



*Results from the  
Multi-site Evaluation of the  
Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative*

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## Session

- **Implementing the Multi-site SVORI Evaluation**
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- **Implementation: Characterizing the SVORI Programs**
  - ◆ Christine Lindquist, RTI International
  - ◆ Laura Winterfield, The Urban Institute
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  - ◆ Lucinda Casson, RTI International



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# Implementing the Multi-site SVORI Evaluation

Christy A. Visher  
The Urban Institute

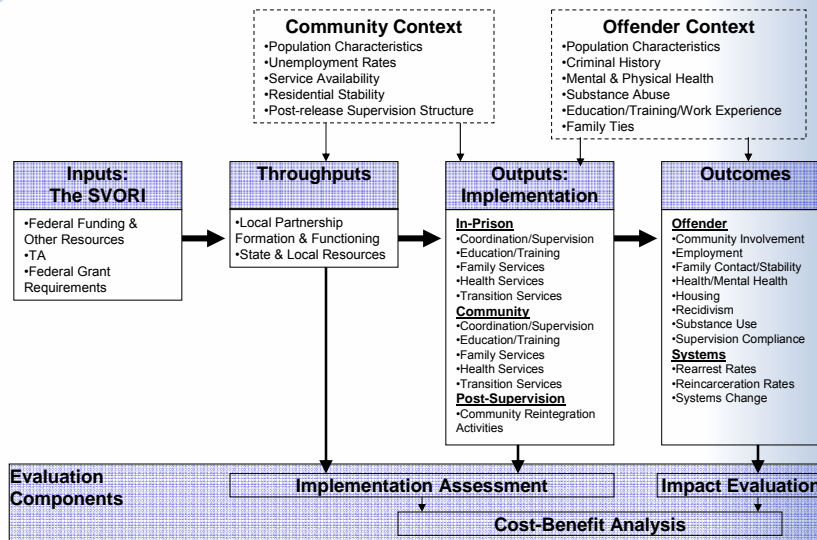
## SVORI

- Multi-site Evaluation of the Serious & Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)
  - ◆ Collaborative Federal effort to improve reentry outcomes in the areas of criminal justice, employment, education, health and housing
  - ◆ Funded by Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor
- 69 grantees are running 89 programs that
  - ◆ Target supervised adult & juvenile populations
  - ◆ Incorporate partnerships among state and local agencies to provide comprehensive services to prisoners returning to the community
  - ◆ Are locally designed to meet local needs and organizational capabilities

## The Multi-site SVORI Evaluation

- **GOAL:** "...determine whether the selected programs have accomplished the overall goal of the Reentry Initiative— increasing public safety by reducing recidivism among the populations served by the program—and determine the relative costs and benefits of the program."
- **Evaluation Components**
  - ◆ **Implementation Assessment:** document implementation of SVORI, including targeted populations, program elements, and agencies
  - ◆ **Impact Evaluation:** determine the extent to which SVORI improves access to services, enhances employment and health outcomes, and reduces criminal behavior of returning criminals
  - ◆ **Cost-Benefit Evaluation:** determine whether SVORI is cost effective
  - ◆ **Dissemination:** produce useful products throughout the evaluation

## SVORI Evaluation Framework



## Implementation Assessment

- Two rounds of surveys conducted with SVORI Program Directors
  - ◆ 2004 survey results were used in the National Portrait of SVORI, the Multi-site Evaluation's preliminary assessment of all 69 sites
  - ◆ 2005 survey results are being used to produce short reports on specific topics, *Reentry Research in Action: Findings from the Field*
  - ◆ Results from both surveys provide information on the individual programs on <[www.svori-evaluation.org](http://www.svori-evaluation.org)>
- A final survey of Program Directors will be conducted in early 2006 and will focus on sustainability and 'lessons learned'
- Annual site visits are being conducted in impact sites where offender interviews are being conducted

## Impact Evaluation

- Goal is to determine the extent to which SVORI
  - ◆ improves access to appropriate, comprehensive, integrated services
  - ◆ improves employment, health, & personal functioning of returning prisoners
  - ◆ reduces criminal activity
- Longitudinal study of 3,000 adult & juvenile offenders in 14 states (16 programs)
- Data sources
  - ◆ Four waves of CAPI interviews (drug testing at 3 & 15 months)
    - Baseline (prior to release): July 2004 – November 2005
    - 3-month post-release: October 2004 – May 2006
    - 9-month post-release: April 2005 - December 2006
    - 15-month post-release: November 2005 – April 2007
  - ◆ Agency data (DOC, DJJ, P&P, ESC)

## Impact Evaluation Sites

- Northeast (2 states)
  - ◆ Maine
  - ◆ Pennsylvania
- South (5 states)
  - ◆ Florida (juvenile only)
  - ◆ Maryland
  - ◆ Missouri
  - ◆ Oklahoma
  - ◆ South Carolina (adult & juvenile)
- Midwest (4 states)
  - ◆ Kansas (adult & juvenile)
  - ◆ Indiana
  - ◆ Iowa
  - ◆ Ohio
- West (3 states)
  - ◆ Colorado (juvenile only)
  - ◆ Nevada
  - ◆ Washington

\*Adult only unless noted

## Impact Evaluation Outcome Measures

- **Self Sufficiency & Quality of Life**
  - ◆ Employment
  - ◆ Housing
  - ◆ Family (including contacts, stability & child custody/support)
  - ◆ Community Involvement
- **Health**
  - ◆ Substance Use (sobriety & relapse prevention)
  - ◆ Physical Health
  - ◆ Mental Health
- **Reduced Criminality**
  - ◆ Supervision Compliance
  - ◆ Reoffending
  - ◆ Rearrest
  - ◆ Reconviction
  - ◆ Reincarceration

## Cost-Benefit Study

- Juvenile Programs
  - ◆ Florida
  - ◆ South Carolina
- Adult Programs
  - ◆ Iowa
  - ◆ Maryland
  - ◆ Ohio
  - ◆ Pennsylvania
  - ◆ South Carolina

## Evaluation Challenges: How Are We Doing?

- N: Original goal was 4,200 baseline interviews
  - ◆ Expect ~3,000
- Identifying & recruiting comparison subjects
  - ◆ Has gone well. Comparisons 'look' much like our SVORI participants
- Working in & maintaining good relationships with multiple facilities across the country to gain access to our subjects for baseline interview data collection
  - ◆ Relatively few problems (maintaining contact with key individuals)
- Retaining subjects for three waves of follow up
  - ◆ Difficult populations to track: 3- & 9-month response rates of about 65%; NIJ wanted 80%.
  - ◆ Collecting follow-up data from subjects incarcerated or hospitalized: Have been successful in gaining access to subjects in many jails & non-study prisons.
- Accommodating programmatic diversity & site-specific evaluation designs
  - ◆ Service (& Need) bundles as a way of measuring program delivery

