



Assess, Inform and Measure (AIM) Pilot Project Overview

By: Tony Streveler, Department of Corrections

Introduction

Over the past several months the PPAC Subcommittee on Effective Justice Strategies (EJS) membership has dedicated a significant amount of time studying the key factors in determining when or if an individual is appropriate to be safely diverted from a jail or prison sentence. Critical to this determination is the nature and value of the information provided to the court in advance of a sentencing decision.

The EJS proposed implementing a 3-5 county pilot to evaluate the Assess, Inform and Measure (*AIM*) model. This model is intended to enhance the quality and scope of information provided to the court, including: risk assessment (an individual's risk to commit further crime in the community); needs assessment (assessing criminogenic needs - needs that are directly related to the individual's criminal behavior); responsivity assessment (taking into account the individual's motivation to change, learning style, gender and cultural needs); and an assessment of available community-based treatment programs that address the assessed needs and reduce the offender's risk to the community.

Additionally, the *AIM* model includes the

development of a "feedback loop" that is designed to provide evaluation data that continually validates the accuracy of the risk and needs assessment process and measures the effectiveness of community-based intervention strategies. This process would serve as a means to measure outcomes and to increase the reliability and validity of the information (risk, needs, client responsivity and community assessment) provided to the court, as well as provide outcome data on the success/failure rates (recidivism) of offenders targeted for this project.

Project Status

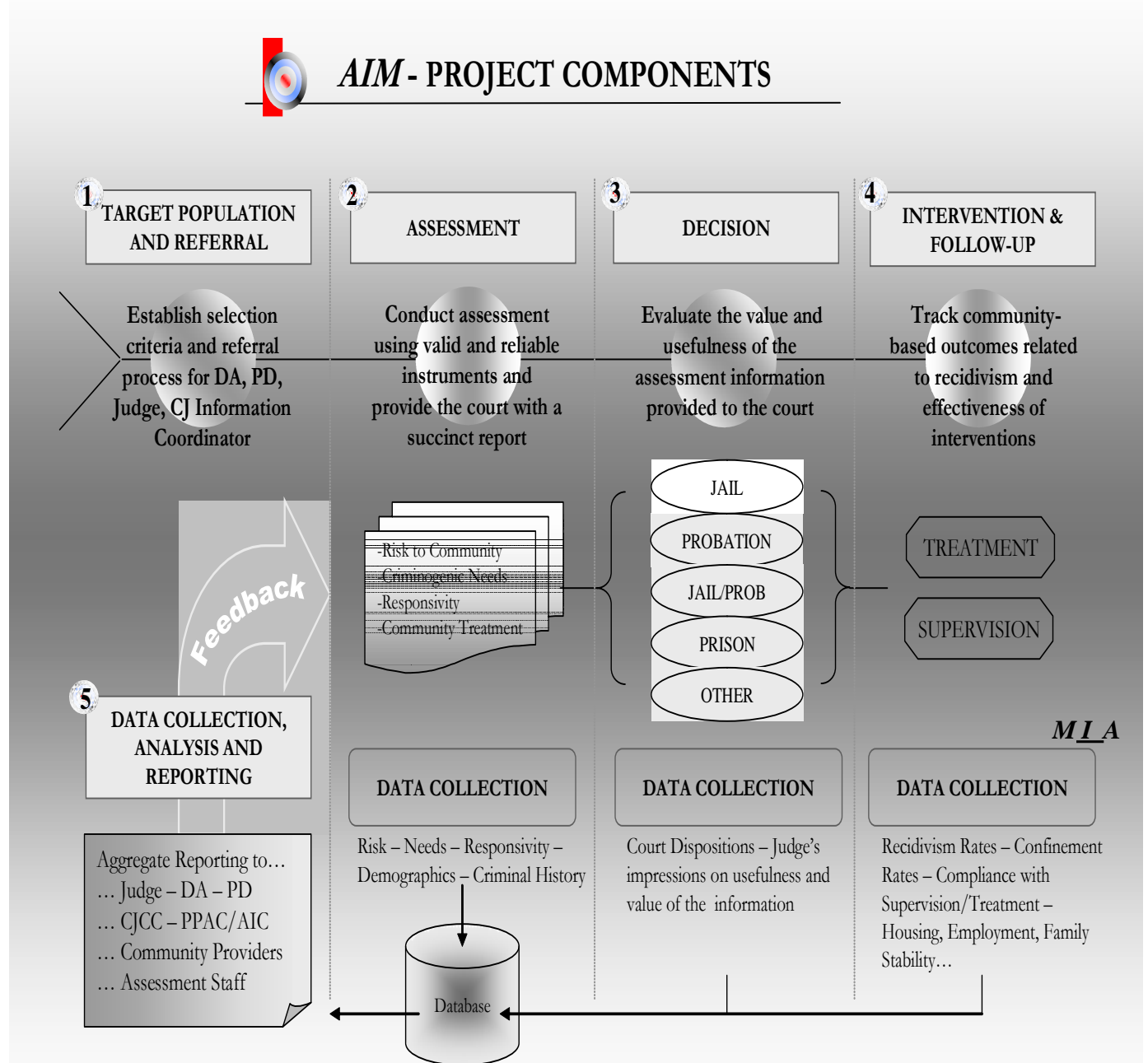
In the fall of 2006, several project development meetings were held with representatives from 8 counties. At the end of these meetings, five counties agreed to move forward as pilot implement sites, including: Eau Claire, Iowa, La Crosse, Marathon, and Portage counties. Implementation phase of the project begins in early 2007.

