

**THE HALIFAX REGIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT'S UPTOWN DRUG
INTERVENTION PROJECT: AN ASSESSMENT**

DON CLAIRMONT

ATLANTIC INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

JANUARY 2014

**OUTLINE: ASSESSMENT OF THE UPTOWN DRUG INTERVENTION
PROJECT**

THE PROBLEMATIC	Page 3
WHAT WAS DONE IN THIS ASSESSMENT	Page 4
THE CONTEXTS	Page 5
DEALING WITH VIOLENCE AND OPEN-AIR TRAFFICKING	Page 5
THE MODEL FOLLOWED	Page 5
THE UDI OPERATIONALIZATION	Page 7
THE UPTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD	Page 8
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UDI PROJECT	Page 15
LAYING THE FOUNDATION: THE PREPARATORY WORK	
MAJOR IMPLEMENTATION EVENTS; THE SIGNPOSTS	
THE BUST: GETTING THE POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS IN PLACE	
GETTING THE PROGRAMS IN PLACE	
THE CALL-IN	
THE JANUARY 2013 UPDATE	
THE STICK: CONTINUING ENFORCEMENT	
VIEWS OF THE AGENCIES	Page 25
VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	Page 30
VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPANTS	Page 33
OTHER VIEWPOINTS: POLICE AND CJS OFFICIALS	Page 40
ASSESSING THE PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES	Page 43
CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	Page 47

THE PROBLEMATIC

The Halifax Regional Police (HRP) over the years have concentrated much of their enforcement and social development policing efforts in the Uptown area, principally focusing on the Uniacke Square public housing complex and its predominantly African Nova Scotian population. The level of crime, violence and drug dealing had become quite high, certainly in comparison with other areas of HRM, since the 1970s. In recent years there had been significant open-air drug trafficking in the streets around the public housing complex and while most residents and the community leaders strongly disapproved and complained of that drug milieu, there was not much direct collaboration with the HRP in identifying the dealers and the stash sites, reportedly because loved ones were or could become involved and the police remedy was generally seen as just focused on arresting and securing the incarceration of the offenders. There was much frustration among both the HRP officers and the community leaders.

The Uptown Drug Intervention (UDI) project was a bold initiative to deal effectively with the above problem. In a December 5, 2012 statement to the HRM Police Board responsible for the oversight of the HRP, the HRP superintendent coordinating the initiative explained it thusly

“Although drug trafficking occurs in other areas of the City, the Uniacke Square Public Housing Neighborhood has traditionally been seen as a ready source of drugs, particularly crack cocaine and pills. Within this neighborhood and the areas that surround it, open air, public area trafficking occurs. Traditional drug enforcement techniques are intrusive in that police typically run an undercover officer or undercover agent in the area and, after making a significant number of purchases, will arrest all of those involved... Unfortunately some community members came to see the police as doing little to address the root causes of the trafficking and came to see the police as being part of the problem”.

Discussions early in 2012 among key informed HRP leaders led to the decision to launch the Uptown Drug Intervention approach (UDI) based on the 2003 High Point North Carolina model (HPNC) which was developed to “close down drug markets and heal the rift between community and law enforcement” and which featured “hard targeting of traffickers coupled with an offer of help and support to those who wished to exit the lifestyle. A support group made up of parole and probation services, federal drug

prosecutors, church groups, social workers and influential community members offered a wide array of assistance that included education upgrading, job skills and job placement”. Police collaboration and dialogue with community leaders was deemed to be an essential feature of the approach.

The UDI proposal presented to the HRM Police Board called for HRP to closely follow the HPNC approach which had been very successful in implementation and in realizing its objectives of dissolving the open air drug market and impacting positively on the societal reintegration of lower level traffickers and the quality of community life there. A pool of traffickers from the open air drug markets was arrested and those “who chose to accept the community support offered, successfully participated and did not commit additional criminal acts were given education and training and had their charges dropped”. A significant sense of partnership developed among police, community and service providers at most American sites – primarily high crime ‘inner city’ sites featuring public housing, minorities and the socially disadvantaged. The HRP version of the model was anticipated to be implemented appropriately and achieve similar outcomes but perhaps on a more modest scale since it was without any new resources or funding and would involve only a handful of arrested traffickers being given the option of participating in the programs or dealing with their charges in court.

WHAT WAS DONE IN THIS ASSESSMENT

This assessment of the UDI initiative has been a modest one and without any external funding. Interviews, using diverse special interview guides, were carried out with the four UDI participants (paid a nominal amount for doing the interview) as well as with the managers of the three collaborating agencies delivering the programs to the participants and with ten Uptown community representatives. The police officers coordinating the project were interviewed on several occasions, the superintendent on many occasions. Interviews were also carried out with a wide assortment of other HRP officers, especially from Special Enforcement Services (e.g., Gangs and Guns, Violence and Drugs) and from the North Dartmouth area (ranging from the superintendent to the “quick response” unit and the diverse community response officers). Data were gathered on the Uptown actual incidents in 2012 and 2013 and for five years in comparison to the

North Dartmouth neighbourhood. Available literature on drug milieus and violence was examined as were police reports including minutes of the Police Board and the regular monthly reports of the Public Safety Office for the previous five years.

THE CONTEXTS FOR DEALING WITH VIOLENCE AND OPEN-AIR DRUG TRAFFICKING

THE MODEL FOLLOWED

While in recent years there has been a very significant decline in crime in HRM especially in assaults, robbery, break and enter and theft, at least partly the result of effective policing strategies, crime levels have not declined in all areas equally and least in areas of high drug activity such as the Uptown and North Dartmouth. Associated with the drug milieu in HRM has been a relatively high rate of murder and attempted murder as discussed in a companion paper to this assessment (Guns, Shootings and the Drug Milieus, 2014). Research has found considerable consensus among various police specialists in HRM that firearm homicides and attempted homicides were heavily associated with the drug milieu and reflected the “inner city” American cultural style. The underlying motives were seen as basically similar to the patterns described in American studies, that is “a high degree of wanton violence and the three Rs – respect, reputation and retaliation – are the immediate causes” “. And, as in the American inner cities, virtually all informed CJS officials considered that the low level traffickers responsible for much of the shooting earned little money and faced serious risks both of being arrested by police and being robbed and assaulted by their peers, a complex circumstance that would presumably generate much frustration

Given the huge scale of the drug problems and the high level of homicides associated with drug milieus in the USA, it is not surprising that there is considerable American attention to policies and programs directed at radical change. The American emphasis, War on Drugs, until recent years, has been on tough penalties for low level trafficking (prisons there are overwhelmed with young Black men), gun control (verging

on the impossible) and greater police presence through special enforcement units and community based policing. Ultimately, though, as the authors acknowledge, the key is getting at the marginality, the zero-level social status that translates into a violent quest for “respect” in the face of slights and modest victimization.

Signs of significant changes in policies and programs are many nowadays in the United States. The War on Drugs has been increasingly criticized for the high levels of incarceration and exorbitant costs it has wrought and the current Obama administration has called for waiving mandatory sentences for low level drug offences. In the Western states (USA) there is a strong trend to regulate, not criminalize, the sale and purchase of marijuana (Colorado in January 2014 will be the first state to launch this approach). In exploring new approaches to the drug and violence problem, as noted above, the work of Kennedy (*Don't Shoot, One Man, A Street Fellowship and the End of Violence in Inner City America*, 2011) has become path-breaking in advancing feasible solutions at the local level. His approach in Boston emphasized the police and community agencies working with the small number of persons and gangs (“crews” in the drug business) in the drug milieu who accounted for most of the violence. Through what might be called a “weed and feed” strategy (i.e., clearly conveying an enhanced likelihood of punishment for those individuals and crews continuing the violence while concerned members of their community expressed to them a strong desire for the violence to stop and social workers offered services to help them detach from the cycle of violence). The Boston initiative led to a sharp reduction in violence for several years and the program, labeled Ceasefire and informally known as the Boston Miracle spread to a host of other American cities, generally operating in poor, predominantly Black neighbourhoods as in Boston. In 2004 Kennedy’s approach was implemented in High Point North Carolina but here the focus was not only with violence but also on ending the open-air drug markets that existed there. There was apparently a much greater involvement of community leaders as well as police and key players in the local drug markets but the same basic carrot and stick strategy was employed whereby key drug gang members were assembled and convinced to cease violence and the open-air drug trafficking or spend “decades in jail beginning tomorrow” – presumably the police had grounds for charges but the charges would be waived if the imposed arrangements held up. This initiative also proved to be

successful, virtually ending homicides and open-air trafficking in the area for at least seven years.

The Boston Ceasefire project and its North Carolina adaptation are not without some limitations as is evidenced in the failure of the former to be successfully implemented in some jurisdictions and the significant re-emergence of violence in the Boston area in the latter part of first decade of the 21st century, and, in the case of the latter project, the ambiguous evidence for a displacement effect. Still, success has been evident too and both projects have much significance for HRM since both types of initiatives were adopted here in 2013. A multi-year, federally funded Chicago version of Ceasefire (known as Cure Violence) is being readied for implementation in several HRM communities (mostly but not exclusively African Nova Scotian) and the HRPS has just completed a modest self-financed version of the North Carolina project through its Uptown Drug Intervention program and is weighing the option of continuing the Uptown UDI initiative and expanding it to North Dartmouth. The Uptown and North Dartmouth are the two most violent and heavy drug traffic areas in HRM as is discussed in depth elsewhere in this assessment where evidence will also be presented documenting the success of the Uptown pilot project in 2013.

