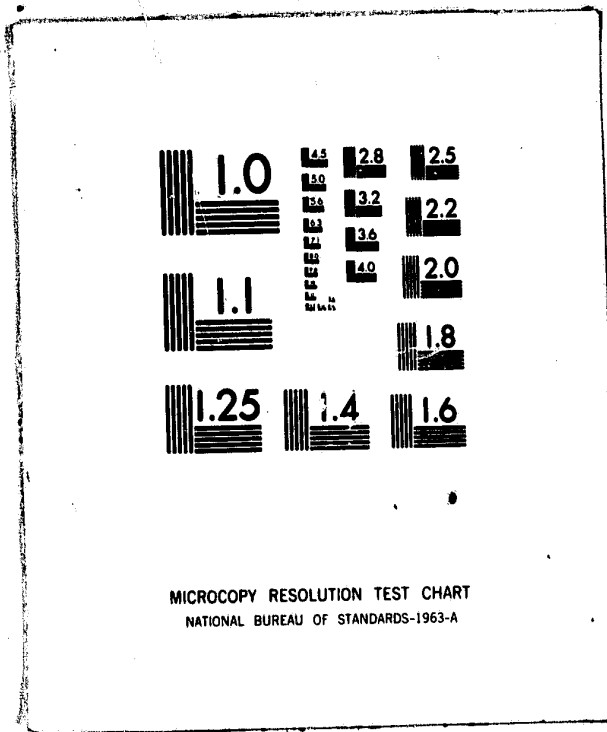


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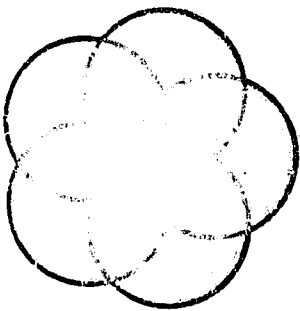
OCTOBER 13, 1980

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ACQUISITIONS

EVALUATION OF
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 10 FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC UNIT
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OF POLK COUNTY

63483



central florida
regional planning
council

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Executive Summary

The Forensic Unit is utilized by the courts to deliver mental health services to the Criminal Justice System.

For the past two years thirty to forty-five mental evaluations per quarter have been completed. As stated in the report, the unit has been successful in meeting the numerical goals specified for completing evaluations. Clients are referred to the Forensic Unit by order of the court and if the unit deems it necessary, treatment is the next step.

The program has been very successful in both deliver and mental health service. Communication between Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System has been greatly improved. Evaluations indicate the program should be continued as it can serve as a successful model for the development of other units throughout the state of Florida. Hopefully, the unit will become a permanent agency of local government.

Introduction

The Forensic Unit of the Mental Health Center of Polk County, Inc. is presently in its fourth year of LEAA funding. This unique project was established to enable the criminal justice system of Polk County to receive comprehensive mental health services. In addition, it was foreseen that the successful implementation of this project could result in the project's use as a model for the improvement of mental health--criminal justice system services in other locations in Florida.

This evaluation was initiated as a result of a request on the part of the local Criminal Justice Advisory Committee in order to determine the impact the Forensic Unit has had upon the criminal justice system. The findings of this project will be utilized to help the Forensic Unit improve its services and to assist the Unit in obtaining funds for the continuation of its services upon the expiration of LEAA funding.

Methodology

This section contains a description of the major objectives of the study and the methods by which these objectives were assessed.

A. Provision of services

The performance of the Forensic Unit in providing services was examined for three major service categories: mental evaluations, mental health treatment, and consultation and education.

1. For mental evaluations the projected number of evaluations which the Unit stated as its measureable objective was compared to the actual number of evaluations completed. In addition, this data was examined by quarters for a period of two years to determine if there were any significant trends in number of evaluations completed.

2. Mental health treatment for individuals in the Polk County Jail and Polk County Stockade was examined for the first three years of the Unit's operation and the year preceeding the establishment of the Unit. Treatment sessions were defined as the administration of mental health treatment (psychotherapy, psychiatric evaluation, medication evaluation) to an inmate by one of the staff members. Each visit to an inmate was considered a single treatment session. The yearly number of these treatment sessions were compared to determine if the Unit had increased service in this area.

3. Consultation and education services were evaluated by comparing the Unit's stated measureable objectives against the actual services provided.