As part of the Governor's 2007-2009 budget, and as a component of his Milwaukee anti-crime initiatives, he announced \$750,000 of funding, over the biennium, to support the implementation of *AIM* in Milwaukee County.

The following provides a conceptual overview of the *AIM* model - illustrating the enhanced upfront assessment information, connection with court dispositions, unified case planning and community-based interventions, collection of outcome data and feeding this information back to the upfront assessment

process information and providing aggregate outcome data back to the court and other criminal justice and community-based organizations.

The remainder of the document includes a visual illustration of the 5 primary components of AIM, including specific goals and objects for each phase and a project timeline. Many of the details related to implementation will be developed collaboratively between the AIC and the involved county representatives.



AIM Project Goal

Provide the sentencing court with a valid risk, needs and community intervention assessment, while creating an outcome feedback loop that provides information on the success of court dispositions and community interventions in promoting offender success and public safety.

Objectives

Target Population, Referral and Assessment Components

- a. To establish a process to effectively provide the court, prior to sentencing, with reliable and valid assessment information about an offender's presenting risk to the community, the offender's assessed criminogenic and responsivity needs, and the availability of appropriate community-based treatment programs to address the treatment needs and risk.
 - i. Identify criteria for selecting the target population that will participate in the pilot.
 - ii. Create case identification and referral process, and related procedures to involve the Judiciary, District Attorney's office, Public Defender's office and others as determined appropriate.
 - iii. Select a validated risk and needs assessment that will provide the court with reliable information.
 - iv. Design an assessment reporting document that contains all the necessary information for the court that is easy to understand and succinct.
 - v. Designate staff who are qualified and who will undergo specialized competency-based training to accurately complete the assessment document for the court.
 - vi. Ensure process and procedures conform to state law and established court rules.

Decision or Case Disposition Component

- b. To evaluate the value and usefulness of the assessment information provided to the court and make changes, as needed or necessary, to ensure accuracy and effectiveness of the assessment process.
 - i. Develop a process to obtain regular feedback and comments from the judges receiving the assessment and aggregate outcome information.

Community Intervention and Follow-up Phase

- c. To document and track community-based treatment and supervision interventions and measure outcomes related to recidivism.
 - i. Develop a process to collect salient information from involved community providers, probation and parole and other sources.

Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting Component

- d. To provide baseline recidivism data to each pilot county based on historical cases that were placed on probation and were ultimately reconvicted of a new crime within three years. Scope of the data will span from 1980 – 2003.
- e. To develop a simple data collection system and repository of data from the DOC, information the assessment document, court dispositions and judge's impressions, and community-based treatment and supervision interventions to measure outcomes related to recidivism.
- f. To establish a protocol for collecting, analyzing and reporting aggregate data addressing format, frequency and distribution of information.
 - i. Establish a protocol for data collection and information sharing that is compliant with established laws, rules and standards.
 - ii. Create a regular information sharing and status reporting system among and between all pilot counties CJCCs, the DOC, PPAC/AIC, community providers and other stakeholders. ■