



LEAD: Three Years In, What Do We Know?

Feb. 21, 2015

Kris Nyrop
Public Defender Association
knyrop@defender.org



What is LEAD?

- Originally: Post-arrest/pre-booking direct diversion to case manager.
- Eligibility: Possession/sales of 3 grams or less or prostitution (pros. added @ officer request).
- Ineligible: Prior conviction on variety of violent offenses.
- Social contact added: wider eligible/narrower ineligible (also added at officer request).

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

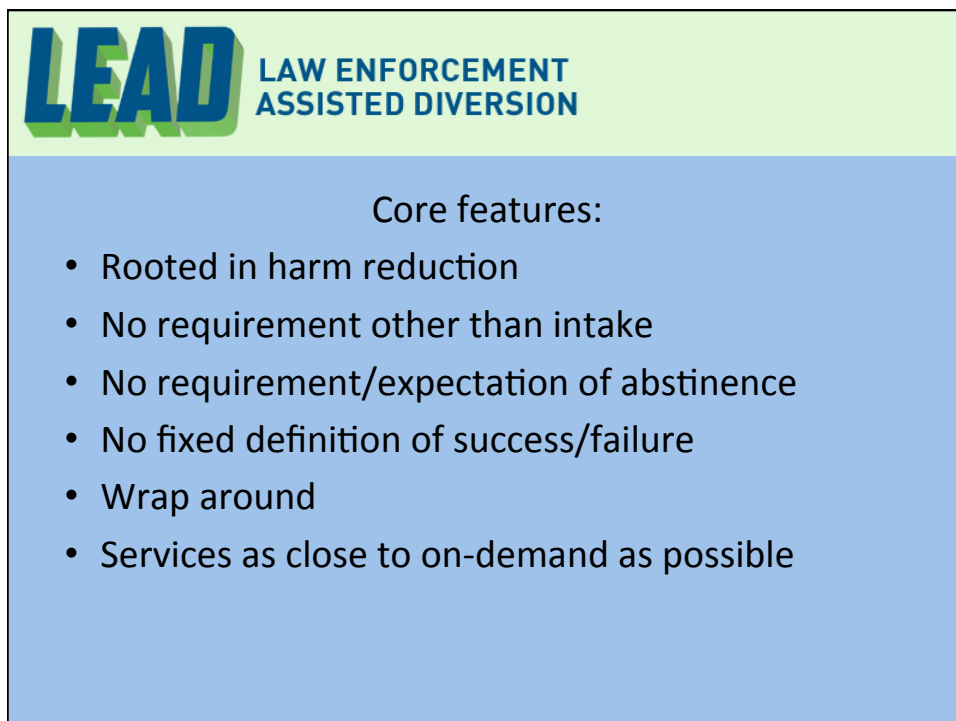
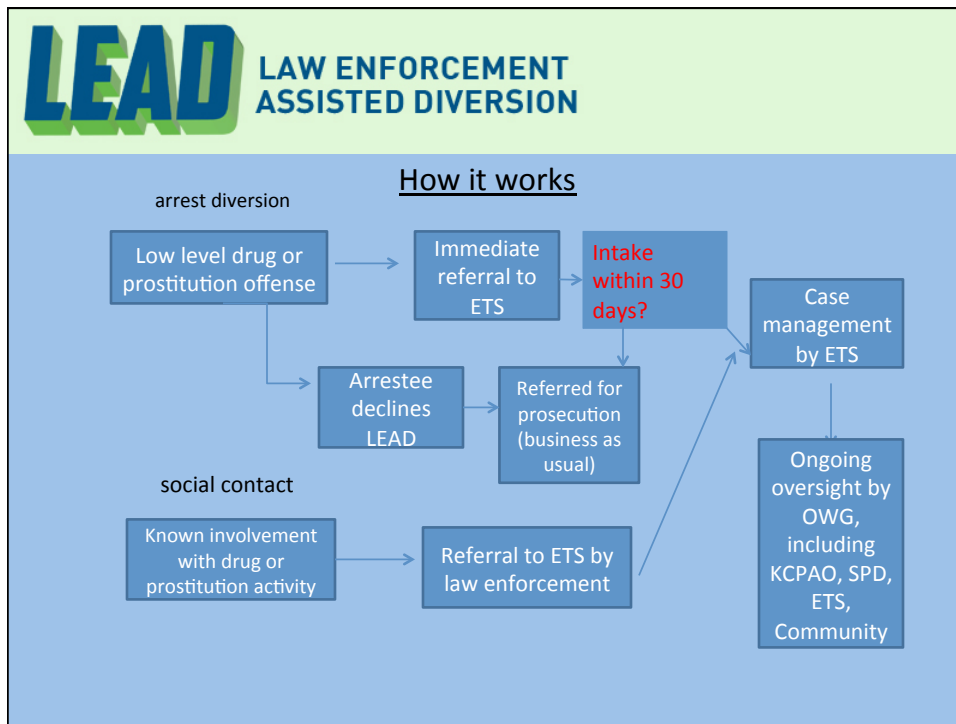
What is LEAD?

- A collaborative effort involving multiple stakeholders to address the issue of public (outdoor) drug use, sales, prostitution, and related offenses.
- Key stakeholders: Seattle Police Dept., King County Sheriff, King County Prosecuting Atty, Seattle City Atty, City and County govt, business/community groups, ACLU-WA.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

What is LEAD?

