



Introduction to the Wellness Court Concept

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What is a Tribal Healing to Wellness Court?

- ▶ Treatment courts or drug courts as they are often referred to in State jurisdictions, integrate substance abuse treatment with the criminal justice system.
 - ▶ The model provides substance abusing offenders a team approach that is judicially supervised treatment and offers transitional services through intense supervision, sanctions, incentives, drug testing, and other rehabilitation services.
 - ▶ The tribal healing to wellness court concept was adopted from the drug court model around 1997. At that time, Tribal Nations determined that a slightly different model was needed to meet the needs of individual tribal nations and their communities.
 - ▶ There are approximately over 100 Tribal Nations that have implemented some form of a wellness court (adult wellness court or juvenile wellness court).



Tribal to Healing Wellness Court Key Components

- Key Component #1: Individual and Community Healing Focus;
- Key Component #2: Referral Points and Legal Process;
- Key Component #3: Screening and Eligibility;
- Key Component #4: Treatment and Rehabilitation;
- Key Component #5: Intensive Supervision;
- Key Component #6: Incentives and Sanctions;
- Key Component #7: Judicial Interaction;
- Key Component #8: Monitoring and Evaluation;
- Key Component #9: Continuing Interdisciplinary and Community Education;
- Key Component #10: Team Interaction.



Salt River Current Practice

- Salt River currently does not have adult wellness court.
- There is a juvenile drug court that was put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, various key players in the drug court program were meeting to make improvements in the juvenile drug court program.
- In 2021, Tribal Council approved exploring the development of an adult wellness court for the Salt River Tribal Court.
- An initial meeting was held involving key players in the development of the Salt River Adult Wellness Court. Key players included: Tribal Prosecutor, Defense Advocate, Social Services, Behavioral Health Services, Cultural Resources, Senior Services, Court, and Veteran's Representative. The team plans to add a Salt River Vocational Services program representative.



Next Steps

- ▶ View other drug courts and tribal wellness courts to see how they operate and take the positive aspects of each court to implement in Salt River's court;
- ▶ Incorporate a cultural component to the program;
- ▶ Seek out training through both the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (wellness court training);
- ▶ Develop policies/procedures for the Wellness court, including what crimes would make a person eligible for the program;
- ▶ Seek final approval to implement the program;
- ▶ Staff the program with each of the respective departments to begin the program;



Wellness Court Goals

- ▶ A wellness court program is not the answer or the right fit for everyone. However, if the core team approaches implementation using the standardized key components, we have an opportunity to:
 - ▶ Treat substance abuse disorders;
 - ▶ Treat mental health needs;
 - ▶ Break the cycle of addiction in families;
 - ▶ Reduce re-arrests and re-incarcerations;
 - ▶ Reduce foster care placements;
 - ▶ Reduce substance use and overdose;
 - ▶ Help secure education, employment, housing;
 - ▶ Help produce successful, productive Community Members.