THE UDI OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE HPNC MODEL

According to the proposal advanced to Police Board in December 2012, the key performance measures proposed would be

- Open air drug markets are shut down in the Uniacke Square area as measured by analysis of confidential debriefs/intelligence advising of drug activity and drug section surveillance.
- Drug related violence decreases in the area where the drug markets were closed as measured by comparison of the number of Persons Crimes within the Uniacke Square area before and after the project.
- Eligible participants diverted to the education/training program as measured by the number of participants who successfully pass the program.
- A new partnership with the community is forged, resulting in a strong new community anti-drug standard as measured through qualitative means and consulting with community stakeholders.

The above measures were examined in this modest assessment and are specifically discussed in the section on processes and outcomes. Other performance measures, as advanced by community stakeholders and others at public meetings, referred to changes within the police department (especially a more empathetic attitude among officers to the Uniacke Square residents and a more collaborative partnership with community representatives) and a healthier Uptown community which could facilitate dynamic socio-economic development in the area. Comments on the measures of success were discussed at a January 2013 update meeting among HRP police officers (the superintendent and the two community response officers assigned to Uniacke Square housing complex), a handful of community representatives and the managers of the three programs in which there were UDI participants. The measures articulated there were essentially similar to the four outlined in the proposal to the Police Board with the addition of the outcome for changed police views and the hope of some community representatives that the UDI project would not only be successful in the Uptown but also might have “legs” to other similarly troubled neighbourhoods.

THE UPTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD

The UDI initiative has been in an area of Halifax known as the Uptown, forty years ago a mixed residential – commercial area of lower-income, working class families and in recent decades largely an area of low-cost rentals, public and social housing and community services. The area – generally deemed to be boxed north and south between Agricola and Barrington Streets and west and east between Cogswell and North Streets - developed an image as poor, Black and dangerous at least for outsiders. For decades it has been an area where the Halifax African Nova Scotia population, while never the majority racial/ethnic grouping there, was significantly concentrated. Since the relocation of Africville in the late 1960s there has been a large public housing project at its core, home to roughly 500 people, many of whom were African Nova Scotians moved from the former Africville site. As well, there were some Black cultural institutions such as the

Cornwallis Street Baptist Church (mother church of the African United Baptist Association) and personal businesses specializing in Black styles.

The area was usually identified by police as a “hot spot” for calls for service, petty crime and drug dealing. Always a diversified area in terms of population and sub-communities, it has become even more so in the last 20 years as a consequence of gentrification, concentration of social services (Direction 180, a methadone clinic, Mainline Services (e.g., needle exchange), Miqmaq Friendship Centre, Salvation Army residential centre, shelters and government services etc) and accommodation to alternative life styles (e.g., LBGTQ adherents, artists and students). As one community activist put it, it is an area of bubbles of life styles where there is significant bonding within them but inadequate bridging across them and so there are issues of balance and integration. No large grocery store ever replaced the one that closed out about 40 or more years ago and agencies and businesses serving the general population (e.g., a bank or credit union) as opposed to specific interests are uncommon.

The charts below compare the Uptown with another area across the Halifax harbour that has a somewhat similar stereotype, namely a certain section of North Dartmouth (i.e. many low-cost rental complexes, some public and social housing, “hot spot” for police response, large poor Black population, but less gentrification and more single family dwellings and medium rentals along with modest condominium development). Both areas have been identified as the major at-risk areas in metropolitan Halifax by the Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety (2008) and by the Statistics Canada’s Geo-Coding of person violence and property crime (Wallace, 2008); the latter research suggested that the key variable found in the geo-coding of census and crime statistics was the proportion of single parent (female-headed) families, significant in both areas (more so in North Dartmouth which has the larger total population). To illustrate their similarities and differences, the charts show, for the sample period November to March in 2008-2009 through 2012-2013, that

- North Dartmouth has had consistently larger levels of violence incidents though the differences declined in recent years.
- Property offences have been consistently greater in North Dartmouth.

- Drugs offences were greater in the Uptown but the difference lessened as years passed due to some decline in the Uptown numbers and an increase in North Dartmouth's. Both areas are defined by police sources as "heavy drug areas".
- Administration of Justice offences (e.g., breaches, failure to appear) have been consistently higher in the Uptown – in both areas the numbers have been quite stable in recent years - due in large part to the Uptown being a central site for released inmates, shelters, addicted persons and crisis services.

Since its establishment under the Safer Communities Act in 2007 as a provincial unit in the Department of Justice the Safer Communities team has responded to complaints about houses or apartments that are locales for illicit activities (i.e., drugs, bootlegging and prostitution). Typically, where a complaint is found to be justified the unit's investigators attempt to resolve the problems through informal resolutions, written warnings and voluntary evictions but as a last resort can apply to the court for a community safety order which can force eviction. Over the period 2007 to the summer of 2013 there have been only 12 community safety orders in Nova Scotia but North Dartmouth and the Uptown area have accounted for most of 8 CSOs in HRM. During that same six year period there have been 112 case files acted upon (i.e., investigators determined that there was activity to justify action) by the Safer Communities team for HRP Halifax East, primarily North Dartmouth, and 97 for HRP Halifax Central, primarily the Uptown area. In HRP Halifax West there have been 76 case files acted upon for an area that ranges from Bedford to Sambro, and in the RCMP jurisdiction in HRM there were 40. The complaints usually have been initiated by police officers (50%), Housing Authorities and private rental management. Clearly these data reflect the extent to which these criminal offences and social disorder problems are concentrated in the two areas of North Dartmouth and the Uptown and generate significant victimization and poorer quality of life for their residents.

PERCEPTIONS OF UPTOWN LEADERS

The ten Uptown community leaders and activists interviewed for this assessment all characterized the Uptown as having a diverse population where the idea of different "bubbles" was deemed quite appropriate, perceiving close ties within the sub-groups but

not among them. In their view the diversification has accelerated in recent years with the development of several middle class condominiums, non-locals snapping up less expensive single family dwellings, and new residents and services cultivating alternative life styles. Some long-term residents considered that these developments are driving out some others (or their own offspring). There is among them a reference to an analogous Africville situation where in the 1960s that long-standing Black community on the edge of the city was bulldozed in the name of urban renewal. At the same time other respondents, some long-term residents as well as new ones and the proprietors of new small business services, contended that the gentrification and other developments are enriching the area, making it more viable, dynamic and interesting, and arresting any further concentration of poverty, unemployment and social stigma. The comparisons are aptly made to the problematic American inner city areas which became increasingly so over a period of time as the middle and stable working class people left the areas leaving the less socially mobile and more socially disadvantaged behind. The challenge is how to encourage such economic and social development in a fashion that benefits, not further disadvantages, the areas' long-time residents.

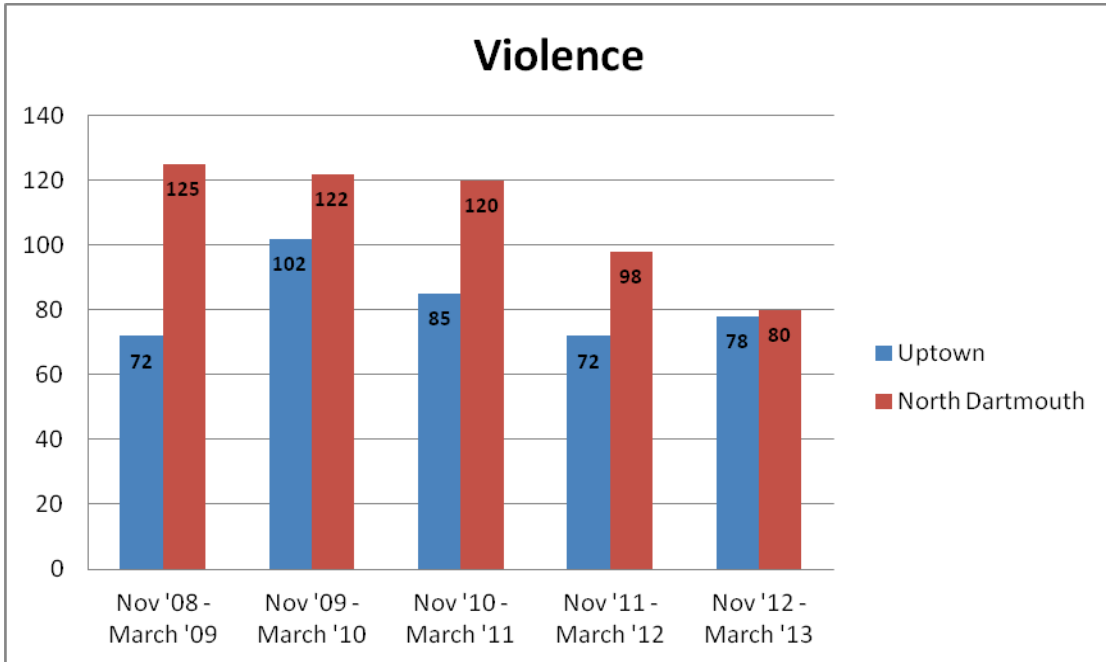
A number of the respondents emphasized that socio-economic disparities, manifested in part in differences between Black and White residents, have increased and, as a result, presumably, there is the increased threat of crime and racial tension. Typically too respondents of all stripes noted the heavy presence of services for troubled persons (addicts, ex-inmates, homeless) and the significant level of visible drug dealing in the area. Such characterization is congruent with the charts below which indicate high levels of drug and administration of justice offences in the Uptown. Members of long-standing local families often attributed much of the crime and social disorder to "outsiders" gravitating to the area for the services and drugs, and contended that "crime and related actions are not as bad here as in North Dartmouth". Newcomers were less likely to proffer that view and more likely to note that muggings and simple assaults are also a problem in the Uptown. The long-term residents, especially the Black population, do appear to be quite removed socially from both the recent middle class arrivals' advancing gentrification or alternative life styles and the troubled population accessing the social services in the area; proportionately few Blacks are clients of Direction 180 or Mainline

Needle exchange though, extrapolating from limited data, Blacks make up at least 10% among those experiencing homelessness and using the shelters.