## Implementation: Characterizing the SVORI Programs

Christine Lindquist

RTI International

Laura Winterfield

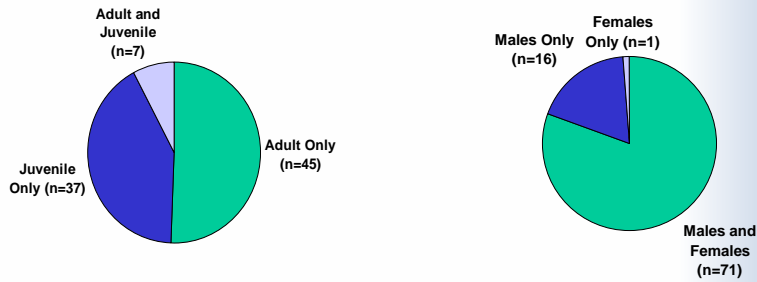
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## Characterizing SVORI Programs

- Program Implementation
- Enrollment
- Program Characteristics
- Service Coordination
- Service Delivery

## Program Implementation

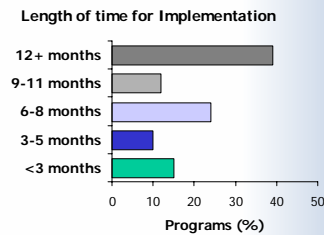
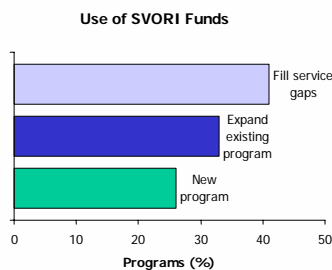
Across all sites, 69 grantees operate 89 programs

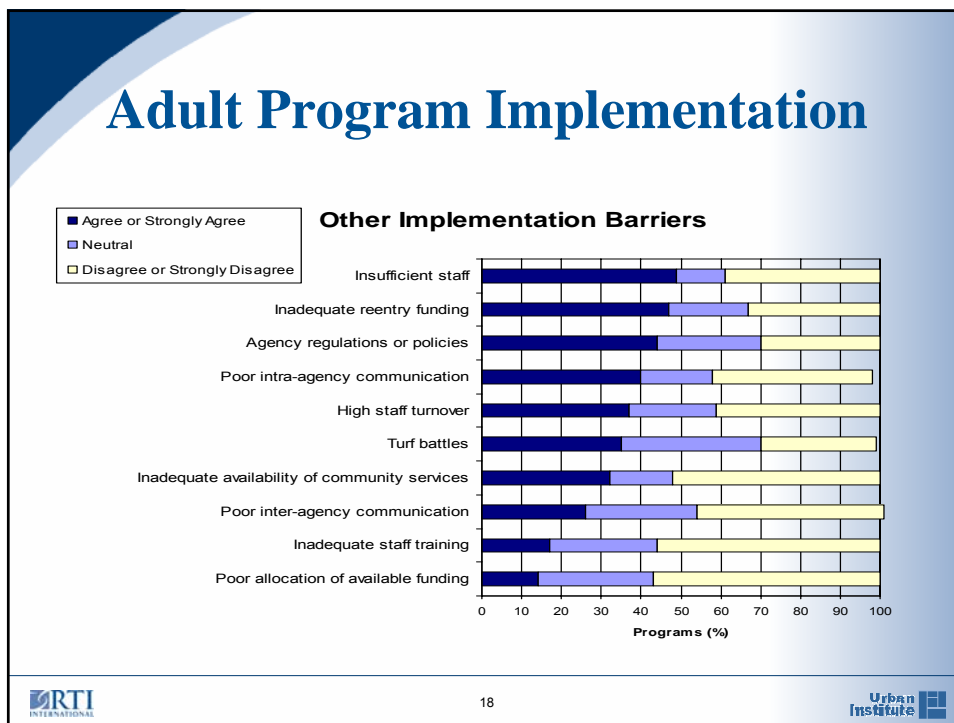
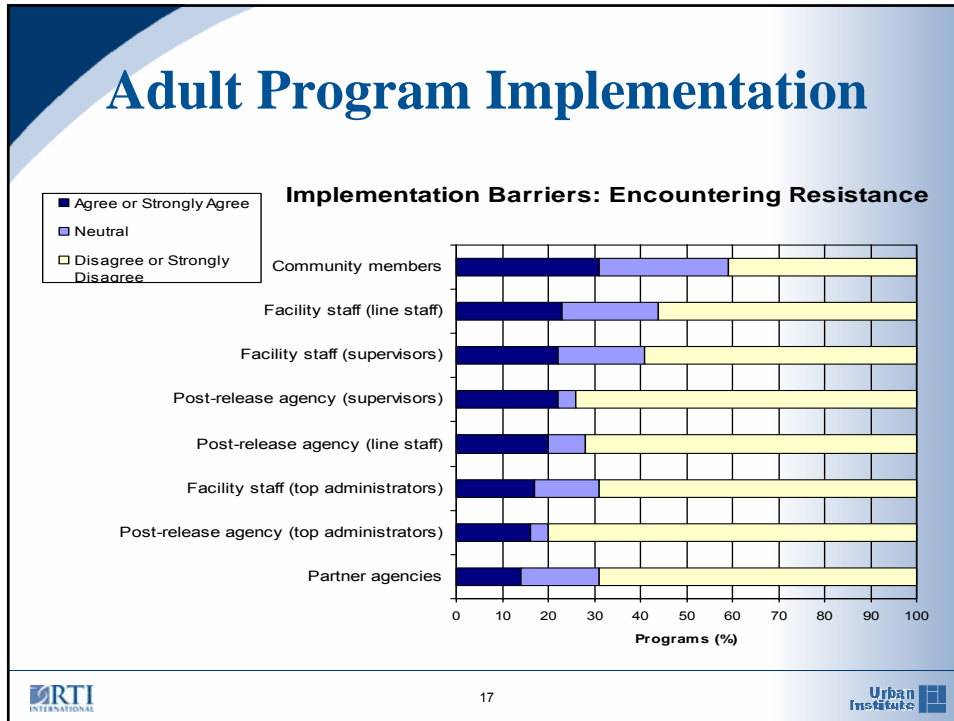


\*Note: youthful offender programs classified with adult programs unless the program is a juvenile/youthful offender combination.

## Adult Program Implementation

- Primary use of SVORI funds has been to fill service gaps or expand an existing program
- 67% of programs are fully operational
- Most of these became operational in 2003 (47%) or 2004 (36%)



