

## **Session D: Partnering for Quality with Private Providers**

### ***General overview***

This breakout session brought two very different organizations together to present on how they have approached the issue of partnering with providers. One organization is a small Midwestern rural county, while the other is a northwestern Department of Corrections.

### ***Major Themes***

#### **Approach**

One of the major themes was how to approach treatment providers. This relationship can often be adversarial. Treatment providers can sometimes feel like corrections agencies are distrustful and trying to control what they do. They often are not accustomed to partnerships, and can feel some sense of competition with other providers.

Grant County has approached this issue by trying to work with providers in a way that emphasizes a mutual shared benefit and shared values. The ultimate goal is public safety and approaching the group with this in mind is important. From there it is a matter of establishing a dialogue with providers. The state of Oregon's Department of Corrections works in a different way with providers. They do not have direct authority over them, or over probation/parole. However they do assessments on all providers using the CPAI and CPC. This is done for all treatment and rehabilitation programs that have contracts with probation/parole in which state community corrections funds are invested. The assessment is non-adversarial because the DOC employee who completes it is a third party reviewer and it is required by a state law. The assessment report is objective, specific and provides recommendations for ways to make improvement to the program so it can be a tool that the local probation/parole office and the program uses to better integrate the research on effectiveness into the program design and the county contracting process.

#### **Accountability**

Communicating that this is an open process intended to foster accountability and to ensure quality was a theme that both sites felt resonated with treatment providers.

### ***Concluding Thoughts***

Working with providers requires ensuring impartiality and communicating a benefit to the providers. Ultimately, all of the involved parties are concerned with public safety, so establishing a mutual value system and building off of that is a helpful exercise. Finally, communicating that this is not a surveillance operation but is about accountability so that everyone is working toward a mutual goal and using proven practices. Whether it is in a small rural jurisdiction or a state agency, the process is similar.