B. Impact of Services

The impact and effectiveness of the Unit's services was determined by having the agencies to which the Unit provides services complete questionnaires concerning the length of time it requires for clients to receive services; the quality of reports; the usefulness of evaluations; the availability of Unit

staff for consultation, crisis services, and special assistance; and the effect of the Unit's operation on the behavior of incarcerated individuals. The agencies which filled out these questionnaires were the County Stockade, the County Jail, Probation and Parole, the Circuit and County Court, the Sheriff's Department, and Children and Youth Services.

C. State Assessment of Services

The project's performance in terms of meeting State Mental Health Standards was to be assessed by reviewing the results of the State Site Visit to the Mental Health Center on December 7, 1977. Although the Forensic Unit was a part of this site visit, the February 1978 report of this visit evaluated the Center as a whole and did not present a separate evaluation of component programs. Therefore, this evaluation goal could not be completed.

D. Cost Effectiveness

The cost effectiveness of the Forensic Unit was determined by comparing the operating costs of the Unit against the cost for the Unit's services if these services would have been purchased from mental health professionals in private practice in the Polk County area. The fees charged for these services were obtained through a survey of these private practice professionals.

Background

The Forensic Unit began operation in Bartow, Florida under an LEAA Grant in July, 1975. The major objectives of the Unit's operation were (1) to provide mental health evaluations of juvenile and adult offenders in order to assist the Court, Probation and Parole, Department of Corrections, and Children and Youth Services in disposition of cases; (2) to treat mental health problems of inmates in the Polk County Jail and Polk County Stockade; (3) to provide a better understanding of mental health problems and procedures through training of criminal justice personnel; to assist the Court in processing of its cases by providing results of evaluations in a timely manner; and to improve communication between the mental health and criminal justice system.

The major activities of the Unit consist of (1) mental evaluations for the Court to determine if an individual is competent to appear before the Court and was competent at the time of his offense; (2) psychological evaluations of juveniles to assist the Court and Children and Youth Services in the disposition of cases; (3) psychological evaluations for other criminal justice system agencies to establish treatment plans for their clients; (4) mental health treatment for individuals in the Polk County Jail and Polk County Stockade; (5) liason and coordination between the mental health system and the criminal justice system; (6) consultation and education programs to (a) provide training for Police Minimum Standard courses, (b) train criminal justice counselors in mental health techniques, (c) participate in local criminal justice and juvenile justice task forces, and (d) present public education programs.

The staff of the Forensic Unit consists of a (1) Ph.D. clinical psychologist who serves as the director of the Unit and who does most of the competency evaluations for the Court; (2) a second Ph.D. clinical psychologist who does competency evaluations for the Court and psychological evaluations for the Juvenile Court and other criminal justice system agencies; (3) a psychologist with a Masters degree who does psychological evaluations for the Juvenile Court and other criminal justice system agencies and who provides much of the training to criminal justice counselors; (4) a Masters level investigator and liason coordinator; and (5) a Masters level counselor who provides the psychotherapeutic treatment to inmates and coordinates the psychiatric treatment provided to these inmates.

Findings

A. Provision of Services

1. Mental Evaluations

For the past two years the goal of the Forensic Unit has been to complete between 30 to 45 mental evaluations per quarter. Table I shows the number of evaluations for the past eight quarters beginning at July 1, 1976 and ending at June 30, 1978.

TABLE I

Begin 7/1/76							End 8/30/78
36	36	28	33	34	53	38	60

As can be seen the Unit clearly met this objective by completing the evaluations within the specified range 5 times and exceeding the range 2 times. In only one quarter did the number of evaluations fail to meet the specified range. Overall, the Unit completed an average to 40 evaluations per quarter during the past two years. In summary, the Unit has been successful in meeting the numerical goals specified for competency evaluations.

2. Treatment

In order to determine the effect the Unit has had on the provision of mental health treatment to inmates in the Polk County Jail and Polk County Stockade, a comparison was made between the number of treatment sessions provided for the year prior to the Unit's existence with the number of treatment sessions for the three years of the Unit's functioning. Treatment sessions were chosen as the unit of analysis rather than number of inmates treated. Since the same inmate might receive a large number of treatment sessions depending

on the severity of his problem or the length of his incarceration, it was felt that the number of treatment sessions was a truer representation of services being offered by the Unit. Table 2 shows this comparison for the pre-unit year from 7/1/74 to 6/30/75 and for the three post-unit years from 7/1/75 to 6/30/78.

TABLE 2

<u>Pre-Unit</u> 7/1/74 to 6/30/75	7/1/75 to 6/30/76	<u>Post-Unit</u> 7/1/76 to 6/30/77	7/1/77 to 6/30/78
290	896	786	568

As can be seen the Unit has doubled or tripled the number of treatment sessions provided when compared to pre-unit treatment levels. In summary, the existence of the Unit has clearly increased the amount of mental health services being received by inmates of the Polk County Jail and Stockade.

