



Promising Practices for Improved Record Reporting

Many states faced challenges in creating state estimates for the NIAA records report over the three years of data collection. Often, these challenges in estimating were direct results of structural or reporting problems of actual NICS records. This brief presents a strategy that at least one state has implemented to address that problem.

Estimation Problem

Cannot distinguish between voluntary and involuntary commitments.

Reporting Problem

Either under or over-reporting due to inability to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary.

Strategy

Create an indicator for voluntary/involuntary coding in the database.

Improve Tracking of Involuntary Commitments

About this strategy

While involuntary commitments are prohibitors, often states cannot separate these records from non prohibiting voluntary commitments. Creating the ability to distinguish these records through modifications in the mental health database will improve the quality and accuracy of mental health records submitted to NICS.

- **Who it may work for:** States who are not able to distinguish between their involuntary and voluntary commitments and who have a database that can be tweaked to include a new indicator.
- **Costs:** Cost of making the programming changes, as well as training on the new indicator.
- **Timeframe for implementing:** December 31, 2012
- **Lead agency:** Illinois State Police

Why this strategy makes a difference

This strategy is a simple addition to a database that can make a considerable improvement in the quality of mental health records reporting.

Who's Doing It? Illinois

Illinois received a NARIP grant to improve their NICS reporting and have added a voluntary/involuntary indicator to their mental health database, as one component of their database upgrades.

For more information:

Illinois

Gregory Stevens
Illinois Criminal Justice
Information Authority
312-793-0890
Gregory.Stevens@illinois.gov

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Devon Adams
202-307-0765
Devon.Adams@usdoj.gov
www.bjs.gov
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