



Summary of “LEAD Program Evaluation: Recidivism Report”

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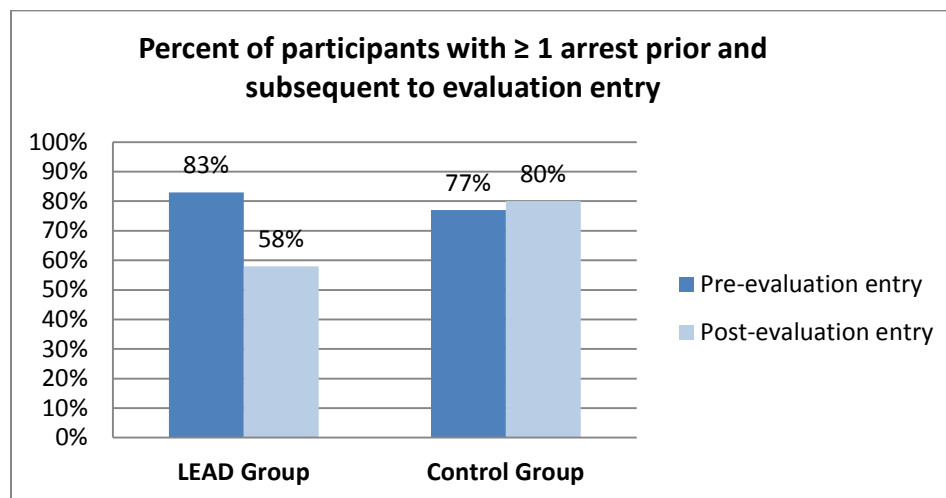
In Seattle’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program, individuals suspected of low-level drug or prostitution criminal activity are diverted by police officers on a voluntary basis to harm reduction oriented case management in lieu of booking and referral for prosecution.

In this evaluation, we analyzed the impact of the LEAD program on recidivism (i.e., new arrests). We used a nonrandomized controlled design with propensity score weighting to ensure comparability of the two groups to the greatest extent possible under real-life conditions.

In this evaluation, we followed 203 people who received LEAD and compared them with 115 people who were in the control group (i.e., were arrested and prosecuted as usual).

This evaluation found that LEAD was associated with significantly reduced recidivism.

- People in LEAD were 60% less likely than people in the control group to be arrested within the first 6 months of the evaluation.
- Over the entire course of the evaluation to date, people in LEAD were 58% less likely than people in the control group to be arrested (see below).



These findings are particularly meaningful when placed in the context of the existing interventions targeting recidivism in King County, Washington. Specifically, LEAD showed more favorable recidivism outcomes compared to the system as usual, which includes various therapeutic courts. This evaluation therefore provides compelling support for LEAD—an innovative approach to reducing criminal recidivism—as a viable alternative to existing criminal justice system approaches.

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