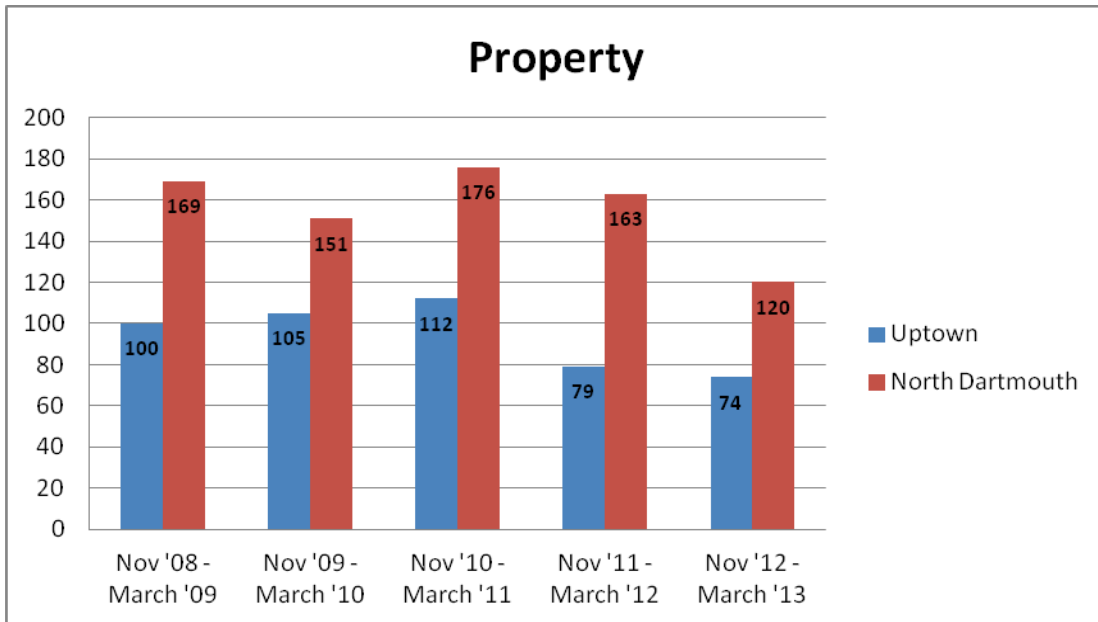
THE CONTINUING CHALLENGE

The UDI project was centered around the Uniacke Square public housing complex. In 2009 a significant initiative was launched there under the auspices of a newly formed Safer Stronger Communities program which was a collaboration of the province and municipality and under the leadership of the HRP chief of police. It was stimulated by the Mayor's Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety, the relatively high crime rate in HRM and the special provincial funding for additional police officers (i.e., the Boots on the Street" program). Under the program the HRP obtained facilities for a community office in the public housing complex from the provincial Halifax Housing Authority and increased its policing complement in the area (both "quick response" police teams and community response officers); other programs such as the Centerline Music Studio (i.e., music recording and drop-in for young teens) were also subsequently established at the housing complex. The UDI project represented a further step in the development of a partnership with the local community leaders to deal with the crime and open-air drug dealing there in a way that emphasizes social development and alternatives to incarceration. There is little doubting the challenges faced. HRP has committed significant resources (officers and programs) in recent years trying to ameliorate the impact of root causes and the municipality, and the province and the federal government have each invested heavily in social programming for youths in the area. As one senior well-informed HRP officer observed, "in many cases the [problem] neighbourhood has many services and programs but they are underutilized. No where is this more true than in the Uniacke Square / Gottingen Street area; frankly there is no other neighbourhood in the province that has more programs".

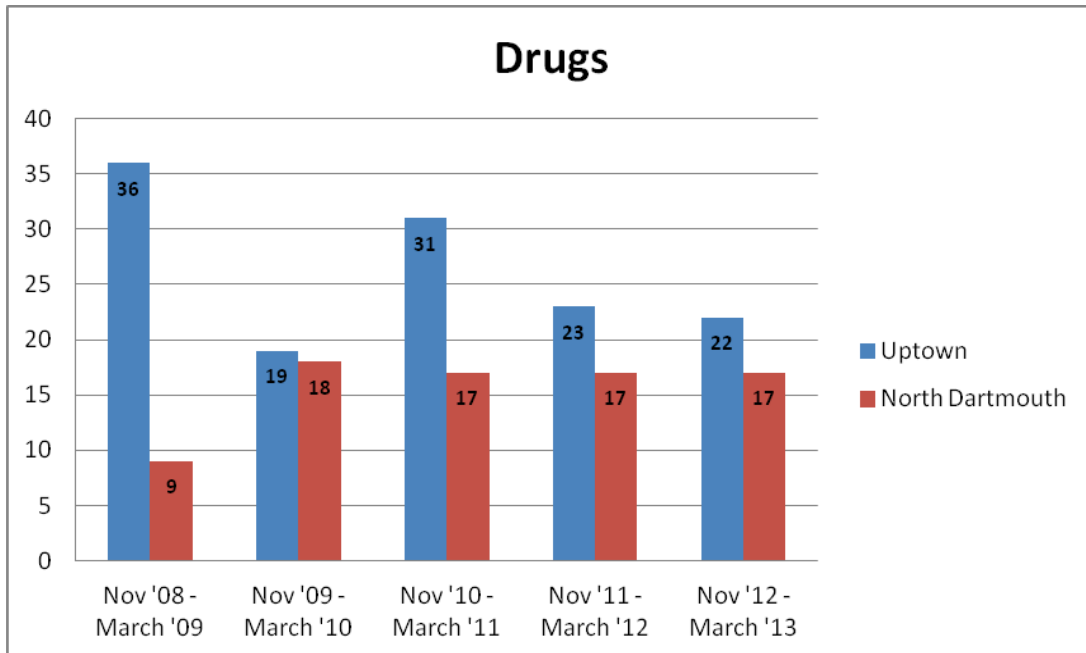
UPTOWN AND NORTH DARTMOUTH COMPARISON TABLES



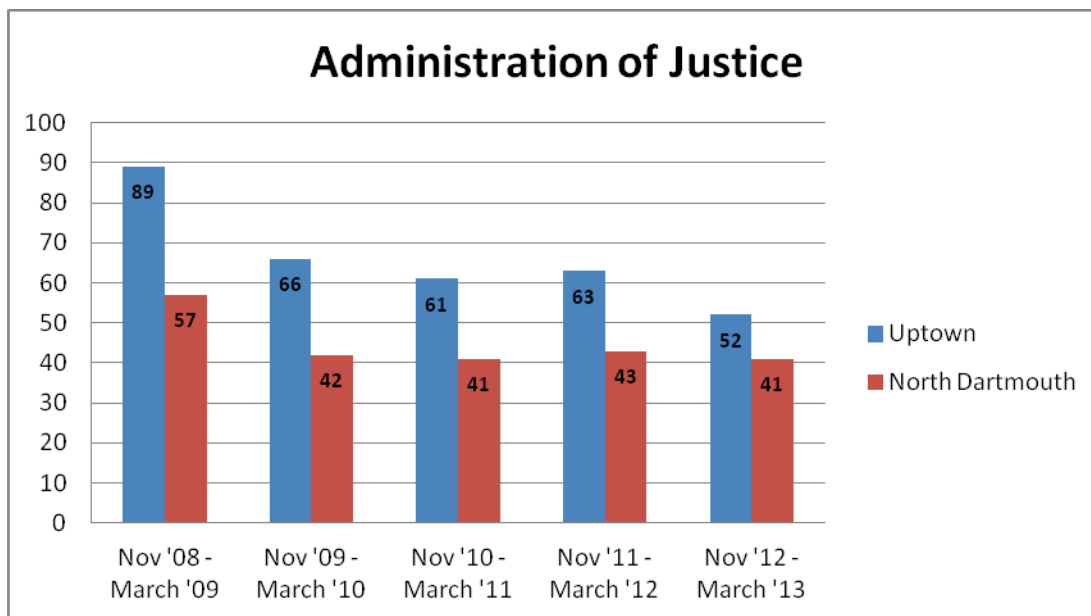
For violent offences, between the years 2008 and 2012, North Dartmouth had a larger number of violent offences. This is particularly apparent in the 2008-2009 time period where violent offences in North Dartmouth were almost double compared to the Uptown (72 in Uptown compared to 125 in North Dartmouth). In the 2012-2013 time period, the numbers of violent offences were similar for the two communities.



Property offences were also quite higher in North Dartmouth than in the Uptown, consistently, by time period.



The numbers of drug offences are fairly low for both communities, however, there have been more drug offences reported in the Uptown area compared to North Dartmouth. The numbers of drug offences in North Dartmouth have been consistent for the last three time periods, whereas in the Uptown offences peaked in the 2010-2011 time period and leveled off since Nov 2011.



Offences in the Administration of Justice category were found to be higher in the Uptown area compared to North Dartmouth. This may be due to the number of transition houses (half-way houses, shelters etc) in the Uptown compared to North Dartmouth.

