



Research in Practice



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Outline

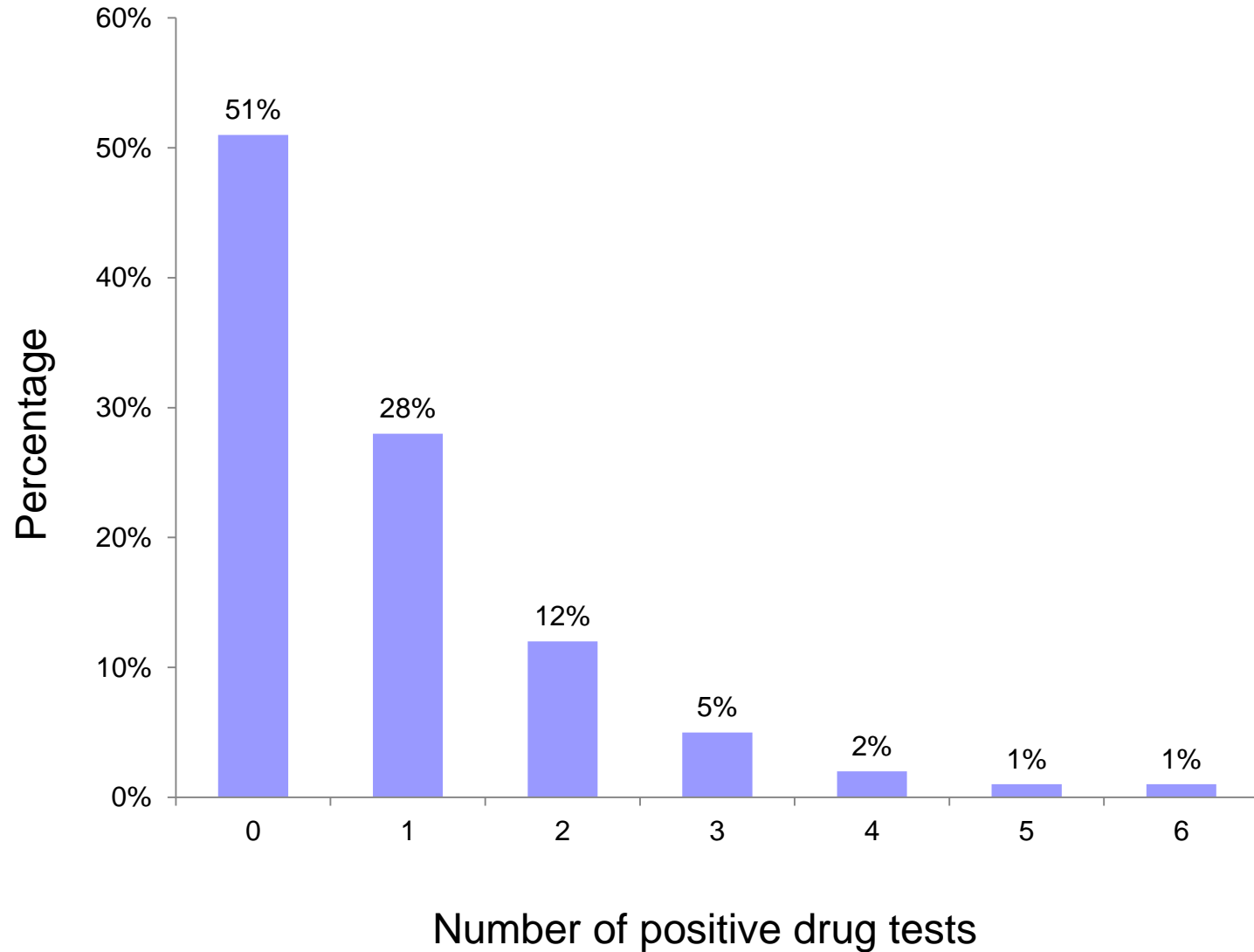
- ▶ Lessons learned from SCF sites
- ▶ Update on HOPE/SCF
- ▶ Research in practice
- ▶ Moving faster and smarter in the search for solutions

Outcomes (RCT Hawaii)

Outcome	HOPE	Control
No-shows for probation appointments (average of appointments per probationer)	9%	23%
Positive urine tests (average of tests per probationer)	13%	46%
Revocation rate (probationers revoked)	7%	15%
Incarceration (days sentenced)	138 days	267 days

Long term followup (at 7 years and 10 years) shows reductions in drug use, crime, and incarceration

SCF as a “Behavioral Triage Model”



National Expansion

After HOPE was introduced in Hawaii, Arizona implemented and expanded SAFE, and many states followed suit.

