



BRIEF

Giving Memphis Residents a Second Chance on Life after Substance Use Disorder & Incarceration

Prepared for:

New Dawn Social Services

By:

Data Driven Consulting & Solutions LLC
DBA ITÀN

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Data Strategist: [Monique O. Ositelu, PhD](#)

SERVICES &

ABOUT ITÀN

ITÀN *(see - fahn)* is a Yoruba term for *story*. Our founder, Dr. Monique O. Ositelu, comes from a rich Nigerian lineage of storytellers – where she applies the art of storytelling to data. **ITÀN** is an innovative data-consulting firm that uses data analytics to enhance the targeted outcomes of non-profits and educational institutions by curating meaningful and actionable strategies.

What Do We Do?

We help clients tell their stories with data by assessing existing programs, practices and interventions while using the highest research standards. We empower our clients to leverage their data (big or small), to turn detailed data analysis into useful strategic insights.

Our Framework

We use a client-focused, collaborative approach to help clients harness the benefits of data through data storytelling with immediate and applicable strategies.



Data Analysis

Includes but not limited to:
program evaluation, survey
development, predictive
analysis and snapshot
analysis of current
organizational outcomes.



Data Storytelling Masterclass

We provide interactive
and engaging in-person
professional development
workshops and online
masterclasses to unlock
participants' data
storytelling skills.



Keynote Talks

Our signature talks:

- “Effectively Communicating Data”
- “Accountability Metrics within Higher Education”

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BRIEF

OVERVIEW

Our Approach: To quantify NDSS' impact within the Memphis community, Itàn evaluated NDSS' 2021-2022 internal data; reviewed the research on evidence-based practices for outpatient services for those recovering from Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and returning citizens; and interviewed a community partner (Drug Court) as well as current and former NDSS' clients.

“I believe New Dawn Social Services saved my life! It gave me another chance to live again.”
NDSS Former Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)

As of 2020, [40.3 million](#) Americans have a substance use disorder (SUD), with only 10 percent [receiving treatment](#). The national recidivism rate reveals that about [3 in 5](#) individuals released from a correctional facility will return within three years. While the state of Tennessee's recidivism rate predicts about [2 in 5](#) will be arrested again within a similar timeframe.

The pattern of recidivism and drug relapse is partially attributed to the challenges in reentering society by getting access to basic needs such as housing. For example, the fundamental necessity of a home is often out of reach for formerly incarcerated adults, as many [landlords are reluctant](#) to approve rent applications from those formerly incarcerated. Research shows that approximately 8 in 10 property-owners use background checks as a way to [screen out prospective tenants](#) with criminal records. Due to such barriers, 1 in 5 of those released from prison [will become homeless](#).

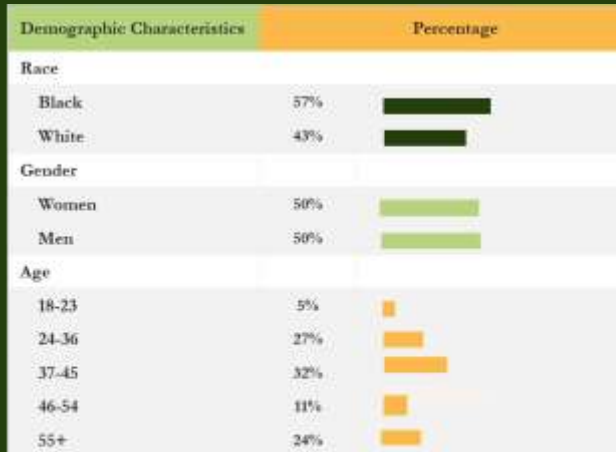
The amount of drug-dependent individuals within U.S. correctional facilities is exceptionally high. [Research](#) suggests those recently released

from prison are more than likely to immediately return to drug use. Transitional support programs, like New Dawn Social Services (NDSS), that focus on a holistic approach to healthy decision-making are critical to successful reentry.