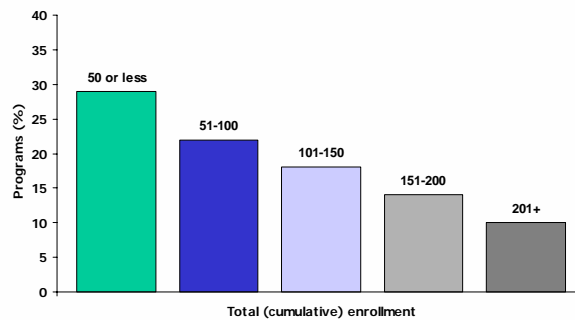


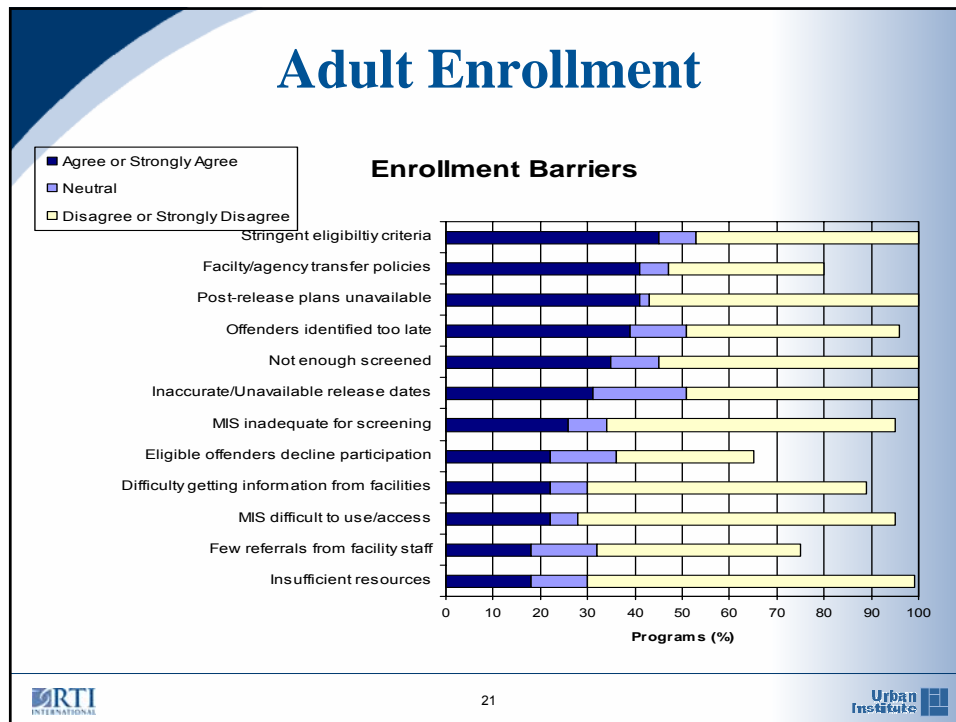
## Enrollment



- All programs have established eligibility criteria
  - ◆ Most (58%) programs accept all offenders that meet eligibility criteria
  - ◆ Of those that don't, the most frequent reasons for rejecting an eligible offender include insufficient capacity (38%) and the likelihood of the offender not being released by the parole board (33%)
- Most (79%) programs receive referrals
  - ◆ Facility or classification staff (84%)
  - ◆ Self-referrals (68%)
- Most (80%) programs are voluntary
  - ◆ Very few eligible participants decline participation in voluntary programs
  - ◆ Of those who decline participation, the most frequent reasons cited are that they don't think they need the services and that SVORI requires too much oversight

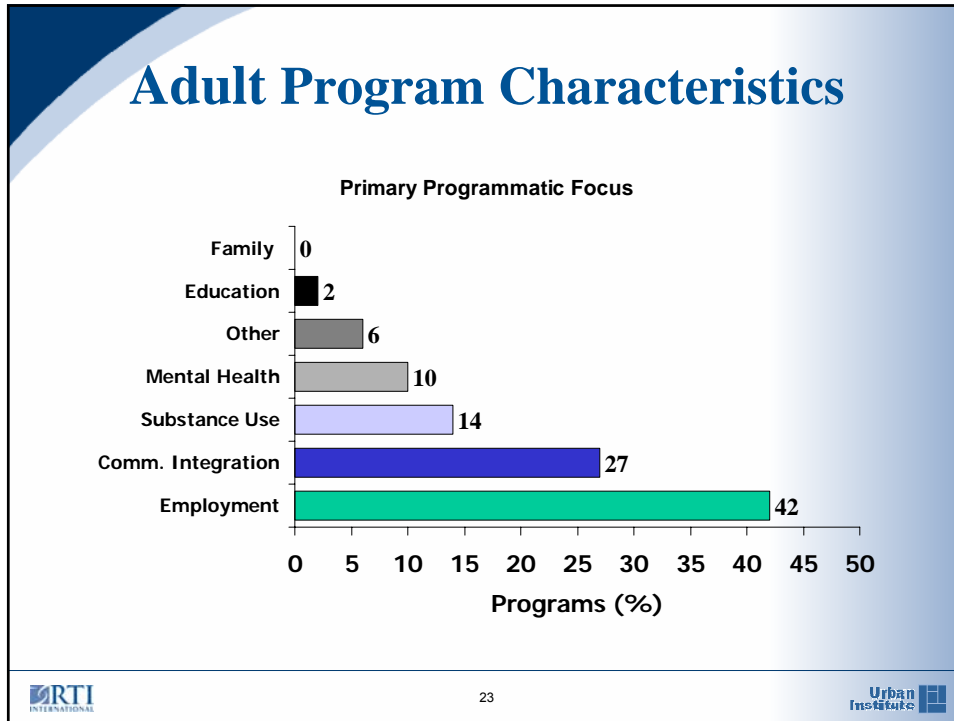
## Adult Enrollment

- Programs tend to be small (51% have enrolled  $\leq 100$  people)
- Actual enrollment is lower than programs' initial projections with 67% of programs reporting that their total (cumulative) enrollment was lower than originally projected







- ## Adult Program Characteristics
- Programs report
    - ◆ Focusing on the general “serious and violent population” (85%)
    - ◆ Focusing equally on the pre- and post-release phase (67%)
    - ◆ Geographic targeting to specific institutions pre-release (64%)
    - ◆ Geographic targeting to specific communities post-release (86%)
    - ◆ Attempting to provide all needed services rather than delivering a specific service or set of services (90%)
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## Adult Service Coordination

Service Coordination Approach	n (%) of programs
<b>Case Management</b>	
Pre-release case management	48 (92%)
Post-release case management	49 (94%)
<b>Continuity of Care Model</b>	<b>40 (77%)</b>
Same case manager for pre- and post-release	21 (40%)
Same supervision officer used for pre- and post-release	18 (35%)
Post-release agency representative works with incarcerated offender	43 (83%)
<b>Wrap-Around Approach</b>	<b>41 (79%)</b>
<b>Community Accountability Panels/Boards Used</b>	<b>19 (37%)</b>
<b>Offender-Specific Reentry Teams Used</b>	<b>37 (71%)</b>
<b>One-Stop Shop</b>	<b>33 (64%)</b>

