

Abstract of proposed presentation at the Stockholm Criminology Symposium

Financial aspects of treatment programs within the Swedish Prison and Probation Services

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Background: Financial constraints often plague treatment programs against drug abuse and crime in correctional service settings. Estimates of overall financial effects of such treatment programs are needed to improve decision-making in resource allocation.

Method: The presentation attempts to explain the method adopted by the Swedish Prison and Probation Services when analyzing the financial effects of client treatment programs aimed at reducing criminal recidivism.

I discuss different ways of looking at monetary costs of crime and attempt to explain why a limited approach is chosen, where only direct costs and loss of tax incomes connected to crime are included.

Concrete examples from currently evaluated programs are provided. For example, costs of substance abuse-related offences are so high that programs even with weak statistically proven effects might be very successful from a financial point-of-view.

Discussion/Conclusion: The need for consistent use of financial models, problems with the divergent conclusions that could result from different analytic models, and advantages and disadvantages of different approaches are discussed.