

**REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE COMALERT PRISONER
REENTRY PROGRAM**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report evaluates the ComALERT (“**C**ommunity and **L**aw **E**nforcement **R**esources **T**ogether”) program, which provides substance abuse counseling and other treatment, employment and housing services to parolees in Kings County, New York. The evaluation consists of three main parts: (1) an analysis of recidivism among ComALERT clients, studying patterns of re-arrest, re-conviction, parole violation, and re-incarceration, (2) an analysis of a survey of employment, family life, and drug use among ComALERT clients and a comparison group of Brooklyn parolees, and (3) an analysis of unemployment insurance data, containing earnings and employment information on the respondents to the survey.

Among a new generation of prisoner re-entry programs around the country, ComALERT is unusual in providing a comprehensive array of services to its clients shortly after release from prison. In addition to substance abuse counseling, ComALERT offers transitional housing and employment for up to a year as well as job referral services in an effort to integrate parolees into mainstream social roles. While evaluations of prisoner re-entry programs typically focus on recidivism, our research design also aims to shed light on the employment, sobriety, and family life of the ComALERT clients. We take this broader focus in part because ComALERT is motivated to reduce recidivism particularly through treatment and employment, and partly because criminological research shows the importance of employment, family life, and sobriety to criminal desistance.

To preview the main results, we find that ComALERT clients are 15% less likely to be re-arrested after two years from release from prison than a comparison group with a similar criminal history. Clients that graduate from the program are more than 30% less likely to be arrested than the comparison group. The survey data show very high employment rates among

ComALERT clients and graduates, more than twice as high as a comparison group matched on criminal history and demographic characteristics. Graduates of ComALERT's Ready Willing and Able program have especially high rates of employment. ComALERT clients also report modestly lower rates of drug and alcohol use than the control group. While these results are extremely promising, a stronger evaluation is needed. Such an evaluation would involve some kind of random assignment to the program, to eliminate systematic selection as a source of the difference between the program and comparison groups.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The rehabilitative potential of prison programs had dominated correctional thinking through most of the twentieth century. Over the last three decades, however, since the publication of Robert Martinson's (1974) literature review of correctional programming, skepticism has replaced optimism. After reviewing hundreds of evaluation studies, Martinson concluded that prison programming was largely ineffective at reducing recidivism. Martinson's conclusions were quickly criticized for being unjustifiably gloomy (Cullen 2005), and he acknowledged that several of his most pessimistic statements underestimated the reductions in recidivism provided by well-designed studies. Still, the ineffectiveness of prison programming quickly became the orthodoxy among policy analysts.

Some policy experts have lately called for new measures to ease the re-entry of ex-prisoners back into their communities (e.g., Travis 2005; Petersilia 2003; Jacobson 2005). Re-entry programs usually involve transitional employment, housing, and drug treatment often arranged before release as part of discharge planning administered by the prison. Although re-entry programs appear to be proliferating, there are few systematic evaluations.

Visher's (2007) study of ex-prisoners in Chicago suggests that the weeks immediately before and after release from incarceration may be a crucial period for policy intervention. Visher's *Returning Home* survey shows the risk of unemployment and reliance on family support are acute in the first months back in society. National figures show that recidivism rates are also highest right after release. Thirty percent of ex-prisoners are arrested for a new felony or serious misdemeanor in the 6 months after release. The risk declines by a third over the following 6 months (Langan and Levin 2002).

Re-entry policy advocates have emphasized the role of discharge planning and transitional employment to improve the economic prospects and reduce crime among ex-prisoners directly after release. Discharge planning often involves a needs assessment for exiting prisoners followed by assignment to programs, jobs, and housing in free society in preparation for release. Model programs also prepare prisoners for managing the bureaucratic demands of social service agencies and employers. This might involve obtaining photo identification, a social security card, Medicaid enrolment, providing for child support obligations, and clearing bench warrants in the final weeks before release.

A number of leading programs share ComALERT's emphasis on employment as a means to reducing recidivism and integrating ex-offenders in to mainstream social roles. Transitional employment programs typically provide temporary subsidized jobs immediately after release. Such programs emphasize immediate employment to reduce the period of economic and social vulnerability in the days and weeks after release. Transitional employment programs are intended to develop work routines, build a work history, and provide a measure of economic independence. Typical programs offer employment from a period of few weeks up to a year. The immediacy of transitional employment is exemplified by the Rikers Island Discharge Enhancement (RIDE) program, a jail re-entry program in New York City. RIDE offers transport from jail directly to paid transitional work and job placement assistance for sentenced inmates leaving the New York jails. Program participants are assigned to work crews for 28 hours a week, providing maintenance, repair and groundkeeping services for government facilities.

The RIDE program's bus-to-work model is well-suited to an urban jail system, where inmates are incarcerated in, or very close to, the communities to which they return. For state prisons, where ex-offenders are often released a great distance from their home communities, the discharge process is sometimes buttressed with additional assistance, including housing, that

helps ensure that employment and other services are delivered immediately following release. In this way, transitional programs are intended to provide phased return from incarceration to free society.

Transitional employment is intended to move people released from incarceration into unsubsidized jobs in the open labor market. As we have seen, employers are often reluctant to hire job seekers with criminal records (Pager 2003). Employment services that develop relationships with specific firms, may help overcome the stigma of a criminal conviction. The job placement services provided by the Texas program, Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders), for example, tends to return to the same employers to place its client population of Texas parolees. Of course, to be effective labor market intermediaries, employment service agencies for ex-offenders must provide workers that are relatively reliable and trouble-free. Project RIO staff (and other employment service providers) claim to do this by supplementing job referral services with training and other programs, by effectively matching clients to jobs, and through supervision that helps maintain the sobriety and dependability of parolees. An evaluation study conducted in 1990 found that RIO clients were nearly twice as likely to be employed after one year than a control group matched on demographic and criminal history characteristics. Gains in employment also translated into reductions in recidivism, although these benefits were restricted to high risk parolees (Finn 1998).

While case studies of individual programs suggest employment-based programming can reduce recidivism, there are few large-scale systematic studies. Two of the largest and most influential policy experiments date from the 1970s. Results from the Transitional Aid Research Project and the National Supported Work Demonstration suggest that neither income supports nor subsidized work reduce unemployment and recidivism (Berk, Rossi, and Lenihan 1980; Piliavin and Gartner 1981). Recent reviews by Bloom (2006), Petersilia (2004), and Seiter and

Kadela (2003) also point to the modest magnitude of program effects and the paucity of well-designed studies of re-entry programs over the last ten years. The Three-State Recidivism Study, and the evaluations of PREP and Project RIO, cited above, are among a relatively small number of recent, well-designed, non-experimental studies that show positive effects. Even in these cases, however, the program effects are relatively small, registering earnings gains or recidivism reductions of the order of 10-15 percent, or just in subsets of the population. Program effects of this magnitude might thus reduce a re-arrest rate of 60 percent to 50 percent in the best-case scenario.

III. THE COMALERT PROGRAM

PROGRAM HISTORY

ComALERT is designed to reduce criminal recidivism by providing parolees returning to Brooklyn with services intended to ease their transition from prison to society. Parolees enter the program soon after release and are provided with drug treatment and general counseling, offered transitional employment and transitional housing, and referred for mental health, housing, and other services as needed.

Over time, the ComALERT program has evolved through several stages as additional services have been offered. The Kings County District Attorney's Office began ComALERT in 1999 as a community organizing entity that brought together District Attorney staff, parole officers, community base organizations, and service providers to discuss re-entry issues.

These meetings led ComALERT to develop direct service provision, beginning in 2001, when the Kings County District Attorney's Office partnered with the Doe Fund to facilitate referrals between Parole and Ready, Willing, and Able—the Doe Fund's transitional employment program. The District Attorney's Office provided parolees with counseling and case management by a licensed social worker, while Ready, Willing, and Able provided transitional employment and housing as well as case management. During this time, ComALERT served approximately 100 clients per year and all clients were required to participate in the transitional employment component of the program.

Beginning on October 1, 2004, the District Attorney's Office and the Doe Fund partnered with Counseling Service of Eastern District New York (CSEDNY), a New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) licensed organization, which began providing substance abuse treatment to all ComALERT clients. Thus, between October 1, 2004 and

December 31, 2006, the period we evaluate in this report, ComALERT was a partnership between three agencies. The District Attorney's Office provided networking and organization, space for counseling, referrals, and a link to law enforcement agencies, Counseling Service EDNY provided drug treatment, re-entry counseling, and referrals, and the Doe Fund's Ready, Willing, and Able program provided transitional housing, employment, and job referral services. With the addition of Counseling Service EDNY, the program expanded its capacity, such that during 2006, 365 parolees entered the program.

In 2007, the District Attorney's Office began implementing a large expansion that will bring new services to ComALERT. These will include a more streamlined mechanism for referrals to housing, educational, vocational, health insurance, and employment services, and an expanded list of services and referral sources to which clients can be linked. In addition, ComALERT is planning to increase its capacity to provide employment services by bringing in a job developer, who will link clients with employers, and by providing clients with instruction in resume construction, computer skills, and other job readiness skills. As these changes were not implemented until after 2006, they are not included as part of the treatment evaluated in this report. In the following section, we describe the ComALERT program in greater detail as it existed during the evaluation period (October 1, 2004 to December 31, 2006).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ComALERT/CSEDNY staff work closely with the New York State Division of Parole to bring parolees quickly into the program. A newly released parolee is required to report to the Division of Parole within 24 to 48 hours of release from prison. If the parolee is mandated by the board of parole or by his parole officer to attend a substance abuse treatment program, a referral will be made by the parole officer to Parole's Access center. At this center, the parolee will meet with an

Access counselor for an assessment and referral to substance abuse treatment. ComALERT utilizes its close relationship with parole to streamline referrals by having a staff member onsite at Access, a feature unique to ComALERT. The onsite ComALERT/CSEDNY CASAC (certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor) interviews the parolee about his past activities and future goals. After the assessment, the eligible client is directed to report to the ComALERT/Counseling Service EDNY Center in downtown Brooklyn, for a program orientation. Unlike other drug treatment programs, ComALERT does not require clients to have medical insurance, as treatment for uninsured clients is paid for by an OASAS grant. This allows uninsured parolees to enter the program almost immediately after release from prison.

All ComALERT clients participate in non-intensive, outpatient substance abuse treatment provided by Counseling Service EDNY. Nearly all ComALERT clients have substance abuse histories, and many are actively abusing illegal drugs and alcohol. Clients are drug tested at least twice per month, and 36 percent test positive at least once while they are in ComALERT. This abuse places them in direct contradiction to standard parole mandates, putting them in danger of violation by parole. Their drug use may also increase the likelihood that they will return to other criminal behavior. Therefore, Counseling Services EDNY's substance abuse treatment and counseling form a core component of ComALERT treatment.

During the orientation visit, the client is assigned to a Counseling Service EDNY social worker, who is primarily responsible for the client's substance abuse treatment. The client meets with this primary counselor once per week and is also assigned to a weekly group treatment session. For most clients, group treatment focuses on drug relapse prevention, but those who test positive while in ComALERT are placed in an intervention group focusing on active use. If they are mandated to do so by parole, clients may also attend anger management groups run by Counseling Service EDNY counselors. For most clients, the program lasts between three and six

months. In order to graduate, clients must be drug free for three months and must be either employed or in school, if physically able.

In addition to drug counseling and treatment, clients are offered the opportunity to participate in the Doe Fund's Ready, Willing, and Able Program (RWA), which provides transitional employment, transitional housing, vocational training, 12-step programs, and courses on financial management and other life skills. The program also offers financial assistance for clients who wish to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL), provides courses toward computer skills certification, and offers a vocational program in extermination (Pest@Rest), through which clients can become licensed exterminators.

RWA participants work full time in manual labor jobs, primarily in street cleaning, and are paid \$7.50 per hour. They receive some of their pay in the form of a weekly stipend, while a portion is withheld each week for deposit into a savings account for the client. Ready, Willing, and Able clients receive all of their meals and other services in a Doe Fund facility and may live in one of these facilities if they are in need of housing. All participants are drug tested regularly, and a positive toxicology report results in discharge from the program. After nine months of transitional employment, life skills classes, 12-step meetings, and vocational programs, the clients begin the process of "job search," a stage in which they are assisted by the Doe Fund in searching for permanent employment and are paid for time spent in this process. Once RWA participants obtain permanent employment and permanent housing, they graduate from the program, and the Doe Fund provides them with an additional \$200 monthly for the next five months.

ComALERT has a unique partnership with the Doe Fund, as ComALERT clients are the exclusive consumers of two Ready, Willing, and Able programs: the "Day" program, which provides transitional employment and other services for clients who do not need to live in Doe

Fund housing, and the Stuyvesant House, a Doe Fund living facility with three bedroom apartments that house RWA/ComALERT participants. Many of these clients are recruited by the Doe Fund prior to release from prison and thus may enter ComALERT and Ready, Willing, and Able simultaneously, upon or soon after release.

The final component of ComALERT is service referral. District Attorney and Counseling Service EDNY staff members refer clients to a variety of other service providers as needed. For example, clients are referred to organizations that provide housing, vocational programs, and job readiness services. In addition, during the evaluation period, ComALERT maintained a relationship with a staff member of Liberty Management, who facilitated Medicaid enrollment for clients. This Medicaid facilitator attended client orientations each week, met with clients to help them gather the paperwork necessary for application and fill out applications, and put through the applications when completed.

PROFILE OF COMALERT CLIENTS

In this section, we provide a profile of demographic, criminal history, and other characteristics of the 750 ComALERT clients who entered the program during our evaluation period—October 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006. All information that follows was obtained by self-report from the psychosocial assessment conducted at program entry.

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of the ComALERT client population. All ComALERT clients are at least 18 years old, as the program does not serve juveniles. However, the clients are in general fairly young. About one quarter are 25 or younger, and almost half are 30 or younger. Only 11 percent are 45 or older.

The vast majority of ComALERT clients are black (80.5 percent) or Hispanic (17.7 percent). The program sees few whites (1.3 percent) or those of other race groups, e.g. American

Indian, (0.4 percent). Compared to all parolees in New York State, ComALERT clients are more likely to be black—52 percent statewide, and less likely to be Hispanic or white—26 percent and 20 percent, respectively, statewide (New York State Division of Parole 2007).

Like the prison population, ComALERT clients are overwhelmingly male; only 1.7 percent of clients have been female. Statewide, 7 percent of parolees are female, indicating that women are underrepresented in ComALERT.

ComALERT clients have low levels of educational attainment compared to the general population. Nearly half have neither a high school diploma nor a GED (General Educational Development). A large number, 38.2 percent, have obtained GED's, many of which were earned while in prison, while only 8.7 percent have earned a high school diploma. This indicates that 87.7 percent of clients dropped out of high school. Only 3.6 percent have attended some college, and only 1 client has entered the program with a college degree.

Table 2 provides information about ComALERT clients' living situation, marital status, and children at program entry. First, the table shows clients' living situation, which indicates the type of housing in which clients were living upon entry to the program. Most clients live with a relative (54.2 percent), often their mother (26.4 percent of all clients), at program entry. 18.6 percent live with a spouse or partner and 2.9 percent with a friend. Only 5.5 percent of clients live on their own. Nearly 15 percent live in transitional housing, usually with the Doe Fund's Ready, Willing, and Able program, which they may have entered simultaneously with ComALERT. Finally, only 4 percent of clients live in shelters at program entry.

Table 2 also shows clients' marital status. Most, 69.4 percent, are single when they enter ComALERT, while 12.3 percent are married, 7.2 percent are partnered, and 12.2 percent are either divorced, separated, or widowed. Most ComALERT clients are parents; 60.9 percent had

at least one child when they entered the program, while nearly 40 percent had more than one child.