Unfortunately, without access to such transitional supports, the success rate for reentry is relatively low. Both formerly incarcerated and those recovering from a SUD are at a compounding deficit in their attempts to integrate back into society.

Who Does NDSS Serve?

To meet this need, NDSS opens the doors of its facilities to men and women released from penal institutions and rehabilitation centers. NDSS aims to improve outcomes along housing, financial literacy, mental health and recovery from a SUD. They also aim to reduce recidivism and equip residents with leadership skills to assist with gainful employment. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of clients they serve (*see Table 1 below*).

Table 1 | Demographics of New Dawn Social Services' Clients*Based on 2021-2022 NDSS Internal Data*

Note: The percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding. N=40

Source: Itan analysis of New Dawn Social Services' internal data from April 2021- April 2022.

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Source: Itan analysis of New Dawn Social Services' internal data from April 2021- April 2022.

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New Dawn Social Services Has a 72% Success Rate



About 7 in 10 former NDSS residents continue to live independently or with loved ones and maintain their sobriety. Compared to the [national relapse rate of 60 percent](#), with as little as 4 in 10 maintaining their sobriety nationally, NDSS' clients are beating the odds and more!

“I stayed there [NDSS] nine months and it couldn't have been a better place. I went back into the work world. I'm a certified welder. And since then, a lot has changed in my life. I got married. Life is great today!”

– NDSS Former Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)

What Makes NDSS So Effective?

Many residents refer to NDSS as a *safe haven*. It is this safety net of love, compassion, care and an opportunity for clients to grow spiritually that sets NDSS apart. NDSS offers a safe, comfortable and peaceful environment that is critical to successful reentry. It allows for what many refer to as a place where they can “sit and gather their thoughts” to make choices in the best interest of their sobriety without external pressures from their former lifestyle luring them back.

Separation from their previous lifestyle – coupled with a supportive environment – allows clients to be in a space where they can think clearly, go through the 12 steps and get their lives back.

“Mrs. Sharon is good with us. She really cares and tries to help us. I feel like I could talk to her about what I was going through and she would give advice.”

– NDSS Former Female Resident (sobriety 11 months)

Empirical evidence [suggests](#) that SUD recovery should go beyond treating the physical condition but rather treat the whole person. NDSS adopts this holistic approach to provide wrap-around services (including financial literacy and spiritual growth) and connect clients to healthcare providers (e.g. mental health) to support individuals in their journey to sobriety.

Strategy for NDSS' Future Expansion

New Dawn Social Services is well equipped to expand services within the community. There is a growing demand for effective transitional care within Memphis where NDSS has an efficient intake process and programming to meet this need, as well as phenomenal rapport among community partners.

Drug Court, a community partner that refers most of NDSS' clients, believes NDSS is well positioned for such expansion and are on-board to refer more clients to NDSS. However, a key factor to increasing NDSS' revenue stream and referrals from Drug Court is to become a *county vendor*. As a county vendor, NDSS has the potential to go from a yearly revenue of currently bringing in roughly \$3,000 to \$45,000 just from Drug Court – equating to a maximum of 55 new clients within a calendar year (if referred residents stay for 45 days).

Multi-Phased Approach

To strategically expand as a county vendor, we suggest a phased approach. At each phase, we strongly encourage NDSS to continue to foster relationships with current community partners, while building relationships with new local and state agencies. Such local agencies include Veterans Court and Mental Health Court.

The multi-phased approach is outlined below:

- Phase 1: Become a county vendor
- Phase 2: Focus on a niche of individuals to serve
- Phase 3: Gradually expand niche of individuals to serve

These three phases will help New Dawn Social Services expand at a rate that is within their staffing and facility capacity. This brief concludes with strategic insight to guide NDSS' implementation of this expansion approach.

THE Challenges to Reentering Society

Based on a [2020 national survey](#), 40.3 million (15 percent) Americans ages 12 or older have a Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Although research shows that [men have higher rates of abusing drugs](#) than women and are thus more likely to die from a [drug overdose](#), women are just as likely to develop a SUD.

