Evidence-Based Decision Making (EBDM) Initiative: A History and Looking Forward to Phase V
Why EBDM?

• Growing body of evidence that can (and does) inform justice system agencies’ performance and increase effectiveness

• Historically, there have been demonstrations of successful approaches/changes within individual operating agencies around the country, not systemwide

• A primary perceived barrier is the lack of system collaboration around a common set of outcomes and principles

One Less...®
A STRATEGY FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES
EBDMONELESS.ORG
NICIC.GOV/EBDM
NIC
National Institute of Corrections
The Vision of the EBDM Initiative

• What if we create and test a “Framework” for evidence-based decision making that
  – brings partners together in a new way, a truly collaborative way?
  – encourages these partners to find consensus around what the justice system in their community – however large or small – hopes to achieve?
  – led to a new way of making decisions – about individuals and about the system itself?
Through the EBDM Initiative we hoped to...

- Affirm existing practices that have been demonstrated to be effective
- Inspire and challenge practices that can be improved
- Create tools and processes that can be replicated elsewhere
- Address those thorny issues that are barriers to advancement, especially those that are barriers to true collaboration
EBDM OVERARCHING GOAL

To create a framework for justice systems that will result in improved system outcomes

*through true collaborative partnerships,*

*systematic use of research,*

*and a shared vision of desired outcomes.*

“A permanent shift in expectations about what is possible.”

--Joe McCannon, Wisconsin EBDM Summit, Jan 2014
“To reach their full potential, evidence-based practices cannot simply be placed alongside past practice or through the piecemeal exchange of one past practice for a new one. Instead, an evidence-based decision making process—a systemic approach that uses research to inform decisions at all levels—offers the greatest promise for harm and risk reduction and the potential for a tremendous return...”

–EBDM Framework, p. 39
Overview of Local Level EBDM 2008-2013

- NIC began its sponsorship of the Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems (EBDM) initiative in May 2008
- In Phase I, we built the EBDM “Framework”
- In August of 2010, NIC selected, on a competitive basis, seven local jurisdictions from across the country to participate in Phase II
- The same seven sites continued on to the Implementation Phase (Phase III)
Phase I

- Worked with NIC and a multidisciplinary advisory committee
- Defined risk and harm reduction as fundamental goals of the justice system
- Reviewed and summarized the research on risk and harm reduction
- Conducted a national public opinion survey
- Outlined a conceptual framework and set of principles for achieving EBDM
- Developed A Framework for Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems
- Convened discipline-specific focus groups to “field test” the Framework
Phase II

- Selected seven EBDM sites
- Assisted sites to:
  - Develop the processes /infrastructure to implement Framework
  - Assess current policy and practice and determine methods to more effectively integrate research at key decision points
  - Develop Phase III work plans for implementation of EBDM
- Conducted independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the technical assistance
- Developed tools and resources for EBDM sites and other interested jurisdictions
Phase III

- Assisted local sites to:
  - Implement their change strategies
  - Expand activities to become systems characterized by evidence-based decision making
  - Implement communication strategies
EBDM Local Sites (Phases II & III)

- Yamhill County (McMinnville), Oregon
- Ramsey County (St. Paul), Minnesota
- Eau Claire County (Eau Claire), Wisconsin
- Milwaukee County (Milwaukee), Wisconsin
- Grant County (Marion), Indiana
- County of Albemarle, city of Charlottesville, Virginia
- Mesa County (Grand Junction), Colorado
Overview of Statewide EBDM 2013 and Beyond

- **Phase IV**
  Preparation for Expansion
  Sep 2013 – Dec 2014
  - Participate in a process designed to prepare teams within the state for the EBDM planning phase

- **Phase V**
  Planning Process
  - Engage in EBDM planning activities at state level and in multiple local jurisdictions (i.e., a state team + approx. 5 local teams)

- **Phase VI**
  Implementation
  Fall 2016
  - Engage in EBDM implementation activities at state level and in multiple local jurisdictions
Phase IV

• States participated in a process designed to prepare teams within the state for the EBDM planning phase (i.e., a state team + approx. 5 local teams)

• Engaged additional in-state partners/built awareness of EBDM
  – Local partners
  – State partners

• Preparing Phase V applications
Phase V

• Selected states will prepare to implement systemwide change strategies (through a series of planning activities) that will align local and state jurisdictions with one another and with the principles of EBDM.

• Phase V is a planning phase, similar to the Phase II planning the EBDM local sites experienced.