Most clients enter ComALERT without employment. A small number are disabled or are in school, but most are unemployed, with only 42 percent of clients having some kind of employment. Nearly half of those clients who are employed are participants in the transitional employment program offered by the Doe Fund's Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA) program. These clients entered the RWA/ComALERT partner programs simultaneously.

GRADUATION OUTCOMES OF COMALERT CLIENTS

In this section, we discuss the graduation outcomes of ComALERT clients and the characteristics associated with these outcomes. Table 3 shows the original discharge status of the 743 clients who entered ComALERT between October 1, 2004 and December 31, 2006 and who are no longer active clients.¹

Just over half (54.4%) of ComALERT clients graduated from the program. Discharges—or clients who did not complete—made up 45.6 percent of clients. Table 3 separates out the reasons for discharge from the program and gives the percent of the total number of clients who were discharged for each reason. The most common reason for discharge is lost contact with the client, which occurs when the client has not come to treatment sessions for 30 days and the counselor is unable to reach the client by phone or postal mail. 15.5 percent of all clients are discharged for this reason. The second most common reason for discharge is the clients' non-compliance with program rules. This may occur for various reasons. For example, the client may have sporadic attendance or refuse to be drug tested.

¹ Some clients (6.3 percent) entered ComALERT more than once. In most cases, these returnees did not complete the program the first time, and later returned. In a few cases, clients who had completed the program returned later after a drug relapse or following a parole violation. Statistics shown reflect graduation outcomes for the first ComALERT entry only.

10 percent of clients were discharged because they were referred by ComALERT staff to a more intensive drug treatment program. These were clients who were unable to reach and maintain abstinence and continued to test positive while in the program. After a client tests positive for drugs three times, the Counseling Service EDNY counselor determines that the non-intensive, outpatient treatment modality provided at ComALERT is not appropriate for the client's needs, and the client is referred elsewhere. Such a client may return to ComALERT for relapse prevention and other services after he has completed the more intensive program and achieved abstinence.

Some clients were discharged from the program because, while they were actively in treatment at ComALERT, they were re-arrested and jailed or they were violated by parole and re-incarcerated. This occurred with 7.7 percent of clients. These clients may also be readmitted after at a later date. Finally, about 2 percent of clients were discharged for other reasons. For example, they may have moved to another location or left ComALERT for medical reasons.

Table 4 shows the percentage of clients graduating by selected characteristics. Age is an important factor in predicting clients' success in the program. Clients in the youngest age group, ages 18 to 25, are substantially less likely to graduate than all other clients. Only 38.7 percent of clients in this age group complete the program. Graduation rates for all other age groups are above 50 percent, and in general, graduation rates increase as age increases. Clients who are 46 to 50 years old have a graduation rate of 75 percent and for those over 50 years old, the graduation rate increases to 86 percent.

The relationship between race and graduation is unclear since there are few non-black clients. Clients who are black graduate at a rate of 54 percent, while about 57 percent of Hispanics graduate. This difference is not large. White and other race clients appear to be less

likely to graduate, but there are so few of these clients in the program that the margin of error is large and no conclusions can be drawn from these data.

Women appear to be more likely to graduate from ComALERT, at 77 percent compared to 54 percent. However, there are so few women in the program, that this difference is not significant. There is also no clear pattern in the graduation outcomes of clients based on educational attainment.

Graduation rates do appear to be related to clients' employment status at program entry. Those who are unemployed or are employed part-time are least likely to graduate, at 42 percent and 47 percent, respectively. Those who are employed full time before entering ComALERT have a graduation rate of 60 percent, and those who entered ComALERT and Ready, Willing, and Able's transitional employment simultaneously have a graduation rate of 72 percent. Finally, of clients who were ever in Ready, Willing, and Able during their time at ComALERT, 72 percent graduated from the program, suggesting that the clients who participate in the RWA program in conjunction with the ComALERT/CSEDNY substance abuse treatment are the most successful.

IV. METHODOLOGY: MEASURING TREATMENT EFFECTS

In the following analysis, we examine the effects of the ComALERT program on parolees' outcomes in four general areas: recidivism, substance abuse, employment, and family relations. For each area, we compare the outcomes of ComALERT clients to those of other groups of parolees. For each outcome, the treatment effect will be the difference in outcome (e.g. employment, wages, drug use) between ComALERT clients and the comparison group of parolees.

Throughout the analysis, we measure two sets of treatment effects: ComALERT graduate treatment effects and ComALERT attendee treatment effects. *ComALERT graduates* are those parolees who attended and successfully completed the ComALERT program. *ComALERT attendees* include all parolees who were officially admitted to ComALERT, regardless of whether they successfully completed the program. A parolee was admitted if he was assigned to ComALERT, attended an orientation, and completed, at a minimum, the initial psychosocial assessment for the program. These individuals were officially admitted to the program, and are considered ComALERT attendees. This category includes those who successfully completed the program (*ComALERT graduates*) as well as those who were discharged prior to completion for any reason (*ComALERT discharges*).

We estimate both ComALERT graduate treatment effects and ComALERT attendee treatment effects because both give important information about the success of the program. The graduate treatment effect compares the outcomes of those who received the full ComALERT treatment to those who did not receive any ComALERT treatment. If the program is successful, ComALERT graduates should have significantly better recidivism, drug use, employment, and family relations outcomes.

However, it is also important to measure a ComALERT attendee treatment effect because the difference in outcomes between graduates and comparison parolees may not be due entirely to the influence of ComALERT, but rather may result, in whole or in part, from selection bias. This selection bias has two possible sources. First, there may be unmeasured characteristics of graduates that exist irrespective of ComALERT treatment, such as motivation levels or familial support, that influence both their likelihood of graduation and their likelihood of success in the outcomes of interest. If so, the difference between ComALERT graduates and comparison parolees may reflect the influence of these characteristics on both ComALERT graduation and the other outcomes, rather than the influence of ComALERT on the other outcomes. Second, selection bias may result from graduation criteria. Clients who graduate from ComALERT are, by definition, relatively successful, because they must demonstrate positive outcomes in order to be considered for graduation. Regardless of whether these parolees had positive outcomes because of the influence of treatment or would have had positive outcomes regardless of treatment, graduates will be, by definition, a relatively successful group.

Because graduate treatment effects may be biased due to selection, we also measure a ComALERT attendee treatment effect for each outcome. By including the outcomes of all ComALERT attendees in the analysis, we can measure treatment effects without the bias resulting from selection toward graduation. However, these measures should still be taken with caution; they are not free from the possibility of selection bias, as some parolees who are assigned to ComALERT never attend. Also, because this evaluation does not employ random assignment to treatment and control groups, there is always the possibility that the control groups used will differ from the ComALERT groups on unmeasured variables that produce differences in outcomes that would have been observed regardless of ComALERT treatment. In the analysis,

we try to match control groups to the treatment groups as closely as possible, but we cannot entirely eliminate the possibility of selection bias.

V. RECIDIVISM

One of the main goals of the ComALERT program is to reduce recidivism, which we define as a return to criminal activity or to involvement with the criminal justice system. The program is intended to help parolees make positive changes leading to crime-free lives. The Kings County District Attorney's Office has argued that its involvement in re-entry is justified by the goal of reducing criminal activity, thereby increasing public safety and reducing the need for prosecution. Therefore an important barometer of the program's success is its ability to reduce recidivism.

In this section, we test the program's success with recidivism by analyzing five types of recidivism outcomes for ComALERT attendees, ComALERT graduates and discharges separately, and a matched sample of New York City parolees. The analysis is presented in several stages. First we present descriptive recidivism statistics for ComALERT attendees and for ComALERT graduates. Then, we use propensity score matching to generate a matched control sample of New York City Parolees, and we present descriptive recidivism statistics for ComALERT attendees, ComALERT graduates, and the matched control group. Finally, we use hazard models to predict the risk of recidivism for each of these groups. These models allow us to introduce control variables, which are characteristics, like age, that are related to recidivism and that may affect the relationship between ComALERT and recidivism.

MEASURES OF RECIDIVISM

We examine five measures of recidivism: re-arrest, re-conviction, re-incarceration by parole violation, re-incarceration by new sentence, and any re-incarceration.

A *re-arrest* is defined as an arrest at any charge level—infraction, violation, misdemeanor, or felony—that occurred after release from state prison. We use all arrests, including those that do not lead to a conviction. A *re-conviction* is defined as a conviction at any charge level—infraction, violation, misdemeanor, or felony—that occurred after release from state prison.

We examine three measures of re-incarceration, all of which measure returns to state prison and do not include county jail terms. A *re-incarceration by parole violation* is defined as a return to state prison that occurs as a result of a technical violation of parole. Parolees are granted release from prison prior to the expiration of their maximum sentence on the stipulation that they follow certain conditions while under parole supervision. Parole may be revoked if a parolee is found to have violated one of these conditions, which may include, for example, completing a drug treatment program or reporting regularly to the parole officer (New York State Division of Parole 2005). This constitutes a violation of parole. When this occurs, a parolee will be returned to state prison to serve additional time toward their maximum sentence date before again being eligible for parole. The time served on a parole violation is part of the original sentence related to the felony conviction for which they were sent to prison; parolees do not receive a new sentence as the result of a technical violation of parole.

A *re-incarceration by new sentence* is defined as a return to state prison that occurs as the result of a new felony conviction leading to a state prison sentence. In New York State, a sentence to state prison will result only from a conviction on a felony charge. Therefore, to be re-incarcerated by new sentence, a parolee must be convicted of a new felony after release from prison. At that time, their parole will be revoked and they will receive a new prison sentence related to their new conviction.

Finally, *any re-incarceration* is defined as a return to state prison, regardless of the reason. This category includes both re-incarceration by parole violation and re-incarceration by new sentence. However, the any re-incarceration category is not the sum of the incarceration by parole violation and the incarceration by new sentence categories, as some parolees may experience both, but only the first re-incarceration for each person will be reflected.

These alternatives are informative in different ways about the severity and timing of re-offending. Arrest is the most permissive measure of criminal activity, capturing violations, misdemeanors and felonies. Arrests are also recorded most closely in time to the underlying offense. Convictions provide a clearer signal of recidivism than arrests, because some arrests do not result in a conviction. Convictions however may take place months after the original offense. Finally re-incarceration, particularly for a new sentence, indicates the most severe cases of re-offending.

RECIDIVISM OF COMALERT CLIENTS

Criminal History Data

In order to examine recidivism outcomes, we analyze criminal history data provided by and the Division of Criminal Justice Services. We received the DCJS Criminal History Data from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The data include the criminal histories of every person released to parole in New York City between October 1, 2004 and October 1, 2006 (N= 18,909). The criminal histories include all New York State events that occurred between January 1, 1970 and January 20, 2007, with detailed information on arrests, convictions, incarceration periods, parole periods, and probation periods. The data also include demographic variables, including race, gender, and date of birth. These data do not include events that occurred outside of New York State.

Flagging ComALERT Observations

In order to flag the observations in the DCJS Criminal History Data that represented ComALERT clients, we merged the DCJS data with a second dataset, the ComALERT Criminal History Database. Using individual rap sheets requested through the Kings County District Attorney's Office, we constructed this database, which contains the criminal histories of ComALERT attendees who entered the program between October 1, 2004 and December 31, 2006 (N=728).² This database contains detailed information on arrests (date of arrest, charges, severity of charges, state of arrest, disposition outcome), convictions (date of conviction, charges, severity of charges, sentence), incarcerations in state prison (date of incarceration, reason for incarceration—violation or new commitment, date of release), and probation and parole periods (date of parole/probation, parole/probation type, revocation status, discharge date). These data include both in-state and out-of-state events. The database also contains demographic variables, including date of birth, race, and sex. In addition, we merged ComALERT program data, including graduation status, date of entry, and date of program discharge, with the criminal history data.

After modifying both the ComALERT Criminal History Data and the DCJS Criminal History Data so that each contained the same set of variables, we merged the two datasets into a single set of data. We indicated the source of the observation with a dummy variable for data source, coded 0 if the source of the observation was the New York City Release data and 1 if the source of the observation was the ComALERT criminal history database.

² We were able to obtain rap sheets for only 728 of the 750 attendees who entered the program during this time. We were unable to request rap sheets for some attendees because their records contained missing or incorrect identifying information.

Because the two original datasets had been constructed separately, from two different sources, the information for the ComALERT criminal history data observations may not be exactly comparable to the information provided in the DCJS criminal history data. However, some of the observations contained in the DCJS data represent ComALERT clients, since most of the ComALERT clients were released to New York City during the time period covered by the DCJS data. The best way to compare the outcomes of ComALERT clients to the outcomes of other parolees would be to use only the DCJS data, which contains both groups.

Using propensity score matching, comparing observations from the ComALERT data to observations from the DCJS data, we flagged those observations from the DCJS data that represented ComALERT clients. Propensity score matching is a statistical technique used to identify individuals with characteristics that are similar to those of the individuals in a specific group of interest. For example, the method is commonly used to create a matched control group for a given treatment group. In this case, we used the method to locate the observations from the DCJS data that represented ComALERT clients.

Using the propensity score matching (`psmatch2`) command for Stata, we estimated several logit models—which are used to predict a binary outcome—predicting whether an observation originated from the DCJS data or from the ComALERT data. Each model contained two predictors: date of birth and one other date (e.g. date of first parole, date of first incarceration). Using these models, Stata generated a propensity score, ranging from 0 to 1, which predicts the probability that each observation originated from the ComALERT data. The propensity score is based on the coefficients of the predictors in the model. Therefore, two observations with equal date of birth and date of first parole will have an equal propensity score. We flagged those observations originating from the DCJS data that had propensity scores equal to an observation originating from the ComALERT data, indicating that the two observations

were an exact match on date of birth and one event date. 448 observations were matched.

Because the DCJS data contain only those parolees who were released between October 1, 2004 and October 1, 2006, only those ComALERT clients who were released during that time could be flagged in the DCJS file. Of those in the original ComALERT sample, 585 were released during this time period. The 479 matches that were made represent 81.9 percent of those in the sample that could be matched.

In the following analysis, we use only those observations that were matched by this process. These matched observations are assumed to be the DCJS data versions of the ComALERT clients. We created a dummy variable coded 1 if the observation is a ComALERT attendee originating from the DCJS data and coded 0 if the observation is from the DCJS data and not a ComALERT attendee. The propensity score matching was performed separately on ComALERT graduates and ComALERT discharges, allowing us to create dummy variables that differentiate these groups in the DCJS origin ComALERT observations.

There is a small possibility that some of these observations do not actually represent ComALERT clients, but such cases should be rare given that the matching was done on exact dates. We compared the means of the two groups—ComALERT origin ComALERT observations and DCJS origin ComALERT observations—to see whether they appeared to represent the same individuals. The two groups have identical group means on several variables, including race, sex, age, number of previous arrests, number of previous parole periods, and number of incarcerations, suggesting that the DCJS origin ComALERT observations do represent ComALERT clients.

In the following analysis, we compare the ComALERT observations originating from the DCJS data with a matched control group of observations (see below) also originating from the

DCJS data, so that comparisons will be made on the same data. The ComALERT Criminal History Data were not used in this analysis.

For each of the five recidivism outcomes described above, we constructed a dichotomous variable indicating whether the recidivism event (e.g. re-arrest) occurred, coded 1 if the event occurred and 0 if it did not. In addition, we constructed a time variable for each outcome. *Time since release* indicates the time between release from state prison to the recidivism event or to censoring, which is the last time for which data are available for subjects who did not have that recidivism event.