3. Consultation and Education

The education and training activities of the Unit for the three quarters of the current year were examined to determine if the objectives for this category of service have been met.

A. One training program of police offered each quarter. This goal has been met each quarter through the presentation of mental health classes to the minimum standards courses for either field officers or correctional officers.

B. Intensive mental health training for police officers. This goal has not been met. The Director of the Unit stated that the demands for other services from the Unit has prevented the Unit from devoting the large expenditure of time that would be required to plan and execute this intensive training program. However, the Unit is currently investigating the possibility of bringing in outside consultants to offer this training.

C. Two public education programs each quarter. Ten presentations have been presented during the past three quarters with, at least, two presentations being given in any one quarter. Presentations have been made to classes of Florida Southern Collge, St. Leo's College, and Polk Community College; the Lakeland Women's Club; the Polk County School Psychologists; the Polk County criminal defense attorneys; the forum on the Disintegration of the American Family; and the Child Abuse Conference.

D. At least one training program offered during the year to criminal justice agencies other than law enforcement. In the first three quarters of this Grant year, three training programs have been conducted. These programs have been a workshop in Reality Therapy for counselors of Children and Youth Services, a workshop on discipline techniques to the staff of the Polk Detention Center, and therapeutic training and supervision to the staff members of the Turning Point Ranch.

In conclusion, with the exception of the specialized police training the Unit has met or exceeded the goals for education and training.

B. Impact of Services

Chart A shows the length of time it takes for the Forensic Unit to make appointments for psychological evaluations with the agencies utilizing the Unit.

CHART A
PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS

	One Week	Two Weeks	Three Weeks	Four Weeks
Length of time it takes to set an appointment for psychological evaluations	60%	40%	---	---
Length of time it takes to receive evaluation reports	20%	80%	---	---

As can be seen from the data in Chart A, clients are usually seen for appointments within two weeks of the time of request, and reports are usually submitted within two weeks of the date of the evaluations. These data clearly demonstrate that the Forensic Unit has been very efficient and timely in offering services to Criminal Justice Agencies.

Chart B represents the survey of agencies to determine if the Forensic Unit is making adequate assessments of mental health treatment needs and the usefulness of these evaluations.

CHART B

ASSESSMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT SERVICES

Are reports accurate and complete?

How useful are evaluations to agencies in deciding disposition of cases?

Are recommendations well developed for agencies' purposes?

Do agencies follow recommendations made in reports?

Does staff consult with agencies on individual cases upon request?

Does the Forensic Unit respond to crisis situations?

Does the Forensic Unit offer special assistance to agencies (i.e., training, jail visits, etc.)?

Is the Forensic Unit adequately staffed?

Do you feel that the Forensic Unit's overall operation of the facilities was of benefit to the inmate's behavior modification?

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Are reports accurate and complete?	100%	---	---	---	---	---
How useful are evaluations to agencies in deciding disposition of cases?	80%	20%	---	---	---	---
Are recommendations well developed for agencies' purposes?	50%	33%	---	---	---	17%
Do agencies follow recommendations made in reports?	17%	67%	---	---	---	16%
Does staff consult with agencies on individual cases upon request?	100%	---	---	---	---	---
Does the Forensic Unit respond to crisis situations?	100%	---	---	---	---	---
Does the Forensic Unit offer special assistance to agencies (i.e., training, jail visits, etc.)?	100%	---	---	---	---	---
Is the Forensic Unit adequately staffed?	---	---	67%	33%	---	---
Do you feel that the Forensic Unit's overall operation of the facilities was of benefit to the inmate's behavior modification?	33%	50%	---	---	---	17%

As can be seen from the data in Chart B, the Forensic Unit generally received excellent ratings concerning the quality and usefulness of services. Since ratings were generally high, some significance should be focused on the comparison of ratings in the "excellent" and "very good" categories. As can be seen, all agencies agreed that the Forensic Unit offered excellent services in terms of the accurateness and completeness of reports, consultation, crisis services, and special assistance. In addition, it was felt by most of the agencies that the evaluations were excellent in terms of assisting in dispositions of cases. However, there appeared to be some discrepancy between the quality of recommendations and the actual final disposition of cases as only 17% of the agencies felt that there was an excellent correspondence between recommendations and final dispositions. Another area in which there was less than overall excellent rating concerned the relation of the Unit's services to change of inmates' behaviors. This rating is not surprising as the Unit serves primarily an evaluation function rather than a treatment function. The other area in which the Unit did not receive ratings as positive as in the other categories was the adequateness of staffing. Comments to this category clearly indicate that the quality of the staff was not being criticized; rather, the agencies felt that the Forensic Unit would provide even better services if it had additional staff members.