Phase IV
Preparation for Expansion
Sep 2013 – Dec 2014

Phase V
Planning Process

Phase VI
Implementation
Timing TBD
Phase VI

- If funding becomes available, selected states will be expected to implement the change strategies developed at the state and local levels during Phase V.
EBP vs. EBDM

• EBPs are policies, practices, and/or interventions supported by research
  – Research finding: empirically-based tools predict risk better than professional judgment alone
  – EB practice: use of a risk tool to determine appropriate amount of intervention

• EBDM is a disciplined approach to using data and research to inform and guide decision making across the justice system
  – Who do we divert?
  – What do we want to achieve by diverting?
  – What does the research tell us about the most effective method of achieving our goal?
EBDM Principles

EBDM Principle 1: The professional judgment of criminal justice system decision makers is enhanced when informed by evidence-based knowledge.

EBDM Principle 2: Every interaction within the criminal justice system offers an opportunity to contribute to harm reduction.

EBDM Principle 3: Systems achieve better outcomes when they operate collaboratively.

EBDM Principle 4: The criminal justice system will continually learn and improve when professionals make decisions based on the collection, analysis, and use of data and information.
Decision Makers at the Local Level

- Law Enforcement Officials
- Pretrial Officials
- Victim Service Providers
- Prosecutors
- Defense Attorneys
- Jail Administrators
- Court Administrators
- Judges, Commissioners, Magistrates
- Probation/Parole/Community Corrections Officials
- City/County Managers/Commissioners
- Community Representatives (e.g., civic leaders, members of faith-based organizations, service providers)
- Behavioral Health and Human Service Representatives
Decision Makers at the State Level

- The Governor’s Office and Cabinet
- State Supreme Court, Judicial Department, Court Rule Making Authority, Administrative Office of the Courts
- State Legislators (Chairs or representatives of standing or ad hoc judiciary, corrections or sentencing committees, joint judiciary and budget committees)
- Office of the Attorney General
- State Defense Bar
- State Directors of Corrections; probation and parole/community corrections
- State Pretrial Administrator
- Paroling authority
- Victim Service Providers
- Directors of State Behavioral Health, Health, Employment, Family Services, Housing, Veterans Affairs, Financial Assistance, and other agencies serving justice-involved individuals
- Families of offenders/advocacy groups
- Representatives of State Criminal Justice Coordinating Groups, Advisory Boards, Sentencing Commissions, Criminal Justice Advocacy Groups, and Reform Coalitions (e.g., mental health alliances)
- State Defense Counsel Association
- State Judges’ Association
- State Prosecutors’ Association
- State Law Enforcement (sheriff, police, jail administrators) Association
Key Justice System Decision Points: State and Local Level EBDM
NIC’s Goals for Phase V

• Assist state and local-level policy teams as they conduct a series of planning activities to implement systemwide change strategies that will
  – Align local and state jurisdictions with one another and with the principles of EBDM
  – Assist teams in reaching their individual and collective harm reduction goals

• By the end of Phase V, sites are expected to
  – have a fully developed strategic action plan for achieving their change targets, and
  – *to the extent possible*, begin implementing change strategies
What is the Phase V Roadmap?

The Phase V roadmap is basically a tool...
- Designed for use by multidisciplinary criminal justice teams
  - Who have agreement about the EBDM Framework
  - Are committed to working together
- To help these teams build their capacity to engage in EBDM
- To guide them through the Phase V planning process
- Outlining a core set of activities to advance system alignment
- That breaks the planning process into concrete, discreet and manageable steps
- Ultimately for assisting teams in preparing for the implementation of EBDM strategies to achieve their harm reduction goals (Phase V)
# Roadmap for Phase V

