

# **July 2007 Quarterly Report: The No Violence Alliance (NoVA) Project Evaluation**

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PREPARED BY



July 27, 2007

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## I. Introduction

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A significant number of ex-offenders with violent histories are released from the San Francisco County jail system into the communities of Bayview Hunters Point, Western Addition, and the Mission District. In order to address the dual problems of violence in these neighborhoods and recidivism in the jail system, the San Francisco Sheriff's Department has initiated the No Violence Alliance Project (NoVA) to provide individualized, intensive community reentry support to violent ex-offenders.

Centered on an intensive case management model, the NoVA Project aims to connect ex-offenders to services provided by a collaborative of partner organizations and other community resources. These services—which include substance abuse and mental health services, housing services, job training and placement programs, victim and survivor services, and other necessary resources—collectively address the many barriers ex-offenders face upon reentry into their communities. The goal of pairing intensive case management with this network of wrap-around services to ex-offenders is to help them reintegrate with their families and communities and avoid re-involvement with the criminal justice system.

A team of consultants from Pendergrass & Associates and LaFrance Associates, LLC (LFA) has been contracted to provide an evaluation of the NoVA project. This ongoing evaluation, whose methods and data sources are described in the next section of the report, aims to:

- Answer key questions about educational, employment, housing, substance use, psychosocial and criminal justice **outcomes** of the clients who participate in the NoVA Project;
- Assess the **functioning** of the administration of the NoVA Project, including the collaborative of the Sheriff's Department, and case managers and other service providers to identify best practices for this unique and promising program model as well as areas for continued improvement; and
- Inform the **ongoing development** of the NoVA Project through frequent check-ins with program staff and administrators and quarterly reporting.

This report is the first quarterly report of the NoVA Project evaluation. It includes a discussion of the characteristics of NoVA clients, preliminary outcomes of their participation, observations on the functioning of the NoVA Project based on conversations with case managers, agency staff and NoVA administrators, and suggestions for improving the project. It covers the first nine months of NoVA's implementation, October 2006 through July 2007. It is our hope that this report is useful for NoVA administrators and program staff as they continue to develop the NoVA Project.

## **II. NoVA Evaluation Activities and Methods**

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### **Overview**

The NoVA Project evaluation approach is a mixed-methods design including qualitative (e.g., interviews) and quantitative (e.g., surveys and institutional records analysis) methods. Because NoVA's intensive case management-focused approach to community reentry and violence prevention is a unique model, the evaluation research conducted by the NoVA evaluation team seeks to answer key questions about the effects of the NoVA Project on participant outcomes (outcomes evaluation); document the characteristics, needs and progress of nova clients; and assess the strengths and challenges of the collaborative of case managers, other service providers, and the Sheriff's Department (process evaluation).

For the quantitative component of the design involving analysis of criminal justice records, the evaluation team will employ a quasi-experimental research design that examines how NoVA Project participants fare over time with respect to re-arrests compared to an historical comparison group that resembles the NoVA participants in their demographics, neighborhood and history of violent crime, but who were released from prison at a time prior to the start-up of NoVA. However, this phase of analysis will occur later in the evaluation process and is not covered in this report.

During the first quarter of the NoVA Project evaluation, LFA developed the project logic model and outcome measures in close collaboration with the project's case managers, Sheriff's Department, and other NoVA Project staff. By meeting directly with these key stakeholders, the evaluation team clarified the goals and approaches of both the NoVA Project and the evaluation study in a face-to-face, interactive format. This format was critical for LFA to begin understanding the on-the-ground perspective of NoVA's implementation, clients, goals, and desired outcomes.

### **Outcomes Evaluation Methods**

#### **Data Available for this Report**

The primary source of data on NoVA client characteristics, progress and outcomes is the case management database, from which the evaluation team culled client intake, service utilization, program outcome, and personal data. Section III of this report presents a portrait of NoVA clients to date, including age, gender, ethnicity, education background, neighborhood, as well as employment training, housing, and counseling needs and preliminary outcomes. Additional information about client utilization of services, intensity of case management, and progress through the program will be explored in future reports.

To examine whether the NoVA Project is having a community-level impact, the evaluation team requested historical and current neighborhood crime data for the San Francisco communities of Bayview Hunters Point, Western Addition, and the Mission District from local police stations. Although the stations have thus far been unable to fulfill our request, evaluation staff was able to download general crime statistics by district through the San Francisco Police Department. Statistics on violent crimes are presented in Appendix A for the city of San Francisco and the Mission and Bayview communities. The Mission and Bayview neighborhoods are represented by separate

districts, but the Western Addition is incorporated into a district representing many neighborhoods and so is not included in the data.

### **Future Data Sources**

The evaluation team is currently determining which, if any, additional variables should be added to this database for evaluation purposes, and establish how these data can be exported into a format that can be easily used for analysis in the future. Project staff and evaluators are also considering methods for further protecting the confidentiality and privacy of NoVA clients in the data collection and analysis process. With the project logic model and outcomes indicators developed and approved by NoVA staff and administrators, evaluators are now in the process of securing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for future aspects of the evaluation research study that will highlight more in-depth information about the experiences and outcomes of NoVA clients. The IRB approval will ensure that the processes of gathering comparison group data and collecting data directly from nova clients via surveys and/or interviews will not compromise individuals' privacy, confidentiality or comfort.

The evaluation team also has plans to incorporate other data sources for measuring outcomes, including individual and neighborhood crime data. In June 2007, the evaluation team sent a formal request for complete CLETS (California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System) records for 500 randomly selected violent offenders who were released in the 12 months prior to October 2006, when the NoVA Project began. This set of individual crime data will serve as a comparison group of ex-offenders who resemble NoVA participants in terms of their characteristics but who did not have the opportunity to receive NoVA Project's services.

### **Process Evaluation Methods**

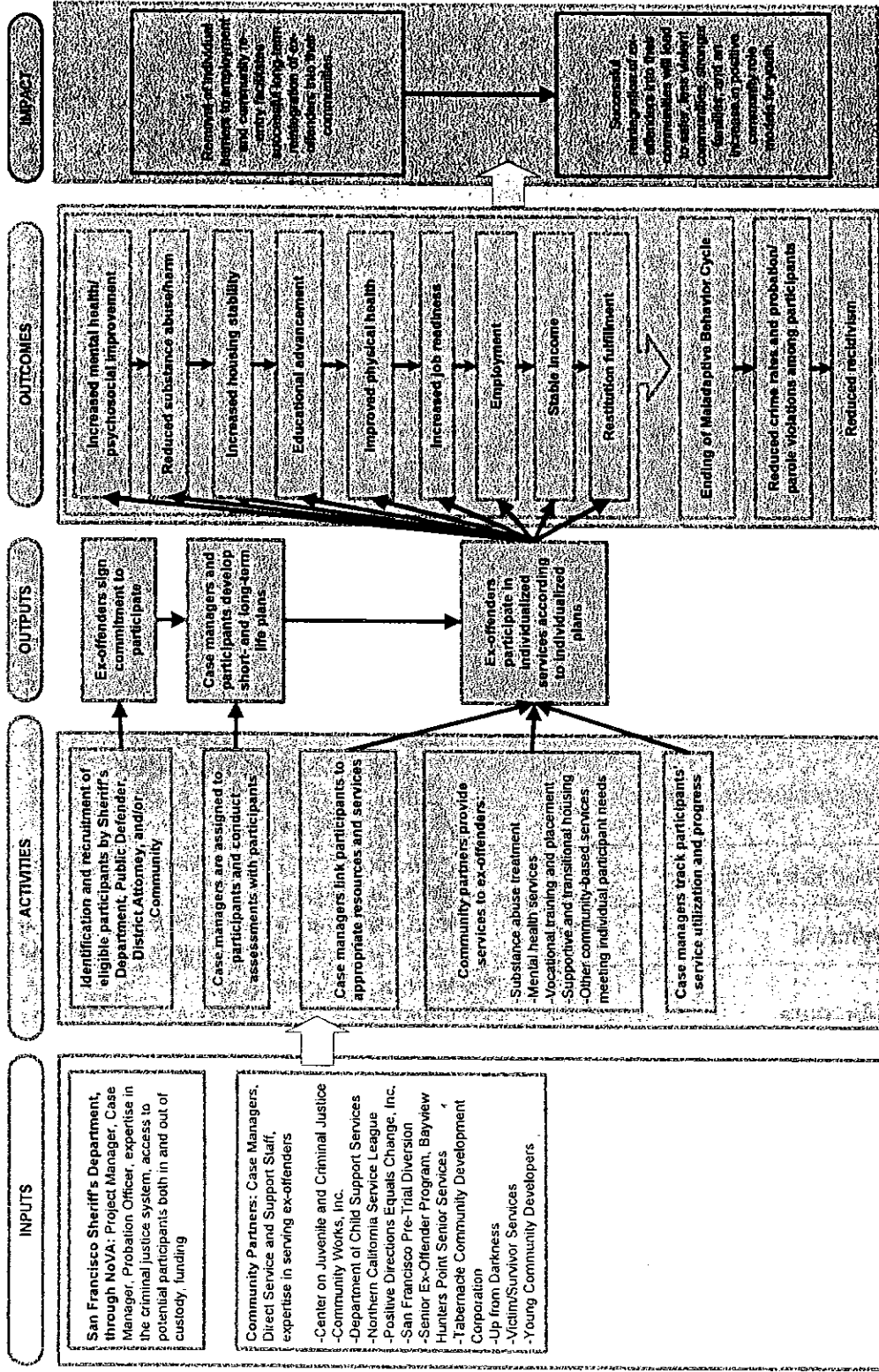
The process evaluation of the NoVA Project draws upon periodic interviews with case managers and agency staff who provide services to NoVA clients, as well as the project management and administration team. The evaluation team conducted the first of four rounds of key informant interviews with representatives of eleven agencies and the project administration to assess the NoVA Project's implementation, administration and agency collaborative. This first round of interviews focused on program flow for the clients, project administration, and the experience of the service providers as part of the collaborative in the first nine months of the project, identifying successful practices as well as challenges. In June 2007, evaluation staff also held a focus group with eleven NoVA case managers to learn about their experiences with clients and to receive feedback on case manager collaboration, project administration, and tools and resources provided by the project. Analysis of the qualitative data gathered from interviews and the focus group is presented in Section IV of this report.