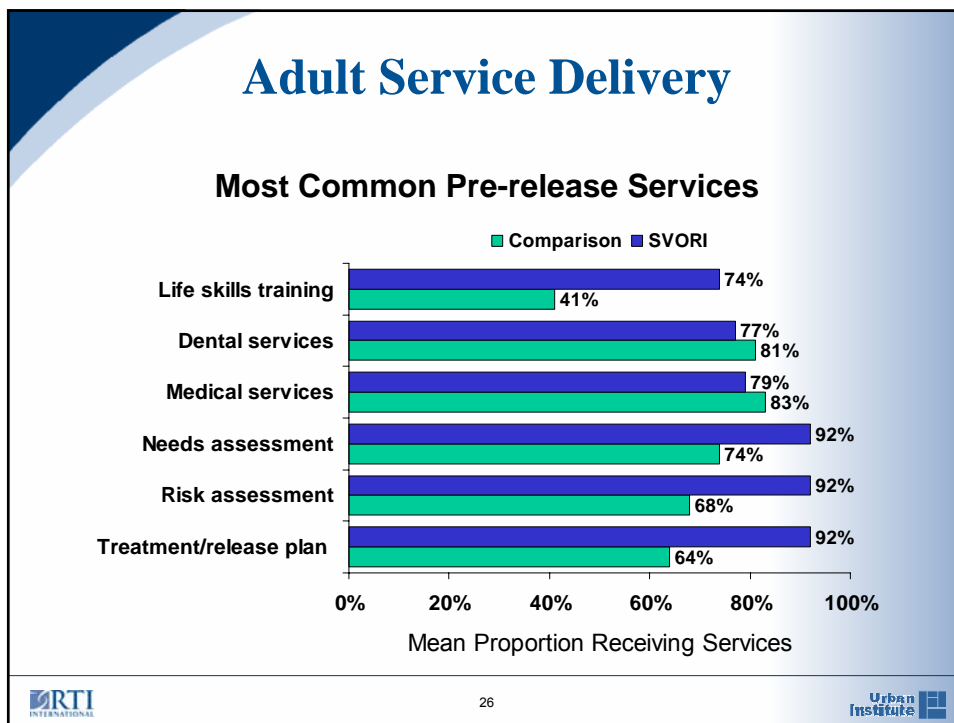

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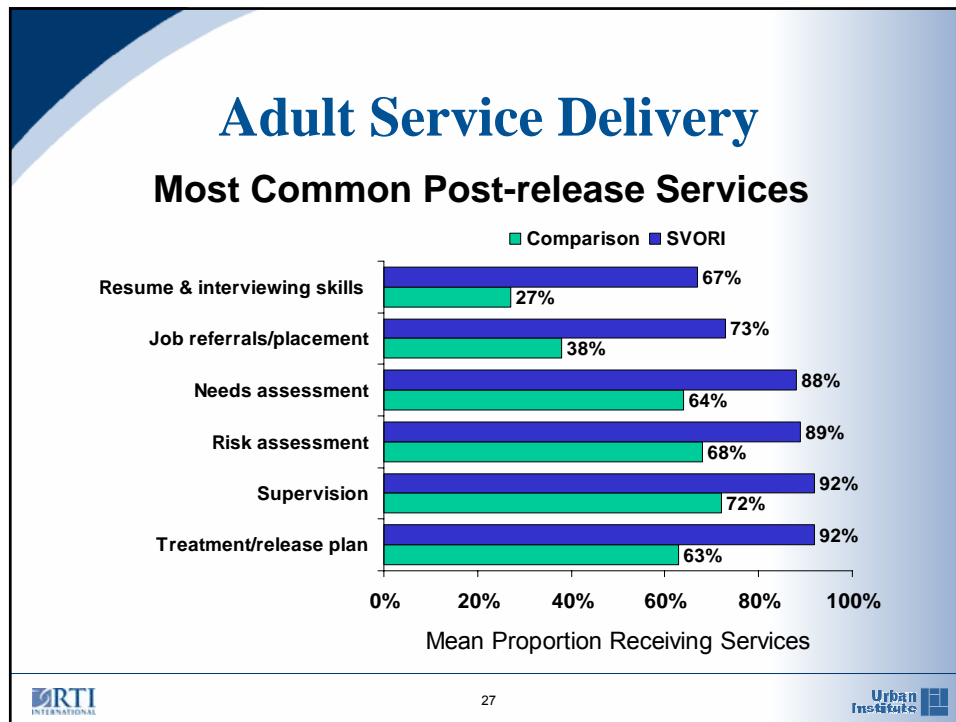
## Adult Service Delivery

### Programs & Services Measured

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Risk assessment</li> <li>2. Needs assessment</li> <li>3. Treatment/release plan development</li> <li>4. Legal assistance</li> <li>5. Assistance obtaining identification</li> <li>6. Assistance obtaining benefits</li> <li>7. Financial support/emergency assistance</li> <li>8. Peer support groups</li> <li>9. 1-on-1 mentoring</li> <li>10. Housing placements/referrals</li> <li>11. Transportation (post-release only)</li> <li>12. Comprehensive drug treatment programs</li> <li>13. AA/NA</li> <li>14. Counseling sessions</li> <li>15. Mental health services</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Anger management/violence counseling</li> <li>17. Medical services</li> <li>18. Dental services</li> <li>19. Education/GED/tutoring/literacy</li> <li>20. Vocational training</li> <li>21. Employment referrals/job placement</li> <li>22. Resume &amp; interviewing skills development</li> <li>23. Work release program</li> <li>24. Cognitive skills development/behavior pgm.</li> <li>25. Life skills training</li> <li>26. Domestic violence services</li> <li>27. Parenting skills development</li> <li>28. Family reunification</li> <li>29. Family counseling</li> <li>30. Formal post-release supervision (post only)</li> </ol>
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- ## Adult Service Delivery
- Issue: Each program offers a unique combination of numerous services and programs, comparison subjects are also receiving services and programs (“the status quo”), variation exists in the proportion of participants who receive each service (either because of “need” or availability)
  - Solution: “Service Bundle Scores” use PD survey data and group individual services into five bundles
    - ◆ Use the midpoint of the proportion receiving each service in a bundle and divide by the # of services in the bundle
    - ◆ Scores are developed for each site and for SVORI and “comparison” offenders, pre- and post-release
  - Service bundle scores represent the average percentage of offenders receiving all services in the bundle
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## Program Service Bundles

- ◆ **Coordination & Supervision:** risk assessment, needs assessment, treatment/release plan, and (post-release only) supervision
- ◆ **Transition Services:** legal, id assistance, benefits assistance, financial support/ emergency assistance, peer support, mentoring, housing, and (post-release only) transportation
- ◆ **Health Services:** AA/NA, counseling, comprehensive AOD treatment, mental health, medical, dental, anger mgmt/violence counseling
- ◆ **Employment/Education/Skills Building:** education/GED/ tutoring/literacy, vocational training, employment referral/job placement, resume/interviewing skills, work release, cognitive skills development, life skills
- ◆ **Family Services:** parenting skills, family counseling, family reunification, domestic violence services

## Adult Service Delivery (PD Survey)

Range of Pre-Release Service Bundle Scores

	SVORI Participants			Non-participants		
	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Maximum
Coordination & Supervision	9	92	100	0	79	100
Transition Services	0	43	95	2	25	77
Health Services	7	56	95	11	48	82
Employment & Education	2	52	86	0	32	86
Family Services	0	33	100	0	17	69

## Adult Service Delivery (PD Survey)

Range of Post-Release Service Bundle Scores

	SVORI Participants			Non-participants		
	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Maximum
Coordination & Supervision	0	89	100	0	63	100
Transition Services	0	43	95	0	19	75
Health Services	0	39	86	0	25	71
Employment & Education	0	46	91	0	22	86
Family Services	0	30	100	0	15	75

