Program: Drug Market Intervention Initiative (DMI)
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Abstract: Drug Market Intervention Initiatives is a new way to help solve the problem of open-air drug markets in high crime neighborhoods. The police department is joining forces with the community to infiltrate the market and hopefully disrupt it enough, that it shuts down. An important aspect of this strategy is that it also links the offenders with the proper resources to change their lives around. The first city to use the DMI approach was High Point, North Carolina and they have seen dramatic changes in their cities crime rates (violent and drug rates) but only some of their data is statistically significant. Since this is new intervention more research is needed to make the general conclusion that it is an effective drug intervention technique.

1. Describe the Program or Strategy.

Open-air drug markets are detrimental to communities and can cause neighborhood breakdowns all across the United States. They provide the location, people, and the incentive to not only use and sell drugs but to partake in other illegal activities. They encourage and spur other violent and quality of life crimes; such as homicide, assaults, gun violence and prostitution. Open-air markets are usually found in high crime areas within a community.

These communities are then targeted for a certain drug intervention program. Police strategies in the past have removed the individuals but caused a strain on the police, community relationship. The government and other policy officials are now seeing the negative effect open-air markets have on communities and now want a change. The most recent and promising intervention strategy is known as the drug market intervention initiative (DMI) and it was developed by police and law enforcement in High Point, North Carolina and John Jay College (Rivers, Norris & McGarrell, 2012).

The DMI is a crime initiative to reduce drug related violence and crime in high concentrated crime geographic areas. The relationship between violent crime and street level dealing is becoming more significant and the DMI is trying to reduce this correlation and build community bonds at the same time (http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/dmi_the_high_point_model.cfm). They are giving a select group of offenders a second chance through programs and resources such as; job training, day care, parenting help, substance abuse treatment, housing, transportation and
family assistance (http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/dmi_the_high_point_model.cfm). The reason for using the DMI strategy is because these neighborhoods are not improving. Despite the numerous arrests, crime has not decreased and the community has lost faith and people are afraid.

The first goal of DMI is to disrupt the markets, not to just disperse them but to prevent them from moving to other neighborhoods. Another goal is to interrupt the supply of the market, make the time between sales increase so they have to search harder for more drugs. A positive consequence of interrupting the supply of the drug is an increase in price, which hopefully decreases the amount of sellers. If law enforcement can make it harder for the drug markets to achieve their goals of making money and selling drugs, then they are doing some good.

There is a nine-step process that is outline below in the “Logic Model” section. The nine steps are divided into three phases; identification, notification and resource delivery. This theoretical model is closely related with other policing intervention strategies. The issue now is doing cost-benefit analysis to determine its legitimate effectiveness.

More research is constantly being done on this new intervention technique and its growing practice in the United States. We have lots of information regarding its theoretical background just need more on its implementation and practice. The following link is to a list of Drug Market Intervention resources, which may be helpful (http://dmimsu.com/content/resources/Resources.pdf). Also, the Department of Justice and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, published a PDF of the High Point Drug Strategy Intervention, which can be very useful when learning more about DMI’s and how to implement them into communities (http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/docs/The_High_Point_Drug_Market_Intervention_Strategy.pdf).

2. **What types of crime does this program or strategy intended to prevent or reduce?**

DMI was implemented to reduce drug violence within high crime neighborhoods. Drug markets spur an increase in other violent crimes as well as quality of life crimes such as prostitution. DMI is targeting these specific crimes in specific geographic
locations. It is important that the program be implemented with the most clarity in terms of its goals and target areas.

3. **Is the program or something similar reviewed on Blueprints for Violence Prevention (http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/) or Crime Solutions (www.crimesolutions.gov)? Provide Citations.**

Blueprints for Violence Prevention did not provide any review of Drug Market Interventions. However, Crime Solutions did have two programs be rated “Promising”. The first program is the Drug Market Analysis Program (New Jersey). This program was introduced by the National Institute of Justice and it was developed to implement strategies for curbing street-level drug distribution and the community problems that stem from drug markets. This program was tested in many hot spots within Jersey City, NJ. For more information please visit the following link, http://crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=214.

The second program evaluated on Crime Solutions is the Nashville DMI. It has also been rated promising. This program was a policing strategy that used community assistance, strategic planning and the “pulling-levers theory” to reduce drug crime in high crime concatenated areas. The only drug crime data that was found to be statistically significant in this study was that the target area decreased in drug crime by 55.6% after the intervention was implemented compared to pre-intervention levels. For more information please use the following link, http://crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=92.