Life Table Analysis

Using the event and time variables, we constructed life tables, which can be used to calculate the cumulative percentage recidivating by time since release for each of the recidivism outcomes. The life table includes time, in quarters, since release (time zero), and several variables for each quarter, including: the number of individuals for whom data are available and who entered the quarter having not yet recidivated, the number of individuals who recidivate in each quarter, and the number of individuals who are censored in each quarter. Using these variables, percent recidivating is calculated for each quarter, allowing us to calculate cumulative percent recidivating by quarter since release from state prison. Because life tables account for censoring, the resulting recidivism percentages take into account exposure to risk—the number of people for whom we could observe a recidivism event during each quarter given the availability of data for that quarter.

Results

Recidivism of ComALERT Attendees

We first describe recidivism outcomes of ComALERT attendees. Attendees include those who completed the program as well as those who did not complete the program (for a detailed explanation, see above in the section titled, “Measuring Treatment Effects”). Table 5 shows cumulative percentage re-arrested, re-convicted, re-incarcerated by parole violation, re-incarcerated by new sentence, and re-incarcerated for any reason, by quarter since release from state prison.

Within 6 months of release, 11.5 percent of ComALERT attendees were re-arrested for any level charge. By the end of the first year, 20.6 percent had been re-arrested, and within two years of release, the cumulative percentage re-arrested was 39.2.

For each time period, the percentage of attendees re-convicted was lower than the percentage re-arrested. These differences likely result from two sources: arrests that do not lead to convictions and delays between arrest dates and conviction dates. Within 6 months of release from state prison, 6.1 percent of ComALERT attendees were re-convicted on any level charge, and after 1 year, the percentage re-convicted increased to 12.0 percent. Within 2 years of release, 27.8 percent of ComALERT attendees were re-convicted. Not all attendees who were re-convicted were sentenced to state prison, which occurs only on felony convictions. Some newly convicted attendees were sentenced to county jail and others were given sentences, like community service, that did not include jail time.

The last three rows of Table 5 show the re-incarceration outcomes of ComALERT attendees. Most re-incarceration resulted from parole violations. Within 6 months of release, 4.2 percent of ComALERT attendees returned to state prison after they were violated by parole. One

year after release, the cumulative percentage violated increased to 13.6 percent, and by two years from release 24.5 percent had been violated and returned to prison.

For all time periods, a return to state prison for a new sentence was about half as likely as a return for a parole violation. Within 6 months of release, 0.5 percent of ComALERT attendees returned to prison on a new sentence, and within one year 1.6 percent did so. Within two years of release, 4.3 percent were returned to prison for a new sentence.

The last row of Table 5 shows the percentage re-incarcerated at least once for any reason, whether they were violated or returned on a new sentence. Within 1 year of release, 15.0 percent of ComALERT attendees had returned to state prison, and within 2 years, 28.7 percent had been.

Figure 1 shows the five recidivism outcomes plotted by time since release. The figure shows that the cumulative percentage recidivating in each category increased nearly linearly over the first two years after release, which means that the rate at which attendees recidivated did not change substantially as they spent more time out of prison.

Recidivism of ComALERT Graduates

Thus far, the analysis has examined all ComALERT attendees, including those who did not complete the program. In this section, we present recidivism outcomes for ComALERT graduates only. Table 6 shows the results. In all recidivism categories, the graduate subgroup recidivated at lower rates than did ComALERT attendees as a whole.

Within 6 months of release from state prison, 4.3 percent of ComALERT graduates were re-arrested, by the 1-year mark, the cumulative percentage increased to 10.7 percent, and within 2 years of release, 29.2 percent of ComALERT graduates are re-arrested.

Re-conviction rates are lower; 2.5 percent were convicted of any level charge in the first 6 months from release, 5.8 percent in the first year, and 18.9 percent in the first two years.

In the 6 months following release, 1.3 percent of ComALERT graduates were returned to prison following a parole violation, while none were re-incarcerated for any reason following a new sentence. By 1 year from release, 2.4 percent were sent back to state prison as a result of a parole violation, and 0.4 percent had been sent back with a new sentence. Within 2 years of release, 10.8 percent were re-incarcerated by parole violation while 7.0 percent had been returned to prison with a new sentence. 17.9 percent experienced any re-incarceration within two years of release.

Figure 2 plots the cumulative percentage of ComALERT graduates experiencing each of the five recidivism outcomes by time since release. For ComALERT graduates, unlike ComALERT clients as a whole, the cumulative percentages are not linear. During the first year after release, ComALERT graduates experience especially low rates of recidivism, but the rates increase in the first six months of year two. Then, after a year and a half, the rates of recidivism begin to slow.

Figure 3 compares the re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration outcomes of ComALERT graduates to those of all ComALERT attendees. In all categories, ComALERT graduates were less likely to recidivate than ComALERT attendees as a whole. The percentage of ComALERT graduates re-arrested within 2 years was 26 percent lower than that of ComALERT attendees, and graduates' percentage re-conviction was 32 percent lower than that of all attendees. The difference in re-incarceration rates was even larger. Graduates' percentage re-incarceration by parole violation was 36 percent lower and their percentage re-incarceration by new sentence was 35 percent lower than the comparable statistics of ComALERT attendees. In total, percentage re-incarceration was 36 percent lower for ComALERT graduates than for ComALERT attendees as a whole.

RECIDIVISM OF COMALERT CLIENTS VERSUS CONTROL GROUP PAROLEES

Generating a Control Group

Propensity Score Matching

In order to understand the effects of ComALERT on recidivism, we must compare the recidivism outcomes of ComALERT attendees to the recidivism outcomes of parolees who have characteristics similar to the ComALERT attendees, but who did not receive ComALERT treatment. In theory, the difference between these two groups is the treatment effect of the program. However, if the two groups differ on characteristics, other than program attendance, that affect their risk of recidivism, the difference in recidivism between the two groups may not be attributable to the treatment, but rather to these other characteristic. Therefore, the control group must be as similar as possible to the treatment group on relevant characteristics.

In order to create a closely matched control group, we used propensity score matching to identify individuals with characteristics closely matched to those of treatment group individuals. Using the propensity score matching (`psmatch2`) command in Stata, we estimated logit models—which are used to model binary outcomes—predicting the probability that an observation is a ComALERT attendee. Because propensity score matching is intended to address selection bias, the model should include predictors that are likely to affect selection into the ComALERT program. For example, ComALERT clients may be more likely to have drug convictions than the average parolee because these convictions will lead to a drug treatment mandate. The model should therefore include a predictor for drug conviction so that the treatment and control groups are matched on this criterion.

For each observation, the model provides a propensity score, ranging from 0 to 1, which represents the probability that the observation is a client of ComALERT. We selected up to 1000 non-ComALERT observations per ComALERT observation that have a propensity score

within .00005 of the propensity score of the ComALERT observation. Since the propensity score is based on the coefficients of the parameters in the model, observations with close propensity scores should have similar values on these parameters. Thus, the two groups will be closely matched.

In order to ensure that the control group closely matched the treatment group in racial composition, we ran separate propensity models by race. We ran a separate model each for blacks and Hispanics, and a third model including both whites and other races, because those two groups were too small to run separate models for each. Each of the three models contained the same predictors, except that the white/other model contained a dummy variable for other race.

The models contained the following demographic predictors: *age* at time of release, *age squared*, *female*—a dummy variable coded 1 if the observation was a female, and *both male and female*—a dummy variable coded 1 if the data indicated that the observation was both male and female, which occurs if both sex categories are present at least once in the person’s criminal history data. The white/other model also contained a predictor for *other race* (white was the omitted variable). No race predictors were included in the black and Hispanic models because we run separate models by race. We restricted the analysis to those who were 18 or older at the time of release since all ComALERT clients are over 18.

The models also included several criminal history variables: a dummy for whether the criminal history included a *felony drug conviction*, a dummy for whether the criminal history included a *felony violent conviction*, a dummy for whether the criminal history included a *felony property conviction*, a dummy for whether the criminal history included a *felony public order conviction*, a count variable of the *number of prior felony convictions*, a count of the number of *total prior convictions*, including misdemeanors, a count of the *number of prior parole periods*, a dummy variable for whether the person had an *arson conviction*, a dummy variable for whether

the person had a *sex offense conviction*, and a dummy variable for whether the person had any *history of drug involvement*, coded 1 if the person has had a drug arrest or drug conviction of any severity. We also included measures of arson and sex offenses since parolees with these types of convictions were barred from ComALERT, and, as a result, these were important variables predicting placement in ComALERT. We did not exclude them altogether, however, since there were a handful of ComALERT clients who have had such convictions in their histories.

Finally, we include some interaction terms to further ensure that those with similar propensity score values will be as close as possible on relevant characteristics. We include interaction terms for number of felony convictions times the total number of convictions, felony drug conviction times age, felony violent conviction times age, felony property conviction times age, and felony public order conviction times age.

Combining the matched groups from the three models results in 448 (of a possible 479) DCJS origin ComALERT observations matched with 6,643 matched control group individuals. We use only the matched observations in the following analysis. These observations are weighted so that the weights of the control observations matched to each treatment observation sums to 1. For example, one treatment observation were matched to two control observations, the weight of each of those control observations would be 0.5, summing to 1. Thus, the sum of the weights of all control group individuals equals 448.

Table 7 shows the weighted means of the treatment group compared to those of the matched control group. The weighted means between groups are very similar, and none of the differences are statistically significant. Because we used separate models by race, the percents black and Hispanic are exactly equal between the two groups. The mean age of both groups is 33 and about 2 percent of the parolees in each group are white. The two groups differ slightly in percent female—1.6 percent for the ComALERT group versus 1.7 percent for controls. For the

felony conviction categories, the two groups differ by no more than one percent. 52 to 53 percent of each group has had a felony drug conviction at some point in the past, about 50 percent has a felony violent conviction, about 25 to 26 percent has a felony property convictions, and about 21 percent has a had a public order felony conviction. For both groups, the mean number of felony convictions is 2.5 and the mean number of parole periods is 2.2. The mean number of overall convictions differs by only 0.1 percent (6.3 compared to 6.2 percent). Less than one percent of either group has an arson history. 3.3 percent of the matched ComALERT group has a sex offense history compared with 3.5 percent of the matched control group. Finally, the percent with a drug history differs by one percent between the two groups (73.1 percent for the control group compared to 74.1 percent for the treatment group). Overall, the groups are very similar on measurable variables, with no significant differences.

Although the matched groups are similar on measurable variables, there is a possibility that the groups differ in one or more unobserved characteristics that affect recidivism. For example, although the two groups have similar criminal histories, it may be the case that ComALERT clients selected into ComALERT because of higher levels of motivation or that ComALERT clients tend to have greater levels of educational attainment, a variable which is not available in these data. Although the propensity score matching performed here generated groups matched closely on race, age, sex, and criminal history, there is still a possibility that unmeasured heterogeneity will bias the results.

Life Table Results: ComALERT Clients versus Controls

Using the matched sample, we used life table methods (described above) to calculate cumulative re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration percentages by quarter for the first two years following release. We do not include any control variables in this analysis. We examine each

recidivism outcome separately. Because these calculations are made using different data than those made above on the ComALERT criminal history data and are made on a different sample—only the matched ComALERT clients, the numbers will be different.

For each outcome, we present results for ComALERT graduates, ComALERT attendees as a whole, including both completers and non-completers, and matched control individuals. We are thus able to show two treatment effects: the difference between ComALERT graduates and controls and the difference between ComALERT attendees and controls (see the discussion of treatment effects, above).

Re-arrest

First, we compare rates of re-arrest between the ComALERT sample and the matched control group. Table 8 shows cumulative percentages of re-arrest for ComALERT graduates, ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals, by time since release.

At each time interval after release, ComALERT graduates were re-arrested substantially less than matched control group individuals. Within the first 2 years after release, 29.2 percent of ComALERT graduates were re-arrested compared to 47.6 percent of matched control group parolees. In other words, ComALERT graduates were 39 percent less likely to be re-arrested than matched control group individuals. This difference is statistically significant.

As a whole, ComALERT attendees were more likely to be re-arrested than graduates. However, ComALERT attendees were still less likely to be re-arrested than matched control group individuals. Within the first 2 years after release, 39.2 percent of ComALERT attendees were re-arrested compared to 47.6 percent of matched controls, a significant difference. Attendees were 18 percent less likely to be re-arrested than matched control individuals.

Figure 4 graphs these results. It plots the cumulative percent re-arrested for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals, by time since release. The plot suggests that the probability of re-arrest for ComALERT graduates is especially low during the first year following release, which suggests that the effect of ComALERT may be greatest when the client is actively attending the program, or soon after they graduate. The ComALERT treatment effect may dissipate over time.

Re-conviction

Using life table methods, we compare the cumulative percentage re-convicted—for any severity of charge—for ComALERT clients and control group individuals by time since release. Table 9 shows these results. As with re-arrest, the cumulative percentage re-convicted at each period is significantly lower for ComALERT graduates compared to matched controls. By two years after release, 18.9 percent of ComALERT graduates were re-convicted compared to 34.2 percent of matched controls. ComALERT graduates were 45 percent less likely to be re-convicted within 2 years of release than were matched control group individuals.

ComALERT attendees as a whole were also less likely to be re-convicted than were matched control group individuals. After 2 years, 27.8 percent of ComALERT attendees had been re-convicted compared to 34.2 percent of matched control group individuals. ComALERT attendees were 19 percent less likely to be re-convicted after 2 years than were matched controls. This difference is nearly significant.

Figure 5 plots the cumulative percentage re-convicted for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals, by time since release. As with re-arrest results, the percent difference between ComALERT graduates and controls and between ComALERT attendees and controls is greatest in the first year after release, suggesting that

ComALERT treatment has its greatest effect while clients are in treatment, and that this effects decreases after they leave the program.

Re-Incarceration by Parole Violation

This section examines returns to state prison that result from a technical violation of parole. Table 6 shows cumulative percent re-incarcerated by parole violation for ComALERT graduates, ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals. ComALERT graduates were significantly less likely to be re-incarcerated by parole violation than either ComALERT attendees as a whole or the matched controls. After 1 year, only 6.6 percent of graduates were re-incarcerated by parole violation, compared to 13.6 of all ComALERT attendees and 14.3 percent of matched controls. After 2 years, the cumulative percentage was 15.7 for ComALERT graduates compared to 24.5 and 23.8 percent, respectively, for all ComALERT attendees and matched controls. After 2 years, graduates were 34 to 36 percent less likely to be re-incarcerated by parole violation than the other two groups.

ComALERT attendees as a whole did not differ significantly from matched controls in re-incarceration by parole violation. The two groups show similar percentages throughout the 2 year period. These results are shown in graph form in Figure 6, which plots the cumulative percentage re-incarcerated by parole violation for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals. The figure shows that ComALERT attendees and matched controls follow a similar parole violation pattern, while graduates do far better than either of the other groups. This difference may be due to selection bias; those who are able to comply with ComALERT requirements, leading to graduation, may also be able to comply with parole regulations and avoid violation.

Re-Incarceration by New Sentence

Individuals may also be sent back to prison because they have been convicted of a new felony and, as a result, received a new sentence to state prison. Table 11 shows the cumulative percentage of ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals who returned to prison on a new sentence.

For all three groups, the probability of being re-incarcerated for a new sentence is low compared to the probability of being re-incarcerated as the result of a parole violation. Of graduates, for example, 15.7 percent were re-incarcerated for a parole violation after two years compared to only 2.8 percent who were re-incarcerated because of a new sentence.

ComALERT graduates were less likely to be sent back to state prison on a new sentence than were all ComALERT graduates or matched control group individuals. After 2 years, 2.8 percent of ComALERT graduates had been sent back on new sentences compared to 4.3 percent of all ComALERT graduates and 6.5 percent of matched controls. Because the likelihood of experiencing re-incarceration by new sentence is low for all groups, the absolute differences between these percentages are small. None of these differences is statistically significant. Figure 7 shows these results in graph form.

