

Early Screening and Intervention(ESI) Program

DIVISION of CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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February 28, 2019



Current Criminal Justice Process

Most States:

Police → Prosecutor initiates any court proceedings

Connecticut:

Police → Court Clerk who initiates the process bypassing the prosecutor

This has a number of unintended consequences:

Unintended Consequences

- Too many continuances
- Nolles without in-depth assessment and monitoring
- Lack of treatment of underlying behaviors
- Over-charging
- Under-charging

To address these concerns the Division developed:

The ESI Initiative

- Private support from the **Herbert and Nell Singer Foundation Inc.**
 - Stamford, Connecticut-based nonprofit corporation doing philanthropic work nationally and internationally
 - Schools in Haiti
 - Community Court in Israel
 - Funding numerous local social service agencies
- Collaboration with the **Center for Court Innovation (CCI)** for data analysis
 - New York-based public/private partnership
 - Aimed at creating a more effective and humane justice system through research and expert assistance

The ESI Initiative

- Spring 2017
Began in G.A. courts in Bridgeport and Waterbury
- Spring 2018
In response to P.A. 7-205 and encouraging preliminary results from the first two sites, the program expanded to Hartford, New Haven, New London, and Norwich G.A. courts
- Summer 2018
Stamford and Norwalk G.A. courts serve as Control Sites

Component One: The ESI Prosecutor

- Screens low-level offenses to determine:
 1. Can the case be prosecuted?
 2. *Should* the case be prosecuted?
- Police Departments and the diversionary network work with the State's Attorney's Office to provide more accurate, complete, and timely information
 - Arrest Profile
 - Criminal and Personal History
 - Availability of appropriate and effective community services, etc.

Component Two: The Resource Counselor

- Social worker provided under contract with **local service providers**
 - Familiar with community service resources and their efficacy
 - Money spent is invested in the community
- **Community Partners in Action** in Hartford and Waterbury
- **Cornell Scott Hill Health Center** in New Haven
- **Reliance Health** in New London and Norwich
- **Regional Network of Programs** in Bridgeport

Component Two: The Resource Counselor

- *Provide service needs assessment for:*
 - *Substance Abuse Issues*
 - *Mental Health Issues*
 - *Homelessness Issues, etc.*
- *Make referrals to services – utilizing existing community resources*
- *Monitor progress to report back to prosecutor*

Goal of ESI

The ESI Prosecutor and Resource Counselor collaboratively review files to ensure:

1. Cases without service needs are disposed with minimal court involvement
2. Cases presenting underlying needs receive assistance that will reduce future contact with the criminal justice system

How is this different?

- Justice is individualized based upon:
 - The impact of the crime on the community and the victim
 - The nature of the defendant and the underlying charges
 - Services available in the community
- In-depth review at the earliest stages of the court process
- Significantly fewer court appearances
- Locally based real-time accountability
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Preliminary Results

As of November 30, 2018:

- ~10,000 cases reviewed by ESI
- ~3,000 cases flagged for further review
- ~2,500 cases accepted
 - 66% of accepted cases diverted
 - ~1,300 into ESI community-based services
 - ~280 into existing Judicially-Supervised Diversionary Programs
 - 89% of ESI diversions were **successfully** completed
 - 89% of ESI dispositions had **2 or fewer** appearances before a judge