NDSS' Executive Director Sharon Smith sees that a trend of "SUD, incarceration and homelessness are all usually one in the same person." [Studies also show](#) that individuals with a history of illicit drug use are more likely to have a criminal record and an increased risk of homelessness. With 700,000 people released annually from [prison](#) and almost 9 million released annually from [jail](#), those reentering society run into a plethora of challenges, that if unable to overcome, lead to relapse and recidivism.

Such challenges include, but are not limited to, reuniting with family, finding housing, gaining employment, accessing public benefits, losing the right to vote, paying off debts, managing the stigma of having a criminal record and facing other personal issues such as mental health and substance use disorder.

"When I came to NDSS, I had \$2-\$3 in my pocket. But what I like is that all you had to do is bring yourself. They provided food and shelter and I did the rest. I was back to working within 30 days of being there."

– NDSS Former Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)



Housing

Stable housing plays a critical role in recovery from a SUD. Individuals experiencing homelessness who also have a SUD often find it difficult to address their addiction without a safe place to live. Before individuals can address their SUD, find employment or even learn new skills, they need a place to stay.

"I am grateful for NDSS because if you don't have a roof over your head, you can't do anything."

– NDSS Former Female Resident (sobriety 11 months)



Environment is Critical

Transitioning from incarceration or a treatment facility back to normal life can be extremely challenging. Individuals go from coping with their issues in a controlled environment to coping in society. For that reason, transitional care like NDSS' sober living facility is especially important to recovery.

"Here [NDSS] you get structure and you know you will be held accountable. That was a big part for me and my recovery."

– NDSS Current Female Resident (sobriety 10 months)



NDSS Meets Needs

NDSS is a sober living home that provides structure, accountability, peer support and employment assistance. Upon arrival, residents are immediately connected to health care providers and other wrap-around supportive services (e.g. anger manager, counseling, etc.).

"NDSS will set them up with a mental health provider in the community. She [Mrs. Smith] will take them to the appointment and help them get the medication if they can't afford the co-pay."

– Drug Court (community partner)

THE TRANSITION:

Road to Recovery

Moving from a rehabilitation center or penal facility where one makes very few decisions to an environment where one is responsible for making all daily decisions makes reintegration and recovery extremely difficult. Handling finances, budgeting, paying off debts and obtaining legal forms of identification are key to the road to recovery.

Participation in the Financial Literacy Class

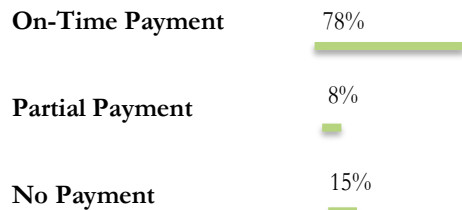


The majority (68%) of residents who do participate in NDSS' financial literacy course are (were) residents for 8 months or longer.

Financial Literacy

Most people overlook the role financial literacy plays in recovery, yet addiction is often tough on finances. [Studies](#) show that learning money management skills like saving and budgeting is critical for a successful return to the community. NDSS offers financial literacy courses twice per year to help clients prioritize their finances and provide assistance with budgeting.

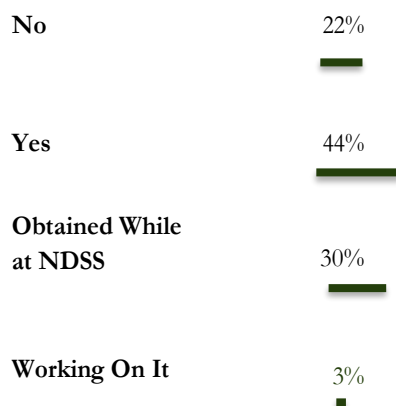
Rent Payments



On-Time Rent Payments

NDSS helps residents acclimate to financial responsibilities, such as paying rent. The majority (86 percent) of NDSS residents pay their rent either on time or via payment installments.

