Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)

By

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Current we are testing a new model for Case Managers and POs called EPICS

• Effective Practices for Community Supervision
• Most has been done with POs
• Recently trained Caseworkers
• We are also piloting a version with families
Traditional Officer-Offender Interactions are often not Effective because:

- They are too brief to have an impact

- Conversations focus almost exclusively on monitoring compliance conditions (and therefore emphasize external controls on behavior rather than developing an internal rationale for pro-social behavior)

- Relationship is often more confrontational and authoritarian in nature than helpful
Rationale for the EPICS Model

“TRADITIONAL” COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

- Dosage
- Caseload size
- Availability and quality of community referrals
- Content of interaction with offender
- Focus on external controls
- Other policy/procedural issues
Rationale for the EPICS Model

Strongest theory of human behavior is social learning, so…..

Important to teach POs and caseworkers how to use structured social learning and CBT in one-on-one interactions with offenders
Rationale for the EPICS Model

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAINING

The most current research is suggesting that the relationship with officer and what is discussed is important.
Rationale for the EPICS Model

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAINING

A study on case management practices in Manitoba probation found that the development of supervision plans was based more on what the court mandated than what the assessments indicated.

↑ in number of topics discussed, ↑ in recidivism

Bonta, Rugge, Seto and Coles (2004)
Rationale for the EPICS Model

IMPORTANT OF THE TRAINING

Research on the Dual Role Relationships Inventory-Revised has suggested that relationship quality in mandated treatment involves caring and fairness, trust, and an authoritative (not authoritarian) style.
Rationale for the EPICS Model

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAINING

The work of Chris Trotter (2006) has also underscored the importance of role clarification and the use of problem solving (as well as other core correctional practices) in working with involuntary clients.
Rationale for EPICS Training

INTEGRATING EPICS AND CASE MANAGEMENT

- Translate the results of assessments
- Supervise/intervene
- Target criminogenic needs
- Provide evidence-based interventions
- Provide graduated incentives and consequences
Case Management

Match offenders to services and programs which address risk factors and remove or accommodate barriers related to responsivity considerations.
Case Management

PRIORITIZING INTERVENTIONS

• Criminogenic targets = reduce risk

• Non-criminogenic targets = reduce barriers...but NOT risk
Case Management

TECHNIQUES – SUPERVISION

- Family contact
- Work contact
- Drug screens
- Electronic monitoring

- House arrest
- Provider updates
- Curfew checks
- Telephone contact
- Technical violations
Case Management

TECHNIQUES – REFERRALS

- Substance abuse
- Social skills
- Antisocial thinking
- Anger management
- Family intervention
- Problem-solving
- Educational needs
- Vocational services
- Prosocial activities
- Mentoring
- Mental health
- Transportation
- Abuse
- Sexual misconduct
Case Management

TECHNIQUES – IN-PERSON

- Build rapport
- Progress updates
- Drug screens
- Build motivation
- Problem-solving
- Skill-building
- Crisis management
- Administer reinforcers

- Family intervention
- Case plan review
- Model prosocial behavior
- Review journals and/or thinking reports
- Reassess needs
Integrating EBP and CBT Into Case Management = EPICS

• Actuarial assessment drives a structured case plan
• Provide interventions during face-to-face meetings
• Interventions are chosen based on client risk and need
• Interventions are evidence-based
• Targets are criminogenic
• Quality assurance to ensure fidelity
Structure of EPICS Meeting

SESSION OVERVIEW

• Each session should be structured in the following way:
  1. Check-In
  2. Review
  3. Intervention
  4. Homework
Structure of EPICS Meeting

CHECK-IN

CHECK-IN is an opportunity to:

1. Determine if the offender has any crises/acute needs
2. Build rapport
3. Discuss compliance issues
Structure of EPICS Meeting

REVIEW

The REVIEW portion of the meeting should focus on:

1. The skills discussed in prior session
2. The application of those skills
3. Troubleshooting any continued problems in the use of those skills
4. Discuss progress in attaining short- and long-term goals
Structure of EPICS Meeting

INTERVENTION

For the INTERVENTION:

1. Identify continued areas of need
2. Identify trends in problems that the offender experiences
3. Teach relevant skills
4. Target problematic thinking
Structure of EPICS Meeting

INTERVENTION - CONTINUED

IF CASE WORKER TAUGHT A NEW SKILL, they should:

1. Model any skills taught during the intervention

2. Have the offender role play the new skill BEFORE leaving your office, and offer feedback
Structure of EPICS Meeting

HOMEWORK

For HOMEWORK:

1. Assign the offender homework that focuses on applying the new skill
2. Give instructions for the offender to follow before the next session
Rationale for EPICS

Preliminary Data from Canada:

- Trained officers had 12% higher retention rates in comparison with untrained officers at six months.

- Also found reductions in recidivism
Two year Recidivism Results from Canadian Study

Findings from Federal Probation Sample

Rationale for EPICS Training

CORE CORRECTIONAL PRACTICES

Elements of Effective Correctional Practice and Recidivism

EPICS Training Requirements

FORMAT OF INITIAL TRAINING

• EPICS is a three day training for probation/parole officers or case managers and supervisors.

• Additional training is required for supervisors only.

• The training for supervisors begins the process of how to provide supervision and support to the officers implementing these skills.
EPICS Training Requirements

RECORDING SESSIONS

• Approximately one month after an offender is enrolled in the study, probation officers will begin audio taping sessions.

• Each audio tape will then be reviewed by UC researchers and information will be coded concerning the relationship, session content, use of reinforcement, use of disapproval, use of authority, problem solving skills, cognitive restructuring, and referrals.
EPICS Training Requirements

ONGOING COACHING SESSIONS

In order to ensure adherence to the model and to train the supervisors as coaches, five video conference sessions are included as part of the training.