## Implementation Conclusions

- Program Implementation
  - ◆ Most programs were designed to fill service gaps (or expand an existing program) and the majority are now fully operational
  - ◆ Programs did not report encountering many implementation barriers, although community support, insufficient staff, and insufficient funding were reported as problems by some
- Enrollment
  - ◆ Most programs are small and have enrolled fewer people than projected
  - ◆ Primary enrollment barriers are stringent eligibility criteria, facility/agency transfer policies, offenders being identified too late, and inaccurate or unavailable release dates
- Program Characteristics
  - ◆ Programs targeted geographically (pre- and post-release) but do not focus on a specific phase, offender need type, or specific service type
  - ◆ Primary programmatic focus is employment/vocational services

## Implementation Conclusions

- Service Coordination
  - ◆ Variety of approaches used
  - ◆ Continuity of care appears to be a widely used strategy
- Service Delivery
  - ◆ Overall, SVORI participants more likely to receive more programs/services than comparable non-participants
  - ◆ For both groups, service delivery slightly higher pre-release than post-release
  - ◆ Differences between SVORI and comparison offenders more pronounced post-release
- Next steps will involve using offender data from the impact evaluation to determine how well sites were able to match individual treatment needs with appropriate services or programming

## Initial Findings from the SVORI Impact Evaluation

Pamela K. Lattimore

University of South Carolina & RTI International

Danielle Steffey

RTI International

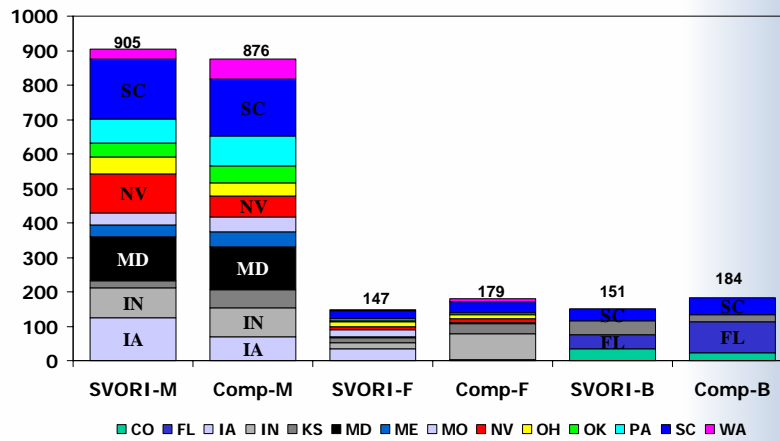
## Impact Evaluation

- Data are being collected in 14 states
  - ◆ 2 states: adults and juveniles
  - ◆ 2 states: juveniles only
  - ◆ 10 states: adults only
- Baseline (pre-release) data collection began July 2004 & concludes this month
- Follow-up interviews are being conducted at 3-, 9- & 15-months post release
- Oral swab drug tests are conducted at the 3- & 15-month interviews (unless institutionalized or incarcerated)

## Data Collection (as of 11/12/2005)

- **Baseline: 4,349 cases fielded**
  - ◆ 2,642 interviewed (63% response rate; 83% excluding 'ineligibles')
  - ◆ 161 cases open
  - ◆ 1,546 not interviewed--343 refusals (a refusal rate of 8%)
- **3-month: 1,818 cases fielded**
  - ◆ 998 interviewed (63% response rate)
  - ◆ 240 cases open
  - ◆ 580 not interviewed
    - 498 unlocatable or unavailable
    - 2 deceased
  - ◆ 113 reincarcerated (59 interviewed)
- **9-month: 1,009 cases fielded**
  - ◆ 460 interviews completed (63% response rate)
  - ◆ 288 cases open
  - ◆ 261 not interviewed—97 because they could not be located/were unavailable; 4 deceased
  - ◆ 119 reincarcerated (88 interviews)

## Distribution of Cases (Baseline)

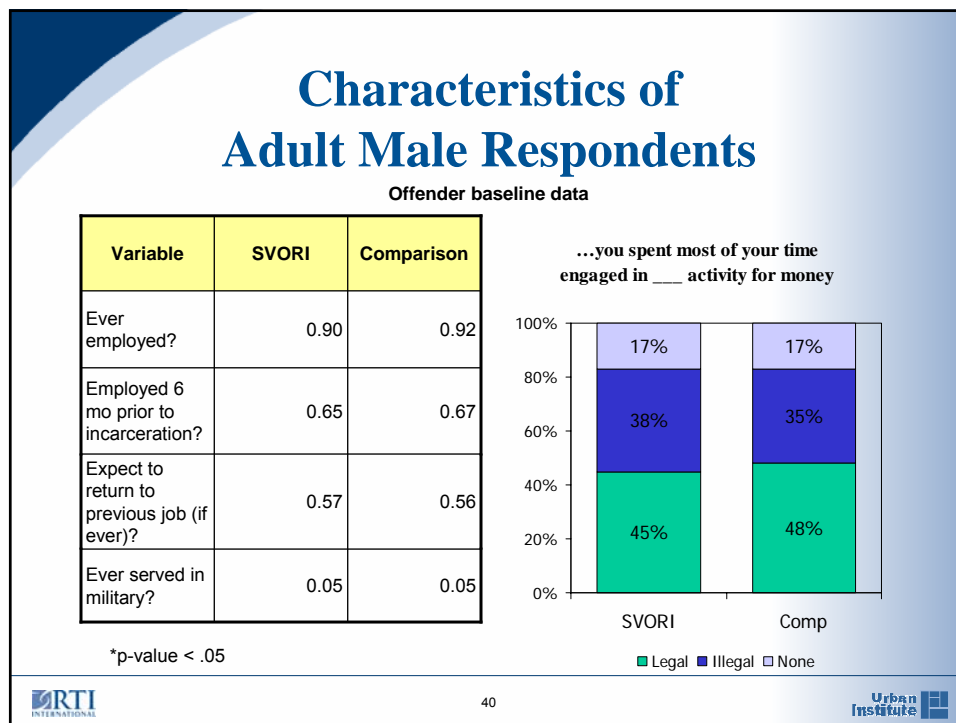
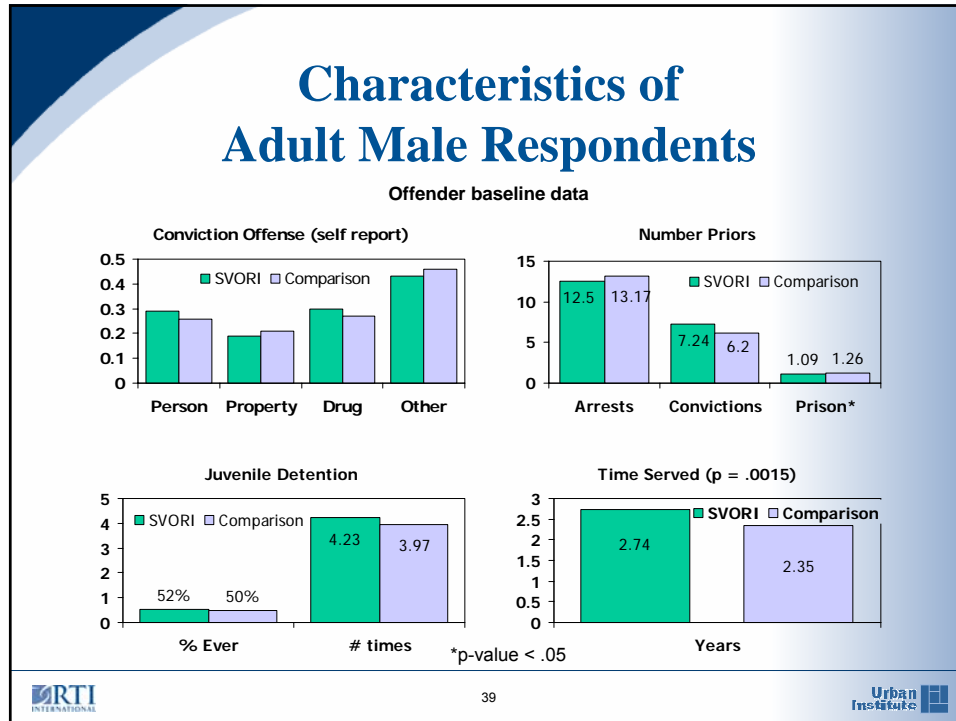