4. **Is there a clear theoretical foundation?**

There are clear links between DMI and police enforcement strategies. A more current policing strategy, known as problem-oriented policing, “encourages police agencies to develop and implement, often in collaboration with community members, proactive responses to the underlying conditions that cause the targeted crime problems” (Rivers, Norris & McGarrell, 2012, pg.60). Problem-oriented policing has been found to be effective when you combine two factors; fear of crime and community order. Also, the literature surrounding this strategy is growing focuses on the importance of the interventions being most effective when they are focused on people, places and contexts.
driving the problem in a specific community. The enforcement approach that embodies this the approach of DMI is focused deterrence or level pulling (Rivers, Norris & McGarrell, 2012). First, focused deterrence or level pulling was aimed at reducing gun violence and gang/group violence. There are six steps to this multi-facet approach;

1. Focus on a specific crime problem
2. Create an interagency working group of relevant law-enforcement agencies
3. Implement a systematic identification of key offenders, groups, and behavior patterns
4. Develop a clear deterrent message to offenders and groups of offenders, which encourage them to stop their illegal behavior
5. Focus on social services and community resources and linking them with targeted offenders
6. Directly and clearly communicate to offenders why they are receiving this special attention (River et al, 2012, 61).

The pulling levers approach has been modified to fit the DMI and helps solve the issue of open-air drug markets. They target specific drug markets and a small group of individuals in that market (distributors, street-level sellers, and lookouts) and convey a deterrence message to them. The theory is strong yet the knowledge on its implementation and practice is still evolving.

5. Is there a direct, indirect or no clear theoretical link to crime reduction?

There is an indirect theoretical link to crime reduction, specifically; gun, drug and gang violence has shown promising results. Replications of this approach have been done in cities such as, Baltimore, Chicago, High Point, and Los Angeles.
6. Describe the logic model. Diagram it. How is it intended to reduce crime?

[Diagram of the logic model]

Source: Dr. James M. Frabutt et al., at The Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro serving as the Project Safe Neighborhoods Research Partner for the United States Attorney’s Office, Middle District of North Carolina. Supported by PSN funding (Awarded #2002-GP-CX-0220) through the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (High Point DMI PowerPoint Presentation, http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/docs/Drug_Market_Intervention_the_High_Point_Model.pdf).

This model is very structured and has clear goals at each stage. The model is intended to reduce crime by targeting high-risk offenders, and providing them with the proper services to improve their quality of life and the neighborhoods in which they live. By eliminating the high-risk sellers/buyers you are making it more difficult for people to use and buy drugs. Also, if we interrupt the supply, it makes the drug markets lives harder in the sense it will take longer to get the drugs and they will have to jack the prices due to a smaller supply.
7. Does this program or strategy exist in this community? If yes, what agency is it run through? How long has it been in existence here? How is it funded?

Rochester, NY does not have a drug market intervention initiative. The closest DMI in NY is Hempstead, NY. Rochester could most likely benefit from a DMI especially to target the “Conkey- Clifford Drug Market”. Rochester does have a drug court, which also uses the collaboration of the community and the criminal justice system.

8. Does it exist in other communities? If yes, where?

The first DMI was implemented in High Point, North Carolina. The strategy has been replicated in other “early adopter” cities, Rockford, IL, Providence, RI, Hempstead, NY, and Nashville, TN.


Research does exist on its effectiveness but not as much as other programs. This is a new strategy and research on its legitimate efficiency is still growing. More information is needed. The information so far, is promising and statistically significant. High Point for example, found a decrease in violent crimes of 7.3%, property crimes declined 9.1% and drug offenses decreased 5.5% following the implementation of DMI (Rivers et al, 2012, 62). The Nashville pulling levers DMI produced a statistically significant difference in property, narcotic and drug equipment offenses in the target area but not surrounding areas, which makes it hard to see the effectiveness of the intervention.