Session 1 & 2: UC staff will review audio tapes and specific cases with trainees.

Session 3 & 4  Probation supervisors partner with UC staff to conduct the session.

Session 5: Supervisors will conduct the session, with UC staff providing support.
EPICS Training Requirements

OTHER QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

- Pre/post tests are available to assess relationships, changes in attitudes, and other intermediate measures.
Current EPICS Research Projects

- Grant County, Indiana (both adult and juvenile)
- Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC)
  - Pilot research study with 3 adult parole services regions
  - Aimed to pilot the use of EPICS model with parole officers
- Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS)
  - Pilot study with 3 adult agencies and 1 juvenile agency
    - Franklin County Adult Probation
    - Hamilton County Adult Probation
    - Hamilton County Juvenile Probation
    - Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections
Pilot of the EPICS Model

Were criminogenic needs discussed?

% of audiotapes

Session 1 Session 2 Session 3 Total

Trained Untrained

%
Pilot of the EPICS Model

DID THE OFFICER USE SOCIAL REINFORCEMENT?

% of audiotapes

- Red: Trained
- Black: Untrained

Session 1  Session 2  Session 3  Total
Pilot of the EPICS Model

WERE ANTISOCIAL THOUGHTS/BELIEFS IDENTIFIED?

% of audiotapes

- Session 1
- Session 2
- Session 3
- Total

- Trained
- Untrained
Pilot of the EPICS Model

WERE ANTISOCIAL THOUGHTS/BELIEFS CHALLENGED?

% of audiotapes

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<tr>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Pilot of the EPICS Model

DID THE OFFICER ROLE PLAY PROSOCIAL SKILL?

% of audiotapes

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Session 1  Session 2  Session 3  Total

0  10  20  30

Trained
Untrained
Pilot of the EPICS Model

DID THE OFFICER ASSIGN HOMEWORK?

% of audiotapes

- Trained
- Untrained

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On-Going Quality Assurance Projects

DESCRIPTION OF SITES

Several sites have now participated in EPICS training and on-going coaching sessions:

- Franklin County, OH Juvenile Probation
- Hancock County, OH Juvenile Probation
- Ohio Department of Youth Services Parole Division (also piloting Family Version)
- Ottawa County, OH Juvenile Probation
- Westchester County, NY Adult Probation
- Williams County, OH Juvenile Probation
- South Dakota Department of Juvenile Corrections
- South Dakota Department of Adult Corrections
- Summit County, OH Juvenile Probation
- San Joaquin County, CA Juvenile Probation
- Cuyahoga Co, OH Juvenile Probation
- Lucas Co, OH Juvenile Probation
- Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice
- Multnomah Co, Oregon, Adult Probation
- Marion Co, Oregon Salem, Adult and Juvenile Probation
- Oregon Douglas Co, Oregon, Juvenile Probation
- Clackamas Co, Oregon, Juvenile Probation
- Humboldt County, CA – Adult and Juvenile Probation
- Inyo County, CA – Adult and Juvenile Probation
- Rites of Passage Juvenile – Case Manager Version
Implementing the EPICS Model

**KEY COMPONENTS**

Requires spending more time with higher risk offenders (need to realign workloads)

Officers need to learn and practice new skills (requires training and coaching)

Supervisors must be part of the process (trained on model and as “coaches”)
Implementing the EPICS Model

BIGGEST CHALLENGES FROM THE OFFICER’S PERSPECTIVE

*It’s too time consuming.*

- Evidence in the pilot project that time decreased slightly as officers became more proficient in the model

*It’s too difficult to conduct EPICS session in the field, easier to conduct in the office.*

- It can be difficult to conduct sessions with parents, siblings, and other distractions in the house

*I already do it, just not in the way UC prefers.*
BIGGEST CHALLENGES FROM THE OFFICER’S PERSPECTIVE

It is enough to say good job; there is no need to weigh the pros and cons of engaging in a prosocial choice.

I am not a counselor; I refer them to counseling services.

It’s not my job.
Implementing the EPICS Model

STRENGTHS

• Most POs demonstrate strong relationship skills

• Most POs regularly monitor compliance

• Most POs use verbal praise consistently and appropriately

• Most POs display effective use of authority skills
Implementing the EPICS Model

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Recognizing antisocial thinking
- Teaching clients how to challenge/replace the thoughts
- Teaching clients new skills
- Using role-play techniques
- Assigning homework designed to provide additional practice opportunities for clients (i.e., not “have your mom call me,” “go to Medicaid office,” etc.)
- Using effective reinforcement and disapproval
Implementing the EPICS Model

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Sometimes officers have a hard time seeing the big picture/purpose of EPICS. Specifically, they understand the idea that EPICS is geared to reduce recidivism, but they don’t always understand their role. Stressing that the officers’ goal is to teach the clients how to use cognitive restructuring and the various prosocial skills and techniques on their own is imperative.
Implementing the EPICS Model

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

These are not skills officers learn overnight; the training is the first step in learning the skills, but the coaching sessions and practice are just as important. Coaching sessions are only as useful as the officers make them. Practice and use is key to mastering the skills.

Coaching and QA from the supervisors and department is extremely important. Without both, the EPICS model has a small chance of being fully adopted.
In Closing...

• The EPICS model is **not** intended to replace more intense cognitive-behavioral treatments to address specific domains, but rather it is an attempt to more fully utilize community supervision officers as agents of change by providing structure and purpose to face-to-face interactions with clients.
“The feedback I am getting on EPICS is phenomenal. Several people have said of all the What Works training, this is the one most valuable because it provides concrete strategies that they can use in their everyday work. People are already sharing with each other their experiences with the skills.”

- Cindy McCoy, Director Grant County, Indiana Correctional Services