## Characteristics of Adult Male Respondents

Variable	SVORI	Comparison
Age @ interview	28.90	29.05
White	0.32	0.36
Black*	0.55	0.49
Hispanic	0.05	0.05
Other race*	0.07	0.10
Homeless prior to incarceration	0.12	0.13
HS grad/GED	0.62	0.60

\*p-value < .05

•Offender baseline data



## Characteristics of Adult Male Respondents

Offender baseline data

Variable	SVORI	Comparison
Currently married/ steady relationship?	0.38	0.40
Children < 18 yrs?	0.61	0.63
Family problems with AOD?	0.73	0.73
Any family member convicted of crime?	0.77	0.78
Friends before incarceration, convicted?	0.83	0.84
Friends before incarceration, AOD?	0.81	0.82

\*p-value < .05



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## Characteristics of Adult Male Respondents

Offender baseline data

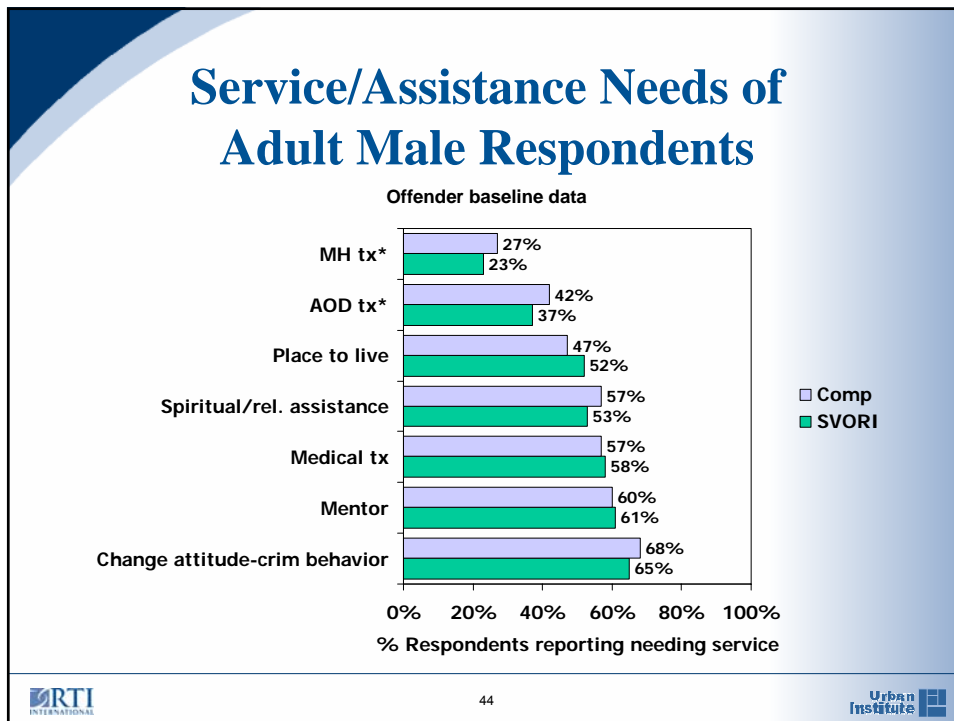
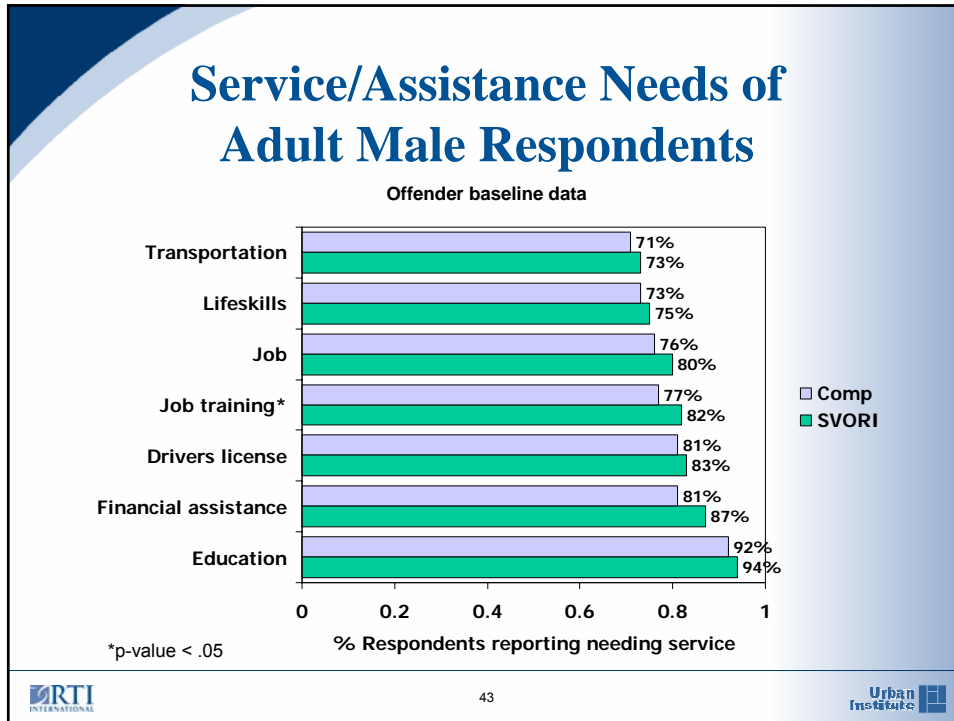
	SVORI	Comparison
SF12 Physical health scale	53.56	53.43
SF12 mental health scale	48.77	48.96
Prior to incarceration, AOD treatment	42%	40%
Alcohol use in 30 days prior to incarceration	68%	66%
Used drugs in 30 days prior to incarceration	66%	69%
Self efficacy scale (0-12)	7.94	7.92
Locus of control scale (0-12)	8.66	8.52
Readiness for change scale (0-18)	13.81	13.79
Spirituality scale (0-15)	12.30	12.40
Legal cynicism (0-15)	5.58	5.63