10. Provide a review of the research

*Nashville Drug Market Intervention*

The goal of the Nashville DMI was to deter offenders, disrupt the drug market and hopefully reduce crime. This intervention enforced a zero tolerance attitude towards
drug dealing and they enforced the importance of community organization. The target area was McFerrin Park, a high crime neighborhood. The adjoining area and the remainder area were also considered in this evaluation. There were four program components; identification, preparation, notification, and resource delivery. The cost of the DMI investigation phase was estimated to cost $48,785, but after the evaluation it cost $117,000 to handle each drug incident. This program has only undergone one empirical evaluation.


a. What was the research design
Coresaro and colleagues did the research in 2010. They used a time-series analysis to first understand the impact the drug market has had on Nashville. They also used a pre-post test analysis to examine the outcomes pre-intervention and post-intervention to compare the differences. To visualize the data a full-count regression model was used to control for seasonal trend factors. After the quantitative part was done, they conducted interviews to provide the study with a qualitative part. They surveyed 44 residents and asked to comment on the status of drug markets before and after the DMI (http://crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=92).

b. Describe the data
The data was from March 2005 to April 2010. It included criminal offense data, calls for service outcomes for the three locations (Target, Adjoining, and the rest). Drug and narcotic offenses data was obtained from the UCR (http://crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=92).

c. Summarize the findings
The results of the study found that by comparing the pre-intervention levels to the post-intervention levels, drug crime incidents decreased 55.6% and it was found statistically significant. None of the UCR Type 1 crime offense changes were found to be statistically significant along with the number of calls for service (http://crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=92). The program was rated promising on Crime Solutions, but it only one study has been done on it.
High Point, North Carolina DMI

High Point DMI was one of the first drug market intervention cities. The target area at first was West End, but has been replicated in other parts of the city. High Point has seen a dramatic change in violent crime; drug crime, quality of life and the neighborhoods are starting to feel safe again. Drug dealers have labeled the west end, as a “no-go zone” and more children are staying off the streets. This study has been done by the High Point Police Department.

a. What was the research design

The research design used both a quantitative aspect and a qualitative aspect. To examine the data, a pre/post hoc test was done to look at before and after the intervention. They looked at the differences over a 100-day increment up to 5 years (http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/docs/Drug_Market_Intervention_the_High_Point_Model.pdf).

b. Describe the data

The data used were violent crime rates, and drug crime rates. They also surveyed officers, and community members. The data was obtained from their own records and UCR (http://www.highpointnc.gov/police/docs/The_High_Point_Drug_Market_Intervention_Strategy.pdf).

c. Summarize the findings

The findings were showing a decrease in crime but we do not know if they were statistically significant. After the first 100 days, there was a 75% decrease in violent crime. After 5 years, a 5.7% decrease in violent crime. Four years after the intervention there was a 25-26% decrease in drug crimes. This study has been replicated in other areas within High Point and deemed effective. However, no other scientific, peer reviewed evaluations have been done to help determine the significance of the data. Without more information, it is challenging to deem this intervention as effective.
11. How would you rate this program or strategy?
   a. Generally recognized as effective
   b. Good likelihood that it is effective
   c. Inconclusive
   d. Probably not effective
   e. Generally recognized as not effective
   f. Harmful or likely to be harmful

12. Explain your Rating

I chose an “inconclusive” rating for one reason. It is a new intervention strategy, and more research is needed to show its legitimate effectiveness. Yes it has been showing to be “promising” but only by one study; we need more studies to be done in other high crime neighborhoods to really attest to its reliability. Most areas that have used the DMI strategy have seen decreases in crime, but more needs to be done to show if it has a lasting effect. The pulling levers theory behind the DMI has been shown to reduce crime but like noted earlier, more research is needed to increase its recognition of being effective. I do not think it causes harm to a city when implemented properly.

13. One paragraph summary of the program, the findings and your recommendation.

Drug Market Intervention Initiatives is a new way to help solve the problem of open-air drug markets in high crime neighborhoods. The police department is joining forces with the community to infiltrate the market and hopefully disrupt it enough, that it shuts down. An important aspect of this strategy is that it also links the offenders with the proper resources to change their lives around. The DMI approach is based on the pulling levers theory and problem oriented policing. The first city to use the DMI approach was High Point, North Carolina. They have seen dramatic changes in their cities crime rates (violent and drug rates) but only some of their data is statistically significant. Since this is new intervention more research is needed to make the general conclusion that it is an effective drug intervention technique. This will provide the incentive for other cities to learn how to implement the DMI properly and make the changes in their communities.
without the risk of doing any more damage. Rochester could definitely benefit from a Drug Market Intervention and I think the results would be promising. We struggle with our open-air drug market at the intersection of Conkey and Clifford the neighborhoods around it are taking a huge hit. Open-air drug markets are dangerous to communities and are the fuel or sometimes the motive for other violent crimes. If we can eliminate the supply, rehabilitate the dealer and user, then maybe we can take back our communities and reduce the crime rates in our neighborhoods.