## NoVA Evaluation Logic Model

A logic model is a systematic and visual way to present the relationships among program resources (inputs), planned activities (activities), and the changes or results (outcomes) a program hopes to achieve. It is a tool that is helpful for staff to plan programs, and it is commonly used by evaluators for performance measurement and development of evaluation strategies.

As mentioned above, evaluators worked with program case managers and administrators to develop a logic model for the NoVA Project early in the evaluation process. NoVA aims to connect ex-offenders to services provided by its partner organizations and other community resources, collectively address the many barriers ex-offenders face upon community reentry, and help them successfully reintegrate with their families and communities. On the following page, the NoVA logic model illustrates the program's inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and overall intended impacts. Evaluators and program staff will continue to update this diagram as appropriate in subsequent years of the project. For example, the distinct roles of community partner organizations and service vendors will be more clearly delineated in future versions of the logic model.

## No Violence Alliance (NoVA) Logic Model: Overview of Project Components and Desired Outcomes



Prepared by Pendergrass & Associates and LaFrance Associates, LLC

## NoVA Research Questions and Outcome Objectives

The outcomes evaluation for the NoVA Project focuses on ten overall outcome objectives. Evaluators, project case managers and project administrators collectively developed indicators as measures for each objective. The table below outlines each project outcome and its corresponding indicators.

### No Violence Alliance Project Outcomes and Indicators

Outcomes	Indicators
<b>Increased mental health/psychosocial improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased access to mental health services</li> <li>❖ Increased ability to make healthy decisions</li> <li>❖ Improved attitudes about the world and participants' prospects in it</li> </ul>
<b>Reduced substance use/reduced harm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased knowledge about negative effects of possessing/using drugs</li> <li>❖ Reduced negative effects of substance use on life (employment, relationships, housing, health, etc)</li> </ul>
<b>Increased housing stability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reduced frequency of housing transition</li> <li>❖ Increased independence</li> <li>❖ Viable prospects after transitional housing/resident program</li> </ul>
<b>Educational advancement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased number of completed educational courses</li> <li>❖ Progress toward GED/degree</li> </ul>
<b>Improved physical health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Access to health care/services</li> <li>❖ Obtain physical health assessments</li> <li>❖ Access to dental care</li> </ul>
<b>Increased job readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Age-appropriate job skills training that is relevant to individual goals</li> </ul>
<b>Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased hours of employment</li> <li>❖ Increased number of employed participants</li> </ul>
<b>Stable income</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased job earnings</li> <li>❖ Obtain non-employment income where applicable (i.e. SSI/SSDI)</li> </ul>
<b>Restitution fulfillment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Community service hours</li> <li>❖ Waivers for court costs</li> <li>❖ Family reunification where appropriate</li> <li>❖ Paying back child support</li> <li>❖ Child support reduction where appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Reduced recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reduced violent crimes</li> <li>❖ Longer time between arrests and sentences</li> <li>❖ Reduced number of re-arrests</li> </ul>



### III. Client Data and Preliminary Outcomes

#### NoVA Client Characteristics

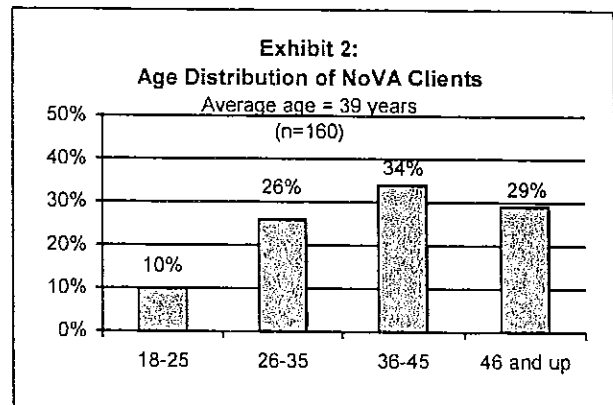
The following section describes all clients who have participated in NoVA since its inception in October 2006, including those who are currently active and those who began the program but have since dropped out. It does **not** include those who applied but were denied or who declined to participate. See Exhibit 1.

The age of NoVA clients ranges from 18 to 59 years old, with an average age of 39 years. The largest proportion (34%) of clients falls between the ages of 36 and 45 years (see Exhibit 2). Most NoVA clients to date are African American (89%) and male (93%). The populations released to the three different neighborhoods differed slightly:

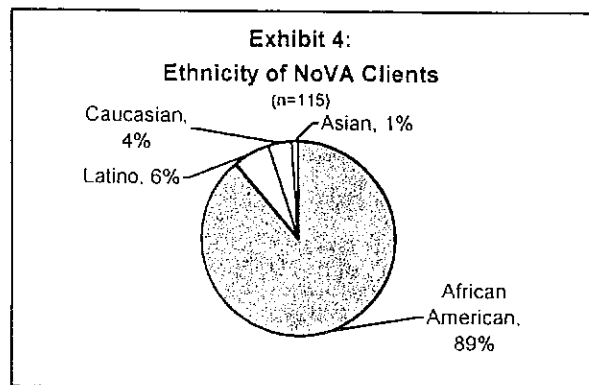
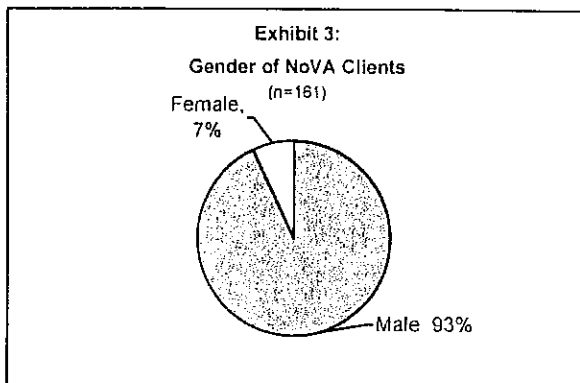
- The NoVA population in the **Western Addition** tends to be older than the overall NoVA client average.
- Latinos make up 30% of the **Mission**-based clients compared to 1% and 6% of those in the Bayview and Western Addition, respectively.
- Most (82%) of the women in NoVA reside in the **Bayview**.

**Exhibit 1:**  
NoVA Client Status  
(n=246)

Client Status	Number	Percentage
Active	149	61%
Declined	31	13%
Pending	28	11%
Drop-out	18	7%
Denied	12	5%
No Status	8	3%



Exhibits 3 and 4 show the ethnic and gender breakdown of NoVA clients overall.