- ▶ Round 1: DOJ funded sites in four states as part of the national DFE
 - ▶ AR, MA, OR, TX
- ▶ Round 2: DOJ funded sites in six states and one tribal court
 - ▶ AL, AK, MI, NH, OH, NY, and the Lummi Nation
- ▶ Round 3: support for additional states soon to be announced
- ▶ Now in 28 states. WA first to roll out SCF statewide



General Observations

- ▶ SCF shows a great deal of promise
 - ▶ Evaluations on the mainland show similar results to Hawaii (Texas, Kentucky, Michigan, WA)
- ▶ There are still many unknowns
 - ▶ Essential components; Role of sanctions and sanction types; Integrating rewards

Important innovations

- ▶ Less is more: small punishment dose
- ▶ Non-incarcerating responses (Ohio is the state to watch)
- ▶ Continuum of supervision to reduce returns to prison (integrating with drug courts retooled to take high-risk)
- ▶ Rewards for compliance (e.g. early discharge in Hawaii and structured release time in WA)
- ▶ Now we see in-custody applications of these principles (Ohio is the leader here also, with large reductions in the use of Ad Seg)
- ▶ BJA Resource Center (scfcenter.org) and others



Research to Practice



No. No.
That's not right!



Practice-to-Research-to-
Practice-to-Research

Or better yet....

Research in Practice



BetaGov

How Rocket Science, Big Business, and
Bisbee, Arizona will Transform the Public
Sector



What works?

- ▶ Most of our public policies—how we educate our children, rehabilitate convicted offenders, or house the homeless—have one thing in common: they have never been rigorously tested.
- ▶ Rigorous evaluations traditionally involve professional researchers, extramural funders, yards of red tape, and long timelines.
- ▶ As a result, many commonplace policies intended to make us smarter, safer, or healthier are based more on intuition (“feels right”) than on data.



Who conducts the research?

- ▶ 58% of CJ programs for drug-involved offenders that are called “Evidence Based” were evaluated by the developer or proprietor.
- ▶ Is there a systematic difference in the results of evaluations conducted by the proprietor compared with independent evaluations? Yes, and in the direction you would suspect!



The state of EBPs in CJ

- ▶ Some good programs. Many less good. Hard for practitioners to recognize which is which.
- ▶ Challenge of transferability. An EBP (even if based on good data) that works well in place A might not work well in place B.
- ▶ We need a new approach for creating knowledge.
- ▶ HOME-grown EBPs --- YOUR EVIDENCE!



A trial that changed my thinking

- ▶ We launched a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of a program called HOPE in 2007
- ▶ By most standards it was a really neat RCT
 - ▶ We found impressive results
 - ▶ The program is being replicated by other researchers
 - ▶ 28 states have implemented the program
 - ▶ It has worked its way into the president's budget
- ▶ I should be happy. Right?



- Federal funders begin to rally
- DOJ funds (at great expense) a national demonstration experiment in four new HOPE states
- Results expected 2016

Meanwhile...

- HOPE is evolving. DOJ is evaluating the *original* model (that's no longer in place...) in four new jurisdictions and results will be released 10 years (!) after we first learned of the program.



The Snail Trail

- ▶ Typical timeline from birth of an idea, through the funding cycle, to study completion is SEVEN years
- ▶ Average term of a DOC Secretary is only 2.5 years
- ▶ Many programs based on “feels nice” because we have made it so hard, so expensive, and so looooooong to test
- ▶ The entire CJ field averages about five trials a year
- ▶ And I’m aging.....



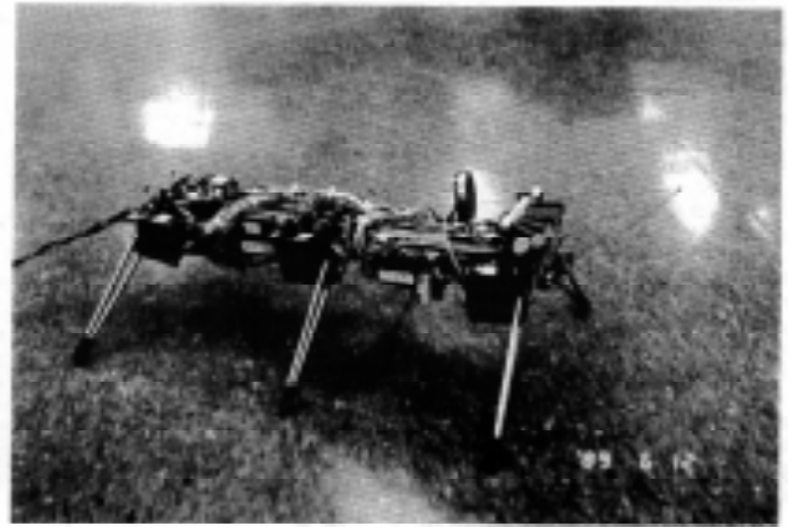
Amidst the frustration...

- ▶ **Four events shake things up**
 - ▶ A paper (“Fast, Cheap and Out of Control”)
 - ▶ A call from Bisbee, Arizona
 - ▶ A meeting at the W in Los Angeles
 - ▶ Subway (sandwiches, not trains)
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FAST, CHEAP AND OUT OF CONTROL: A ROBOT INVASION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

RODNEY A. BROOKS and ANITA M. FLYNN
MIT Artificial Intelligence Lab*, Cambridge, MA, USA.