Any Re-Incarceration

Finally, we examine results for re-incarceration for any reason, including parole violations and new sentences. Table 8 shows the cumulative percentage of ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals who returned to prison for any reason.

Since most of the re-incarceration experienced by our sample occurs because of parole violations, the total re-incarceration results closely resemble the re-incarceration by parole

violation results. ComALERT graduates were significantly less likely to be re-incarcerated than either ComALERT attendees as a whole or matched control group individuals. However, ComALERT attendees as a whole do not experience significantly different re-incarceration rates from matched controls. After 2 years, 18.5 percent of ComALERT graduates were returned to prison for any reason, compared to 28.7 percent for all ComALERT clients and 29.9 percent for matched control group individuals.

Figure 8 shows these results in graph form. The figure shows that ComALERT graduates are less likely to be re-incarcerated than the other two groups, but that there is no difference between ComALERT attendees and the matched control group. This suggests that assignment to ComALERT has no effect on a parolee's likelihood of returning to prison, but completing the program may reduce this probability, assuming that the graduate effect is not due entirely to selection bias.

Hazard Regression Analysis

In this section, we analyze the criminal history data using survival analysis, which allows us to develop a statistical model of the variables that affect the likelihood of re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration. These predictor variables include ComALERT treatment as well as demographic and criminal history variables that are also related to recidivism. Thus far, our analysis has not controlled for these other predictors. We use proportional hazards Weibull regression to model each recidivism outcome (see Appendix for detailed discussion of the Weibull models used in this analysis).

We estimate two separate models for each of the five recidivism outcomes—re-arrest, re-conviction, re-incarceration by parole violation, re-incarceration by new sentence, and any re-incarceration. The first model measures *ComALERT attendee* status with a dummy variable,

coded 1 if the person was ever treated at ComALERT, regardless of whether they graduated from the program, and coded 0 if they are a matched control observation. The second model distinguishes between ComALERT graduates and discharges. We include two dummy variables for ComALERT status: *ComALERT graduate*, coded 1 if the client graduated from ComALERT on his first entry and 0 otherwise (some clients may later re-enter ComALERT after having been discharged the first time; this analysis examines the effects of the first ComALERT entry only), and *ComALERT discharge*, coded 1 if the client was discharged from the program without completing (*matched control* is the omitted category).

The models also include the following demographic variables: (1) gender: *female*, coded 1 if the subject is female and 0 otherwise, and *both male and female*, coded 1 if the criminal history data include codes for both male and female and 0 otherwise (*male* is the omitted category); (2) race: dummy variables for *Hispanic*, *white*, and *other race* (*black* is the omitted category); and (3) age at release: dummy variables for *age 26 to 30*, *age 31 to 35*, *age 36 to 40*, *age 41 to 45*, *age 46 to 50*, and *age over 50* (*age 18 to 25* is the omitted category).

Finally, each model includes controls for criminal history, although the specific variables included differ by the outcome measured, depending on the influence of the predictors. All models include a predictor for *number of prior parole periods*, measured as the number of times the person was on parole prior to the relevant release. In addition, each model controls for *any drug history*, a dummy variable coded 1 if the person has any drug-related arrest or conviction in his history and coded 0 otherwise. This variable approximates the likelihood that a person will be mandated by parole to attend drug treatment, which we include because nearly all ComALERT clients have this mandate. The models predicting re-arrest and re-incarceration control for *number of prior arrests*, measured as the number of arrests, regardless of severity, the person had in their criminal history prior to release. In addition, the model predicting re-arrest

controls for *number of prior arrests squared*. Finally, the model predicting re-conviction controls for *number of prior convictions*, measured as the number of convictions, regardless of severity, the person had in their criminal history prior to release, and for *number of prior convictions squared*.

Hazard Regression Results

Re-arrest

Table 13 shows the coefficients for ComALERT status from the ComALERT attendee model and the graduate status model predicting risk of re-arrest (see appendix for complete models). The first model compares the risk of re-arrest for ComALERT attendees to risk of re-arrest for the matched control group of parolees. In these models, a negative coefficient indicates a lower risk of re-arrest and a positive coefficient indicates a higher risk of re-arrest. The coefficient for ComALERT attendee is negative and statistically significant, meaning that parolees who enter ComALERT have a lower risk of re-arrest than matched control individuals. Specifically, controlling for race, age, gender, and criminal history, ComALERT attendees have a 22.9 percent ($1 - \exp[-.260]$) lower risk of being re-arrested than similar parolees who did not attend ComALERT. Overall, ComALERT attendance is negatively correlated with being re-arrested.

The second model differentiates between ComALERT graduates and ComALERT discharges (i.e. non-completers), and separately compares each ComALERT group to the matched control group. The results show that ComALERT graduates have a 45.7 percent ($1 - \exp[-.611]$) lower risk of being re-arrested than matched control individuals. This difference is statistically significant. ComALERT discharges, however, do not differ significantly from

matched controls, meaning that there is no evidence that the two groups differ in the likelihood of re-arrest. In sum, compared to similar parolees, ComALERT graduates are less likely to be re-arrested, while ComALERT discharges do no better or worse.

We used these models to predict the probability of re-arrest for a parolee with a typical set of characteristics: black, male, age 31 to 35, and with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug-related criminal history. We predicted the probability of re-arrest for three types of parolees with these characteristics: one who graduated from ComALERT, one who attended ComALERT (regardless of graduation status), and one who did not attend ComALERT at all,³ by time since release. The results are shown in Figure 9. Within two years of release, a parolee with these characteristics is predicted to have a 22.8 percent risk of re-arrest if he graduates from ComALERT, a 30.5 percent risk of re-arrest if he simply attends ComALERT, and a 37.6 percent risk of re-arrest if he does not attend ComALERT.

Re-conviction

The second set of information in Table 13 shows the ComALERT status coefficients from the proportional hazards Weibull models predicting risk of re-conviction. The first model compares the risk of re-conviction for ComALERT attendees to the risk of re-conviction for the matched control group of parolees. The coefficient for ComALERT attendees is negative and significant, meaning that parolees who enter ComALERT have a lower risk of re-conviction than matched control individuals. Specifically, controlling for race, age, gender, and criminal history, ComALERT clients have a 22.7 percent ($1 - \exp[-.258]$) lower risk of being re-convicted than similar parolees who did not attend ComALERT.

³ The ComALERT model, rather than the graduate model, was used to predict the probability of re-arrest for a control group individual.

The second model distinguishes between ComALERT graduates and ComALERT discharges. The coefficient for ComALERT graduates is large and statistically significant. ComALERT graduates have a 50.7 percent lower risk of being re-convicted on a new charge of any severity than do matched control group individuals. However, there is no significant difference in risk of re-conviction between ComALERT discharges and control group individuals.

Figure 10 shows the predicted probability of re-conviction for a ComALERT graduate, a ComALERT attendee, and a matched control individual with the same measured characteristics. Of the three groups, ComALERT graduates are the least likely to be re-convicted. Within 2 years of release, the ComALERT graduate is predicted to have a 13.2 percent probability of re-conviction, a ComALERT attendee a 19.7 percent probability of re-conviction, and a matched control parolee a 24.7 percent probability of re-conviction.

Re-incarceration by Parole Violation

Table 13 shows the coefficients predicting risk of parole violation. Model 1 shows no significant difference between ComALERT clients and matched control individuals, suggesting that attending ComALERT does not affect a parolee's likelihood of being re-incarcerated by parole violation.

The second model, which distinguishes between ComALERT clients who graduate and those that do not, shows that ComALERT graduates have a significantly lower risk and ComALERT discharges have a significantly higher risk of re-incarceration by parole violation, compared to matched control group parolees. ComALERT graduates have a 44.0 percent lower risk while ComALERT discharges have a 83.5 percent higher risk of returning to prison on a parole violation.

Based on the two regression models, we calculated the predicted probability of re-incarceration by parole violation for a black male, age 31 to 35, and with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug-related criminal history. Figure 11 shows these predicted probabilities for three parolees with these characteristics: one who graduated from ComALERT, one who attended ComALERT (whether graduating or not), and one who did not attend ComALERT. The figure shows that the ComALERT attendee is as likely to return to state prison on a parole violation as a similar parolee who did not attend ComALERT. However, graduation from ComALERT is associated with a substantially lower probability of doing so. The ComALERT graduate is predicted to have a 10.2 percent probability of being violated, compared to 18.4 percent for ComALERT attendees and 17.5 percent for non-ComALERT parolees.

Re-Incarceration by New Sentence

As with parole violations, ComALERT attendees appear to be no less likely than matched controls to return to prison on a new sentence. However, those who graduate from ComALERT do have a 66.7 percent lower risk of doing so. Finally, there is no significant difference between ComALERT discharges and matched controls in risk of a new sentence to prison.

Figure 12 shows the predicted probability of re-incarceration by new sentence for ComALERT graduates, ComALERT attendees, and control group parolees who are identical on other variables. The figure shows a large difference between ComALERT graduates and the two other groups. After 2 years, a black male aged 31 to 35, and with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug-related criminal history is predicted to have a 0.9 percent probability of re-incarceration of a new sentence. A comparable ComALERT attendee has a 2.1 percent probability of doing so and a matched control parolees, a 2.7 percent probability. The predicted

probability of this outcome is very low for all three groups compared to the probability of experiencing other recidivism outcomes.

Any Re-incarceration

Finally, we compare ComALERT clients to matched control parolees on the risk of returning to state prison for any reason, whether by parole violation or by new sentence. Table 9 shows the results of the ComALERT attendee and of the ComALERT graduate/discharge proportional hazards Weibull models predicting this outcome. The first compares all parolees from the matched sample who attended ComALERT, regardless of graduate status, to matched control parolees. There is no significant difference between the two groups. However, when ComALERT graduates are differentiated from ComALERT discharges, we find that graduates have significantly a lower risk of re-incarceration (49.3 percent lower) and discharges have a significantly higher risk of re-incarceration (73.5 percent higher) than control individuals.

Figure 13 compares the predicted probabilities of re-incarceration for a ComALERT graduate, a ComALERT attendee, and a matched control parolee with the same measurable characteristics. The table shows visually that ComALERT graduates are less likely to be re-incarcerated than the matched control group or the ComALERT attendees as a whole. After 2 years, a ComALERT graduate with the selected characteristics has a predicted probability of 10.0 percent of returning to state prison, compared to 19.7 percent for a ComALERT attendee and 19.4 percent for a matched control parolee.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RECIDIVISM RESULTS

In sum, over half of ComALERT attendees are arrested within two years of release from prison, but fewer than 40 percent are re-convicted, and only 10 percent are re-incarcerated for a new

offense. Recidivism rates are significantly lower for those who graduate from the program; only 42 percent are re-arrested, 28 percent are re-convicted, and 7 percent are re-incarcerated for a new offense within two years of release. These recidivism rates for ComALERT attendees as a whole and for ComALERT graduates are lower than for the statistically matched comparison group. Re-arrest rates for attendees are 15 percent lower and for ComALERT graduates are 30 percent lower than those of the comparison group. Re-conviction rates and re-incarceration rates (whether for a parole violation or a new offense) are both about 40 percent lower for ComALERT graduates than for the comparison group. Although these recidivism rates are impressively low, we caution that at least part of the difference between the ComALERT graduates and the comparison group is due to selection. Successfully graduating the program is likely related to personal and family resources that help reduce re-offending. A more stringent test of the effects of the program on recidivism would involve randomized assignment of parolees to programs.

VI. ANALYZING EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS WITH ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

ComALERT seeks to reduce recidivism by promoting employment, which the program does by guaranteeing jobs to Ready, Willing, and Able participants, who also receive job readiness training and job referrals, and by making referrals to vocational training and job readiness programs.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DATA

A common approach to studying employment among people coming out of prison involves linking correctional administrative data to employment and earnings records collected by state unemployment insurance (UI) authorities. This approach can be difficult to implement because of the confidentiality of the UI records and the consent required to obtain them. We fielded a survey of ComALERT clients and a comparison group of Brooklyn parolees and obtained from survey respondents a consent form giving us permission to request their UI records from the NYS Department of Labor. We were thus able to address the concerns about consent and confidentiality while obtaining two independent measures of earnings and employment: the UI records kept by the Department of Labor and the self-reported earnings and employment of the survey respondents. The UI records are collected by matching personal identifiers like names, dates of birth, and social security numbers. About 75% (130 of 173) of the survey respondents who signed UI consents were successfully matched to UI earnings data. Comparison of the two data sources is important because UI data can measure earnings and employment over a long period but may poorly measure many of the jobs likely to be taken by those who have been to prison. Neither transitional employment programs nor the kinds of

informal and casual jobs taken by ex-offenders may carry the payroll taxes that register in the UI system.

RESULTS: EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

Table 14 compares the employment and quarterly earnings self-reported by the survey respondents to those retrieved from UI records. Employment in the survey data is measured in two ways. First, we measure all employment, including jobs in the RWA transitional employment program and other employment that is not taxed. Second, we include just taxable employment on the open labor market that should also be recorded in the UI data. In the quarter of the survey interview, 64.6% of respondents reported working, though the figure is only 29.1% if RWA and other untaxed jobs are excluded. The 40.2% employment rate in the UI data falls between these two estimates of employment among the survey respondents. The two data sources are not highly correlated on taxable employment, with a correlation of .51.

Like other studies, the UI data shows lower levels of earnings than the survey data (Kornfeld and Bloom 1999). In the whole sample, including ComALERT clients and the control group, self-reported taxable earnings is about 75% higher than UI earnings. Taxable earnings from the two sources have a correlation of .47, which is not large.

Breaking the sample into the control group and the ComALERT clients, ComALERT clients have higher rates of employment and earnings regardless of whether we rely on self-reports or the UI data. Still, the UI employment rates are consistently higher than self-reports of taxable employment, but the earnings are consistently lower. The two data sources are more correlated for ComALERT clients (.55) than for control respondents (.40).

Finally, Table 15 describes trends in employment and earnings by quarter. ComALERT clients tend to have higher earnings than the control group of survey respondents. The earnings

advantage of ComALERT respondents varies from about \$700, in the quarter of the survey interview, to \$1600 in the first quarter of 2007. Evidence is weaker for clear employment benefits in the UI data, as employment rates differ little between ComALERT respondents and control group respondents. There is also evidence that control group parolees earn more than ComALERT clients in the first two quarters out of prison. This is likely due to the non-taxable status of earnings of ComALERT clients employed through Ready, Willing, and Able. We explore this further in a more detailed analysis of the survey data.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE RESULTS

In sum, the UI data provides some evidence that ComALERT clients have higher rates of employment and earnings than a control group of Brooklyn parolees. The evidence is strongest for those who are at least several quarters out from prison. Still, we think the UI results should be viewed with some caution, because the UI earnings and employment data are only weakly related to self-reported earnings and employment and they do not measure earnings from the Ready, Willing, and Able program, which are not taxable. It may be that the UI records poorly measure the labor market participation of those who are only tenuously attached to steady work. We now turn to the survey data to provide a more detailed analysis of the labor market involvement, family relation, and drug and alcohol use, of those in the ComALERT program.

**VII. THE COMALERT SURVEY:
EMPLOYMENT, DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE, AND FAMILY RELATIONS**

COMALERT SURVEY DATA

To obtain information on the demographic characteristics and family relations of the ComALERT clients, we conducted a survey of active and former clients. Our survey instrument was based on the Urban Institute's Coming Home Survey, administered to released prisoners in Illinois. We adapted the survey to include questions specifically about the ComALERT program, and other aspects of employment and family life. (The interview schedule is included as an appendix to this report.) To compare the status of ComALERT clients to the rest of the parole population, we also interviewed parolees outside of the ComALERT program.