Close to two-fifths of NoVA clients (41%) have not graduated from high school nor received a GED certificate (see Exhibit 5). In the Mission District, fully half of nova clients has less than a high school education. None of the NoVA clients has received a BA degree.

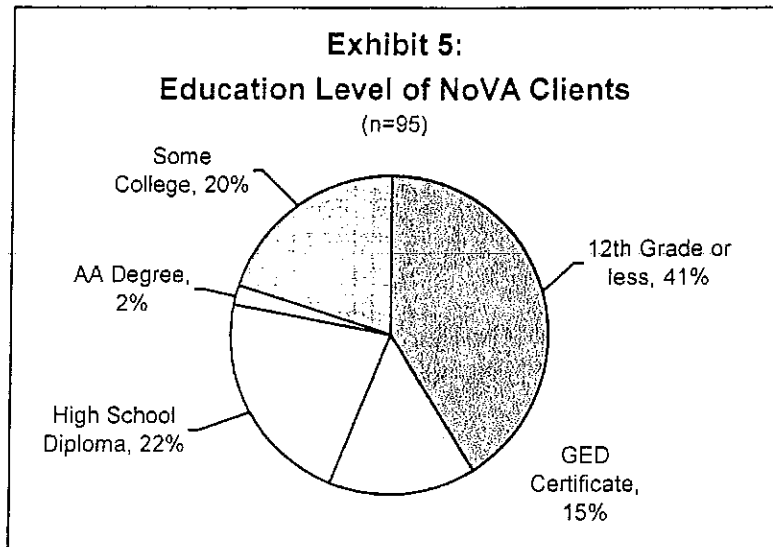
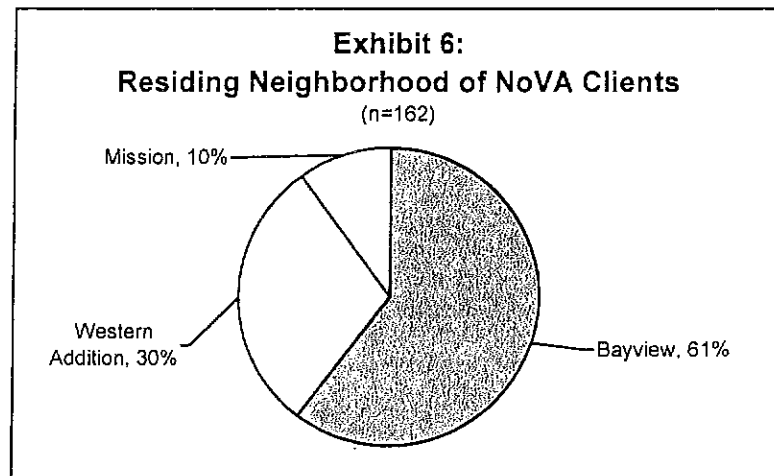


Exhibit 6 provides information about client's neighborhood of residence. More than half of NoVA clients (61%) reside in the Bayview neighborhood. Almost one-third (30%) of clients live in the Western Addition neighborhood, and only 10% reside in the Mission neighborhood.



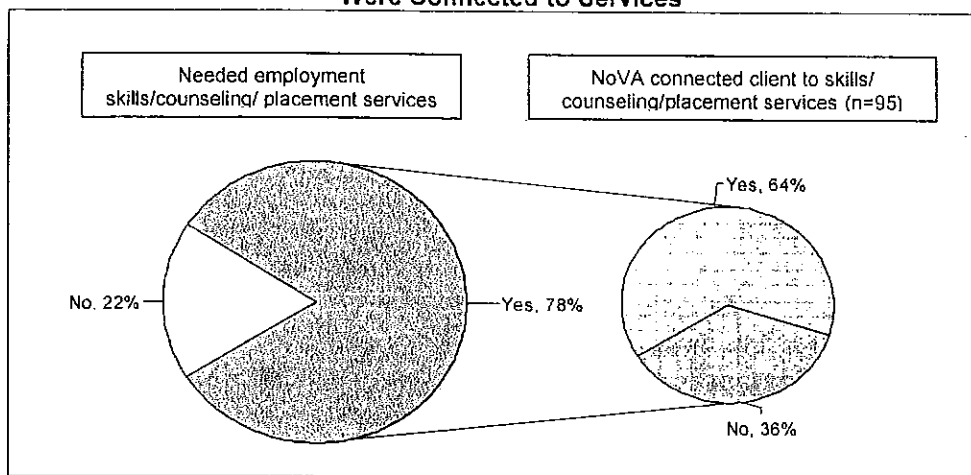
## Preliminary Outcomes

The following provides findings on NoVA clients' service needs and preliminary outcomes. Additional outcomes results will be available in subsequent evaluation reports.

### Employment

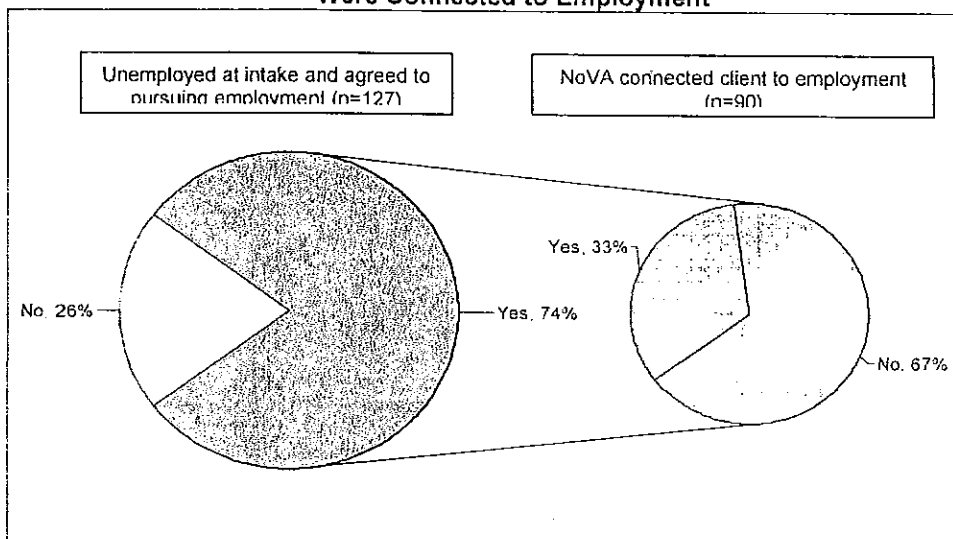
More than three-fourths (78%) of NoVA clients reported needing employment skills services at intake, including job training and employment placement assistance. Nearly two-thirds of those who requested these services have been connected to skills/counseling/placement services through NoVA (see Exhibit 7).

**Exhibit 7:  
Two-Thirds of Those Needing Employment Skills  
Were Connected to Services**



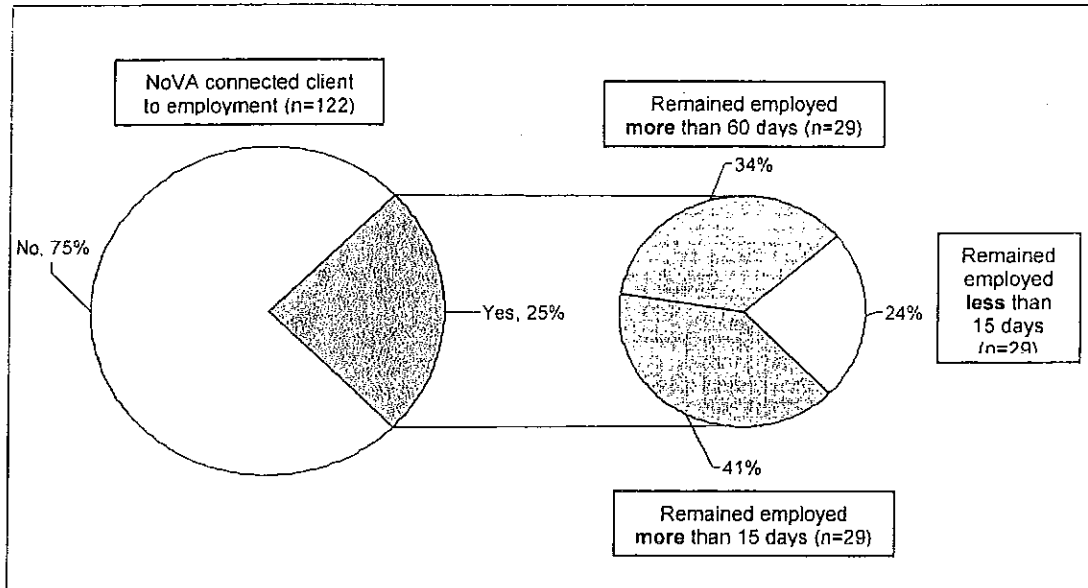
Close to three-fourths (74%) of NoVA clients were unemployed at intake (not depicted); one-third of those clients have been connected to employment. See Exhibit 8 below.