Complex systems and complex missions take years of planning and force launches to become incredibly expensive. The longer the planning and the more expensive the mission, the more catastrophic if it fails. The solution has always been to plan better, add redundancy, test thoroughly and use high quality components. Based on our experience in building ground based mobile robots (legged and wheeled) we argue here for cheap, fast missions using large numbers of mass produced simple autonomous robots that are small by today's standards (1 to 2 Kg). We argue that the time between mission conception and implementation can be radically reduced, that launch mass can be slashed, that totally autonomous robots can be more reliable than ground controlled robots, and that large numbers of



Bisbee, AZ

- ▶ A call with a probation chief
- ▶ He wants to try something *similar* to HOPE
- ▶ I explain that with funding mechanisms and timelines, if all goes well he'd have findings in 3–4 years (he was planning to retire within 2 years)

OR

He could start tomorrow

- ▶ So he did...
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The W Hotel

- ▶ I meet a bereaved father who lost his son to addiction
 - ▶ He asks what we should be doing more of to have fewer tragedies like his
 - ▶ I say we are flailing: we need innovation and more, better-quality studies
 - ▶ I learn about the basement and I'm embarrassed for my field
 - ▶ The W knows more about how you respond to the placement of a light switch than we know about what offenders respond to
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Subway Sandwiches

- ▶ Big companies (Walmart, Subway) routinely rely on trials to improve operations
 - ▶ Where should the daily special be posted? How many stacks of napkins and how far from the register?
 - ▶ Small details add up to major operational efficiencies
→ lower costs and better service
 - ▶ The CJ system needs both...
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So I created BetaGov

- ▶ Removes barriers to conducting rigorous evaluations
 - ▶ seeks to make tests the norm rather than the exception
 - ▶ Goal is homegrown, practitioner-led trials
 - ▶ Most rigorous test of an intervention—random assignment—is also the simplest to interpret
 - ▶ BetaGov provides free support, so that practitioners can carry out RCTs
 - ▶ minimal cost
 - ▶ contribute to evidence registry with more scope, rigor, and practical value than anything to date
 - ▶ It took an inspired funder ... (BetaGov is unconventional)
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What is BetaGov is doing?

- ▶ **Stimulating tests**
 - ▶ Spur innovation
 - ▶ Tools for practitioners
 - ▶ Repository of findings (not influenced by money)
 - ▶ **Going to new wells for ideas**
 - ▶ Academics not always well suited to be authors of innovation (often far removed from practice)
 - ▶ Field-based innovations
 - ▶ Staff-initiatives
 - ▶ Offender-led innovations
 - ▶ BPC, HPC, IMU focus groups, families
 - ▶ Operations observation
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What will motivate ME to comply? (submissions from female inmates)

- ▶ Special events
 - ▶ Sneakers (real, not prison-issue)
 - ▶ Oils/perfumes
 - ▶ Mattress topper
 - ▶ Cosmetics
 - ▶ Colorful towels/linens
 - ▶ New pillow
 - ▶ New water cup
 - ▶ Hair accessories
 - Allowed to eat in the dayroom
 - Larger selection of hygiene products (conditioner!)
 - Slippers
 - Hoodies
 - Colorful t-shirts
 - Yard time
 - Manicures
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What will help ME comply: Supermax inmates

- ▶ Graduated reintegration (exiting isolation is terrifying)
 - ▶ “When I get anxious somebody gets hurt”
- ▶ Customized rewards
 - ▶ “Soap that smells nice calms me down”
- ▶ Sunlight
- ▶ Unstructured congregate programming
- ▶ Cake (once a month)



Example: IMU Congregate programming

Control - BAU



Intervention



Status...

- ▶ This month we prepared proposals for 7 trials for submission to NIJ
 - ▶ 2x Text message reminders, Cell phones on release, 2x Calendaring, Pre-release video conferencing, IMU chairs
 - ▶ This month we added 15 new trials for WA
 - ▶ This month we brought on two new states, each launching with five trials to start
 - ▶ Since January 2015 we have had 80 approved RCTs
 - ▶ As a reminder, the entire field produces 5 a year
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The result?

- ▶ Large number of trials
 - ▶ Small but high-quality studies that help signal what works and what doesn't
 - ▶ None will be perfect, but in aggregate
 - ▶ provide evidence of which approaches (or changes to operational procedures) are worthy of further study and which are not
 - ▶ Public-programming prospecting—Brooks/Flynn-inspired rocket science for the public sector
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My “Team”

- ▶ We are almost all volunteers
- ▶ We rely on great ideas from the field
- ▶ We rely on great ideas from inmates and families
- ▶ We learn from success and learn from failure
- ▶ What would YOU test?

BIG IDEA? Small idea?

Please innovate with us.
