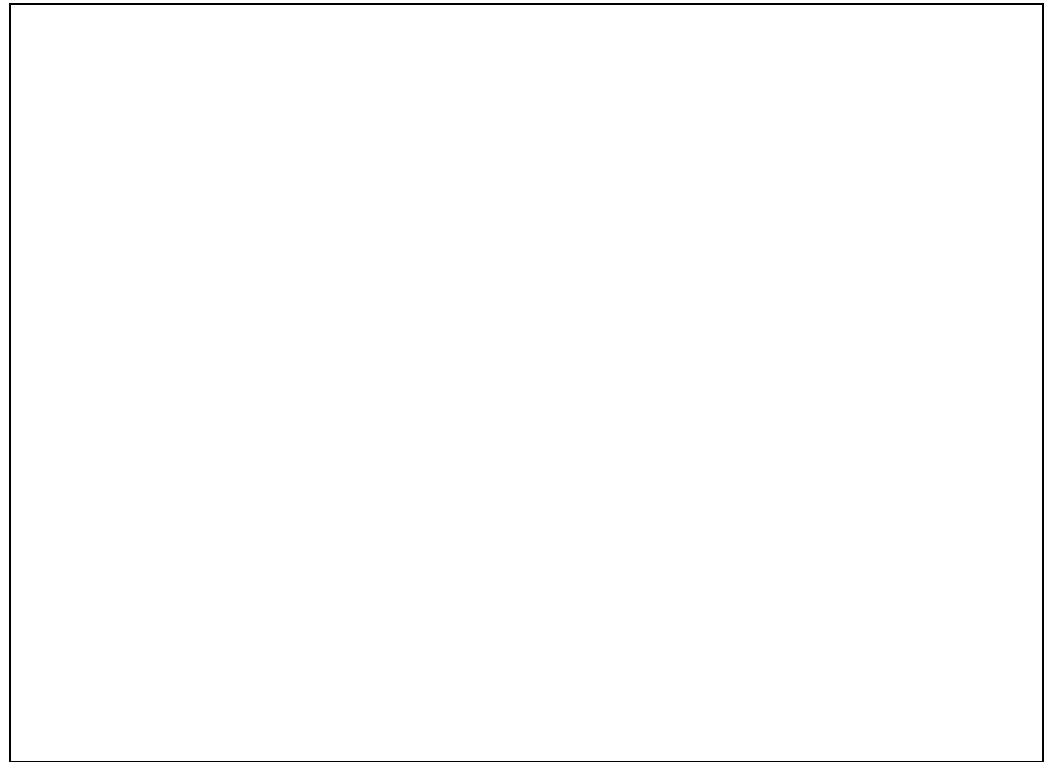




OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
STATE OF MINNESOTA

EVALUATION REPORT

Substance Abuse Treatment



FEBRUARY 2006

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State of Minnesota • James Nobles, Legislative Auditor

February 2006

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Substance abuse does great harm to individuals, families, and society. While some types of treatment may mitigate the harm, research shows that not all treatment is effective.

Our evaluation found that Minnesota needs stronger leadership to help ensure that effective treatments are more widely available. The Department of Human Services should foster the development of effective treatment options, particularly in parts of the state that are underserved. In addition, the department should more closely monitor local decisions that place people in publicly-funded treatment to better ensure that appropriate services are being used.

We found that many chemically dependent prisoners have not received any treatment during or after their time in prison. Thus, we recommend that the Department of Corrections work with the Legislature to develop more treatment opportunities for prisoners. We also recommend that the department work with local corrections agencies to more effectively plan for inmates' post-prison treatment needs.

This report was researched and written by Joel Alter (project manager), Valerie Bombach, and Kelly Lehr. During our evaluation, we received full cooperation from the Department of Human Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Public Safety, Sentencing Guidelines Commission, and county human services and corrections agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Nobles".

James Nobles
Legislative Auditor

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