INTRODUCTION:

Miami-Dade County Jail is home to approximately 1,000 individuals with various mental illnesses. This number is expected to increase to 3,000 in the near future. This is a result of state hospital beds being cut off. To reduce the strain on state hospitals, the Miami-Dade County jail has implemented the Miami-Dade Forensic Alternative Center (MD-FAC) program where patients are diverted from state hospitals to the jail. The Miami-Dade Forensic Alternative Center was started in August 2009 by the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida and the Florida Hospital and provided with daily competency restoration services. Treatment services also focus on illness management and community reentry.

METHODS:

A Diversion Program for Mentally Ill Offenders

RESULTS:

CONCLUSIONS:

• Patient populations were comparable in demographic factors.
• Patients admitted to MD-FAC were found to have lower recidivism rates in comparison with those admitted to a state hospital.
• An admission to MD-FAC doubled the chances that the patient would not return to jail in the year following discharge.
• The amount of days MD-FAC patient spent in jail the year following discharge was 2/3 less than state hospital patient's.
• The average length of stay at MD-FAC inpatient unit was 1/3 less than the length of stay at a state hospital.
• The cost for inpatient admission to MD-FAC was 1/2 the cost of inpatient admission to a state hospital.

A patient admitted to MD-FAC had double the chances of staying out of jail the year following discharge, at half the cost and 2/3 the length of inpatient stay in comparison to a patient admitted to a state hospital.

Outcomes of the Miami-Dade County Forensic Alternative Center: A Diversion Program for Mentally Ill Offenders

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MD-FAC patients</th>
<th>State Hospital patients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (average)</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>M: 69%  F: 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>White: 53.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Hispanic: 34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Comparison criteria for outcomes were:
• Costs per patient admission to MD-FAC and state hospital.
• Recidivism rates (jail bookings for committing new offenses, rearrests, warrants, and incarceration).
• The time spent in jail for all year following discharge.

Diagrams of State Hospital Patients (n=33) vs. MD-FAC Patients (n=87)