**Exhibit 8:  
One-Third of Those Needing Employment  
Were Connected to Employment**



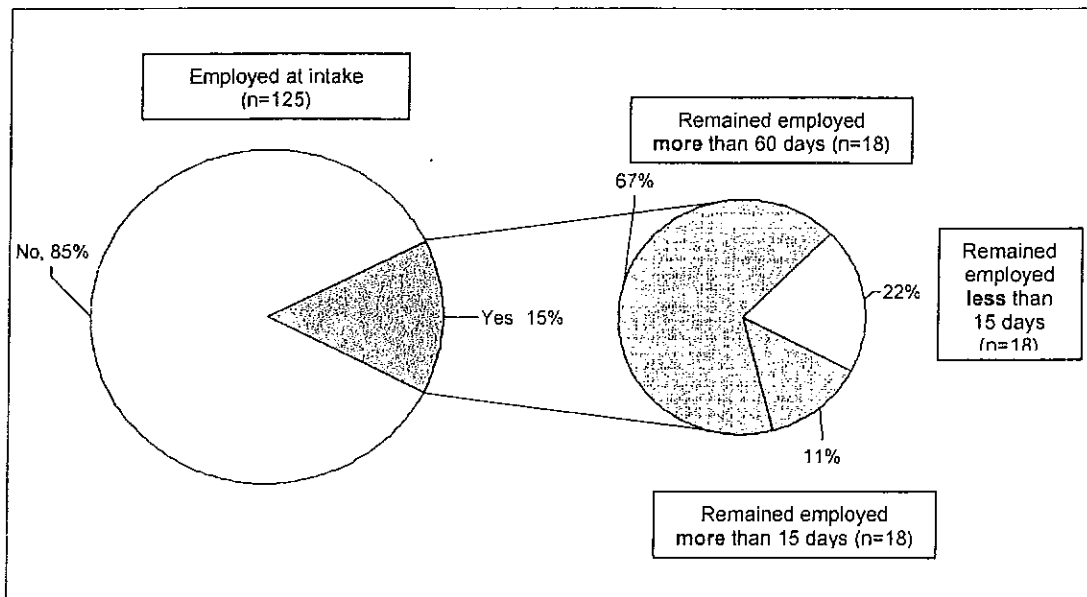
Overall, one-fourth (25%) of NoVA clients were connected to employment. Of those clients, 41% remained employed more than 15 days, and 36% remained employed more than 60 days. See Exhibit 9 below.

**Exhibit 9:  
Three-Fourths of Clients Connected to Employment  
Remained Employed for at Least 15 Days**



As seen in Exhibit 10 below, 15% percent of NoVA clients were already employed at the time of intake. These clients were much more likely than those who came into NoVA unemployed to remain employed longer: 67% remained employed more than 60 days, and 11% remained employed more than 15 days.

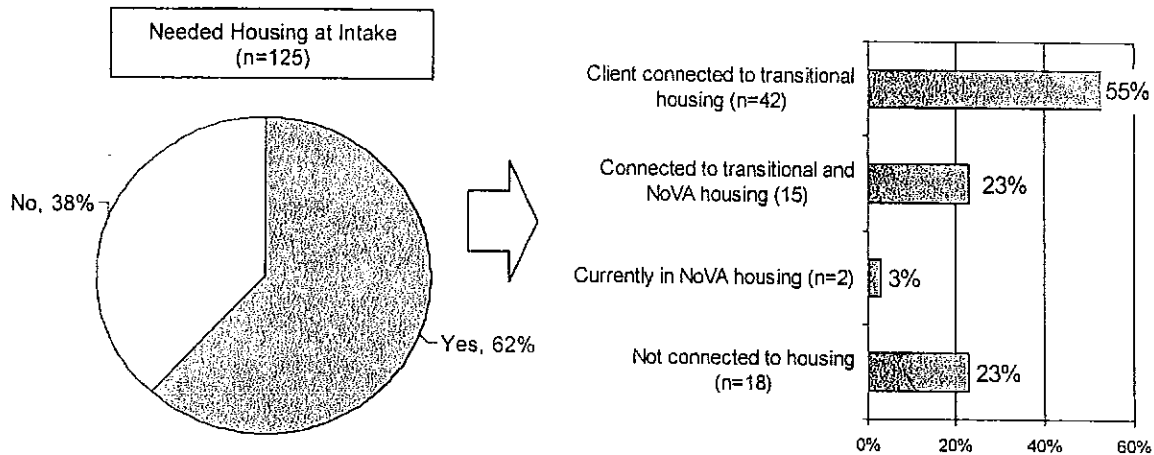
**Exhibit 10:  
Two-Thirds of Already Employed Clients  
Remained Employed for at Least 60 Days**



## Housing

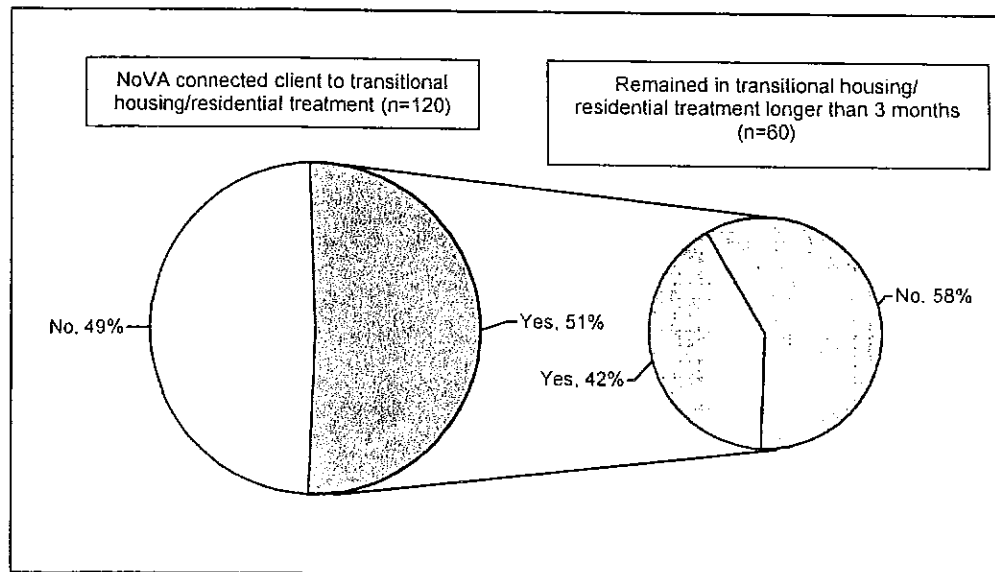
Over three-fourths (78%) of NoVA clients were in need of housing at intake. Close to two-fifths of clients (41%) have been connected to transitional housing, 37% have been connected to both transitional and NoVA housing, and 2% of clients are currently in NoVA housing. One-fifth of clients have not been connected to housing programs. See Exhibit 11 below.

**Exhibit 11:  
Four-Fifths of Clients Needing Housing Were Connected to  
Transitional Housing, NoVA Housing, or Both**



Half of all clients were connected to transitional housing/residential treatment. Of those clients, close to two-fifths (42%) remained in transitional housing/residential treatment for at least three months, as seen in Exhibit 12 below. Those who remain in transitional housing for at least three months were twice as likely to transition to independent housing and pay full rent.

