

Wisconsin Smart Defense Reporting, Analysis, and Mining Project (RAMP) Final Report of Project Implementation and Outcomes (2015 – 2017)

Executive Summary

September 2017

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Description of the Project

The Wisconsin State Public Defender’s Office (SPD), in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI), implemented a data-driven strategy to enhance decision-making on individual cases, assess attorney performance, and enhance budget and legislative policy input through the development of the RAMP Reporting System. RAMP was developed to address two of the American Bar Association’s (ABA) Principles of Public Defense Delivery System, which recommend that “the public defense counsel is controlled to permit the rendering of quality representation” (Principle #5) and that “defense counsel is supervised and systematically reviewed for quality and efficiency according to nationally and locally adopted standards” (Principle #10).

SPD’s case management system (eOPD) was enhanced to receive and analyze additional data from the Wisconsin Circuit Court Automation Program (CCAP) to develop the “RAMP Reporting System.” The figure at right details the system’s enhanced capabilities.

SPD will use the RAMP Reporting System to improve the quality of the following:

- policy decisions,
- client outcomes,
- agency impact, and
- effective management of legal operations.



Summary of RAMP Outcomes

As a result of the RAMP grant funding, SPD made numerous improvements to increase agency-wide evidence-based decision-making capabilities and to enhance the effectiveness of staff. The RAMP Reporting System enhanced SPD's ability to review data pertinent to attorney performance and thereby provided SPD management with greater ability to evaluate quality representation in accordance with ABA Principle #5 and #10.

RAMP has enabled SPD to accomplish the following:

- enhance data infrastructure;
- develop, test, and release a variety of automated reports for both management and client representation purposes;
- integrate feedback from early RAMP report users;
- develop attorney performance indicators;
- use RAMP reports for 2017 attorney performance reviews;
- enhance attorney access to data to improve client case outcomes through RAMP reports;
- enhance the assigned counsel billing system;
- continue strong project leadership through the RAMP Team;
- achieve extensive agency staff input and collaboration; and
- maintain a strong UWPHI/SPD partnership.

RAMP Users Say:

*“Impressed!”
“That was easy.”
“Loved it compared to eOPD.”
“...That is awesome.
No more using paper copies. I wish I would have had this three weeks ago when I was [calling] on my 45th attorney for a case I had to appoint.”*

Lessons Learned and Implications

Lessons learned during RAMP included the importance of a unified team approach, a structured work plan via a logic model, ongoing stakeholder engagement, data quality, data documentation, staff training, development of performance indicators, effective communication with Information Technology (IT) staff, and collaboration with other indigent defense systems. SPD will use these lessons learned to enhance agency operations.

SPD will also continue many of the RAMP-related project tasks after the end of the grant period, including the following:

- ongoing maintenance of the RAMP Reporting System,
- continued assessment and measurement of quality representation,
- use of RAMP reports to respond to legislative and budget requests, and
- use of RAMP reports to improve client case outcomes.