IMPLEMENTATION

LAYING THE FOUNDATION: THE PREPARATORY WORK

The UDI represents a bold initiative in the local HRM context. Currently, apart from a pilot project at two sites outside HRM and another operating in partnership with the Department of Justice's NSRJ program and Dalhousie University exclusively for Dalhousie students accused of very minor offences, there is no restorative justice alternative for adults in Nova Scotia and providing such "alternative justice" options for adults charged with drug trafficking is well beyond the eligibility criteria for adult diversion. Alternative justice programming is the responsibility of the provincial government so launching the UDI without formal approval of the Department of Justice would be a bold strike. Apparently in laying the foundation for the UDI there was some informal consultation and a tacit support obtained from some provincial authorities. Similarly, once charges are laid by the police, the case technically is the responsibility of the prosecution service and in the case of drug offences, the responsibility of the federal prosecution service. Consultations were carried out with the latter and an agreement was reached which enabled the project to go forward and for the charges to be stayed and then withdrawn if an accused took up the UDI option, participated in the program, and then successfully completed it.

An important dimension of laying the groundwork for the UDI initiative was of course internal, that is discussing and obtaining the support of HRP units such as the Public Safety Office and Special Enforcement Services (SES) both of which have responsibilities that would be salient to successful implementation as well as expertise and familiarity that would be called upon. The Public Safety Office had a familiarity with the HPNC model and contacts with community leaders while SES coordinated the major enforcement strategies for dealing with violence and the drug-related offences; its collaboration was essential since surveillance and direct enforcement and ultimately undercover work could be required to obtain the requisite pool of accused traffickers who would be potential UDI participants. These internal consultations occurred in the early months of 2012. In describing the outcome of these discussions, the UDI proposal of December 2012 stated "Members believed that the High Point [HPNC] Strategy or a

variation of it would be worthwhile conducting in the Uptown area given the previous results of traditional drug enforcement and the continued prevalence of open air drug trafficking”. Since the Police Board had oversight responsibilities for the HRP, it was important that it be informed and supportive; on two occasions HRP’s UDI proposal was brought to the Board, a preliminary “heads-up” in March 2012 and the detailed UDI proposal in December 2012.

External consultations were an important dimension of “laying the groundwork”. HRP’s team explored the local agencies that could provide – basically without any cost to HRP – the alternative programming to facilitate the UDI participants’ turning their lives around and having the capacity and resources to secure employment and education / training. Once the CEED agency was identified as the lead partner and an understanding reached between it and the HRP, the phase of putting the program in place proceeded apace. The UDI project as noted was centered on the Uniacke Square public housing area and the predominantly Black traffickers operating from that base; therefore much consultation took place with local community leaders with suggestions for contacts coming from the community response officers on site, the service providers and other collaborators. Throughout the preparatory phase – indeed throughout the entire project cycle – there was much person to person interaction between the HRP police officers involved, the community stakeholders and the program deliverers. In characterizing these crucial consultations and discussions with the community stakeholders and the program providers, the December UDI proposal noted “all of whom were excited to participate”.

The proposal details and operational criteria were also developed during this preparatory stage. Only offences under 5(1) CDSA - possession for the purpose of trafficking or 5(2) CDSA – trafficking - were considered eligible for the UDI program. The candidates were then screened via the following criteria:

- Convictions for weapons offences or gun violence
- Convictions for sexual assault
- Convictions for serious assaults or violence (e.g. Assault Causing or above, forcible confinement, etc.)
- Significant drug convictions
- Age (18-45)
- Overall totality of Criminal Record

Suitable candidates were to be between 18 and 45 years of age while the criteria of the other categories essentially would exclude the arrested persons so identified from being offered the UDI option. Reportedly, there was some consultation with community stakeholders concerning the possible candidates but the above criteria were considered basic and were adhered to. The selected candidates were offered an alternative to court processing of their case in the form of one of three different programs, all minimally of six months duration. In all cases some modest compensation was available to participants within the program, especially in two of them. Selected candidates were advised that if they decided not to take the opportunity, or if they took it up but then dropped out, the charges will be reinstated and they will face incarceration. They were also advised that should any of them commit an additional criminal offence they will be referred to court.

MAJOR IMPLEMENTATION EVENTS; THE SIGNPOSTS

The following were the key event markers as the UDI project unfolded:

1. March 2012 Discussion of the UDI concept at Police Board
2. the June 2012 undercover operation which yielded 17 arrests and a pool of candidates for selection
3. the December 5 2012 presentation of the UDI proposal to the Police Board
4. the December 13 2012 “Call-In” meeting at the North Branch Library
5. the January 2013 meeting of police, community stakeholders and program managers at CEED
6. the Graduations in 2013 for UDI participants in June at LOVE, October at CEED / Second Chance, and December at MetroWorks.

THE BUST: GETTING THE POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN PLACE

In June, 2012 the enforcement segment of the project was initiated by the Integrated Drug Section. As noted in the December 2012 proposal, “Initially source information was analyzed with directed enforcement taking place on identified individuals falling between the ages of 18 and 30. Surveillance and directed enforcement

failed to gain evidence on prospective candidates and so an operational plan was completed utilizing an undercover officer. This plan resulted in 12 persons being charged with trafficking offences stemming from open air transactions and five other candidates charged as a result of individual investigations and residential searches”. Subsequent to this “bust” which netted 17 persons, the HRP UDI team began the selection process, ultimately arriving at a grouping of 5 possible participants for the UDI project.

GETTING THE PROGRAMS IN PLACE

HRP officials had already begun the search and consultations to determine what agencies and programs would be most appropriate for the UDI initiative and would be willing to include potential participants within their own resources. A number of sources internal and external to the HRP were contacted, including informed experts at the Nova Scotia Community College. The Center for Entrepreneurial Development (CEED) with its well-known Second Chance program, geared to youths (aged 15 to 30) in conflict with the law, was determined to be the most appropriate for the UDI project. CEED itself is a large, well-respected agency that, for over 20 years, has been providing programs in entrepreneurship training and success “in the business of life”, and even facilitating small business loans. Its Second Chance program (awarded the 2012 National Youth Employment Innovation Grand Prize) provides a 40- week- plus curriculum focused on building life, employability and entrepreneurial skills, a very appropriate emphasis for the potential UDI participants who in essence now had to develop new life strategies, alternative to drug trafficking, with limited formal educational background and very limited legitimate work experience. In each cycle the large majority of the Second Chance clients graduate, attesting to the program’s effectiveness in retaining clients. Second Chance is funded by Service Canada and had a limit of 12 ‘seats’ of which only two could be available for UDI young adults and thus, after agreeing to be part of the HRP project and reaching an understanding about processes and accountability with the HRP initiators, it took on the task of helping to find other appropriate agencies that could absorb the other possible participants. HRP’s UDI project had virtually no special funding so the agencies providing the programs had to have the capacity to take on the

recommended persons. CEED's Second Chance program managers became the quarterback as it were for the community programs that would be offered to the UDI participants. In that role, and in regular contact with HRP, Second Chance contacted several agencies and, as a result MetroWorks and Leave Out Violence (LOVE) came on board, each committing to include one UDI participant in its extant program.

LOVE Halifax is affiliated with a national and international non-profit organization bearing that name and logo. It has a small staff of 3 full-time and 6 part-time employees and an annual clientele of 137 youths (including young adults as in CEED and MetroWorks) in its core programs. For ten years it has been running a 6-month full-time employability and life skills program called LINKS with the objective of increasing the abilities of its clients to find meaningful and challenging educational and employment opportunities.. Like Second Chance, the LOVE program graduates most of its clients each cycle and in addition encourages a continuing relationship with clients.

MetroWorks, established in 1978, has a full-time staff similar in size to LOVE. It began its Work Activity Program in 1986. It offers a 30-week "holistic training" program for youths and adults, combining employment counseling, academic upgrading, basic skill development in Food Service, Building Maintenance and Customer Service, and has on-the-job placement opportunity; it graduates roughly half its clientele each cycle.

All three programs offer some compensation to the clients; in the case of Second Chance and LOVE the client-participant may receive up to \$1500 a month for regular daily participation in the program; in MetroWorks the monthly compensation is limited to \$150. The programs are similar in focusing on individual clients and having little operational engagement with communities; also, none had had such a partnership arrangement with HRP prior to this UDI project. Indeed, becoming so involved with the police was an issue to consider for the agencies, especially Second Chance and LOVE given their heavy focus, much more than in the case of the hands-on MetroWorks option, on changing clients' values, attitudes and dispositions. A relationship of trust was seen by staff members as bedrock to effective counseling and mentoring between staff and participants, and the agencies independently assessed and selected applicants to their programs. In the UDI project, while not having any impact on the programs delivered, the police required check-in monitoring reports every two weeks on the UDI participants and

had essentially themselves selected the potential participants (though the candidates had to meet the usual criteria for acceptance as set by the receiving agencies). One program provider put the issue as follows: “At first I wasn’t comfortable with the plan as it was proposed to me. We were too closely attached to Halifax police. Trust is big part of our programs, and without it, it’s not safe area for our youth. We have short amount of time, so we can’t afford to put that (trust) at risk”. The agencies had to balance their wariness about a police partnership, concern about any negative impact of the police partnership on the trust (real or perceived) and relationship crucial to their interaction with clients, and the opportunities this UDI project created for their working with desirable clients in a new relational context involving both police and local communities of interest. At least one agency with similar objectives and programs considered that the risks to their *raison d’être* outweighed the benefits and so turned down an offer by the CEED to become involved.