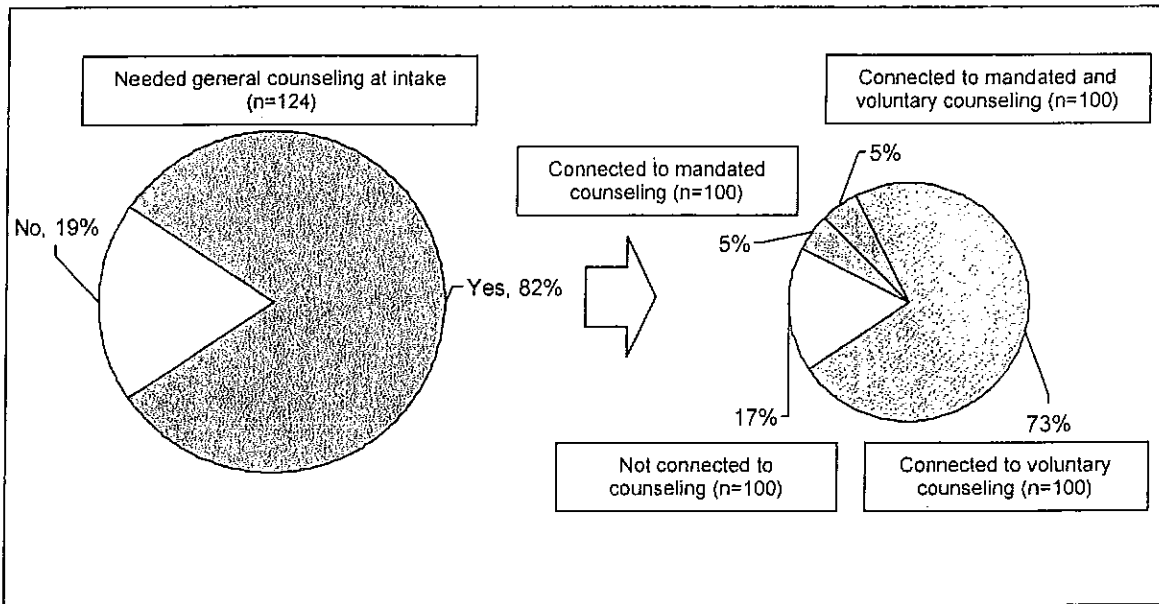
**Exhibit 12:  
Two-Thirds of Those Connected to Housing  
Remained in Housing Longer Than Three Months**



**General Counseling**

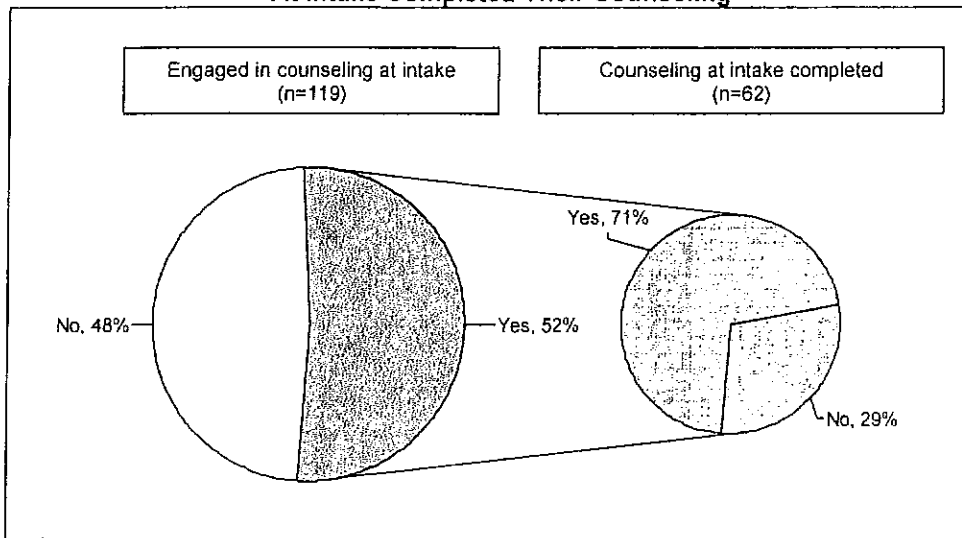
A significant percentage of NoVA clients (82%) reported a need for general counseling during their intake sessions. Close to three-fourths (73%) were connected to voluntary counseling, 5% were connected to mandated counseling, and another 5% were connected to both mandated and voluntary counseling services. Only 17% of those needing counseling at intake did not receive any services, as seen in Exhibit 13 below.

**Exhibit 13:  
Most NoVA Clients Needing Counseling  
Were Connected to Voluntary Counseling**



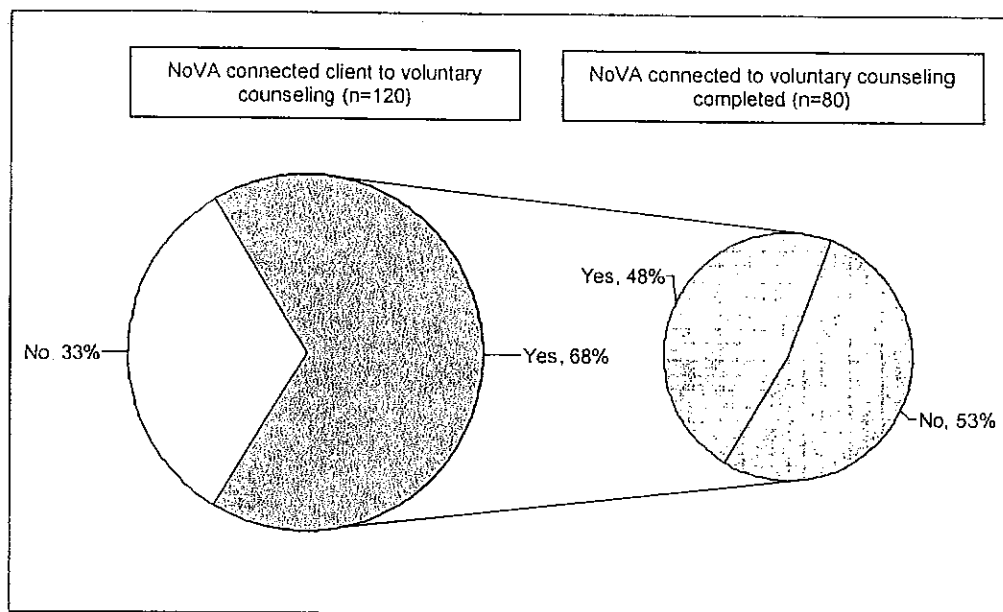
Over half of clients (52%) were engaged in counseling at intake, and 71% of those clients who were engaged in counseling have completed that counseling (see Exhibit 14 below).

**Exhibit 14:  
Nearly Three-Fourths of Those Engaged in Counseling  
At Intake Completed Their Counseling**



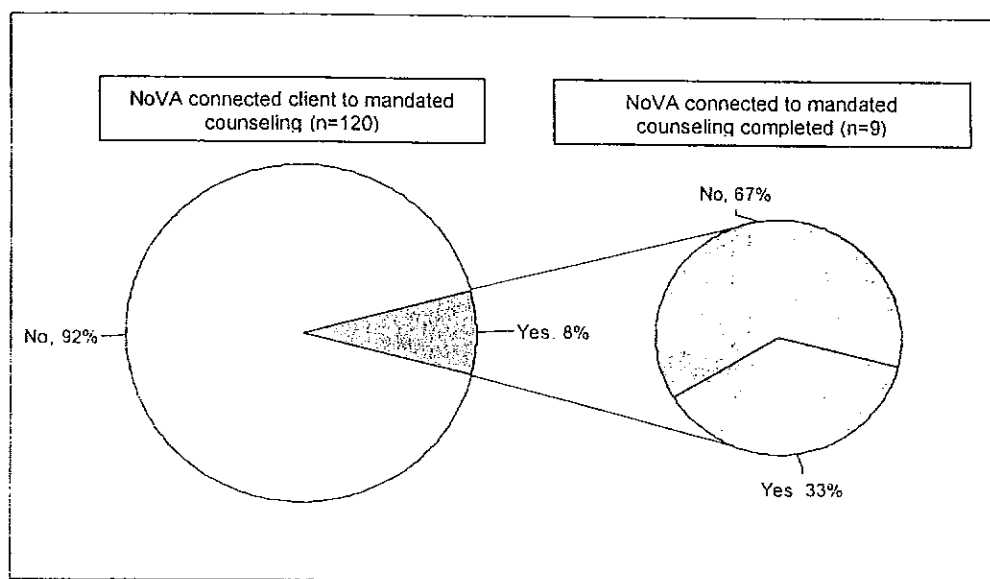
Client data show that NoVA participants are much more likely to complete voluntary counseling than mandatory counseling. Of the 68% of clients who were connected to voluntary counseling through NoVA, close to half (48%) have completed their counseling, as seen in Exhibit 15 below.