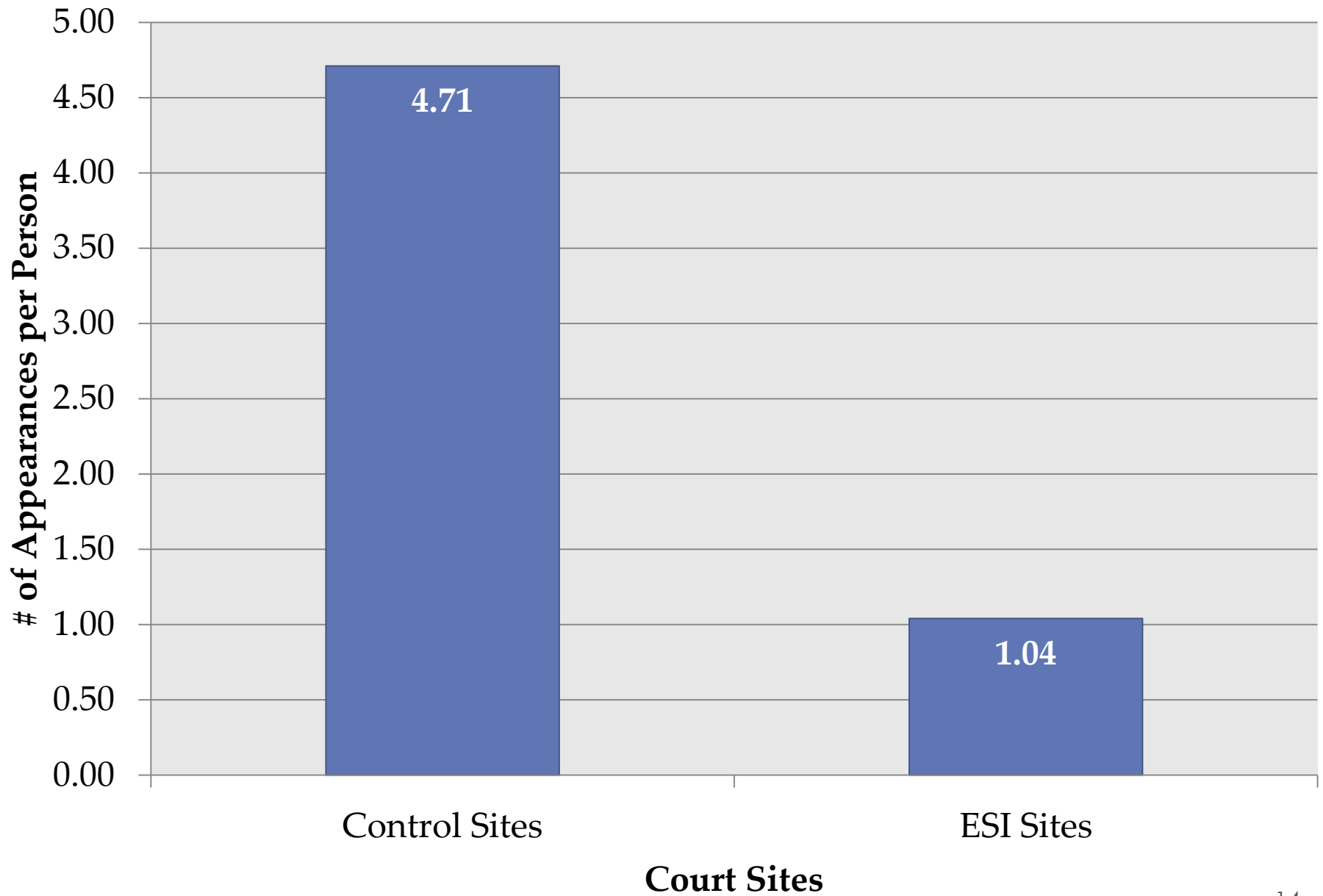
ESI Sites vs. non-ESI Sites

- ESI sites divert **94% more** individuals into ESI community-based services (compared to control sites)
- ESI sites divert more than **5.5 times as many** individuals with mental health/homelessness/substance abuse issues (compared to control sites)
- ESI sites provide more targeted assessment and monitored treatment referrals (compared to control sites)

ESI Sites vs. non-ESI Sites

- ESI sites have more than **four and a half times fewer** appearances before a judge (compared to control sites)
- ESI sites have more than **twice as many** cases result in a dismissal with **95%** of those cases receiving ESI diversion services (compared to control sites)
- ESI sites get individuals who need Judicially-Supervised Diversionary Programming into those programs more quickly – often, ready for application at their **first court appearance**

Average Formal Appearances per Person



Savings

If expanded statewide:

- ESI prosecutors would **divert 4,300 more cases** annually than if traditional non-ESI case processing were utilized;
- Creating an estimated savings of \$2,274 in ongoing societal costs per individual
 - Based on Washington State Institute for Public Policy lifecycle Benefits-Costs calculations

Savings

If expanded statewide on an annual basis:

- The ESI program would **save the public 54,000 court appearances;**
- **Freeing up 4,500 hours of court time**

Conclusions

- The ESI Program has demonstrated success and should be supported and expanded.
 - The Transition Team for Governor Lamont and Lt. Governor Bysiewicz, through its Prosecutorial Reform Working Group, recommends expansion of the ESI Pilot Program.
 - Judicial Branch's Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Establishing Opioid Intervention Courts recommends expansion of the ESI Pilot Program as an alternative to the creation of opioid courts.
 - The State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management awarded the Division federal Justice Assistance Grant funds to continue the ESI Pilot Program through June 30, 2019.

Thank You

- The Herbert and Nell Singer Foundation Inc.
- Center for Court Innovation
- Office of Policy and Management
- Michael L. Regan, State's Attorney, New London
- Maureen Platt, State's Attorney, Waterbury
- Community Partners in Action in Hartford and Waterbury
- Reliance Health in New London and Norwich