None of the participating programs / agencies – CEED’s Second Chance, LOVE’s LINKS, and MetroWorks’ Work activity Program – required the extra clients brought forward by the UDI project as they had sufficient candidates at hand for the positions available, and, as noted, they themselves were accountable for the costs of having them as clients. Nevertheless, they sorted out the issues and decided in favor of the partnership with the HRP. Factors that affected this positive decision included appreciating that it was voluntary for young adult accused traffickers whether to opt for the UDI rather than go to court and also to opt for the specific program they wished to participate in. The voluntary feature was muted by a Hobson’s choice situation (“take it or leave it”) and the limited program alternatives but some choice could be exercised by the potential participants. Other crucial factors included the evident community support for the initiative in the Uptown, and the attractiveness of the HRP innovation and the reasonableness of its selection process and monitoring requirements.

Throughout the UDI project subsequently there was regular contact between the agencies and the HRP, at the policy level with the superintendent and on an everyday practical level, with the community response officers.

THE CALL-IN

The 5 arrested traffickers selected from the pool of 17 June arrestees were invited to an evening meeting, a Call-In, on December 13, 2012 at the North Branch Library just a few short blocks from the Uniacke Square public housing complex and the site of the open-air drug dealing which had declined somewhat from previous years but was still evident. In addition to the 5 young adults and several HRP officers including the superintendent responsible for the initiative, there were representatives from each of the three agencies who described their programs and what it could offer the potential participants, and most importantly perhaps, a dozen or so key community stakeholders (ministers, heads of community organizations, well-known area activists), almost all Black, reinforcing in strongly emotional comments the message that open-air drug trafficking will no longer be tolerated but also pledging support if the accused persons, sitting directly across from them in a packed large meeting room, elected to turn their lives around.

The HRP superintendent coordinated the meeting and after attendees were introduced explained the UDI project and the options available to accused persons. Then the community leaders spoke of their concerns and frustrations with the drug dealing and the violence, their support for the UDI initiative and their caring for the accused persons. Representatives from the three agencies then discussed their programs and the opportunities that they presented for the potential participants developing alternative lifestyles and employment. The accused young adults were not asked to respond and did not; instead, having laid out the issues, concerns and opportunities the superintendent asked them to reflect on what they had heard and then report to the police station with their decision on the options. Virtually everyone present when interviewed months later recalled the session as having “powerful” effects.

THE JANUARY 2013 UPDATE MEETING AT CEED HEADQUARTERS

This update meeting brought together the UDI three person police team, the five key community stakeholders, the three program managers and three Second Chance participants plus this evaluator and his associate. While the three programs had only been operational in this cycle for a month or less, the meeting provided an opportunity for all

parties to get a sense of the early stages of implementation and to highlight the aspects of UDI project that they were especially pleased with. The mood was largely celebratory with virtually everyone praising the initiative. The UDI participants reported that they were grateful for the opportunity, were turning their lives around (e.g., focusing on family and children, taking it one day at a time) and fully confident that “at this rate”, they will graduate from the program. There was a sentiment conveyed by both the participant-clients and two of the program managers that emphasized the voluntary aspect of the participation; for example, one UDI participant in the Second Chance program stated that now that he has experienced the program he probably would have participated even without the goal of having the charge withdrawn.

The program managers reported that their UDI clients were doing well and successfully dealing with their assignments. One observed that they were getting more confidence in themselves as they went along, noting that one had quickly agreed to a media interview and another emphasized in the program discussions how he wanted to be “a good role model for my kids”. The young male participants were positive about their Second Chance experience and smiled frequently when the program manager commented on their becoming open and friendly in a short time in the program; they made a point of shaking hands with all of the other people at the meeting before they left the room. Several community stakeholders who noted that they knew the UDI participants well, made comments on how they have noticed a positive turn-around in their community and family life.

The comments at the meeting then were positive and quite upbeat. There were no critical remarks from any quarter about the programs’ content, delivery or compensation. The program managers indicated that their programs were flexible and adaptable so while there was a standard structure, there was some leeway for the participants to go at their own pace with rewards for those who finish assignments well and quickly. They also noted that the programs’ clients typically had to complete exercises where they wrote about their background, challenges and future goals, an activity that developed conceptual and literacy skills and also provided the clients with insights into their selves, something considered important in turning around one’s life style. This activity also facilitated the program staff getting to know the clients better and facilitated their

developing relationships where they could meaningfully reinforce the clients' developing new goals (e.g. "not let down people who treat you well and care for you").

The HRP police team expressed their concerns and experiences in a positive mode too. Asked by a program manager what his expectation or wishes were for this meeting, the UDI coordinator reiterated the success measures detailed earlier and emphasized the importance of actively engaging local programming expertise and the community stakeholders. He indicated a concern about post-program employment and discussed his efforts to explore that issue. Like many others, he emphasized too how for him all the components of the UDI project came together at the December Call-In meeting. The HRP coordinator reported that he was pleased with the project's processes and outcomes to date and wanted it to continue beyond this cycle, albeit with some changes (e.g., the federal crown prosecutors' reluctance to continue the same format might require some new procedures such as proceeding with the project without laying charges).

The two community response officers expressed much enthusiasm about the new initiative. They noted how different the community officer job is from patrol duties in that it enables the officers to become more engaged and, like others, emphasized how the December general meeting – the Call-In - in their view had a significant impact. One observed that over the previous two years it was frustrating trying to get people to look beyond the uniform / badge but now there is a better mood in the Square. There is now more hope for the future. Picking up on a comment about police subculture by one of the community stakeholders, one officer observed that skepticism may be rampant among their fellow officers and that needs to be changed and the community officers' role could be significant in doing so. The HRP UDI coordinator suggested that in future fall-ins he would like the community officers to make short presentations about the program since that could perhaps influence the officers more than a "white shirt" (upper management) officer could.

The program managers reported themselves very positive about the relationships developed among the project's partners, and especially with the police. Two shared the view that initially there was skepticism but "it's been a great experience and I'm pleased as it did not hurt our reputation with their clients. It helped that the young adults came to us, not the other way around" (i.e., there was some voluntarism). The agencies, like the

police, also underlined that the UDI project did not entail new direct costs but did hope that their contribution would either help in their future funding or entail new referrals.

The community stakeholders expressed positive valuations with respect to the programs' achievement to date but their main emphasis was highlighting the communication that had been established between police and community. Asked what has been their favorite aspect of the UDI to date, one community stakeholder replied "more trust in the police" and "better street life in the area". Another cited his favorite aspect as "the commitment from this committee" while a third mentioned the more positive interaction between the officers and the participants. Several community stakeholders observed that "breaking away from gangs is not easy" so helping people change and learn new coping skills are the most important aspects.

THE GRADUATIONS

There were three graduation ceremonies, one by each participating agency, The HRP superintendent attended all three and there were multiple HRP officers at the last two, in October for graduate at CEED's Second Chance and in December at the MetroWorks graduation. Reportedly, the most elaborate graduation, involving two UDI young adults among the graduates, was a particularly moving experience for the UDI-involved people and among them – from the HRP chief of police to the superintendent and two community response officers to Second Chance staff, community people and the UDI participants – respondents indicated "there was not a dry eye anywhere". With the graduation, the two UDI participants also formally had their charges withdrawn.

THE STICK: CONTINUING ENFORCEMENT

Part of the Ceasefire and HPNC models for reducing violence and / or open drug trafficking was continuing enforcement pressure simultaneously with providing alternatives for those who opted out of the drug milieu activities, the classic carrot and stick strategy. Presumably this would entail tracking any simple displacement effect (i.e., shifting the open-air drug dealing a few blocks or more afar) as well as consultations between, in this instance, the pertinent SES officers and the UDI police team. As one officer put it, "We continued to put pressure on the traffickers in the area ... sat down

during the project to discuss the need for continued pressure as we had made a commitment to the community to keep it free of street level dealing. This was particularly important as we had asked the community to work with us to ensure this could take place”. It could be expected that one result of the project’s successful implementation would be a stronger police-community relationship mitigating the wariness or alienation referred above (see The Problematic) and generating a higher number of “tips” from the Uptown area.

THE SERVICE PROVIDERS’ PERSPECTIVES

CEED played a major role in developing the program dimension for the UDI initiative. CEED’s staff combined with the HRP to “get the ball rolling” by seeking collaboration with other, similar programs. There were several reasons for their taking on this role, principally, there were only two “seats” available in its Second Chance program and also the organization’s representatives wanted to ensure that the potential UDI participants had some options such that the element of coercion would be minimal. The representatives of the other agencies – LOVE and MetroWorks – reported that indeed CEED was responsible for their becoming involved in the UDI. This collaboration was essential for the UDI project which provided no funding for the program activity, and for the agencies being able to properly maintain that the UDI young adults were in their specific programs by choice (i.e., “you selected us”), a condition deemed crucial for the program’s success with clients.

The three programs and their staff people all were “tried and validated” in this work and apparently regularly served a clientele quite similar to the UDI candidates; as one provider summed it up, “they are no different than the population I dealt with before”. Indeed, all program managers reported that the UDI participant accepted “had met our program’s criteria”. The interviewed representatives reported that no changes in the curriculum or format had to be made to accommodate the UDI clientele, save the required biweekly reporting to the HRP to inform the police about attendance and general

level of participation by the UDI people - recall that the charges had been stayed, with withdrawal pending the young adults' successful completion of the program. In describing her program's thrust and its inherent adaptability, one provider commented "one of the big things we do we get the participants out of their world. A lot of people who are living largely within bounds of a neighborhood don't have experience of the broader community, and options presented in the community. When they find out other options, they get a guide, a person who tells them "you need to do this and this, [some] adult learning program, high school, and programs that will lead you to the life you want, where you get to use your gifts in a way that's beautiful instead of a way that's causing disruption"; in her view, the experience provides the client with hopes and support for developing a new life from the hopes.