Neither the ComALERT survey respondents nor the control group of Brooklyn parolees were chosen with a well-defined probability sampling mechanism. ComALERT respondents who entered the program prior to 2007 were initially contacted by mail. The mail solicitation was sent to the last known addresses of the 444 ComALERT clients for whom contact information was available. 51 of those 444 (11.5%) took the survey, 21 refused, 8 were incarcerated, and 2 were deceased. 105 of the 444 letters were returned to sender. All 2004-2006 ComALERT clients for whom telephone numbers were available (668) were contacted by phone. Of those, 254 were disconnected or the wrong number. Overall, 109 of the 749 clients who entered prior to 2007 (14.6%) took the survey. In addition, clients who entered the program after 2007 were contacted personally at the ComALERT offices, either by the primary counselor or a researcher. Not all clients in this category were contacted. Of the 107 clients who entered through April of 2007, 19 took the survey, for a total of 128 ComALERT clients. The comparison group of Brooklyn parolees was obtained either by referrals from ComALERT respondents or in response to flyers

distributed by Brooklyn parole officers. 113 comparison group respondents took the survey. Both groups of respondents, from inside and outside the program, were generally interviewed at the ComALERT offices, and all respondents were given a \$20 Metrocard after the survey was explained, but before the questions were asked.

There is a danger that those who agree to be interviewed have more positive experience with re-entry than those who are not interviewed. Although we cannot quantify this effect, our contacts with the survey respondents indicate that the Metrocard reward provided a strong incentive to be interviewed. Indeed respondents would often ask preemptively about the Metrocard and some respondents tried to be interviewed more than once. Thus the interview incentive offset some of the bias of our sampling procedure.

A clear limitation of the survey method is that parolees who have been re-incarcerated cannot be interviewed. In this case, the survey results may provide an optimistic picture of the success of parolees because those who have failed are unrepresented in the data. On the other hand, if the program is reducing re-incarceration rates, the control group may select more heavily from the low-risk population of ex-offenders and the survey data will tend to under-estimate differences between program clients and the rest of the Brooklyn parole population.

Despite these limitations of the survey data, the characteristics of the interview samples resembled the broader population of ComALERT clients and parolees in terms of age, observed, demographics and criminal history. We are thus reasonably confident that the survey data broadly describes differences between the ComALERT and non-ComALERT populations of Brooklyn parolees.

In our analysis below, we refer to the comparison group of Brooklyn parolees as the “control group” though there was not, of course, controlled assignment to the treatment, the

ComALERT program. We also report results from statistical inferences and these should be treated with caution because the data were not generated by a well-defined sampling mechanism.

We completed 241 interviews, 128 with current or former ComALERT clients and 113 with other respondents. Of the ComALERT respondents, 46 were active clients, 65 were program graduates, and 16 had been discharged from the program. Of those in the control group, a handful would have been ineligible for ComALERT because they paroled outside Brooklyn, or because they had convictions for sex offenses or arson. In all our analyses below, we restrict our attention to the ComALERT-eligible respondents.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Figure 14 compares time served in the most recent incarceration among the ComALERT and control-group respondents. ComALERT respondents served slightly longer on average—53 months compared to 42 months for the control group. Most respondents in both groups were incarcerated for between 1 and 4 years, however. Differences between the two groups were largest among those serving short sentences, for a year or less. Only 1 in 5 ComALERT respondents were incarcerated for a year or less compared to a third of the control group respondents.

Descriptive statistics for the two groups are reported in Table 16. Although the ComALERT respondents were incarcerated for longer than the control group, the control group reported a larger number of prior arrests and convictions. Average numbers of arrests and convictions are increased by small numbers of respondents with extensive criminal records. Although the whole sample averages 14 prior arrests, half the sample records fewer than 7 arrests, but two respondents report at least 60 arrests. A similar pattern is seen for convictions.

The sample averages 7.2 convictions. Half the sample reports fewer than 5 prior convictions, but three respondents report more than 40 prior convictions.

The ComALERT respondents and the control group also share similar demographic characteristics. The control and the ComALERT group were both mostly male, though we interviewed a relatively large proportion (23%) of women in the control group. Both groups are around 40 years old in age. Both groups also indicated low levels of education compared to the general population. While 10 to 15 percent of men of similar age had not completed high school in the general population, the rate of high school drop out in our sample was about three times higher. Like other samples of released prisoners, our respondents were also unlikely to be either married to or cohabiting with a partner. Still, about two-thirds of the sample reported having children. Finally, most of the sample respondents were Hispanic or African American, with African Americans comprising about 70 percent of all interviews.

The economic status of the control and ComALERT groups before incarceration were also roughly similar. Nearly half of respondents had not worked in the six months before incarceration, though employment rates were somewhat higher among the ComALERT respondents. Among those that did work, average weekly earnings were about \$100 higher for ComALERT than for those in the control group.

Finally, the descriptive statistics show that the two groups of sample respondents had similar experiences with prison programming. Four out of five were involved in some kind of drug treatment. Similar numbers reported taking GED classes or sitting for the GED. ComALERT respondents, however, were slightly more likely to have had vocational training or job readiness classes while in prison.

In sum the descriptive statistics indicate that the control and ComALERT groups of respondents are demographically similar, and had similar experiences with prison programming.

However, the ComALERT respondents had somewhat less prior criminal activity than the control group. In the analysis below we try to adjust statistically for these differences between the groups by controlling for both demographics and prior arrests and convictions.

SURVEY RESULTS

Research on criminal desistance indicates that steady employment and a stable family life, under conditions of sobriety, offer the best chances of pathway out of crime. In this section, we analyze these pathways out of crime by analyzing three different outcomes: (1) employment and earnings, (2) contact with partners and children, and (3) drug and alcohol use. This analysis is intended to complement our estimates of recidivism, indicating how ComALERT clients and other parolees are re-adjusting to mainstream social roles after release from prison.

Employment and Earnings

A number of studies find that a steady well-paying job is associated with an increased likelihood of desistance from crime (Sampson and Laub 1993; Uggen 2000). We might expect the ComALERT clients to do relatively well on the job market after release because of the employment services and supported work at the core of the program.

Employment in the survey is measured by the respondent's current employment status. Earnings are measured by the weekly pay of those who are employed. The first two rows of Table 17 show the employment rate and the weekly earnings of the ComALERT and control groups. The ComALERT sample includes those currently in the program (and employed in the Ready, Willing and Able program), ComALERT graduates and clients who were discharged before completing the program. The ComALERT employment rate is much higher than for the

control group (75.6 compared to 23.9%). Among those who were working at the time of the interview, the ComALERT clients earned about \$100 more each week than the control group.

To account for differences between the control group and the ComALERT clients we also calculate regression estimates of the difference in earnings and employment. The regression estimates control for the effects of demographic variables and for the effects of criminal history. Because demographic and criminal history variables are not highly correlated with ComALERT status, the regression estimates are not greatly different from the unadjusted differences between the two groups. The regression estimates show that ComALERT clients have employment rates about 50 points higher than the control group, even taking account of differences in demographics and criminal history. Regression adjustment slightly reduces differences in weekly earnings. Even controlling for age, race, education, and prior arrests and convictions, ComALERT clients earn about \$94 more each week than those who are working in the control group.

An alternative approach to adjusting for differences between groups involves matching respondents in the control group to those in the ComALERT group. The matching method compares respondents in the two groups on the basis of demographic and criminal history characteristics. The matching estimates can have less bias compared to the regression estimates. We report the three estimates of group differences (unadjusted, regression adjusted, and matching) to assess the robustness of the observed results to different methods. The matching estimates, like the unadjusted and regression estimates, show that ComALERT clients have an employment rate that is about 50% higher than the control group. The weekly earnings gap is slightly smaller with the matching, but even with this approach ComALERT clients are found to earn about \$64 a week more than their counterparts in the control group.

If we restrict the analysis to ComALERT graduates only (see Table 19), we find that, with the exception of regression adjusted estimates, the difference between graduates and controls is somewhat higher than when all ComALERT clients are included. The difference in employment rates between ComALERT graduates and controls is close to 60 percent for the unadjusted and the matched estimates, compared to just over 50 percent for all ComALERT clients. Earnings are also higher for ComALERT graduates than all ComALERT clients, with graduates earning close to \$400 per week compared to about \$390 per week for all ComALERT clients, and about \$250 per week for controls.

The high rates of employment reported by the ComALERT respondents may be an artifact of the program itself. The RWA program, by providing employment to ComALERT clients, may raise employment rates while participating in the program, but have little effect afterwards. To study this possibility, we also calculated the employment rates and weekly earnings of ComALERT graduates who were no longer in RWA's jobs program. Like the ComALERT respondents as a whole, the ComALERT graduates also experienced significantly higher employment and earnings than the control group respondents.

Disaggregating the earnings and employment figures (see Table 18) also shows that RWA clients have extremely high rates of employment, even among the ComALERT clients as a whole. The 90% employment rate reported by RWA graduates exceeds the ComALERT average by 15 points and exceeds the employment rate for the control group by nearly 70 points.

In sum, ComALERT clients, particularly those involved in RWA, reported very high employment rates, which were at least twice as high as the employment rate in the control group. Among employed respondents, weekly earnings were about a third higher among ComALERT clients than in the control group.

Co-Residence and Contact with Children

Studies of criminal desistance indicate that a stable family life contributes to a life out of crime (Laub and Sampson 2004; Warr 1998). The social supports of family help regularize life and the obligations of marriage and children provide ex-offenders with a stake in conformity. Our survey interview asked respondents if they were currently married or cohabiting—living with a significant other. Parents in the survey were asked if they kept in contact with children at least daily or several times a week.

Results of the analysis of co-residence and contact with children are reported in Table 20. The ComALERT respondents are slightly more likely to be co-resident—either married or cohabiting—and parents in the sample are slightly more likely to have contact with their children if they came through ComALERT. However, unlike the analysis of employment and earnings, differences between the ComALERT and control groups are very small in the area of marriage and family life. Rates of marriage and cohabitation differ by only a few percentage points between the two groups. ComALERT parents tend to be slightly more involved with their children than parents in the control group, but here again the differences are not statistically significant.

If we restrict the analysis to just the ComALERT graduates, we obtain similar results. Table 21 shows the unadjusted, regression adjusted, and matching estimates of the differences in rates of co-residence and contact with children between ComALERT graduates and the control group. As for the ComALERT clients as whole, we see no significant difference between the graduates and the control group.

In sum, ComALERT clients are more likely to be living with partners and more likely to be having regular contact with their children than respondents in the control group. However, the differences between the two groups tend to be small and not statistically significant.

Drug and Alcohol Use

All the ComALERT respondents and most of the respondents in the control group were subject to a court mandate for drug treatment. Remaining drug free after release from prison is central to successfully fulfilling the conditions of parole and reintegrating into the community. In addition to studying drug use among the respondents we also examine alcohol use. Frequent use of alcohol may be associated with drug use. Respondents may also be more likely to honestly report alcohol use, which may not be a violation of parole, as opposed to drug use, which is a violation.

We measured drug and alcohol use in a variety of ways. We asked about use in the six months before incarceration and in the thirty days prior to the survey interview. In asking about drug and alcohol use before incarceration, respondents were asked if they used “once or twice,” “every two weeks,” “once a week,” “a few times a week,” or “daily.” In asking about drug and alcohol use after release from prison, respondents reported whether they had ever used in the last thirty or whether they used at least several times a week. The interview recorded whether respondents used marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methadone, amphetamines, or IV drugs.

Descriptive statistics showed that both the control group and ComALERT respondents were heavy drug users in the six months before incarceration (Table 22). Over 40% of the ComALERT clients reported using marijuana daily or several times a week. Nearly 40% of the control group respondents used cocaine every day or several times a week. Four out of five respondents reported some kind of drug use before imprisonment. Rates of self-reported drug use were much lower after release from prison. Only 13.5% of the sample reported drinking alcohol in the last thirty days. Only about 9% of the respondents reported using drugs of kind in the last thirty days.

Table 23 compares the drug use of the ComALERT clients to those in the control group, controlling for criminal history, prior drug use, and demographic variables like age, race, and education. The unadjusted difference shows that ComALERT clients report less drug use than the control group, but differences between the two groups are quite small. Indeed, both groups of respondents report identical levels of alcohol use—13.5 percent. Controlling for differences in criminal history and prior drug use, yields slightly larger estimates of group differences. The regression estimates indicate that ComALERT respondents are about 3.3 percentage points less likely to report drinking alcohol and 6.4 percentage points less likely to report drug use than respondents in the control group. Matching methods also indicate that ComALERT clients report lower levels of drinking and drug use than the control group, once we account for differences in criminal history and drug use before incarceration. Still, the differences between the two groups tend to be small and not statistically significant.

Differences between the ComALERT group and the control group tend to be somewhat larger if focus just on the ComALERT graduates (Table 24). In this case, graduates are 4 to 8 percentage points less likely to be drinking or using drugs than respondents in the control group. These differences, however, are not statistically significant. The differences may be small because many of those in the control group are also receiving some kind of drug treatment in another program. The control group in this respect is not “untreated,” and the differences reported in Tables 8 and 9, can be understood to contrast levels of drug and alcohol usage for parolees enrolled in different types of treatment programs. Although we collected information on participation in other programs for the control group, the numbers of respondents are too small to meaningfully compare ComALERT to any other specific program.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY RESULTS

Three main findings emerge from the survey data. First, there is strong evidence that employment rates among ComALERT respondents are significantly higher than the employment rate of the control group. The high rate of employment can be seen among ComALERT graduates as well as current clients, and employment levels are especially high among those enrolled in RWA. Higher levels of employment in the ComALERT groups are also associated with higher levels of weekly earnings. Second, there is modest evidence that self-reported drug and alcohol use is lower among ComALERT respondents than in the control group. Unadjusted differences between the two groups are small, but the differences grow once we take account of the criminal history and prior drug use of the two groups of respondents. Finally, there is no evidence in the survey data that ComALERT clients are either more likely to be co-residing with wives or other partners, or that ComALERT clients have more contact with their children than other Brooklyn parolees.

We caution that these results cannot be given a strong causal interpretation. There may be many differences between the ComALERT and control groups that we were unable to control with our survey instrument. Still, the very large differences in employment rates is a striking result, and consistent with the program's strong emphasis on job referrals supported work.

VIII.CONCLUSION

The ComALERT prisoner re-entry program, in its partnerships with Counseling Service EDNY and the Doe Fund, provides a synthetic approach to the re-integration and rehabilitation of individuals leaving prison and returning to society. By combining substance abuse treatment, housing, and employment services, ComALERT operates to lower the main barriers to criminal desistance for Brooklyn parolees. In evaluating the program we focused most attention on recidivism among ComALERT clients, but we also examined patterns of employment, drug and alcohol use, and the family life.

We found strong evidence that ComALERT clients are re-arrested, re-convicted, and re-incarcerated about 15% less than a matched comparison group with similar criminal history and demographic characteristics. If the comparison group is contrasted with ComALERT graduates, as opposed to all ComALERT clients, the gap in recidivism rates is twice as large. We view these as extremely encouraging results that are large by the standards of well-designed evaluations in the research literature. We caution, however, that we could only imperfectly control for the unobserved characteristics of parolees that place them at risk of re-offending, and the gap in recidivism rates we observe may well over-estimate the reductions in crime produced by the program. From a social scientific point of view, the best estimates of program effects are produced by well-implemented random assignment. The denial of services to parolees cannot be justified on this basis, so stronger designs in the future will rely on collecting more complete data about clients and controls, and choosing controls carefully to ensure they were at least eligible for ComALERT.