In summary, the services of the Forensic Unit were highly rated and it was felt that there was a need to continue the program and to increase the size of the Unit so that even more services could be given to the criminal justice system.

C. Cost Effectiveness

In order to assess cost efficiency of the Unit, a survey was conducted of mental health professionals in Polk County who customarily do evaluations for the Court. It was found that the median cost for adult mental evaluations was \$125.00 per hour. It was estimated that an evaluation as done by the Forensic Unit--with accompanying (a) interviews of family members, witnesses and police officers; (b) conferences with attorneys; (c) testimony; and (d) consultation to the Court to assist with mental health disposition of the case--would require a minimum of four hours per case or \$500.00. During the past year the Unit completed 185 mental evaluations. The cost to the criminal justice system of private individuals offering the services enumerated above would have been \$92,500.

The Forensic Unit's yearly budget for all services including adult mental evaluations, jail treatment, juvenile evaluations, consultation and education, evaluations for the Public Defender, and liaison activities is \$105,476. Consequently, the \$92,500 cost for private adult evaluations represents 90% of the Forensic Budget for all services. In fact, using a similar analysis for juvenile evaluations with a minimum time spent on a case of three hours, it would have cost from private sources \$61,500 for the 164 juvenile evaluations completed during the past year.

In conclusion, the costs for all of the services offered by the Unit are substantially below (approximately 50%) the costs that would have been

incurred had the private sector been utilized for adult and juvenile evaluations, treatment, and training activities.

Recommendations

The first three years of operation of the Forensic Unit of Polk County has resulted in a highly successful program in both delivery of mental health services and in the establishment of open communication between mental health and Criminal Justice. It is felt by the Central Florida Regional Planning Council's Criminal Justice Program that the Forensic Unit can serve as a successful model for the development of other such units in Florida and should be established as a permanent agency by local government.

FORENSIC UNIT SURVEY

1. How long does it usually take to set an appointment for psycholological evaluations?

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| a. One Week | _____ | d. Four Weeks | _____ |
| b. Two Weeks | _____ | e. Other | _____ |
| c. Three Weeks | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

2. How long does it take to receive evaluation reports?

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| a. One Week | _____ | d. Four Weeks | _____ |
| b. Two Weeks | _____ | e. Other | _____ |
| c. Three Weeks | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

3. Are reports accurate and complete?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

4. How useful are evaluations to agencies in deciding disposition of cases?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

5. Are recommendations well developed and practical for agencies' purposes?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

6. Do agencies follow recommendations made in reports?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

7. A. Does staff consult with agencies on individual cases upon request?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

B. Do they respond to crisis situations?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

8. Does the unit offer special assistance to agencies (i.e., training, jail visits, etc.)

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| | | e. Poor | _____ |

9. Is unit adequately staffed to handle needs ?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

10. How many referrals in County Jail and Stockade have you had in the last three (3) years?

- | | | | |
|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| a. 1-50 | _____ | e. 200-250 | _____ |
| b. 50-100 | _____ | f. 250-300 | _____ |
| c. 100-150 | _____ | g. Other | _____ |
| d. 150-200 | _____ | h. N/A | _____ |

11. How many inmates were treated by the Forensic Unit as a result of referrals?

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------|------------|-------|
| a. 1-25 | _____ | d. 100-150 | _____ |
| b. 25-50 | _____ | e. Other | _____ |
| c. 50-100 | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

12. How many of these inmates were first time offenders and how many were repeated offenders?

First Time Offenders

Repeat Offenders

- | | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|-------|
| a. 1-10 | _____ | a. 1-10 | _____ |
| b. 10-20 | _____ | b. 10-20 | _____ |
| c. 20-25 | _____ | c. 20-25 | _____ |
| d. 25-50 | _____ | d. 25-50 | _____ |
| e. Other | _____ | e. Other | _____ |
| f. N/A | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

13. Do you feel that the Forensic Unit's overall operation of the facilities was of benefit to the inmate's behavior modification.

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|---------|-------|
| a. Excellent | _____ | d. Fair | _____ |
| b. Very Good | _____ | e. Poor | _____ |
| c. Good | _____ | f. N/A | _____ |

14. Comments: 1. What services should the Forensic Unit provide that are not currently being met?

2. What should be done to improve present services?

END