The program directors all considered that the attitudes, work ethic and learning capacity of the UDI clients were quite acceptable. In each case the program manager reported that the UDI participants were at least on a par with the other clientele in terms of the work they accomplished and the positive attitude they exhibited, and in two cases the UDI participant was considered among the top clients in the program; for example, one provider commented, "[X] has made great strides. His views are great. It's a challenge. There's definite reduction in income and major lifestyle changes [from his drug trafficking life] that is not easy. Am I seeing him take great strides? Absolutely, but saying it's easy is an understatement". In a different program the provider noted that at the call-in in December 2012 she noticed that [Y] nodded at the right places and appeared to be ready for the program her organization offered. Asked how it worked out she exclaimed, "I'm shocked at the effort that [Y] puts in everyday. He blows us away every day. He didn't come here with high literacy – across our board, the group has low literacy rates, low computer skills, frustration, anger issues, when you push them, and you have to, and tempers flare, and it can get heated in the room, but that's the job. [Y] has no mean bone in his body, kind to a fault, which is part of the reason he got in trouble, he just wanted to be supportive to everyone around him. I ask for little to [Y] but he gives me a lot more, and he is so apologetic when he's not perfect".

In two instances there were significant attendance problems and in one case that problem was severe enough to threaten the participant being dropped from the program.

Even here though, the program provider indicated that, when in attendance, the UDI participant was cooperative and displayed a positive attitude towards the program tasks and to the other clients. A problem for the program providers in these two instances was that they did not know what the factors were causing the uncertain if not poor attendance but were aware of the very negative consequences if the young adult was withdrawn from the program (i.e., possible incarceration).

The program managers considered that the young adults were positively impacted by their programs and as a consequence better able to cope with life. This was especially true of the programs that emphasized lifestyle transformation such as Second Chance and LINKS. One such provider observed that the young adults had improved with respect to both behaviour and hard skills such as computer skills and literacy. She amplified on the behavioural aspects by pointing to their making eye contact now with people in general, and exhibiting friendliness when meeting randomly with police officers; she exuberantly described two participants as “now they are role models for others” and of [Y] she opined that “the [positive] impact on his family will be huge”. The other program’s provider pointed to similar impact effects, noting of her client, “Huge changes. Eye contact, sense of pride, desire to learn, strong desire to learn, and all the things we hope for... Someone with a body language that’s closed, separate, changing to integrating with people in positive behavior, and not reverting back to the lifestyle that they used to be in”.

At the same time the program providers constrained their hopes and enthusiasm by subsequently commenting on the challenge for the UDI participants of sustaining their confidence and hopes after the program came to an end, if their employment and housing needs were not dealt with. One of the providers rather gloomily commented, “It could just take one phone call [to get them back into their old life]”. A different program manager echoed those views, observing “Jobs, housing – more work could be done right away, some encouragement and support, would have more value; if they finish here, and there’s no jobs, etc, they would go back to the old life. They didn’t get into drug business for no reason; they did it to support their families. We still need extra push for them”. The project outcomes discussed below bear out this concern.

Whatever their initial concerns were about partnering with the police service in this UDI project, the three service providers indicated that they were positive now about

the initiative and would like to see it continued and even expanded, with their agency being involved possibly to a greater extent. Two of the programs' managers observed that most of logistical legwork was done by the police officers and "we helped only with the timing and identification of some important community members who might be consulted". Although they had little role in the selection of the UDI participants, and expressed a wish to become more engaged in that dimension of the project should the project be continued, they generally considered that the selection had been quite successful in yielding appropriate candidates for their programs. The representatives also expressed quite positive views about the police officers with whom they collaborated. They appreciated being able to contact them on different matters and acknowledged the effort that the police officers expended (e.g., transportation, motivation) to help the young adults continue in the program. Clearly, their initial fears and sense of risk in partnering with the police abated as their relationship with the HRP officers assumed greater depth and they got to know the officers better.

Also, as noted above, all three program managers highlighted their perception of significant changes in how the young adult UDI participants began to relate to police officers. They all appeared to share the view expressed by one manager, namely "A lot of the participants said the way they look at police is different from before. I think they really felt that police officers really did care about them, and about their future, to try something to help them out". Interestingly, two of the program managers also held that the UDI experience might have been helpful in effecting some change in police thinking and behaviour about the Uptown community and the young adults participating in the project. One program manager emphasized this feedback effect on police culture, commenting in effect that the more police convey the message that they are concerned with social development as much as arrests, the more community residents would start to disclose things to them but "if they [residents] think the police will just arrest and jail their loved ones, they won't call". Typically the program managers had a very limited knowledge of similar police programs in this field.

The community engagement was a significant consideration for the program providers. Clearly, without it, their own participation might well have been more problematic but with it they could better grapple with the risks they perceived of

partnering in such a way with the HRP. Clearly, too, while not an entirely new dimension in their work, the partnership was different from their usual focus on individuals. The service providers all appeared to be pleasantly intrigued about collaborating more with the community representatives and indicated that they would wish to see more community engagement, and more meetings throughout the program period among the police, the community leaders and themselves. As one representative observed, subsequent to the December 2012 general meeting – the call-in as some expressed it – and the January 2013 session at the CEED office, there were no meetings held with the community representatives. All three program managers were especially impressed with the impact of the community leaders’ presence at the two general meetings held; for example, they expressed the view that the December 2012 call-in was a powerful experience conveying community leaders’ concerns and support for the potential participants in a sincere and emotional manner.

Community engagement was seen then as a significant tool in effecting individual change and something they would want to partner with more in the future. One program manager commented “because of our involvement and the community’s role, we have become more interested in adding a community dimension to our general programming”. The others shared that perspective, and indicated interest in developing this relationship further and maintaining it. In fact their suggestions strongly emphasized strengthening the community engagement in the project and sustaining the partnership among the police, community and themselves, the program providers. More and early consultations about a next cycle were seen as crucial so the agencies could plan better and get their funding in place. They acknowledged that by its nature the UDI project would have to be directed by the police service but within that context there should be more discussion and sharing of responsibilities. All the program managers essentially shared the view that the UDI project was “a positive experience”, “a really good initiative”, or as one put it “a successful project and now we can move forward”.

OVERALL PERSPECTIVE ON THE UDI PARTNERSHIP

Overall, then, the program providers considered that the UDI project was successful in its objectives regarding enhancement of the positive attitudes and life skills

of the young adult participants and the forging of a more positive relationship between the police and the Uptown community. They did not speculate on the implications of the UDI with respect to open-air drug dealing or crime and related issues in the Uptown but, given the minimal resources expended and the processes and outcomes achieved, they certainly considered that the UDI had been a considerable bargain for the police and HRM and should be continued and even expanded. From an agency perspective, one provider summed up the project as follows: “there was a lot of risk for us but it worked out well”. A common view was that, should the UDI be continued, there should be more up-front discussions about the criteria for selection and also more periodic meetings among the three major parties – the police, the community and the agencies providing the programs. At the same time, all program managers held that the processes were effective and appreciated that the police service had to exercise authority. Finally, there was a more or less implicit view that doing well and graduating from the programs was no automatic ticket to a successful turn-around in the “business of life” for the UDI participants; indeed, without their employment and housing issues being dealt with, and given the possible frustration of the program-generated expectations and hopes, there is distinct possibility that “they’ll go back to the old life”.

VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

In the Boston Ceasefire and High Point North Carolina initiatives, especially the latter, the local area community leaders and activists were considered vital to the success of the project. They were counted upon to convey to the drug traffickers or gang members the respectable community’s concern for the offenders, denounce the targeted activities (use of guns or open-air drug dealing) and encourage the offenders to change their behaviours for the betterment of all, especially their families, the younger generation and of course themselves. Five core persons were interviewed from among the main grouping of approximately a dozen engaged by HRPS officers in that task. They were among the people who attended the two central meetings noted earlier and they participated fully in those meetings. In addition, another five persons influential in the

area but more marginal to the initiative were interviewed. All ten were well-respected, and with two exceptions, leaders in Uptown organizations, whether that be in the ministry, health services, recreation or community services or Uniacke Square Public Housing residents' programs.

The respondents were asked about the Uptown district as place to live, its recent history, diversity of groupings, crime and safety concerns, and community-police relationships. Here the focus is on their views specifically about the UDI. Without exception, all ten were quite favorably disposed about the initiative. They highlighted the need to overcome a legacy of distrust towards the police and the perceived differences between police and community approaches to dealing with crime and social disorder. They considered that both parties may share the goal of reducing these offending activities but disagree on the means, with community people wanting a more social development approach to the problem than the punitive one (i.e., arrest and incarceration) they associated with the police. They considered that the UDI initiative was overcoming the distrust and the gap in perspectives because police were consulting with them and advancing positive more than punitive solutions. Those who knew enough about the project – the options made available, the participant offenders – spoke of the UDI as a success, something to build upon. Virtually all ten stakeholders expressed concern that there might be no follow-up and continuation, advancing more or less tacitly the view that the targeted activities and the distrust with the criminal justice system are well entrenched in the Uniacke Square area and cannot be expected to be resolved in a short time frame with just four offenders, even were these latter to be successful in their programs. The general view in this stakeholder grouping was that drug dealing, swarming and youth gangs such as the G-Lock group (specifically mentioned by several interviewees) had been declining in recent years and declined further with the UDI initiative but that nevertheless drug dealing was still visible if not “open-air”. Among the five persons most engaged in the project, there was unanimity that the community which they represented had bought into the project and a few even suggested that community members were more ready now to provide police with information about drug dealing and other criminal activities.