Results from our parolee survey show evidence of large employment and earnings benefits associated with ComALERT. Respondents who attended ComALERT were nearly three

times as likely to be employed as respondents from the control sample. ComALERT graduates experienced even better employment outcomes; they were nearly 4 times as likely to be employed as controls. ComALERT clients who participated in the Ready, Willing, and Able program exhibited an especially high rate of employment at nearly 90 percent. Earnings results show a similar pattern, with ComALERT attendees, especially those who graduated, earning substantially more than controls. These results should be taken with some caution as there may be differences between the ComALERT and control groups that we were unable to control with our survey. Employment and earnings data from unemployment insurance records are less clear, but show some evidence of higher employment and earnings among ComALERT clients. These data may be a poor measure of employment outcomes among parolees as they do not measure off-the-books employment or the non-taxable stipends often provided by transitional employment programs. Overall, our results suggest that ComALERT attendance is associated with employment and earnings benefits; the survey results showed strong evidence that employment rates and earnings were significantly higher among ComALERT attendees, especially graduates and those who participated in RWA, than among control group parolees.

Our survey shows modest evidence that self-reported drug and alcohol use among ComALERT clients is lower than that among control group parolees. Controlling for criminal history and drug use prior to prison, ComALERT clients report slightly (about 3 percent) lower rates of drug and alcohol use than controls. The difference between ComALERT graduates and controls is about twice as large. These differences may be small because many of those in the control group were also receiving drug treatment from another program. Therefore, these results may be interpreted as comparing different drug treatment programs rather than treatment versus no treatment. The weaknesses of our survey data strongly limited our ability to measure drug and alcohol use and to compare use between ComALERT clients and other parolees. First, we cannot

control for selection bias resulting from our sampling techniques or from selection into ComALERT. Second, the data provide only self-reported drug and alcohol use, which likely underestimates actual use since respondents may be reluctant to admit involvement with drugs and alcohol. Better data, which are generated using a stronger sampling methodology and which do not rely on self-report—e.g. toxicology results, are needed to measure drug use among parolees and to compare level of use among ComALERT clients and similar parolees.

Past research has shown that a stable family life contributes to maintaining a life without crime. ComALERT clients do not appear to experience family life outcomes that differ from those of other Brooklyn parolees. Our survey presents no evidence that ComALERT attendees or graduates are more likely to be co-residing with wives or partners or that they have more contact with their children than control parolees.

Overall, the results of our evaluation of ComALERT are extremely promising. ComALERT clients, especially graduates, show substantially lower rates of recidivism, higher rates of employment, and higher earnings compared to similar Brooklyn parolees. Drug and alcohol use results are more modest, while ComALERT clients show no greater likelihood of experiencing more stable family lives. Finally, as ComALERT graduates and RWA participants are especially likely to experience positive outcomes, program retention and participation in transitional employment appear to be particularly important to client success.

IX. TABLES

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of ComALERT clients entering October 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006.

Characteristic at program entry	Number of ComALERT clients	Percentage of ComALERT clients	Cumulative Percentage
<i>Age</i>			
18-25	195	26.0	26.0
26-30	170	22.7	48.7
31-35	98	13.1	61.7
36-40	119	15.9	77.6
41-45	84	11.2	88.8
46-50	48	6.4	95.2
Over 50	36	4.8	100.0
Total	750	100.0	
<i>Race</i>			
Black	604	80.5	80.5
Hispanic	133	17.7	98.3
White	10	1.3	99.6
Other	3	0.4	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	737	98.3	98.3
Female	13	1.7	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0
<i>Education</i>			
Less than high school	371	49.5	49.5
GED	286	38.1	87.6
High school diploma	66	8.8	96.4
Some college	26	3.5	99.9
College degree	1	0.1	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0

Table 2. Living situation, family situation, and employment status of ComALERT clients entering October 1, 2004 through December 31, 2006.

Characteristic at program entry	Number of ComALERT clients	Percentage of ComALERT clients	Cumulative Percentage
<i>Living situation</i>			
Alone	41	5.5	5.5
With mother	198	26.4	31.9
With other relative	208	27.7	59.6
With spouse/partner	140	18.7	78.3
With friend	22	2.9	81.2
Transitional housing	111	14.8	96.0
Shelter	30	4.0	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0
<i>Marital status</i>			
Single	520	69.3	69.3
Married	92	12.3	81.6
Partnered	54	7.2	88.8
Separated	37	4.9	93.7
Divorced	44	5.9	99.6
Widowed	3	0.4	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0
<i>Number of children</i>			
0	293	39.1	39.1
1	178	23.7	62.8
2	133	17.7	80.5
3	79	10.5	91.1
4	33	4.4	95.5
5 or more	34	4.5	100.0
Total	750	100.0	100.0
<i>Employment status at program entry*</i>			
Employed full-time	141	19.2	19.2
Employed part-time	24	3.3	22.5
Transitional employment (RWA)	144	19.6	42.1
Unemployed	412	56.1	98.2
Disabled	6	0.8	99.0
Student/In training	7	1.0	100.0
Total	734	100.0	100.0

Note: Employment information is missing for 16 clients.

Table 3. Status of ComALERT completers and non-completers who entered between October 1, 2004 and December 31, 2006, (N=743).

	Number	Percent of total
<i>Graduated</i>	404	54.4
<i>Discharged</i>	339	45.6
Lost contact	115	15.5
Not compliant with program rules	82	11.0
Referred for more intensive treatment	74	10.0
Jailed/Incarcerated	54	7.7
Other	14	1.9

Table 4. Percent graduating from ComALERT by selected characteristics.

Characteristic	Number in category	Percent Graduating
<i>Age</i>		
18-25	194	38.7
26-30	169	54.4
31-35	95	50.5
36-40	118	61.0
41-45	83	60.2
46-50	48	75.0
Over 50	36	86.1
<i>Race</i>		
Black	599	53.9
Hispanic	131	57.3
White	10	50.0
Other	3	33.3
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	730	54.0
Female	13	76.9
<i>Education</i>		
Less than high school	369	52.9
GED	282	56.4
High school diploma	66	53.0
Some college/college degree	26	57.7
<i>Employment status at entry</i>		
Employed full-time	139	59.7
Employed part-time	24	41.7
Transitional employment (RWA)	144	71.5
Unemployed	409	46.9
Disabled/in treatment	6	66.7
Student/In training	7	85.7
<i>Ever in RWA</i>		
Yes	178	71.9
No	565	48.9

Table 5. Cumulative percentage of ComALERT attendees re-arrested, re-convicted, and re-incarcerated by time since release (N=448)

	<u>Time Since Release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
Re-arrested	11.5%	20.6%	29.5%	39.2%
Re-convicted	6.1%	12.0%	20.5%	27.8%
Re-incarcerated				
Parole Violation	4.2%	13.6%	20.6%	24.5%
New Sentence	0.5%	1.6%	3.5%	4.3%
Total	4.5%	15.0%	23.8%	28.7%

Table 6. Cumulative percentage of ComALERT graduates re-arrested, re-convicted, and re-incarcerated by time since release (N=243)

	<u>Time Since Release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
Re-arrested	4.3%	10.7%	22.0%	29.2%
Re-convicted	2.5%	5.8%	13.9%	18.9%
Re-incarcerated				
Parole Violation	1.3%	6.6%	10.4%	15.7%
New Sentence	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.8%
Total	1.3%	6.6%	11.8%	18.5%

Table 7. Weighted means of selected variables for ComALERT observations and for matched control group observations.

	Matched ComALERT (N=448)	Matched control group (Weighted N=448)
Mean age	33.3	33.2
Percent black	78.8	78.8
Percent Hispanic	19.0	19.0
Percent white	2.2	2.0
Percent other race	0.0	0.3
Percent female	1.6	1.7
Percent both male and female	1.9	2.0
Percent with felony drug conviction	52.9	52.1
Percent with felony violent conviction	50.4	50.9
Percent with felony property conviction	25.0	25.9
Percent with felony public order conviction	21.7	20.6
Mean number of felony convictions	2.5	2.5
Mean number of total convictions	6.3	6.2
Mean number of parole periods	2.2	2.2
Percent with arson history	0.7	1.0
Percent with sex offense history	3.3	3.5
Percent with drug history	74.1	73.1

Table 8. Cumulative percent re-arrested for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals by time since release.

	Time since release			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
ComALERT Graduates (N=243)	4.3%	10.7%	22.0%	29.2%
ComALERT Attendees (N=448)	11.5%	20.6%	29.5%	39.2%
Matched Control Group (Weighted N=448)	16.4%	28.2%	38.4%	47.6%

Table 9. Cumulative percent re-convicted for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals by time since release.

	<u>Time since release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
ComALERT Graduates (N=243)	2.5%	5.8%	13.9%	18.9%
ComALERT Attendees (N=448)	6.1%	12.0%	20.5%	27.8%
Matched Control Group (Weighted N=448)	8.0%	18.0%	27.4%	34.2%

Table 10. Cumulative percent re-incarcerated by parole violation for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals by time since release.

	<u>Time since release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
ComALERT Graduates (N=243)	1.3%	6.6%	10.4%	15.7%
ComALERT Attendees (N=448)	4.2%	13.6%	20.6%	24.5%
Matched Control Group (Weighted N=448)	5.9%	14.3%	19.5%	23.8%

Table 11. Cumulative percent re-incarceration by new sentence for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals by time since release.

	<u>Time since release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
ComALERT Graduates (N=243)	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.8%
ComALERT Attendees (N=448)	0.5%	1.6%	3.5%	4.3%
Matched Control Group (Weighted N=448)	0.7%	2.4%	5.0%	6.5%

Table 12. Cumulative percent re-incarcerated for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control group individuals by time since release.

	<u>Time since release</u>			
	6 Months	1 Year	1.5 Years	2 Years
ComALERT Graduates (N=243)	1.3%	6.6%	11.8%	18.5%
ComALERT Attendees (N=448)	4.5%	15.0%	23.8%	28.7%
Matched Control Group (Weighted N=448)	6.4%	16.4%	24.3%	29.9%

Table 13. Coefficients for ComALERT variables from proportional hazards Weibull models predicting re-arrest, re-conviction, re-incarceration by parole violation, re-incarceration by new sentence, and any re-incarceration.

	ComALERT Model	Graduate Model
<i>Re-arrest</i>		
ComALERT Attendee	-.260** (.097)	
ComALERT Graduate		-.611** (.142)
ComALERT Discharge		.126 (.132)
<i>Re-conviction</i>		
ComALERT Attendee	-.258* (.122)	
ComALERT Graduate		-.707** (.192)
ComALERT Discharge		.175 (.160)
<i>Re-incarceration by Parole Violation</i>		
ComALERT Attendee	.057 (.130)	
ComALERT Graduate		-.579* (.224)
ComALERT Discharge		.607** (.160)
<i>Re-incarceration by New Sentence</i>		
ComALERT Attendee	-.226 (.312)	
ComALERT Graduate		-1.052+ (.573)
ComALERT Discharge		.337 (.402)
<i>Any Re-incarceration</i>		
ComALERT Attendee	-.022 (.120)	
ComALERT Graduate		-.680** (.208)
ComALERT Discharge		.551** (.150)

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. +p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01

Note: Models control for race, gender, age, and criminal history

Table 14. Comparison of earnings and employment during the quarter in which the survey was taken, from UI data and from survey data, unadjusted (N=130).

	Survey Data (all employment)	Survey Data (taxable employment only)	UI Data
<i>All Respondents</i>			
Employment (%)	64.6	29.1	40.2
Earnings (\$)	4050.17	4087.80	2349.29
<i>Controls</i>			
Employment	37.2	23.3	35.7
Earnings (\$)	2265.20	3853.40	1855.20
<i>ComALERT</i>			
Employment	78.6	32.1	42.4
Earnings (\$)	4453.23	4550.69	2555.17

Note: Analysis includes only those matched on UI data.

Table 15. Analysis of UI earnings and employment, unadjusted.

	Controls (N=43)	ComALERT (N=85)	Difference
<i>Survey Quarter</i>			
Employment (%)	35.71	42.35	6.64
Earnings (\$)	1855.20	2555.17	699.97
<i>1 Quarter after release</i>			
Employment (%)	8.33	8.86	0.53
Earnings (\$)	5557.00	1601.86	-3955.14*
<i>2 Quarters after release</i>			
Employment	12.50	6.85	-5.65
Earnings (\$)	4449.75	2384.20	-2065.55
<i>Quarter 1 2007</i>			
Employment	41.86	41.18	0.68
Earnings (\$)	957.50	2566.00	1608.50*
<i>Quarter 2 2007</i>			
Employment (%)	37.21	54.12	16.91+
Earnings (\$)	1930.75	2633.20	702.45

Note: +p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01

Table 16. Descriptive statistics for ComALERT survey respondents and control group respondents.

	Controls	ComALERT
<i>Criminal History</i>		
Age at first arrest	18.5	17.5
Number of prior arrests	15.3	12.8
Number of prior convictions	7.8	6.6
Months of last incarceration	42.1	53.0
<i>Demographics</i>		
Male (%)	77.0	96.1
Current age (years)	41.7	39.7
HS dropouts (%)	42.5	51.6
Married or cohabiting (%)	18.0	22.8
Has children (%)	67.3	63.8
Hispanic	18.6	25.8
African American (%)	71.7	68.0
<i>Economic Status</i>		
Employed before prison (%)	54.0	65.1
Earnings, if employed (\$)	450.80	543.24
<i>Prison programs</i>		
Drug program, incl. 12 step	78.8	83.5
GED classes	74.0	80.3
Job training or readiness	67.3	84.4
Sample size	113	128

Table 17. Analysis of self-reported earnings and employment, unadjusted, regression, and matching estimates.

	Controls	ComALERT Including Active Clients	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Employment (%)	23.1	75.6	52.5
Earnings (\$)	273.08	384.48	111.14
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Employment	22.5	75.9	53.4
Earnings (\$)	303.39	399.46	96.07
<i>Matched</i>			
Employment (%)	13.6	74.6	61.1
Earnings (\$)	266.14	390.31	76.75

Note: All differences are statistically significant at the .05 level on a one-tailed test. Regression adjustment controls for number of prior arrests and convictions, prior drug use, age, race, educational attainment, and employment prior to incarceration. Matching estimates are based in nearest neighbor matches, conditioning on the regression covariates.

Table 18. Analysis of self-reported earnings and employment, unadjusted, regression, and matching estimates. Treatment group includes only ComALERT graduates and discharged clients.

	Controls	ComALERT Graduates Only	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Employment (%)	23.1	81.5	58.4
Earnings (\$)	273.08	397.45	124.36
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Employment	23.3	79.8	56.5
Earnings (\$)	258.43	398.25	139.82
<i>Matched</i>			
Employment (%)	19.7	80.3	60.6
Earnings (\$)	213.03	398.67	185.64

Note: All differences are statistically significant at the .05 level on a one-tailed test. Regression adjustment controls for number of prior arrests and convictions, prior drug use, age, race, educational attainment, and employment prior to incarceration. Matching estimates are based on nearest neighbor matches, conditioning on the regression covariates.

Table 19. Employment and earnings for control group respondents and different subsets of ComALERT clients.

	Average	Difference from control group
<i>Employment (%)</i>		
Control group	23.0	
All ComALERT	75.6	52.6
ComALERT graduates	81.5	58.5
RWA clients	88.0	65.0
RWA graduates	90.0	67.0
<i>Weekly Earnings (\$)</i>		
Control group	273.08	
All ComALERT	384.48	111.40
ComALERT graduates	397.45	124.37
RWA clients	351.19	78.11
RWA graduates	383.64	110.56

Table 20. Analysis of co-residence and contact with children, unadjusted, regression, and matching estimates.