\*p-value < .05



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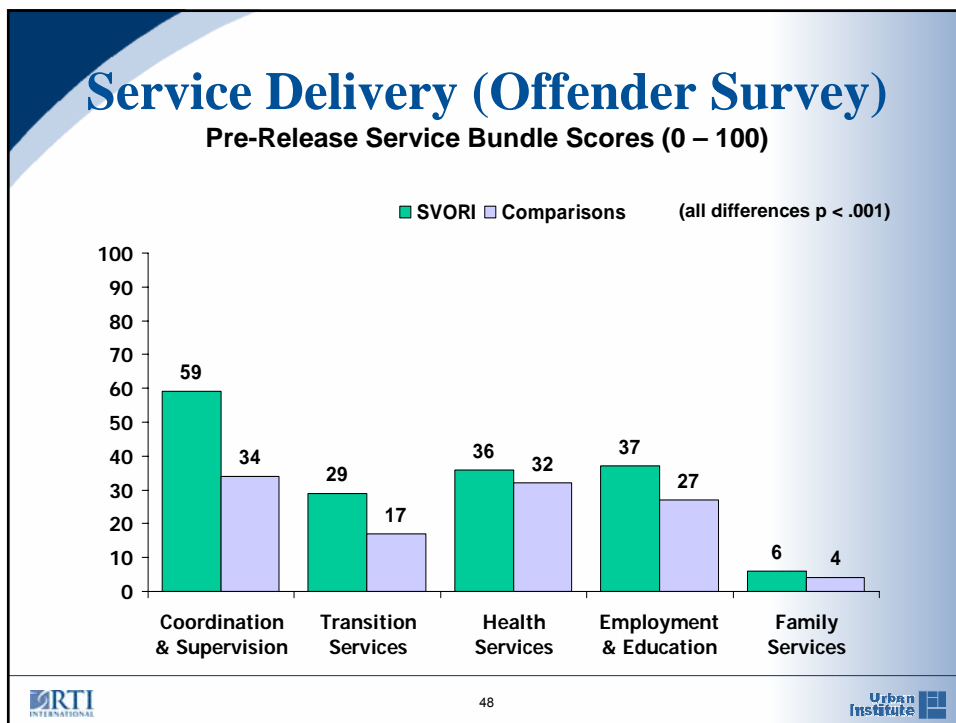
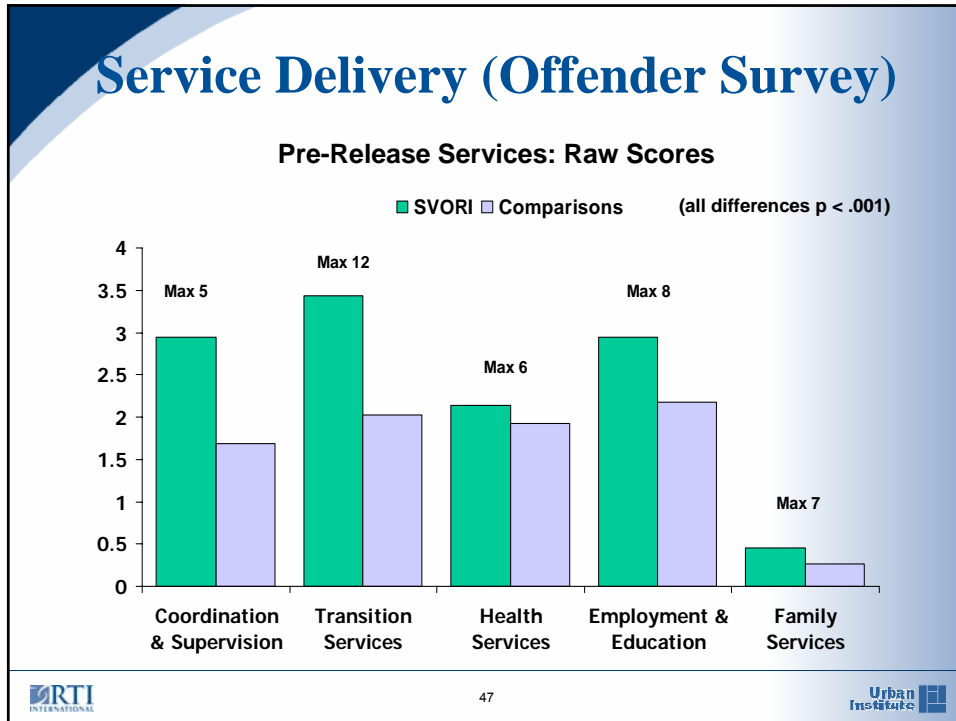
## Pre-Release Services Received

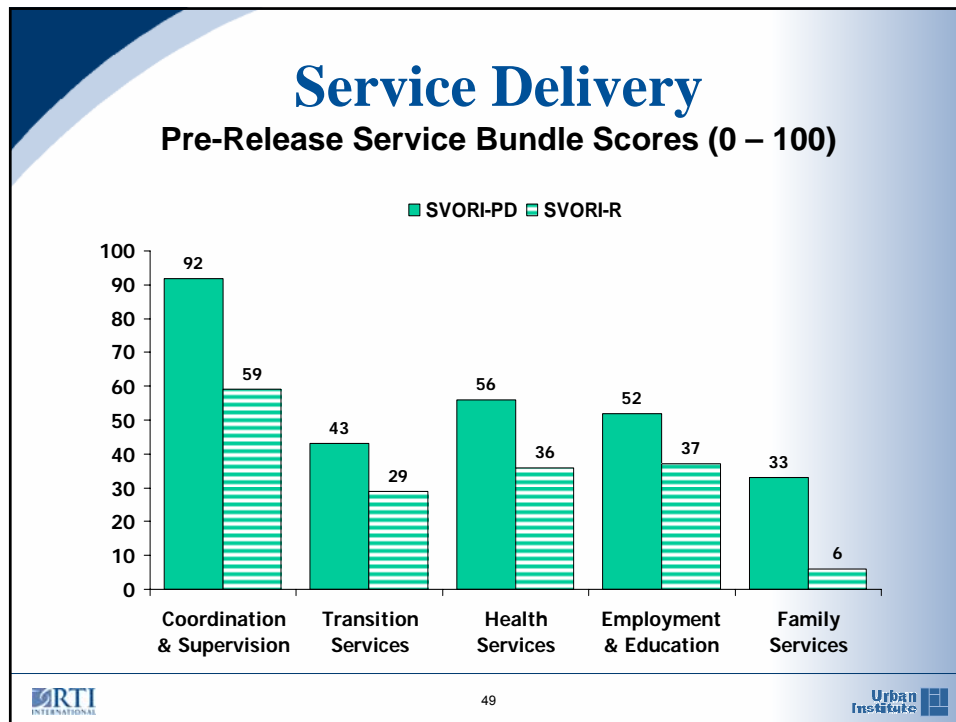
- Service bundle scores (analogous to those developed using the program-level data) have been developed
- For each individual and each bundle
  - ◆ Sum the number of items in each bundle reported received
  - ◆ Divide by the number of items in the bundle
  - ◆ Multiply by 100
  - ◆ Score is percentage of services received