Several other themes ran through most of the respondents' comments, including the following

1. It was usually acknowledged that drugs had been part of the area's culture for some time and the major HRM district not only for street-level purchase of crack and other heavy drugs / pills but also for needle exchange and methadone services as well as half-way houses and shelters. Still, there was a common view that North Dartmouth – an area to which the Uptown has often been compared – had more crime and especially more violence (a view consistent with police reports at least in recent years as cited above).
2. There was a pervasive view that the UDI was being initiated at an appropriate time because of the high regard among community leaders for the designated community response officers, reinforced by the 2007 provincial Boots on the Street funding of additional police officers, and constituting a reincarnation of the village constable and community police neighbourhood office in the late 1980s. Also, some respondents considered the Uptown to be on a verge of major economic and social development in which context the diminution of open-air drug dealing and its associated social disorder could be a stimulus for the area developing a more positive “persona” as a diversified, dynamic community.
3. The stakeholders, while mostly of the opinion that the UDI was having a modest impact on the open-air drug dealing, did not think that there had been a noticeable displacement effect “down the street”. The several stakeholders from “down the street” operations (e.g., small business, methadone services, Stepping Stone staff serving sex workers) reported no obvious increased drug dealing activity in their area.
4. Perhaps not surprisingly, among the five stakeholders not engaged by the police in the UDI meetings, the favorable assessment of the UDI was tempered by some skepticism about its impact. They indicated that they knew little about the specifics, the implementation or the monitoring and that there had been little communication provided by the police.

5. Virtually all the stakeholders considered the UDI to be a police-led initiative but there was little criticism of that fact. For the respondents especially those who were Black and residents, the most important concern was that the UDI would not continue and the police might terminate the project especially if there were a number of failures. Their focus was clearly on the need for the police to “hang in there” and have a more long-term perspective.
6. The core participating stakeholders, quite familiar with the arrested young adults, referred to two factors that could impact the success of the UDI, namely (a) the need for employment opportunities for the young adults and (b) the glamour or hype associated with being a player in the drug dealing milieu. Without legitimate employment and some realism about the risk and futility of the “runner” role, they were clearly worried that the program participants could fall back into that lifestyle.

VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPATING YOUNG ADULT OFFENDERS

WHY PARTICIPATE?

The four young adults, who opted for participation in the UDI program rather than having their cases processed through the conventional CJS, were African Nova Scotians aged from 19 to 34, with residential roots in Uniacke Square public housing, and a significant number of years in the drug dealing business. One, in his thirties and the oldest of the grouping, reported that he had been in the drug trade for fifteen years and was facing “my second time getting caught since 2010”; he anticipated being found guilty and receiving a sentence of possibly four to five years. The others, all with previous convictions, expected that otherwise they would likely have received, respectively, “three to five years”, “two years in jail” and “the maximum sentence”. Each participant considered that the option to take a program in the community was a far better strategy. One commented, “Police came to my house with a paper, and gave me the option to go to the program and said do the program or go to court. I thought I'd get 2 years in jail so I took the easy way and came here. I didn't talk to a defence lawyer”. Another stated, “I was on the run actually. It was my second charge and I knew I was getting time. For the first charge, I was given

a conditional discharge with a curfew... So when I found out [that I was selected], I was very happy and although I was already in [a different city] I said I would do anything I can do to come back and be in the program. My lawyer type of drug buddies [drug dealers who think they know the law] said they [the police] can't come get me in [this central Canada city] for this [offence], but I wanted to come anyways". A third participant echoed the surprise about being selected, noting, "The Narcs came to me and said that they are starting this program and that I was selected. Honestly, I thought it was sketchy. Who does something illegal then gets told that they got this program they want you to get into? I didn't know what to expect and I didn't trust anyone at first"; he consulted with a lawyer and reportedly "my lawyer said he'd kill me if I don't take the program".

While selecting the option of participation in the UDI program rather than endure a strongly expected period of incarceration is quite rational, experienced therapists have suggested that the strongest key to successful participation is whether the potential participants "would like things to be different in their lives". In their responses all participants did suggest that, at least to some degree, they did have such a disposition. All the participants indicated that family considerations were important and beyond that, the opportunity to change their lives. One articulate participant stated: "I chose this option for my family. After this [finishing the program] I'm moving to [central Canada] and starting a new life there, then maybe go out west and work in the oil-rigs or pipe fitting or something. With this program, I *can* do all these things, and get a second chance at life. [Drug dealing is] not like the music videos, sitting in a mansion and getting cars by selling drugs". Another participant indicated that a major factor in his decision was "To better my life, move up in the world, start living the right way. Most def, I got kids, and can't do anything for them behind bars". A third participant responded "I chose to do this [take up the UDI option], because I haven't been in school for a while. I need to get better at work and stuff. I used to go to Citadel High".

When asked why they opted for the specific program they participated in, among the several available to them in the UDI project, three participants put some emphasis on the money they could earn. One participant stated, "Honestly, because of money! It's the highest paying program and longest program so also I can earn more. Other programs are about 5 to 6 months; this one's 9 months long. Also, other programs pay \$150 or \$500 a month, and this one pays \$1200 a month. It's about same amount of money I could make by working, and it's better than

making nothing in jail”. Another participant observed, “[The other programs] couldn't pay me what everyone else was paying. Here I get paid \$582 every two weeks which helps. Honestly, I'm used to having thousands, to do whatever I want with it. Now I got to be careful with money. When I was selling drugs, I didn't respect money at all. But before I started the program, \$582 is more than what I was making, because after I got grabbed in August, 2012, I haven't done anything [drug dealing] since, so I was making less”. A third participant noted, “From [this program], I can get \$750 every two weeks, so \$1,500 a month. I come here 5 days a week, 10 am to 3 pm, but I still get paid as if I was here from 10 to 5”; this person also emphasized that he knew the staff in the program he opted for – “it's positive. I knew these guys, and I felt comfortable with them, and I could work with them”.

PERCEIVED IMPACT OF PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM

In response to questioning about the challenges of the program they were enrolled in, the participants indicated that there were some stresses partly because of the learning challenges but more often because of lifestyle factors. Three of the four indicated that the material that had to be dealt with, the classes and assignments, were difficult for them; one of the older participants had quit school before grade ten fifteen years earlier and he noted that “my reading and writing skills aren't good”. But the cooperative staff people in the programs were deemed to be considerate and helpful so they anticipated graduating from the program. Only one participant was worried about not graduating and any implication that might have for his charges being waived (withdrawn); he noted, “I worry that I ain't going to graduate. I have personal doubt. I go back and forth between doubts and thinking that I will graduate. I most likely won't find out until the end if I will graduate from the program”.

Personal lifestyle issues led to attendance problems for several of the participants. One man, for example, noted that “I like it here. The teachers aren't bad. I enjoy the work so far and I'm trying my best; sometimes it's difficult... there have been transportation issues”. Another participant observed, “Good, it's the right amount of time and effort, but I could do a little more. I would work more for more money. I thought I would at least get minimum wage in the program, but I'm getting \$8 and some cents”; with respect to attendance and doing the required work, he added, “Yes, everyday for the last four months, except a day or two, and got all assignments done in time! Some work is challenging, like the business model board we are

making. I was told that that's something lots of people don't get to do, even in university". A third participant noted "I don't mind it. I'm here early every morning. I get here by 7:30 am every day. It is tough to get up sometimes, but you got to do what you gotta do. Also, I need the pay here, and the skills they give you. Yes, I try to do all of it. I'm all up to date with my assignments. It's not too difficult. I'm usually up at 6:30 then come straight here". The fourth participant stated, "I have trouble attending regularly, and it's not like I can get doctor's note every time. Because of my attendance, I receive only about \$500 to \$600 every two weeks, so about \$1200 a month (instead of the full \$1500). I don't argue about it with the guys here because I know its how it works. I could get a letter that says I get sick often, but couldn't use that one letter as a good excuse because it would look like I'm just skipping for no good reason then after a while". While, as noted above, the participants were all concerned about the funding they received – not surprising since they had earned income before the arrests and two of the four attested to major family responsibilities – only one man reported significant financial challenges; he commented, "\$1500 is not cutting it. In the drug business I was used to getting \$500 to \$600 a day and I have kids".

The participants were quite positive about the impact of having selected this alternative to court processing. One man observed that "I started looking at the bigger picture since coming into the program. Before that, I just thought I'd go to jail, do my time, and then go straight. But then this program came to me ... If I got grabbed several years ago and they sent me to jail, I would have got out and kept doing the same thing. It's great to give people a second chance through this program. Maybe this is the way to get people to stop selling drugs; it helps you open doors for opportunities; he expressed both optimism and ambition, adding that "Yes, I feel success already. Even though I haven't done anything I feel like I am at the beginning of success. I want to do labour work, go out West, make money and start a business here, employ people from where I'm from, maybe get them off the streets". Another participant noted that he is learning people skills and now, like two other participants, wants to get his GED. He envisioned a much better future as a consequence of selecting this option, commenting, "Yes, I'll get a great reference from here; they help you look for a job and even give you loans if you have a business plan". A third man expressed similar optimism, talking about "Get a job, start a new life for me and my family, do it the right way. Now I am thinking about a GED; before I wasn't worried about stuff like that". The fourth participant had more modest expectations and found the agency

work he was involved in quite compatible – “I liked the experience doing some janitorial work. It’s something I was looking into before. It was good to get experience in it and get help in getting a job”.