	Control	ComALERT	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Co-resident (%)	18.0	22.8	4.8
Contact with children (%)	68.1	69.1	1.0
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Co-resident (%)	17.0	19.1	2.1
Contact with children (%)	62.6	67.8	5.2
<i>Matched</i>			
Co-resident (%)	15.2	21.2	6.0
Contact with children (%)	76.9	71.1	-5.7

Note: None of the differences are statistically significant. Regression adjustment controls for number of prior arrests and convictions, prior drug use, age, race, educational attainment, and employment prior to incarceration. Matching estimates are based in nearest neighbor matches, conditioning on the regression covariates.

Table 21. Analysis of co-residence and contact with children, unadjusted, regression, and matching estimates, ComALERT graduates only.

	Control	ComALERT Graduates Only	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Co-resident (%)	18.6	21.5	2.9
Contact with children (%)	72.7	75.9	3.2
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Co-resident (%)	24.2	21.8	-2.4
Contact with children (%)	64.8	69.7	4.9
<i>Matched</i>			
Co-resident (%)	16.4	19.7	3.3
Contact with children (%)	75.0	75.0	0.0

Note: None of the differences are statistically significant. Regression adjustment controls for number of prior arrests and convictions, prior drug use, age, race, educational attainment, and employment prior to incarceration. Matching estimates are based in nearest neighbor matches, conditioning on the regression covariates.

Table 22. Percentage of respondents using alcohol or drugs in the six months before imprisonment and within 30 days of the survey interview.

	Control	ComALERT	Difference
<i>In 6 Months before Prison</i>			
Alcohol	26.5%	15.8%	-10.7
Marijuana	29.8	43.0	13.2
Cocaine	37.5	26.6	-10.9
Heroin	22.1	15.6	-6.5
Any drugs	76.8	79.7	2.9
<i>In last 30 days</i>			
Alcohol	13.5	13.5	0.0
Marijuana	6.9	4.8	-2.1
Cocaine	4.9	1.6	-3.3
Heroin	2.9	2.4	-0.5
Any drugs	9.2	8	-1.2

Note: Drug or alcohol use in the six months before imprisonment was recorded if the respondent reported using daily or several times a week. Any drug use in the six months before prison was counted in the “any drugs” category. Alcohol use in the six months before prison includes getting drunk daily or several times a week. Alcohol use in the last 30 days includes any alcohol use.

Table 23. Analysis of drug and alcohol use, unadjusted, regression, and matching, estimates, all ComALERT clients.

	Control	ComALERT	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Alcohol	13.5	13.5	0.0
Drugs	9.2	8.0	-1.2
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Alcohol	16.1	12.8	-3.3
Drugs	12.0	5.6	-6.4
<i>Matched</i>			
Alcohol	13.8	10.3	-3.5
Drugs	9.6	6.1	-3.5

Table 24. Analysis of drug and alcohol use, unadjusted, regression, and matching, estimates, ComALERT graduates.

	Control	ComALERT Graduates Only	Difference
<i>Unadjusted</i>			
Alcohol	13.5	9.4	-4.1
Drugs	9.2	3.1	-6.1
<i>Regression adjusted</i>			
Alcohol	18.2	12.5	-5.7
Drugs	10.9	3.5	-7.4
<i>Matched</i>			
Alcohol	15	6.7	-8.3
Drugs	6.7	3.3	-3.4

X. FIGURES

Figure 1. Cumulative percentage of ComALERT attendees rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated by time since release from state prison

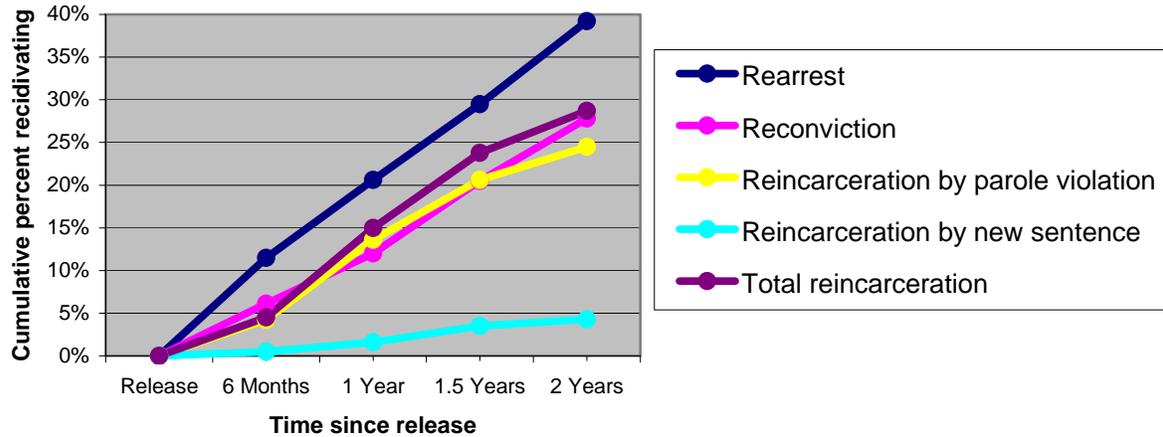


Figure 2. Cumulative percentage of ComALERT graduates rearrested, reconvicted, and reincarcerated by time since release from state prison

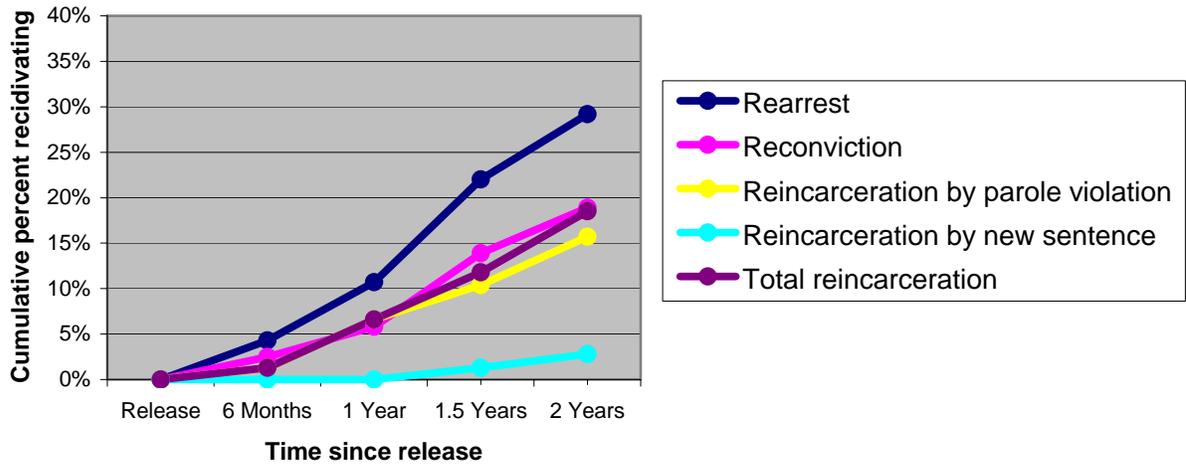


Figure 3. Cumulative percentages of rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration for ComALERT graduates and all ComALERT attendees within 2 years of release from state prison

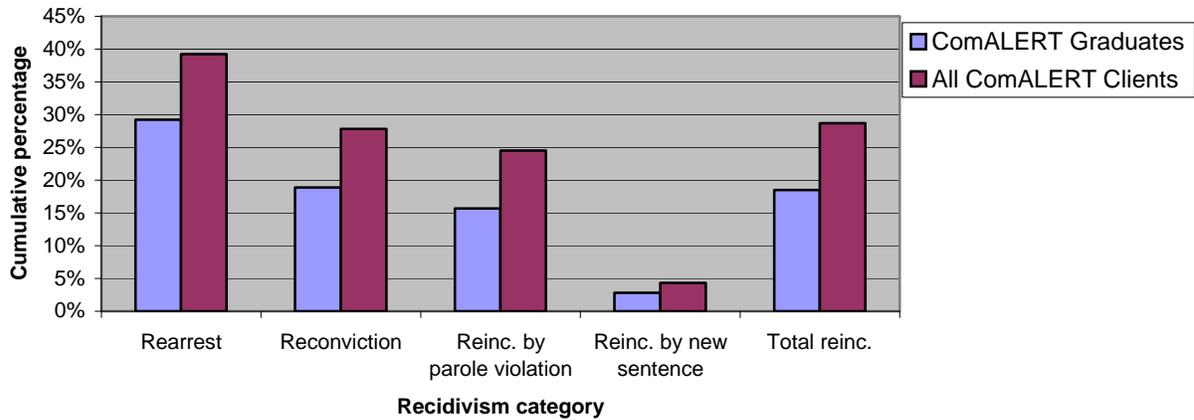


Figure 4. Cumulative percent rearrested for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals by time since release

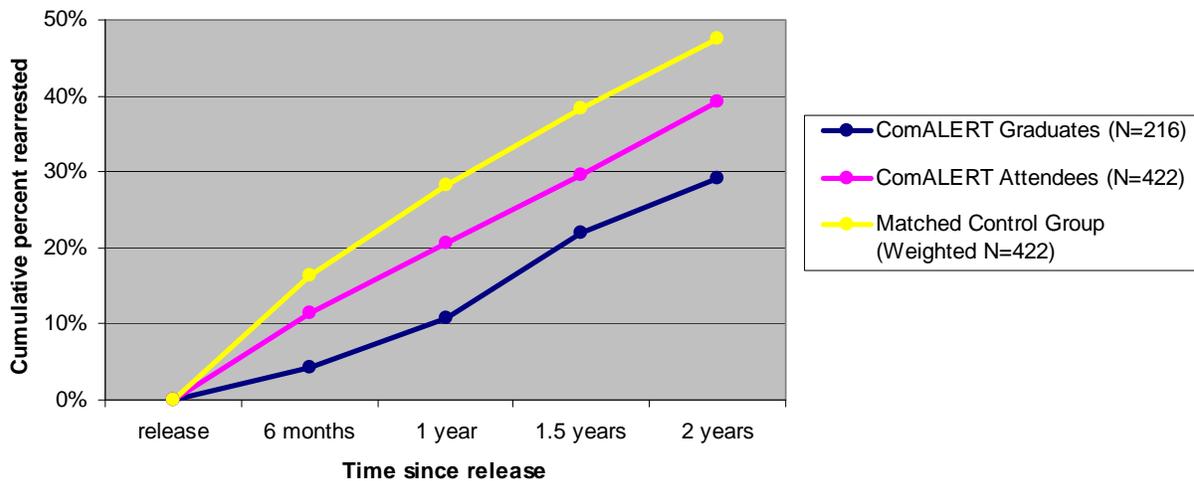


Figure 5. Cumulative percent reconvicted for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals by time since release

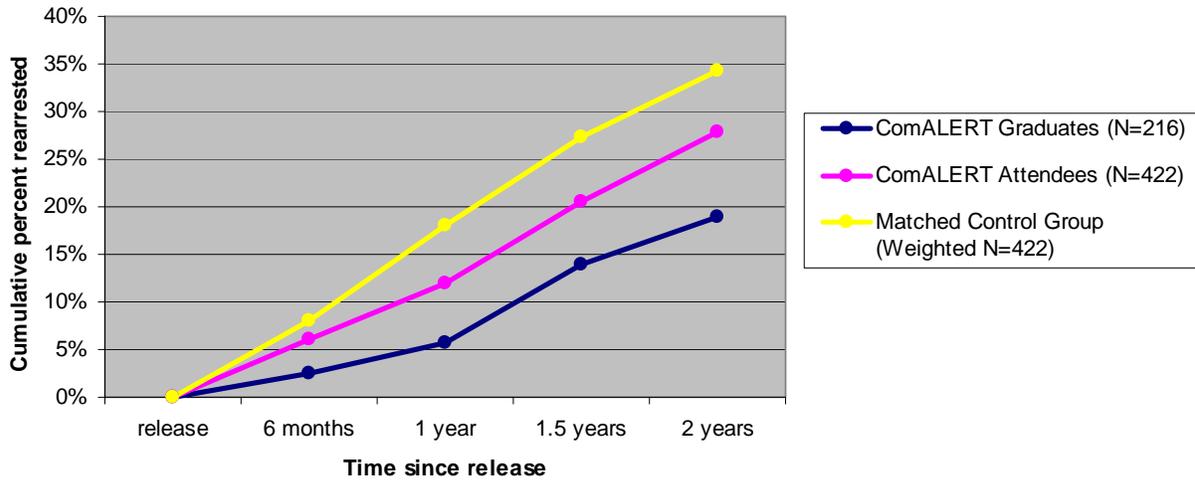


Figure 6. Cumulative percent reincarcerated by parole violation for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals by time since release

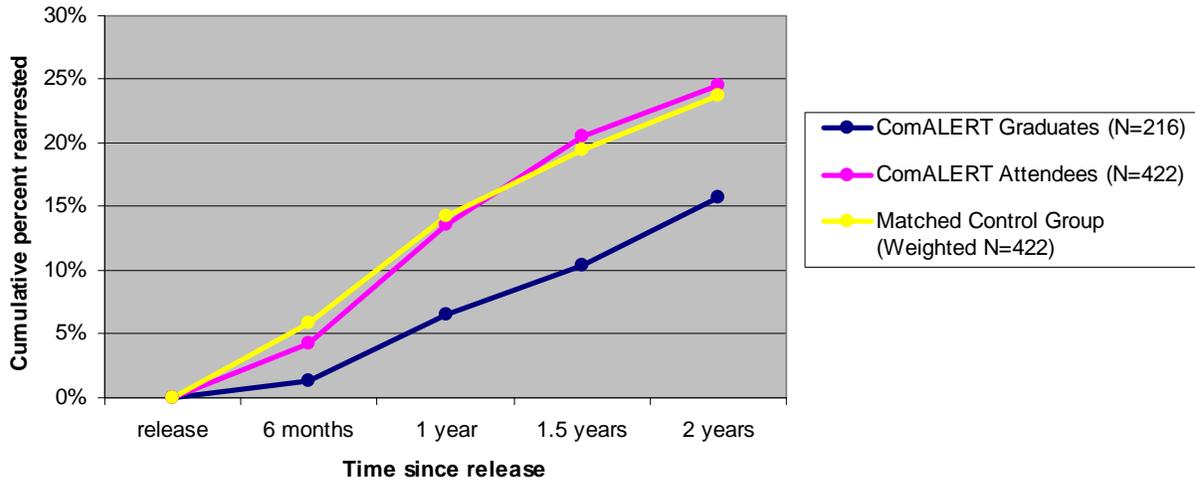


Figure 7. Cumulative percent reincarcerated by new sentence for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals by time since release

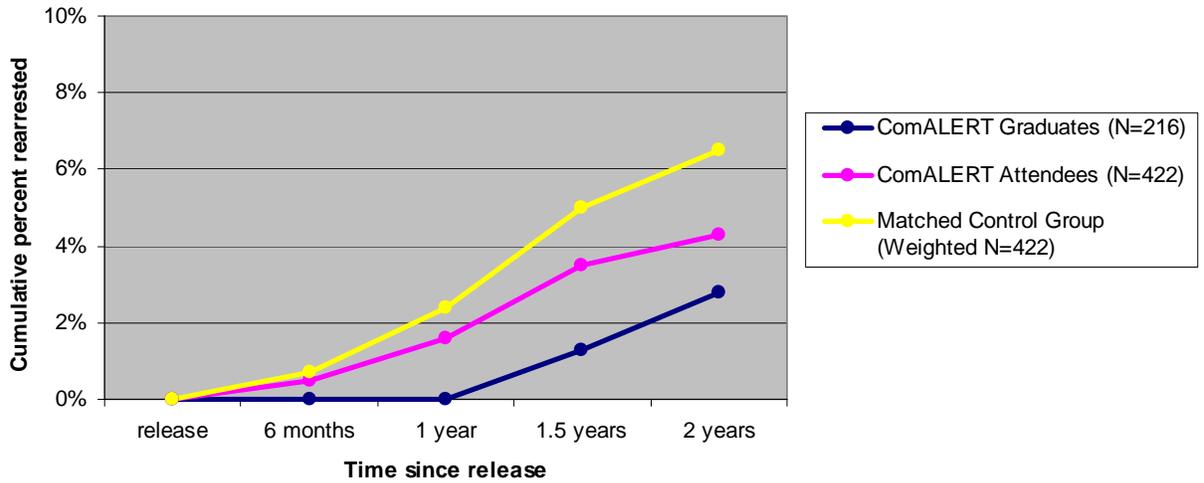


Figure 8. Cumulative percent reincarcerated for ComALERT graduates, all ComALERT attendees, and matched control individuals by time since release