**Exhibit 15:**  
**Close to Half of Those Connected to Voluntary Counseling Have Completed Their Counseling**



In contrast, only one-third of NoVA clients who were connected to mandated counseling have completed their mandated counseling. See Exhibit 16 below.

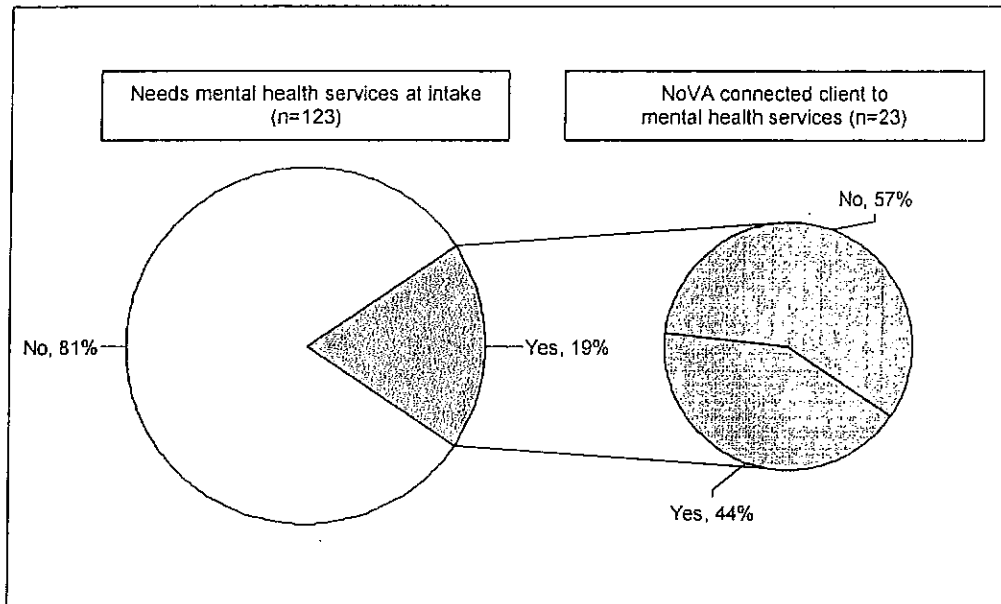
**Exhibit 16:**  
**One-Third of Those Connected to Mandated Counseling Have Completed Their Counseling**



## Mental Health

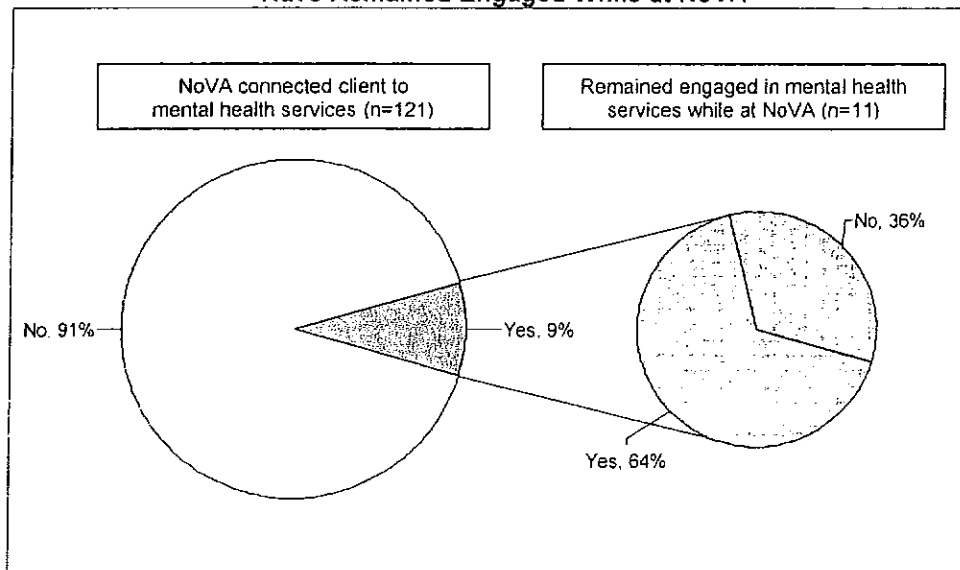
About one-fifth of NoVA clients (19%) needed mental health services at intake. Of those clients, almost half (44%) were connected to mental health services, as seen in Exhibit 17 below.

**Exhibit 17:**  
**Almost Half of Clients Needing Mental Health Services**  
**Were Connected Through NoVA**



Eight percent of NoVA clients were connected to “non-CBHS” mental health services or to community mental health services. Of those who were connected, 64% remained in mental health services while at NoVA, as seen in Exhibit 18 below.

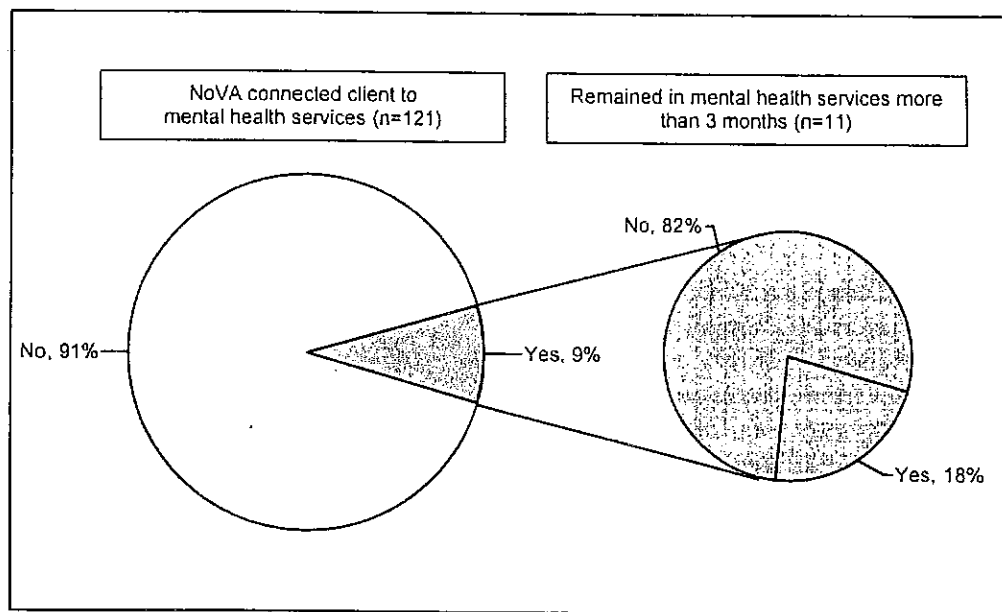
**Exhibit 18:**  
**Two-Thirds of Those Connected to Mental Health Services**  
**Have Remained Engaged While at NoVA**





Close to one-fifth (18%) of those NoVA clients who were connected to mental health services remained in those services for more than three months; see Exhibit 19 below.

**Exhibit 19:  
Two-Thirds of Those Connected to Mental Health Services  
Have Remained Engaged While at NoVA**



In future reports, the evaluation team will look more in depth at these and other indicators of progress toward clients' goals. These preliminary results are intended to show a snapshot of how clients are utilizing some of the services available to them. Case notes from the NoVA client database show consistent, extensive, and diligent follow through with clients to help them meet their basic needs and achieve their goals.

## IV. Lessons from the First Nine Months of NoVA Implementation

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To assess the NoVA Project's implementation in its first nine months, LFA staff conducted the first of four rounds of key informant interviews with representatives of eleven agencies and the Sheriff's Department, and facilitated a focus group with eleven NoVA case managers. The focus group and key informant interviews addressed topics of project administration, agency collaboration, NoVA tools and resources, and case managers' experiences with clients. The wealth of qualitative data culled from this information gathering process is presented here. Through analysis of this data, LFA was able to assess and identify successful practices as well as project challenges.