- “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.” Benjamin Franklin



LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Origins of LEAD:

- Years of racial disparity litigation
- 2005 Capt. Brown: “Assuming everything you say is true, what would you have us do differently?”
- 2008 King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg: Do we keep arguing this in court, or is there something we can do together?

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Origins of LEAD:

- Complaints about drug dealing and prostitution in Belltown despite high arrest numbers
- “Mutual collective exhaustion”
- Everyone agreed there was a problem with outdoor drug use, sales, prostitution, and related crime.



Origins of LEAD:

- Everyone agreed that the traditional approach was not working and was unsatisfactory to all (albeit for different reasons).
- Based on this, desperate for some way out.
- Each group had to give up a little and pledged to operate in good faith.



Origins of LEAD:

- 2009-10 Conversations with community members, SPD, KCPAO, City Attorney, city and county council members.
- 2010 Agreement from foundations to fund LEAD if law enforcement and prosecutors will implement. Agreement from key stakeholders to implement.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

“LEAD’s goal is to improve public safety and public order, and to reduce the criminal behavior of people who participate in the program.”

- Program piloted with grant funding in Belltown & Skyway (unincorporated King County) in 2011.
- In 2014, City funded expansion of LEAD throughout downtown.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

- In 2015 to expand to at least two areas in King County.
- Additionally, KC Sheriff patrols all of Metro. All LEAD eligible arrests in and around Metro to be diverted.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

Three years in what do we know?

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

LEAD services: as of Dec 2014

- Total Enrolled Clients: 252
- **Homeless** 86%

For Homeless LEAD participants:

- Housed in permanent housing 40%
- Housed in long-term transitional recovery housing 33%
- Ever sheltered in motels /shelters (55% 1st yr \$) 80%

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

For All LEAD Clients:

- Received basic need support (Food or Clothing) 90%
- **Set and achieved a case management goal while in LEAD:**
- Completed individualized goal plan and achieved at least one 84%
- **Received chemical dependency treatment 55%**
- Engaged in mental health treatment 49%
- Received non-urgent medical care (not in ER) 55%
- Received legal assistance 64%
- Received assistance with public benefits 61%
- **Received assistance with ID 54%**

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

LEAD Demographics: Dec 2014

Gender:

- Male 63%
- Female 37%

Age:

- 18-25 6%
- 26-40 29%
- 41-54 49%
- 55+ 16% (oldest 69)

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

LEAD Demographics: Dec 2014

Race/Ethnicity:		2010 census
• African American	51%	8%
• Caucasian	31%	70%
• Alaskan Native/Native American	5%	1%
• African	3%	N/A
• Latino	3%	7%
• Asian/Pacific Islander	3%	14%
• Other/Unknown	5%	7%

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION

LEAD Demographics: Dec 2014

Drug of Choice:	
• Cocaine	56%
• Heroin	29%
• Multiple Drugs	15%
• Cannabis	7%
• Alcohol	4%
• Methamphetamine	2%
• Unknown	2%

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

LEAD Evaluation

- Evaluation is being conducted by an independent team from UW.
- Funded by a foundation not funding LEAD or member groups

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

The aims of the UW evaluation are to test the effectiveness of the LEAD program in:

Reducing criminal recidivism (tx group only
Fall 2014 and tx v. controls Winter 2014-15)

Reducing criminal justice service utilization
and associated costs (Spring 2015)

Improving housing and psychosocial
outcomes (Winter 2015)

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Preliminary Evaluation

- Results just released on LEAD participant recidivism (pre/post)
- No statistically significant diffs on demographics or recidivism between arrest v. social contact diversions

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Preliminary Evaluation

Short-term longitudinal recidivism analyses.

- New arrests and charges remained stable or decreased slightly from the six months prior to program entry to the six months subsequent to program entry.
- These changes were not statistically significant ($ps > .51$).

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Preliminary Evaluation

- Also looked at a longer time (10/1/09 -7/14/14)
- Here we see statistically significant changes
- Mean arrests and charges declined significantly before/after LEAD entry

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Preliminary Evaluation

- Mean arrests/yr <16%
- Mean charges/yr <25%
- Mean felonies/yr <24%

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Evaluation

- Just about to complete direct recidivism comparison between LEAD participants and controls.
- Should be publicly available in 2-3 weeks.
- Not For Distribution: Large and statistically significant differences between LEAD and controls on new arrests and charges.
- Re-running data to verify.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Qualitative evaluation

- Have completed qualitative interviews with 34 participants so far.
- Time in LEAD: <2 months to over 2 yrs.
- Still going through transcripts, but broad themes emerging.
- By and large, people report lengthy drug/criminal histories.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

Qualitative evaluation

- Very low system involvement/use other than criminal justice.
- Broad satisfaction w/LEAD – especially of the harm reduction approach.
- W/out using phrase “harm reduction”, many participants directly note that approach.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

What makes LEAD different from other public safety programs?

- Transformation of relationships between police officers and people on the street.
- Building trust between participants and case managers.
- Transformation of relationships among operational partners.

LEAD LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION

- Officers themselves making harm reduction arguments.
- Stages of change – they see it.
- Gives officers a tool besides arrest
- “I don’t know if LEAD will work, but it’s not going to fail because of me” Sgt. Tom Yoon.