Driver's License Attainment



Driver's License Attainment

Once individuals are released and/or recovering from a SUD, attaining some form of identification like a driver's license is [critical to recovery](#). A driver's license allows individuals to make productive steps towards the future, such as opening bank accounts, getting a job and buying a car.

THE SUCCESS RATE OF NDSS Meets & Surpasses National Trends



Sobriety

As a sober living home, New Dawn Social Services requires all residents to maintain sobriety during their stay.

[National studies](#) estimate that approximately 70 percent of individuals who successfully complete rehabilitation treatment are sober six to nine months later. Within NDSS, about 70 percent of residents are sober seven to 12 months later – meeting the national trends of sobriety amongst individuals recovering from a SUD.

Table 2 | The Average NDSS Client is Still Sober 7 to 12 Months Later

Months of Sobriety	Percentage
Less than 2 Months	0%
2 – 6 Months	13%
7 – 12 Months	69%
13+ Months	19%

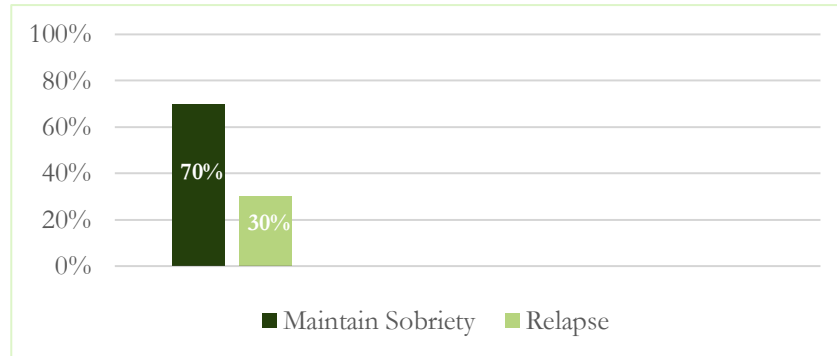
Note: Percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding. NDSS' data on sobriety was only available for 16 clients. Actual average of sobriety may change once data is available for all 40 residents. N=16

Source: ITÀN analysis of New Dawn Social Services' internal data from April 2021- April 2022.

Relapse & Return

[National trends](#) show that as much as 85 percent of individuals recovering from a SUD will relapse. Yet within NDSS, only 30 percent of residents relapse, with the majority maintaining their sobriety (see *Figure 1 below*).

Figure 1 | The Majority of NDSS' Residents Maintain their Sobriety

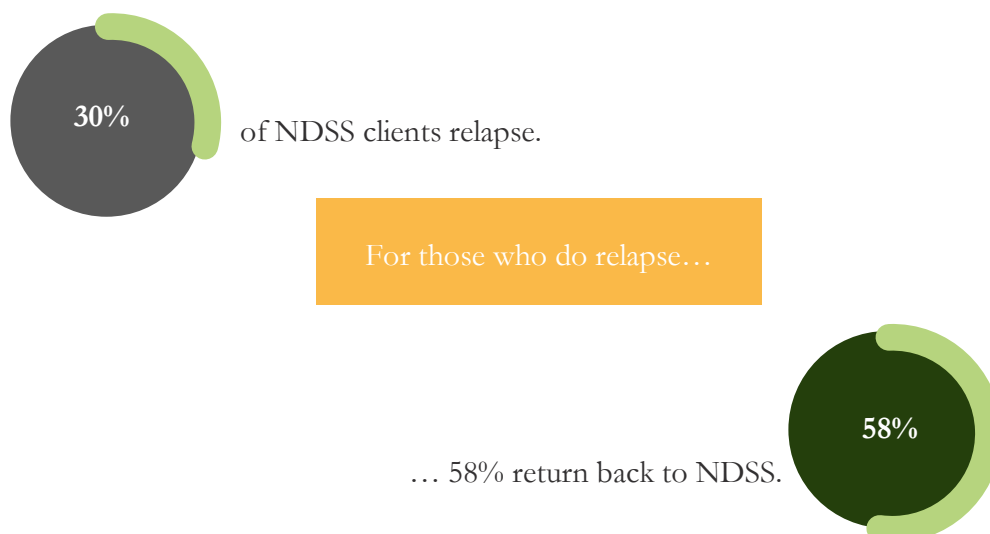


Source: ITÀN analysis of New Dawn Social Services' internal data from April 2021- April 2022.