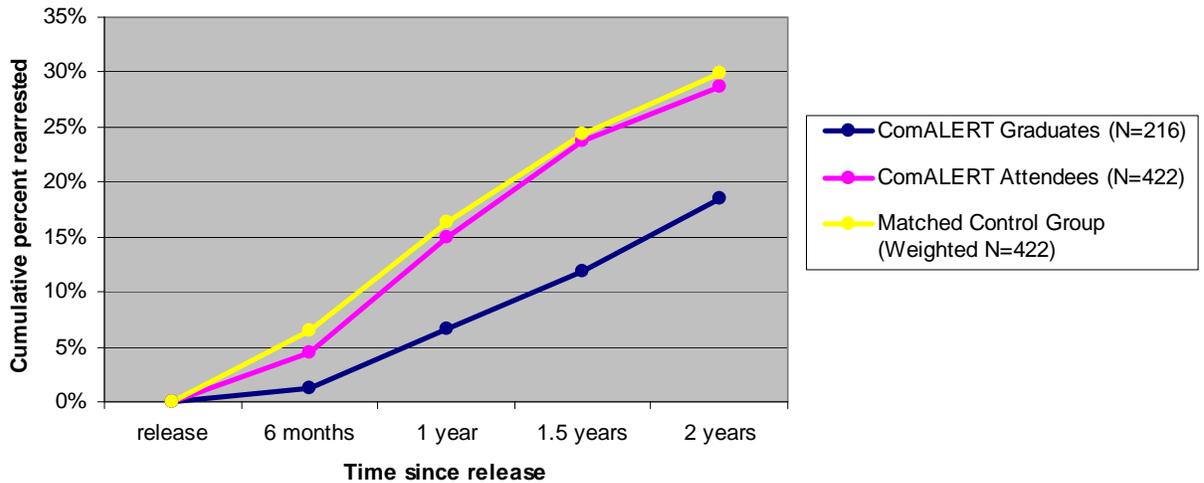


Figure 9. Predicted probability of rearrest for a 31-35 year-old black male with 5 prior arrests, one prior parole period, and a drug history by time since release and ComALERT status

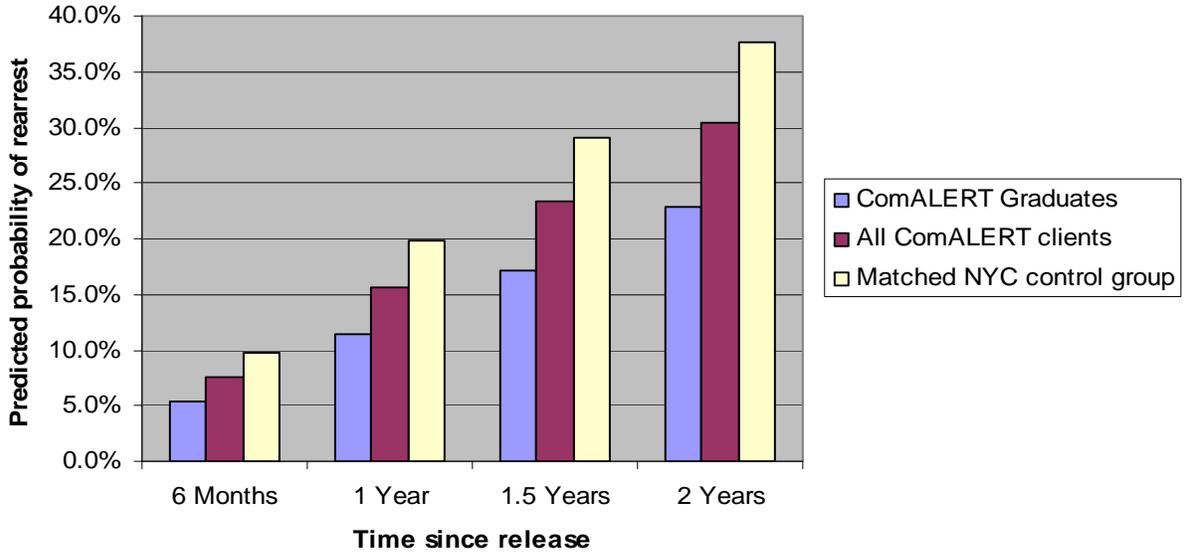


Figure 10. Predicted probability of reconviction for a 31-35 year-old black male with 4 prior convictions, 1 prior parole period, and a drug history, by time since release and ComALERT status

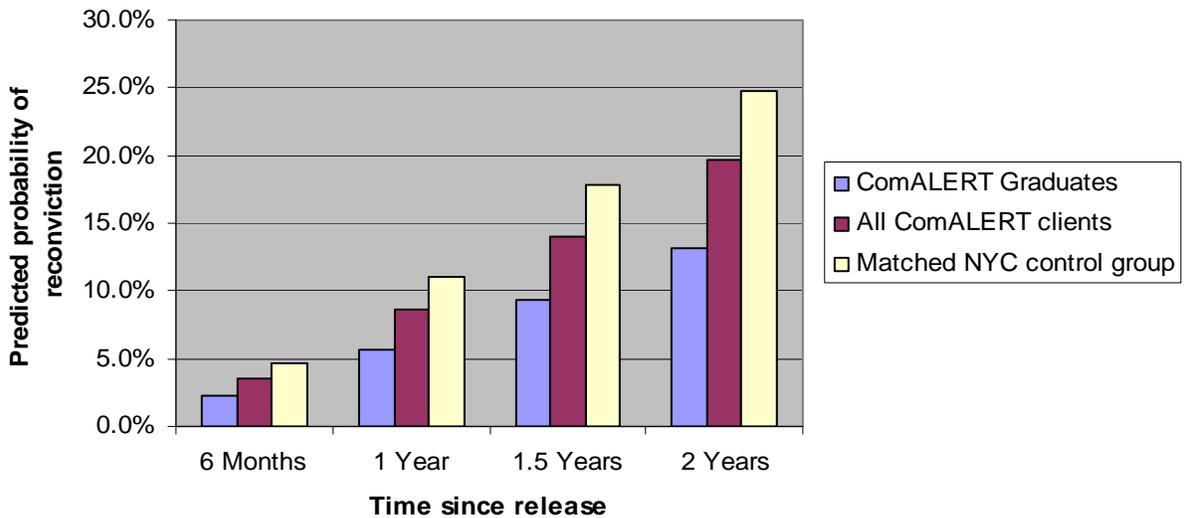


Figure 11. Predicted probability of reincarceration on a parole violation for a 31-35 year-old black male with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug history, by time since release and ComALERT status

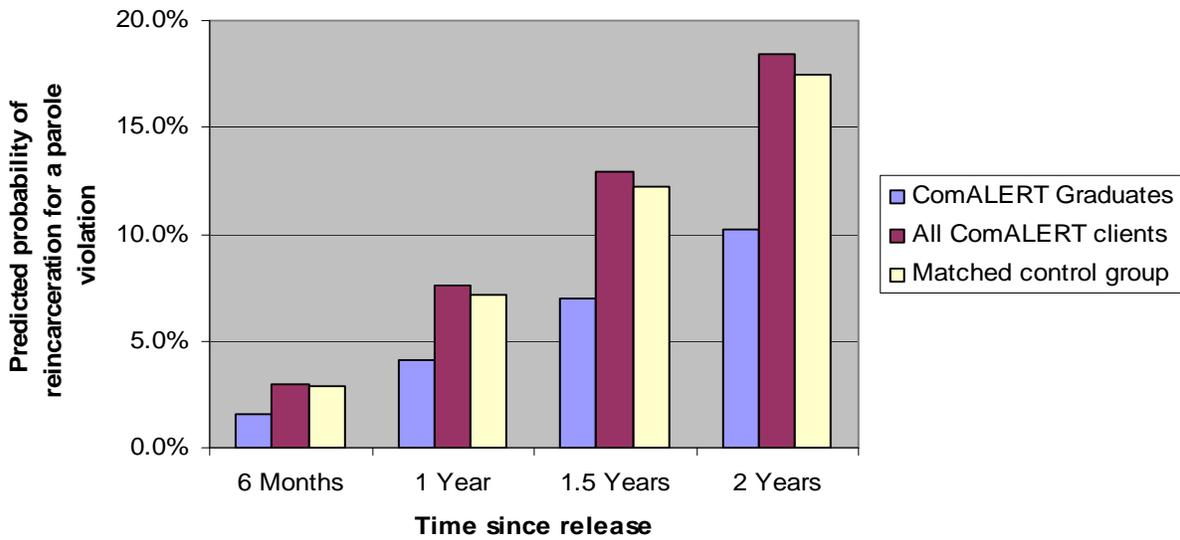


Figure 12. Predicted probability of reincarceration for a new conviction for a 31-35 year-old black male with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug history

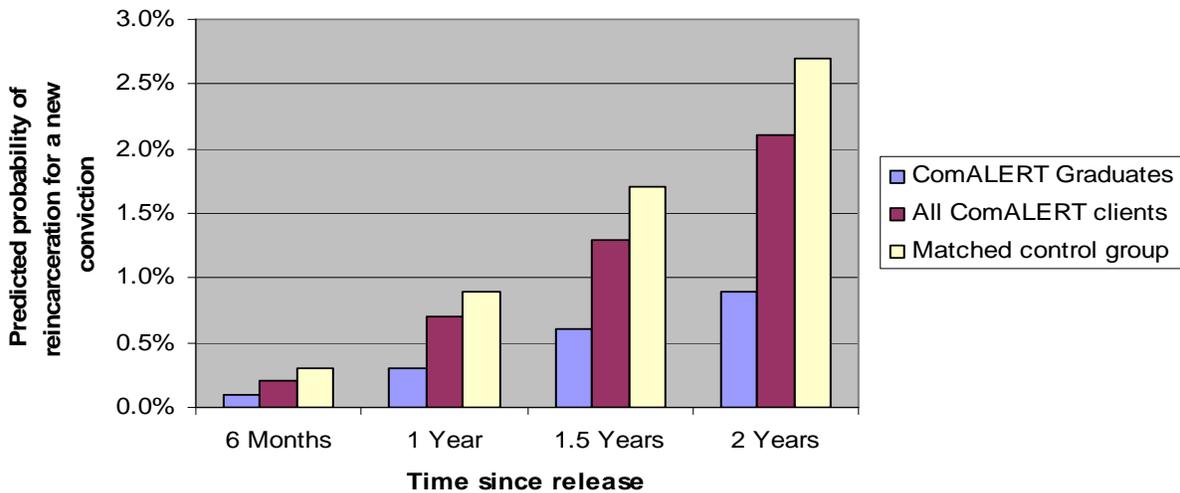


Figure 13. Predicted probability of reincarceration for a 31-35 year-old black male with 5 prior arrests, 1 prior parole period, and a drug history

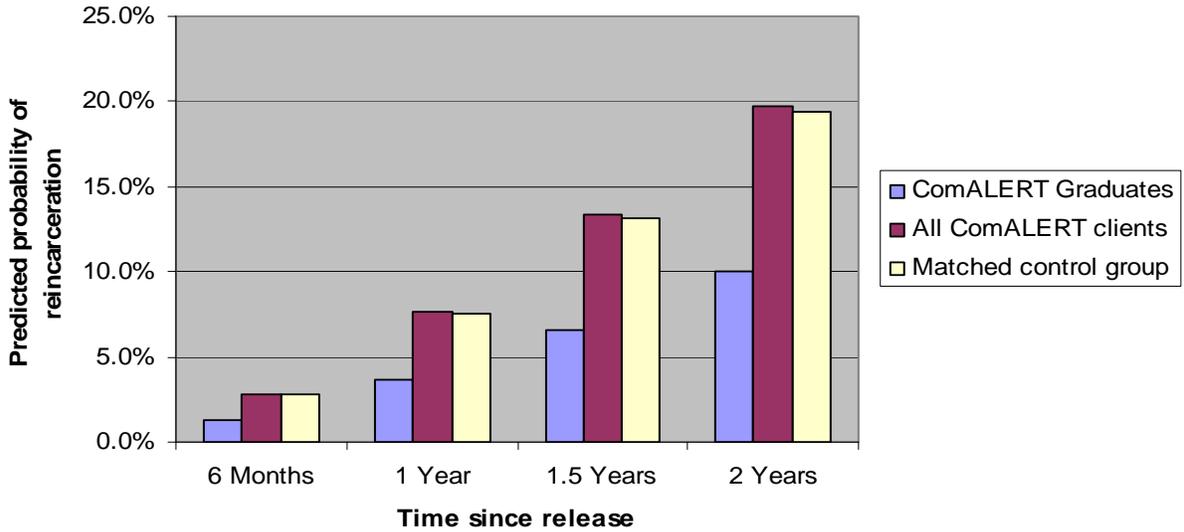
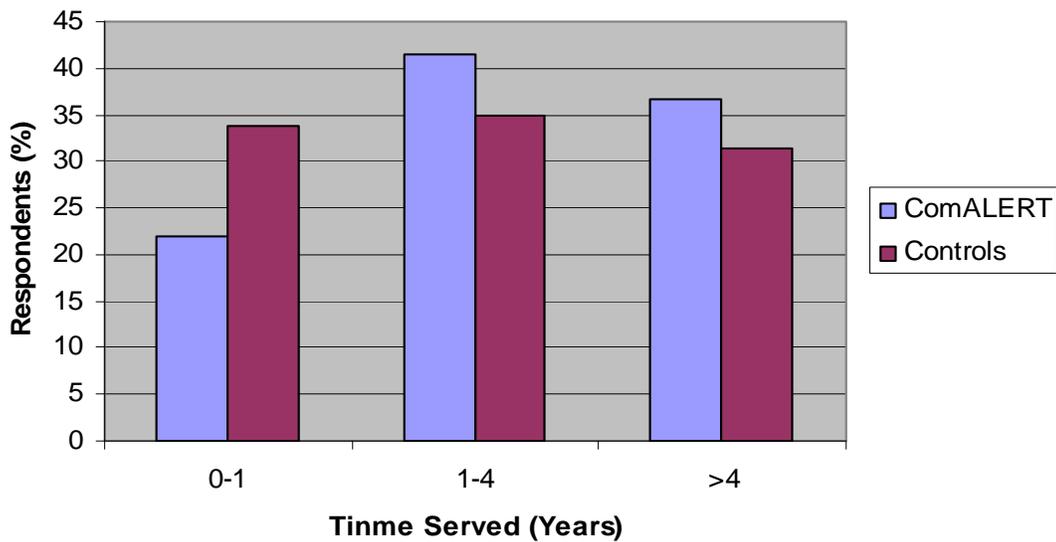


Figure 14. Time served in most recent incarceration, ComALERT survey respondents, and control group respondents



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