, M. Ed.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Calgary Drug Treatment Court







## **Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals**

2201 Finch West Avenue, 5th floor, Toronto, Ontario, M9M 2Y9

### **SEND IN INSPIRING DRUG TREATMENT COURT STORIES**

Dear Drug Treatment Court Alumni/Practitioner

Re: National DTC Alumni Book Publication Project

The Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals (CADTCP) is launching a special book publication project. The objective is to publish a book of inspiring stories and artwork from Drug Treatment Court participants, former participants, Alumni and practitioners. This national publication is intended to inspire others as they battle through a drug addiction or other challenge in their lives.

Another objective is to facilitate an extensive national and international circulation of this publication in an effort to provide some support for Drug Treatment Court Alumni from across Canada who wish to pursue further education or job training.

This idea was conceived by the late Honorable Paul Bentley and Paulette Walker. The publication will be dedicated to Justice Bentley and the national effort will be coordinated by Paulette Walker, Peer Support worker, Toronto Drug Treatment Court and Mr. Justice Kofi Barnes.

The Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals (CADTCP), working primarily through the CADTCP National Alumni Group, is dedicated to supporting Alumni in their continued efforts to meet their personal goals, support their peers and be leaders in their communities.

In an effort to celebrate the talents of our graduates, the CADTCP would like to invite all Drug Treatment Court Alumni, participants, former participants and practitioners from across Canada to contribute to an Alumni book that will be published in 2013.

We encourage you to use your artistic voice in a variety of ways. Suggested ideas for submission include:

- Artwork
- Poetry
- Short Stories
- Photography
- Reflections about recovery – hardships and triumphs
- Your personal story

Please make your submission to Paulette Walker at this address:

Ms. Paulette Walker, *Peer Support Work*  
Toronto Drug Treatment Court Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Bell Gateway Building  
100 Stokes Street, 3rd Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M6J 1H4

Hard copies of your Artwork, Poetry and Photography are preferred. Please send in your submissions as soon as possible.

A special CADTCP Alumni Book Publication Committee shall review and select the submissions. The identities of all persons who submit entries will not be revealed without the permission of the author or artist. We thank you for your continued support and trust that your experiences in Drug Treatment Court will continue to have a lasting positive impact in our communities.

Yours truly

Mr. Justice Kofi Barnes  
*Chair Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals*



## Canadian Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals

2201 Finch West Avenue, 5th floor, Toronto, Ontario, M9M 2Y9

### SUBMISSION FORM - National DTC Alumni Book Publication Project

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the best way to reach you? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Your Drug Treatment Court: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Affiliation with your DTC:

☐ Alumni: Year Graduated - \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I am currently an active participant

☐ I am a past participant

☐ I am a Professional in my DTC - TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Type of Submission:

☐ Fictional Short Story

☐ Artwork – (See Section A)

☐ Poetry

☐ Photograph – (See Section B)

☐ Personal Reflection

☐ OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

#### A) Please provide us the following information:

- Title of your artwork: \_\_\_\_\_

- Materials \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Dimensions - \_\_\_\_\_

- Optional: Include a synopsis of the artwork (ie meaning, process, etc)

#### B) Please provide us the following information:

- Title: \_\_\_\_\_

- Optional: include a synopsis of the photo's significance

Are you submitting original artwork? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you want your original artwork returned to you? ☐ YES ☐ NO

I (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby consent to the members of the CADTCP Alumni Book Publication Committee to contact me at the above mentioned contact information. I understand that should I submit original pieces that it is my responsibility to ensure that my contact information is correct and updated as needed so the Publication Committee can ensure their safe return.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_