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Although NDSS has a strict policy that requires sobriety to reside in the facility, they typically leave the door open for individuals to return if they have relapsed. In such cases, individuals must go through rehabilitation treatment first and then are eligible for consideration to return. *“Mr. & Mrs. Smith fed me and put me in a motel after I relapsed after 9 months. I did 14 days detox and then moved back to the house. I’ve been clean ever since.”* – NDSS Current Male Resident (sobriety 24 months)

Figure 2 | Over Half of the Clients Who Relapse Return Back to NDSS to Continue their Sobriety Journey



Employment & Success Rates

For many individuals with a criminal record and/or recovering from a SUD, obtaining employment is a critical but difficult step to achieve. To assist with this challenge, NDSS provides employment assistance to help individuals find gainful employment. For current NDSS residents, about 1 in 3 (32 percent) obtain full-time employment during their stay (see *Figure 3 below*).

Figure 3 | 1 in 3 of NDSS' Clients Are Gainfully Employed within a Year

**Full-Time
Employment** 

Note: To confirm employment status, ITAN received written confirmation that the individuals identified in the data set as employed are employed full-time. Thus, the analysis assumes there are no NDSS clients employed part-time.

Source: ITAN analysis of New Dawn Social Services' internal data from April 2021- April 2022.

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Success Rate

Although NDSS lives by the motto that they “do not force anyone out,” residents eventually get to the place in their sobriety journey where they are able to move out and live independently. Of those individuals who decide to move out to live independently or stay with a loved one, 72 percent maintain their sobriety. This is major as [national trends](#) typically reveal a success rate (maintain sobriety) as low as 15 to 40 percent. Yet, NDSS exceeds national statistics with a success rate of more than 70 percent.



STRATEGIC

Insight

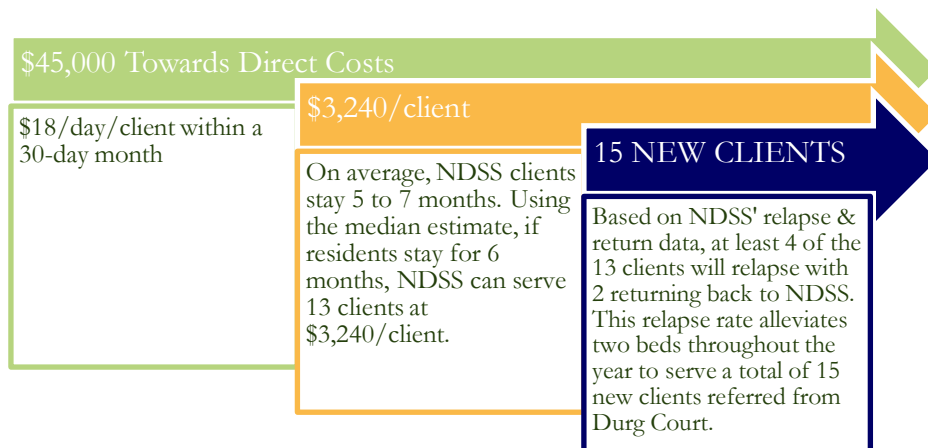


Expansion of New Dawn Social Services

With a combination of outstanding rapport amongst community partners and exemplary results from their programming as detailed in this brief, NDSS is ideally positioned to expand their services across the city of Memphis.