### Key Successes

#### *Intensive Case Management Model*

Overall, case managers and administrators expressed positive feedback about the NoVA model and genuine satisfaction with the innovative work that NoVA resources have allowed them to carry out. These resources, including more money and time allocated for each client, allow case managers to overcome previous barriers they faced in building rapport and maintaining relationships with clients. Also through this model, case managers can better assess their clients' needs and follow through on meeting these needs to the best of their ability. Project staff have the flexibility under NoVA to spend several hours a day with a client, if necessary, and provide assistance with the small but important practical needs such as helping clients obtain IDs, taking them to medical appointments, and providing them with public transportation passes. One case manager described this type of intensive and individual case management as "customized and client-friendly," and is regarded by the NoVA team as truly unique and valuable.

*"We can step out of the box,  
because there is no box."  
—NoVA Case Manager*

#### *Collaboration amongst Case Managers and Partner Agencies*

Another strength of the project has been extensive collaboration amongst NoVA case managers and partner agencies in the first nine months of the project. In addition to weekly check-in meetings, case managers often contact each other with reference to mutual clients and sometimes request services from other NoVA agencies for their clients. This type of collaboration provides "extra eyes out there in the community" on the activities and well-being of ex-offenders reentering the community. During weekly meetings, case managers learn from each other, receive updates, and make sure they are heading in the same direction. Also facilitating their collaboration is the NoVA tracking system, a live comprehensive database accessible by all case managers at any time. This tracking system allows case managers to conference with each other about particular clients and makes possible on-going engagement with clients as well. Project staff unanimously agreed that the tradeoff between time taken up by weekly meetings and updating the tracking system and the benefits of these systems was worth it. NoVA case managers themselves are probably the project's most valuable element. Given that they come from the community and have shared experiences with their clients ("we know that they know that we know"), it becomes easier for NoVA case managers to obtain buy-in from their clients.

*"[Weekly NoVA meetings] make  
us stronger as a group and as  
individual case managers."  
—NoVA Case Manager*

Several administrators at partner agencies spoke to the ease with which they have worked with each other, the responsiveness of each partner organization, and everyone's genuine effort at collaboration and resource-sharing. An example is the successful implementation of the NoVA database tracking system—a new tool that all partner agencies and their staff quickly adapted to despite the unique ways that each organization manage client cases. One administrator also expressed that prior to the NoVA Project, some partner agencies would only be in the same room to compete over funding. NoVA has instead connected agencies and “created better politics.”

*“The collaboration uses everyone's different areas of expertise and pools each organization's strengths and weaknesses. This is the wave of the future.”*

—NoVA Partner Agency Representative

### ***Positive Client Impact***

Although the NoVA Project is still very much in its startup phase, project staff articulated the impact they already see in NoVA clients. Clients are staying out of prison, if only for a little bit longer than before (“if they used to stay out of prison for two weeks before, now it's one month”). Some case managers have seen clients' self-esteem rise, attitudes change, and improved participation and more engagement in groups. Within the initial pool of NoVA clients who have been in the project for seven to eight months, a segment now has jobs and is saving money. At the same time, one case manager warns that evaluators of the project will not see impact within the first twelve month timeframe. Another case manager emphasized that NoVA is still an experimental project and as case managers go through this “trial and error” period, clients are also testing the project as well as their case managers.

*“I have seen some people change their lives because of the intensive case management and reinforcements.”*

—NoVA Case Manager

Agency administrators echoed these sentiments. One key informant stated that some NoVA clients might end up back in jail but not for violent crimes, and this outcome, although not ideal, should be seen as a positive impact. Another administrator expressed that the agency has really seen change in their NoVA clients, many of whom have stabilized their lives and can “see the long-term path.” Key informants gave numerous examples of individuals in the NoVA project who have successful completely training programs and found and kept employment.

### **Areas for Improvement**

#### ***Administrative Streamlining***

Information about the NoVA Project “spread like wildfire” in the jail system where participating agencies began recruitment for participants. Once clients joined the project, they also spread the news about NoVA and the services it offers. As a result, eighty participants were recruited in the first two months of the project—an unanticipated achievement. Now project staff express concern that at times there is a backlog of referrals in the Sheriff's Department; when this happens, potential clients are on hold for approval for several weeks. Partner agencies are concerned that this administrative bottleneck can cause delays that often make the difference between engaging a potential client during a critical window of opportunity and losing them to harmful behaviors. The backlog also creates confusion among non-NoVA service providers working in jails and providing re-entry services about how to get their clients into the NoVA Project. Staff and administrators emphasized

*[There needs to be] “immediacy in action before (potential) clients lose interest.”*

—NoVA Case Manager

that individuals referred upon release must get on the NoVA caseload as soon as possible or they will either fall into crisis or lose interest. Case managers also expressed concern that sometimes clients will get assigned to a different case manager than the one who referred them to the NoVA Project and has an existing relationship with the client. Fortunately, NoVA Project Management staff are aware of this situation and are pursuing additional support to keep the referral process moving along in a timely manner.

Additionally, case managers requested guidance and support from the project to keep cases moving forward. In line with the real-time intensive case management offered by NoVA, case managers suggest that the project creates a role for someone to systematically monitor the tracking system and case-log information, with an eye for cases that could be the subject of review and discussion. This person could, for example, pull up the list of clients that case managers have not seen for a period of time, such as two weeks, and make these clients the subject of collective discussion at the weekly case managers meeting regarding next steps.

*"We need something like clinical supervision, but more productive."*  
—NoVA Case Manager

Administrators also noted how challenging it is to establish minimum standards and baseline protocols for service provision amongst all partner agencies. The difficulty lies in the diversity of organizations involved in NoVA and the need to respect each agency's sovereignty.

### ***Promote Sustainability & Reflection***

Key informants expressed concern that partner agencies as well as the project administrators need to step back by the end of NoVA's first year and enjoy a period of reflection without the addition of new project components. With an eye towards long-term sustainability of the project, some

*"We can't do the next nine months at the pace of the first nine. It is not sustainable and I can't keep staff and case managers fresh."*  
—NoVA Partner Agency Representative

administrators felt that agencies cannot continue operating in "crisis mode," which characterized the first phase of the project. Among the benefits of slowing down and focusing on long-term planning is the ability to reflect on long-term goals and success measures. Several key informants expressed concern that NoVA's current structure places too much emphasis on lowering recidivism rates as a target outcome. One key informant spoke to the need for NoVA to place more emphasis on challenging and changing client behavior through setting concrete guidelines for their behavior. Another administrator articulated the need to develop broader success measures on both the micro level (case management) and the macro level (agency collaboration). In this evaluation process, case managers, other project staff, and evaluators collaboratively developed a set of intermediate outcomes that track NoVA's progress towards successful community reintegration, as shown in the logic model provided earlier in this report.

### ***Management of Funds***

Some key informants expressed frustration with delays in payment for services as well as changes in NoVA's payment policies. NoVA Project Management staff acknowledge this issue and express commitment to reducing the amount of time it takes to process and pay invoices.

*"I invoice NoVA, and it takes a month to get paid, and then they only pay me for one month instead of two. I had to borrow money to pay my bills. I never had to deal with that until I started working with the Sheriff's Department. If you are going to have a small program to do large volumes of work to restore people's lives, you need to invest."*  
—NoVA Partner Agency Representative

One partner agency administrator voiced frustration with NoVA's "over cautiousness in how they are allocating the money." The administrator felt that NoVA was not providing case managers with a "decent wage," paying part-time equivalent wages for full-time work. These concerns lead some agencies to question whether their organization will be able to continue to participate in NoVA. NoVA administrators acknowledge that partner agencies have faced delays and barriers to payment for services provided and have initiated a new process to ensure more prompt fund disbursement.

### ***Additional Needed Resources***

Case managers and administrators also cited other resources the NoVA Project should offer, or offer more of. Among these were transportation support, creative strategies for job placement, and most critically, the need for permanent housing options in neighborhoods other than those where clients experience triggers for behaviors they are trying to change. Case managers describe clients who enter transitional housing, get their lives together, but "hit a wall" when the time comes for them to look for permanent housing due to their criminal records. Another identified need was services for women ex-offenders, who, according to one partner, are becoming NoVA clients but having a harder time getting services because programs are not designed to serve them.

Not all agencies make the same use of NoVA resources. Some agencies include funding for basic client needs in their NoVA budgets while others do not. Yet all case managers expressed the value of and need for providing clients with basics such as haircuts, clothes for job interviews, and personal hygiene items.

