



Counterdrug Technology

Advanced Systems to Help Law Enforcement and Medical Science in the Struggle Against Drug Crime and Abuse

www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/ctac

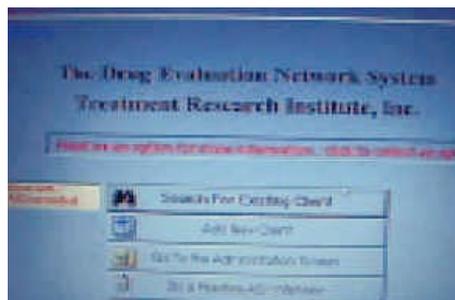
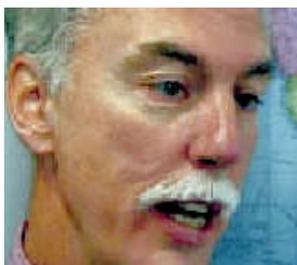
DENS: The Drug Evaluation Network System

Tracking American Drug Abuse in Real Time to Make Treatment and Prevention More Effective

CTAC has sponsored the creation of the nation's first digital, virtually real-time, Drug Evaluation Network System (DENS), allowing for the tracking of drug-related problems and drug use patterns across the country. The benefits of this system include earlier intervention in problem areas, more focused treatment care plans, and targeting of prevention efforts. DENS was conceived by two of the most respected authorities in substance abuse treatment, outcomes, and prevention: Columbia University Prof. Herb Kleber, M.D., and University of Pennsylvania Prof. A. Thomas McLellan, Ph.D.

Piloted for the past 3 years in 40 drug treatment programs and drug courts in six cities, DENS has proved itself and expanded. Under the operational guidance of Dr. Deni Carise of the Treatment Research Institute, DENS is now collecting information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' 200 drug and alcohol treatment programs as well as the statewide treatment system in New Jersey, and the Delaware Drug Courts. A follow-up study is underway with DENS in 300 drug treatment centers in Los Angeles. Additionally, another ONDCP-sponsored study, the RAMONA project, is being built into DENS to provide an estimate of the number of hard-core drug users in the U.S. Integrating RAMONA into DENS should produce more precise results than previous efforts, which did not have the immediate reach and rapid response of RAMONA.

DENS begins with an extensive profile of individuals entering treatment at a participating program, allowing comparisons of treatment efficacy while completely shielding each patient's privacy. In the future, the system will additionally track services received as well as treatment outcomes, providing solid, scientific measures of performance. This, in turn, is expected to create a wide range of new knowledge-based opportunities for treatment professionals and other decision makers. Today, long before it was expected, some



treatment centers are using DENS information and software to streamline their new patient evaluation and the result is much faster identification of patient needs. "We are saving weeks if not months and that means patients get much more out of their time in the program than they would have without the DENS input into our process," one treatment center told us.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Dr. Kleber; Dr. Carise listens to treatment center manager; DENS computer system being used at treatment center; detail from DENS terminal screen; Dr. McLellan.