Preparing to Implement the EBDM Framework at the State Level and Within Local Jurisdictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activities</th>
<th>Likely Action Steps (Others may be added, where needed)</th>
<th>By the end of Phase V, the EBDM teams will have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Build genuine, collaborative policy teams at the state and local levels. | - Administer a policy team collaboration survey (one or more times).  
  - Establish ground rules and operating norms.  
  - Develop a vision/mission statement for the team’s work.  
  - Articulate roles and responsibilities of team members.  
  - Assess readiness to engage in EBDM in terms of both strengths and needs.  
  - Develop “One Less” individual (or similar) statements and a team document that reflects these statements.  
  - Take other steps to build/enhance the collaborative climate of the policy team. | - Highly functioning collaborative policy teams at the state and local levels.  
  - A vision/mission for each policy team.  
  - Track records of meaningful team accomplishments. |
<p>| Build a shared vision for EBDM in the state.         | - Engage in discussions with local EBDM representatives in an effort to develop a shared vision for achieving EBDM statewide. | - A shared vision for the criminal justice system for achieving EBDM (i.e., spanning local and state-level decision points). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activities</th>
<th>Likely Action Steps (Others may be added, where needed)</th>
<th>By the end of Phase V, the EBDM teams will have…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ensure that EBDM efforts are coordinated across the policy teams and across the state. | • Develop methods to facilitate genuine and meaningful collaboration between and among state and local EBDM representatives.  
• Identify areas where county and state-level collaboration could be strengthened.  
• Develop processes for cross-team sharing and partnerships in the advancement of EBDM statewide. | • The establishment or enhancement of a true and meaningful collaborative partnership within and among state and local criminal justice system stakeholders.  
• An infrastructure to support coordination and collaboration of EBDM advancements throughout EBDM jurisdictions. |
| Build individual state and local-level agencies that are collaborative and in a state of readiness for change. | • Engage staff in the EBDM Initiative in specific, purposeful ways (e.g., establish an internal working team to collect information, provide input, and assist in accomplishing specific objectives). | • State and local agencies and staff that demonstrate a collaborative climate and readiness for change.  
• An engaged staff that provides meaningful, ongoing input into evidence-based policy and practice changes. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activities</th>
<th>Likely Action Steps</th>
<th>By the end of Phase V, the EBDM teams will have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Understand current practice within each agency and across the local and state criminal justice systems. | • Develop a system map at the state level.  
• Conduct policy/practice assessments around each decision point to determine the use of evidence-based practices/decision making and continuous quality improvement (CQI) strategies.  
• Identify barriers to achieving harm and risk reduction goals at the state and local levels, in partnership with local-level teams/state team.  
• Gather baseline data.  
• Identify strengths/challenges.  
• Develop strategies to address barriers between state and local-level criminal justice policies/practices.  
• Identify prioritized change targets. | • A full understanding of the basis upon which decisions are made at key points within and across agencies at the state and local levels.  
• A set of agreed-upon strengths.  
• A set of agreed-upon targets for change.  
• A work plan for addressing barriers to achieving harm and risk reduction goals. |
| Understand and have the capacity to implement evidence-based practices.          | • Administer a knowledge survey to the policy team and agency staff.  
• Assess staff skills in core competency areas.  
• Develop specific strategies to augment knowledge and competencies, where needed.                                                                                                                   | • A common understanding of the research (and its limitations) across all relevant agencies/staff.  
• An understanding of the implications of these findings for future policy and practice.                                                                                                                                                    |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activities</th>
<th>Likely Action Steps (Others may be added, where needed)</th>
<th>By the end of Phase V, the EBDM teams will have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop logic models.</td>
<td>• Develop a system model.</td>
<td>• Sound and testable logic models at the state and local levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Establish methods to collect, analyze, and utilize data to inform decision making. | • Agree on key definitions (e.g., “recidivism,” “probation violation”).  
• Develop scorecard items/outcomes.  
• Identify baseline data.  
• Develop performance measures.  
• Assess data system capacity, collection methods, storage, usage, and sharing.  
• Build capacity, where needed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | • A set of agreed-upon performance measures that will enable an objective, empirical evaluation of the effectiveness of the justice system agencies in achieving their agreed vision.  
• Benchmarks against which longer-term outcomes can be measured.  
• Methods to collect, analyze, and share data on an ongoing basis to inform policy and practice.  
• Recommendations for enhanced data integration between agencies and systems.  
• A systemwide scorecard.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activities</th>
<th>Likely Action Steps (Others may be added, where needed)</th>
<th>By the end of Phase V, the EBDM teams will have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Develop a communications strategy to engage a broader set of stakeholders and communities throughout the state. | • Analyze the systems and vehicles in place for communicating with criminal justice and allied policymakers and practitioners, and with the public.  
• Conduct a public opinion survey (resources permitting).  
• Compile information/a clear set of messages the team and individual stakeholders can use to inform and engage the community.  
• Define the desired role of the community in justice system activities.  
• Identify individuals/groups within the community who are appropriate for outreach. | • A communications strategy for engaging additional stakeholders and the community in meaningful dialogue about the vision/goals of the justice system, the state of knowledge and research, and the system’s performance in achieving these goals.                                                                                                                                          |
| Develop a strategic action plan for implementation.                             | • Conduct an analysis of potential barriers to implementation.  
• Develop a plan of action for implementing specific policy and practice changes—who, what, when, where, how.  
• Ensure that state and local change targets align and complement one another. | • A clear, specific, measurable plan for implementing policy and practice changes that advance evidence-based decision making and further support the achievement of the justice system’s vision and goals.                                                                                                                                         |