Another need expressed by both administrators and case managers is for the NoVA Project to incorporate mental health professionals into the collaborative. Mental health specialists would be able to provide assessments in a timely manner whereas case managers are currently dependent on outside organizations for this service, which creates a lag time for appropriate referrals. Bringing this type of support on board is in the works, although progress has been slow largely as a result of the challenge in finding someone with the right set of skills and experience.

Other suggested resources to support streamlining of NoVA services include laptops for each case manager, and a skills and training center for clients.

Finally, it was noted that although services focused on basic needs such as employment and housing are indeed critical, there could be greater attention paid to clients' participation in more direct violence prevention programs, such as anger management classes. As one interviewee shared, "I see a lack of accountability in the violence prevention piece. If someone isn't required to attend an anger management or batterer treatment program, it's a concern from the survivor and community perspective.

### ***Expand Opportunities for Service Providers***

A final theme that emerged from the conversations with NoVA case managers and program representatives is that there is a strong desire for NoVA to succeed, and that NoVA's success will be enhanced by including services that touch as many aspects of the clients' lives as possible. While many key informants spoke positively about the collaborative working relationships amongst partner agencies and individual case managers, not all NoVA partner agencies have been part of the weekly meetings. Those who participate in weekly NoVA meetings consistently report that the communication allows them to share information, problem solve, support each other, and build cohesiveness in a way that is unique to NoVA. By not including all agency representatives, NoVA

loses an opportunity to fully leverage the skills, knowledge and resources of all partners and to extend the cohesiveness of the case managers to the entire collaborative.

Additionally, service agencies not represented at weekly NoVA meetings tend not to receive very many referrals from case managers. This led one informant to feel that potential clients are not aware of the NoVA Project, which is the opposite perspective of agencies that are receiving a heavy stream of referrals.

One administrator whose agency is not represented at weekly NoVA meetings felt that the agency was not well informed of systematic changes within the collaborative. This key informant also stressed that standards and expectations need to be clearer, and that the NoVA project would benefit from better overall communication. Another key informant whose agency is represented at the weekly meetings suggested extending an invitation to agency representatives who operate programs inside jails in order to refine the recruitment and screening processes and ensure that NoVA clients are hearing accurate and realistic information about the project.

*"Many drop outs result from clients entering the program without knowing what to expect. They hear about the services NoVA offers and they expect success immediately. When it doesn't happen like that, they drop out. Involving program staff in the screening and recruiting process could help by communicating more realistic expectations about the barriers ex-offenders will be up against when they come out. I've found that clients can hear this better from program people than from the Sheriff, because a lot of us have been there."*

—NoVA Partner Agency Representative

Finally, there was acknowledgment that although victim and survivor services were originally envisioned to be part of the NoVA Project and invited to be a NoVA partner agency, and although this service has been represented at the weekly case management meetings, it has not been effectively integrated into the project. It is possible that there is a misconception among some NoVA partners that "helping victims is equivalent to holding the ex-offenders back," or that it is inappropriate to talk about violent ex-offenders and victims/survivors at the same time. To help address this fear, a representative from the Victim and Survivor Services Program shared an alternate perspective about how these services can be an integral part of supporting ex-offenders and creating safer communities:

*"Let's say that a case manager has a violent client whose daughter is sexually assaulted, and he's in a community where there is no support for that. He can tell his NoVA case manager, who would refer the daughter to the survivor case manager to provide support and services to the daughter. It gives the NoVA client another piece of support to deal with an issue that might otherwise trigger his own violence. In this way, I see the survivor services piece having an important role in reducing violence and helping the community because it can be an important support service for ex-offenders as well as survivors, especially when ex-offenders are survivors themselves (tends to be especially true with women ex-offenders) or when people in the ex-offenders' lives are the victims (not necessarily their own victims)."*

## V. Summary and Recommendations

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In summary, this initial systematic examination of the NoVA Project has yielded valuable information for the ongoing development of this unique program. The evaluation team heard resounding appreciation for the level of communication and collaboration that has been fostered through the weekly meetings. There also appears to be consistent evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, suggesting that the extensive support provided by the intensive case management model truly does help clients in a new and tangible way.

The lessons from this first collection of process data can help guide the program to greater levels of effectiveness. Some key recommendations appear below.

- Expand the value of the weekly meetings by including—perhaps at a less frequent but regular interval, such as monthly—non-case management staff from other NoVA partner agencies and staff who work with potential NoVA clients in the jails.
- Include service providers in the recruitment and screening of NoVA clients to manage expectations and ensure better program fit.
- Build in time for program reflection to enhance the sustainability of the intensive case management model and to support incremental client successes in the context of the end goal of reduced recidivism.
- Address the lack of administrative resources causing delays in processing NoVA applicants and in paying service providers.

The evaluation team also identified improvements that can be made to the NoVA case management data system. Evaluators will work with staff who manage the data system to discuss and integrate these recommendations.

## Appendix A: San Francisco Citywide and Neighborhood Crime Data, 2005 – 2006

The crime data below were generated from the San Francisco Police Department Incidents Analysis, which provides monthly statistics on all incidents reported by district. For this report, only violent crimes that occurred during the immediately year prior to NoVA's initiation, from October 2005 to September 2006, were documented. Violent crimes included incidents such as aggravated assault, homicide (murder & non-negligent), rape, robbery, offense against family/child, sex offenses, and other assaults. Exhibit A1 to Exhibit A4 show the percent of violent crimes each month for San Francisco City, and two of its neighborhoods, Bayview and the Mission. No crime data on Western Addition were included in this report, since the Northern district was too large to represent the Western Addition neighborhood by itself.

While many factors contribute to changes in crime rates over time, and while it is not possible to measure the direct impact of the NoVA Project on community crime rates nor realistic to see changes in a short period of time, these crime data provide a baseline for future trend analysis on crime rates in the targeted neighborhoods. We will continue working with the local police departments to obtain more precise data on crime in the Western Addition.

**Exhibit A1**  
**Total Violent Crimes**  
October 2005 – September 2006

	2005			2006									Total
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	
<b>San Francisco</b>	1429	1307	1170	1311	1224	1387	1433	1453	1444	1471	1376	1331	16336
<b>Bayview</b>	136	128	121	141	140	164	170	169	153	181	171	162	1836
<b>Mission</b>	239	199	172	181	168	218	198	211	212	226	208	204	2436

**Exhibit A2**  
**San Francisco Citywide Violent Crimes**  
October 2005 – September 2006

	2005			2006									Total
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	210	188	198	173	192	221	224	238	229	210	188	198	173
<b>Homicide (Murder &amp; Non-Negligent)</b>	14	20	5	5	5	5	12	6	9	14	20	5	5
<b>Rape</b>	21	21	16	19	22	14	15	22	15	21	21	16	19
<b>Robbery</b>	333	310	277	339	310	334	368	360	428	333	310	277	339
<b>Off. Against Family Child</b>	249	231	229	249	247	271	277	255	256	249	231	229	249
<b>Sex Offenses</b>	81	97	74	81	64	82	66	87	73	81	97	74	81
<b>Other Assaults</b>	521	440	371	445	384	460	471	485	434	521	440	371	445



**Exhibit A3**  
**Bayview District Violent Crimes**  
 October 2005 – September 2006

	2005			2006									Total
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	
Aggravated Assault	21	21	23	13	19	26	33	30	27	32	25	39	309
Homicide (Murder & Non-Negligent)	4	6	0	2	1	0	4	3	1	3	7	1	32
Rape	0	1	1	0	3	2	0	0	2	1	2	2	14
Robbery	31	34	27	53	42	47	41	49	56	52	50	33	515
Off. Against Family Child	34	24	33	38	39	47	47	45	33	34	36	37	447
Sex Offenses	5	11	9	0	5	5	4	8	4	12	9	6	78
Other Assaults	41	31	28	35	31	37	41	34	30	47	42	44	441

**Exhibit A4**  
**Mission District Violent Crimes**  
 October 2005 – September 2006

	2005			2006									Total
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	
Aggravated Assault	39	31	36	29	36	30	23	32	39	31	34	22	382
Homicide (Murder & Non-Negligent)	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	13
Rape	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	4	3	1	28
Robbery	67	40	42	44	39	61	48	51	68	57	63	61	641
Off. Against Family Child	33	37	29	35	36	49	42	27	28	51	30	33	430
Sex Offenses	12	13	6	9	9	9	6	13	8	8	15	8	116
Other Assaults	82	74	56	62	45	65	77	85	65	74	62	79	826