We highly encourage New Dawn Social Services to become a county vendor within Shelby County. Tennessee's [Procurement Technical Assistance Center](#) (PTAC) can assist NDSS with becoming a vendor or NDSS can directly apply on [Shelby County's Vendor Registration website](#). For example, as a county vendor, NDSS becomes eligible for a maximum of \$45,000 in annual revenue in referrals from Drug Court. Below is a customized estimate for expansion based on our analysis of the typical length of stay, relapse and return data. Figure 4 below estimates the amount of additional clients NDSS can potentially serve in a given year just from Drug Court referrals – once they have become a county vendor. The process to submit pay orders to Drug Court as a county vendor begins annually in July.

Figure 4 | Based On Data Trends – NDSS Can Expand to Serve 15 New Clients in a Given Year from Drug Court Referrals



It is important to note that this estimate only includes an increase in referrals from Drug Court. There is potential that once NDSS acquires a county vendor status, they could become eligible to receive additional referrals from other current partners, as well as new partners such as Veterans Court and Mental Health Court.

PROPOSED

Multi-Phased Approach

This section of the report applies the interviews and internal data results to guide NDSS with data-driven strategies.

Three Phases of Expansion

1

Become a County Vendor

- Identify the process and steps to become a county vendor
- Identify when Drug Court makes the call for proposals from county vendors to submit a pay order for consideration

2

Focus on a Niche of Clients

- Focus on female referrals
- Acquire housing unit (s) solely for women
- Hire additional staff trained to support women with SUD and/or formerly incarcerated

3

Gradually Expand Niche if Necessary

- Consider what subpopulation NDSS is best equipped to serve
- Options include veterans, those with mental health concerns, men, etc.

To strategically expand as a county vendor, we suggest a phased approach. At each phase, we strongly encourage NDSS to continue to foster relationships with current community partners, while building relationships with other local and state agencies.

Focus on a Niche of Clients

During initial phases of expansion in the service industry, it is imperative to narrow your niche audience due to limited resources and staffing. Although we acknowledge NDSS will continue to serve both men and women, for the second phase of expansion, we strongly encourage NDSS to focus on expanding a facility primarily for women.

NDSS has such a great track record with women and a community rapport that NDSS serves women recovering from SUD exceptionally well. *“We have been sending more women than men because we have a contract with a men’s housing... The compassion and interest she [Mrs. Smith] takes with getting to know these women and time getting to know them and their families. She knows who they are dating, who their visitors are. It’s that type of relationship and rapport that she has with the participants that makes her so good with them [women].”*

– Drug Court

What Residents and Community Partners are Saying

“NDSS allowed me to regroup and redefine myself without the past being a part of it.” – NDSS Current Female Resident (sobriety 10 months)

“These past 19 months of being sober has been the best months of my life.” – NDSS Former Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)

“The top two game changing services NDSS provides are the holistic approach and the contacts they already have established with community agencies to make that connection rather quickly.” – Drug Court (community partner)

“I get to be in an environment where I got to sit there long enough and be taught. I’m blessed with a job. I now have a driver’s license, a car in my own name, insurance and my record is expunged!” – NDSS Current Female Resident (sobriety 10 months)

“I can’t say with words how I love it. It has helped me learn how to live life again. I have a good job, a car, driver’s license and car insurance. Thank God for sending me people like Mr. Smith. I have grown. I love myself.” – NDSS Current Male Resident (sobriety 24 months)

“They [Mr. & Mrs. Smith] are people who give you a second chance.” – NDSS Past Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)

“I was homeless with no other option for housing. I had no insurance and no money. If not for NDSS, I am not sure where I would be today.” – NDSS Current Male Resident (sobriety 24 months)

“A lot of men and women get their lives back at NDSS. Mrs. Sharon is strictly business but you are going to get your life back.” – NDSS Current Male Resident (sobriety 24 months)

“I love this program. I want people to know NDSS is saving people’s lives. Y’all [NDSS] saved my life!”
– NDSS Current Male Resident (sobriety 24 months)

“I have nothing bad to say about it [NDSS]. I recommend it to anyone who really wants it.” – NDSS Past Male Resident (sobriety 19 months)