## Individual Service Receipt Bundles

### Offender Interview Data

- **Coordination & Supervision:** needs assessment, needs assessment for release, case manager, reentry plan, worked with anyone to plan for release
- **Transition Services:** taken programs to prepare for release; taken class for release; legal assistance; assistance accessing financial assistance, public financial assistance, public healthcare assistance, transportation, clothing/food; assistance obtaining documents, finding place to live, getting drivers license; mentoring;
- **Health Services:** medical tx, dental tx, MH tx, AOD tx, abuse groups, anger management programs
- **Employment/Education/Skills Development Services:** employment services, educational services, money management, other lifeskills, assistance w/ personal relationships, training to change criminal behavior, institution job, work release
- **Family Services:** assistance finding child care, getting child support; assistance modifying child support debt, custody; parenting class; DV support group; batterer intervention





- ## Impact Conclusions
- SVORI subjects similar to comparisons on many important measures, including age, criminal history, employment history, AOD history, many expressed needs, variety of scales including readiness for change
  - Among differences of potential concern
    - ◆ Race (SVORI more likely black; confounded with site?)
    - ◆ Time served (SVORI longer. Is this a selection artifact? Individuals not selected for SVORI because time remaining too short?)
  - Substantial differences in reported services received (consistent with PD reports that SVORI participants were receiving more) but levels are far less than 100%
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## Impact Evaluation: Next Steps

- Continue data collection, including concluding baseline data collection and fielding the 15-month interview
- Continue to assess service delivery, including refining bundles
- Examine treatment needs matching
- Acquire administrative data from sites
- Conduct response bias analyses
- Conduct attrition analyses
- Analyze 3-month follow-up data focusing on intermediate outcomes
- Recidivism analyses

## Interviewing Prisoners & Released Prisoners: Data Collection Challenges

Lucinda Casson  
RTI International

## Significant Challenges

- Identify and interview subjects ~30 days prior to release
- Obtain accurate dates of release for fielding 3M post-release interviews
- Locate subjects post-release for follow-up interviews
- Recruit and retain experienced, high-quality Field Interviewers
- Monitor and control costs

## Identify & Interview Pre-Release Subjects

- **REQUIREMENT:** Field cases so that interviews can be conducted prior to release (30-day window)
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Due to 'good time' and other pre-release factors, sites often provide date that does not reflect subject's true Date of Release (DOR)
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Investigate sites' policies and adjust expected Date of Release before sending to field; adjust schedule for receipt of file
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Some subjects are released months after scheduled DOR so Baseline data are old
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Re-Baseline those not released whose Baseline interview was done 6+ months prior

## Identify & Interview Pre-Release Subjects

- **REQUIREMENT:** Obtain ~ 50/50 balance of SVORI participants and comparison subjects
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** More potential comparisons (particularly adult males) than SVORI participants
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Sample comparisons if necessary
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** In a few sites, program status is not determined until immediately before release
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** FI ascertains SVORI status prior to interview; post-fielding updates also communicate the information

## Obtain Actual Dates of Release

- **REQUIREMENT:** Complete 3M follow-up interview within +/- 1 month interview window
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Even sites with good MIS sometimes cannot provide actual DORs so case can be fielded on time
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** At training, make sure FIs understand they may not have two full months to work 3M cases
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** For cases where actual DORs are received after interview window has closed, code as such, then field for 9M follow-up

## Obtain Actual Dates of Release

- **REQUIREMENT:** Complete 3M follow-up interview within +/- 1 month interview window
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Subjects released to jails—we want to interview them after they are released to the community
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** When FI locates subject in jail, FI attempts to determine if subject spent time in community prior to jail
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** If subject did not spend time in community, FI attempts to find out subject's new expected DOR from which a new date for the 3M is identified
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Subjects not released on schedule
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Obtain updates monthly to expected DORs
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Make contact with subjects one month after expected DOR in attempt to identify new expected DOR

## Locate Subjects for Follow-up Interviews

- **REQUIREMENT:** Locate and interview subjects for post-release follow-up interviews
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Traditional tracing operations, such as databases, do not work for marginalized, transient populations
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Train FIs to use project-specific Tracing Checklist as guide. Have FI go to pre-prison address and place of arrest (if known), talk to old neighbors, visit homeless shelters and soup kitchens
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** At front-end of Baseline, 3M, and 9M interviews, collect contact information for three people who should always know how to reach subject.

## Locate Subjects for Follow-up Interviews

- **REQUIREMENT:** Locate and interview subjects for post-release follow-up interviews
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Subjects do not provide sufficient contact information for others who would know their whereabouts or subjects' contacts are also transient and marginalized
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Train FIs to probe and help subject compensate for lack of address book (if incarcerated) and possible memory issues
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Train FIs to use same tracing techniques to find subject's contacts, including visiting their old neighborhoods

## Locate Subjects for Follow-up Interviews

- **REQUIREMENT:** Must locate and interview subjects for post-release follow-up interviews
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Risk of losing subjects for remainder of study becomes greater as more time since release passes
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Have FIs make contact with subject mid-way between waves and report the contact to their supervisor
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** When actual DOR received too late to field 3M, have FIs try to find subject and maintain contact anyway, so subject not lost for 9M and 15M interviews

## Recruit & Retain Good Field Interviewers

- **REQUIREMENT:** Hire and keep experienced, high-quality Field Interviewers for the duration of the study
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** FIs must go into rough neighborhoods to locate and interview serious and violent offenders
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Make sure FI candidates are aware of population they will interview and what job will entail
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Start experienced FIs at higher pay than most projects. Be conscious of increasing gasoline costs FIs may have to absorb
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Offer substantial bonus for staying on the study for the duration
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Make FI safety a priority and allow use of escort if FI feels it is warranted

## Recruit & Retain Good Field Interviewers

- **REQUIREMENT:** To hire and keep experienced, high-quality Field Interviewers for the duration of the study
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Study takes an emotional toll on FIs, particularly on those interviewing juveniles
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Make sure FSs recognize when FIs are affected and, when necessary, dedicate part of weekly call to simply listening
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Use other qualified staff members to 'triage' those FIs severely affected
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Try to hire individuals who have experience with lower income or at-risk populations

## Monitor & Control Costs

- **REQUIREMENT:** Monitor & control costs associated with conducting four waves of data collection
  - ◆ **PROBLEM:** Many factors impact cost of doing interviews in correctional facilities (Baseline and follow-ups with re-incarcerated)
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Interviewers should call Facility Contact and schedule an appointment (FIs should never just 'show up')
  - ◆ **SOLUTION:** Require FIs to call Facility Contact a day or two before interview appointment to confirm subject still there and interview still scheduled to take place

## Bottom Line

- Hire good people & take care of them (provide bonuses, be aware of cost burdens like increased gasoline costs, be aware of psychological burdens)
- Work closely with sites to establish best-known dates of release and check monthly to update actual dates of release
- Work closely with sites to smooth access to facilities & subjects
- Develop procedures to assist with tracking subjects (in addition to standard field interviewing techniques)
- Assume that interviews will be missed and that costs will go up over the course of a multi-year study & budget accordingly