The participants indicated that they have received positive support for their involvement in the UDI program. All reported that their program staff was fine and two were especially exuberant; one of them stated “Aside from my family, they [the program staff] are the best ever...they are for you 100%”. Two of the participants reported that they were struck by the community stakeholders’ comments – and their tears - about caring for them and for the community at the important community conference in December 2012. One man described his reaction in the following words: “They all felt bad for me at the call-in meeting. Somebody at the meeting was crying. It really opened up my eyes to start in the program, and it boosted my confidence, seeing that people care about me, and they want me to succeed”. In another case this community support has led to an informal mentoring relationship with an elder in the public housing complex; as a participant observed, “I got community support from Mrs [X] and Mrs [Y]. They talk to me. Mrs. [X] calls me every two weeks to check in to see that I'm doing good, and make sure that I don't fall back to my old ways”.

Other participants indicated that their families were solidly in support of their selecting the UDI option. One participant observed, “I could see people are proud of me for taking the program. They [family members] aren’t yelling at me like they used to when I was in the drug business. My mom, my grandmother, used to yell at me, but now are happy about my situation”. Along the same lines, another participant commented, “Yes, definitely [support] from my mom. She was there for me, even before I got grabbed, she wanted me to stop selling drugs”. All the participants in turn made a point of emphasizing that they were involved in order to become better family persons, making comments such as “I live to support my family”, “I am changing, doing it for my family”, “Now for my kids, I don’t want to lose my freedom”. Two participants considered that the support was in the eyes of community residents and in their own sense of self; one noted “They [others in the community] look at me different now, not sure how, but they look at me differently from before. I never had anyone tell me that I'm a bad person, but I didn't like the way I saw myself. It's hard to say how I saw myself. But now, I am a changed man, looking toward to going straight in life, instead of diagonally”.

There were a number of questions asked of the participants with regard to what implications their decision to participate has had for relationships with their former associates in the drug milieu. One participant remarked that “I was hesitant a little [to select the UDI option] because people were already talking about my friend [X, who opted for the UDI program], saying he’s a rat, so I thought about that [before accepting program]. I was so far into the game, I couldn’t have people talk about me like that. I can’t go back to that after getting into the program”. Another young adult noted that his former friends in the drug business were negative – “Most of my friends in the neighbourhood said that I should keep on selling drugs. But I said I’m done. I want to be known as a good person. There is social pressure”. These two views were held by all four participants and indeed there was conveyed a sense that a kind of martyrdom was the preferable drug culture response; as one participant stated, “[support?] ... from the drug dealing community – no. They are not supportive. They are only supportive if you go to jail, otherwise, they call you a rat. They second-guess you even if you get a discharge. They say go do your time, and think you “talked” if you get off easy ... People [in the drug dealing community] are not saying that I’m doing good, how I’m going back to school. They want me to go to jail, and keep selling drugs”. Interestingly, none of the participants reported that they were threatened in any way by their former associates in the drug milieu, suggesting that indeed they may have been easily replaceable.

The participants observed that there have been, at best, minor changes in the drug dealing in the Uniacke Square area; they have been replaced by others. One participant reported that there has been no impact on youths, adding “younger guys nowadays, they are so thick-headed. They are filling the drug selling positions that I left. They are young and dumb; they should realize that they won’t make millions like in the rap songs. There are less people dealing drugs now actually. It’s often young people doing it, but overall, less people are willing to take the chance lately. Adults see that the drug dealing business is a trap. You can sell for 2 years, but they will grab you”. Two of the four participants did mention that the Uniacke Square community appears to be more explicitly anti-drug now and one suggested that some community people have become quite active in opposing the open-air drug scene; he opined “Police now have so many people who are willing to talk. Police are now hearing things that they would not even thought about hearing before. Community people seemed to have gotten tired of the drug

dealing, people running around selling drugs, shooting people up. Community people now tell the police all kinds of details like, who is selling, where he hides his drugs, etc”.

There was some ambivalence among the older participants with respect to the financial benefits and level of risk taking associated with their former drug dealing activity. The two oldest mentioned several times during the interview how much money they gained. One commented “In 3 to 4 days, I could make \$5000. But then I would spend it fast, on my kids, like on Christmas time, they got everything”. The other, his close friend, echoed those comments, saying that he was used to having thousands and could have been a millionaire if he had not spent wildly and for his kids. Similarly, both appeared to downplay the risks to themselves of carrying out the drug trafficking. One of these participants noted “I didn't worry about police much when I was selling drugs though. I got so used to having them around, but not getting caught”. Still, there was ambivalence. Both participants also at times acknowledged that drug trafficking was a high risk activity, whether that risk was being arrested by police or killed by their peers. And in disparaging the new generation of youthful ‘runners’ they highlighted both the significant risks and the paltry earnings obtained at that level of the drug trade.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The participants were all quite positive about the UDI project. They thought the option presented to them was fine and the programs they accessed were beneficial for them. In their view the project should be continued in the Uptown and expanded to other areas; as one participant declaimed, “it’s ridiculous, all the people going to jail and the money being spent to house them”. The oldest pair especially held that the younger generation of ‘runners’ should be targeted in the future. The only suggested change the participants advanced was that there might be more programs to choose from. They expressed satisfaction with their own seizing the opportunity offered by the police. And while they maintained their wariness about the police in general, they spoke well of the two community response officers who assisted them in keeping engaged in the program. They clearly too experienced, at least temporarily, raised expectations and fired-up ambitions about getting on in mainstream society. Some participants did appear to retain an idealized version of their lives as drug traffickers and all considered that only modest change had occurred in the Uptown drug milieu.

OTHER VIEWPOINTS: POLICE AND CJS OFFICIALS

Other key viewpoints on the UDI project were gathered from interviews with a dozen HRP officers on both sides of the Halifax harbour, a representative of the federal prosecution service, the provincial Safer Communities leaders and six HRM councilors representing the areas impacted or that could be impacted in the future were the UDI to spread to Dartmouth. The HRP's UDI police team members were unanimous in their positive assessments of this alternative way of responding to a part of the drug trafficking activity (i.e., the low level 'runners', young adults and fitting the criteria established for inclusion), and encouraged its continuation in the Uptown and extension to North Dartmouth. They acknowledged the considerable effort that the pilot required of the police but were pleased with the collaboration "on their own dime" of the agencies providing the programs and the support of community stakeholders (e.g., several reported the latter's public praise for the UDI); they hopefully envisioned a larger role for community stakeholders in future cycles. They considered the UDI to have been a successful pilot project in its implementation processes and anticipated outcomes (e.g., reducing visible open-air drug trafficking, all UDI participants graduated from their programs).

SES interviewees (all sergeants or staff sergeants) were of course quite aware of the UDI and several had been consulted in the initial planning phase; they supported the initiative then in its targeted objectives and continued to do so. Several officers indicated that there were some discussions post-implementation with the UDI team though in the future there could be advantage in having more meetings to provide a more integrated HRP response. On the outcome side, it was reported that some information helpful to enforcement (e.g., tips) was relayed from Uptown community sources, though any overall effect on the drug milieu was modest, not unexpectedly so given the modest scale of the UDI pilot. It was also observed that none of the UDI participants were engaged in drug trafficking during the period in which they were in their respective programs. A strongly held view among this SES grouping – and indeed among most HRP officers interviewed – was that the UDI was a good strategic initiative but "police should not do it all". There was some concern that were projects such as UDI to become more prevalent it

would be crucial, given the limitations on police resources, to engage community resources more, and it was not evident how this “community ownership” might be done. As one SES officer commented, “Policing is now back to the specialist mode [and he is in favour of that]. I support the [UDI] initiative but police should be participants, not run the show”.

All the officers and CJS officials captured the essence of the UDI as, in the words of one officer, “eliminating the open-air drug dealing or at least displace it, reducing crime, saving on court costs and providing alternatives for the young adult dealer’. Not surprisingly, given their different degrees of “closeness” to the UDI activities, there was some diversity among the non-UDI team grouping concerning how much community buy-in there was in the UDI project. Some respondents characterized the project as “primarily a community response, showing people there a willing, collaborative police response”, but also noted that they had no knowledge of how the police-community partnership has worked out. While a few officers considered that there had been a community buy-in, a few others echoed the words of one senior officer, “it was too much a police project and should be more a community project; the community basically left it up to the police and did not grasp how much time and effort had to be put into it”; from his perspective that effort begins to be “the outer limit of the proper police role”. Most if not all the officers emphasized the “sub-culture’ thesis about the drug milieu especially in the Uptown and appreciated that impacting that sub-culture and developing positive collaborative relationships with the majority of the residents, who themselves disdain the drug dealing, required more than conventional enforcement strategies.

Virtually all the officers in discussions about the drug milieu agreed that, like any subculture, there may be sustaining myths (a mixture of truths and motivational idealizations) that facilitate recruitment and continuation in the trafficking role. Here such myths were considered to include that the ‘runner’ can make a lot of money in the business and that the risks are manageable. The officers and other CJS officials (e.g., federal prosecutors, provincial Safer Communities officers) drew attention to the glamorization of working in the drug milieu and its contrasting realities of making “little real money” (though occasionally perhaps enough to obtain an automobile and clothes given their limited household expenses from living with relatives or friends) and having

to deal with serious risks of arrest by police and of violence by their peers in the business. They wondered about if and how the programs offered the young adults effectively respond to these sustaining myths, especially since, otherwise, upon finishing the programs the UDI participants might be readily tempted back into the drug business as they encounter limited legitimate employment opportunities; as one officer observed, “realism is necessary because no matter how you cut it, well-paying, “good” jobs are very rare for persons such as these participants whose education is not great and who have no specialized training in crafts etc”. Another concern raised by the SES officers in particular was that the UDI-type intervention should continue to exercise the selectivity it has practiced in accepting participants for the alternative (i.e., young, non-violent ‘runners’ not otherwise serious criminals).

Overall, then the police officers and others interviewed, beyond the UDI team, were positive about the UDI project and supportive of its continuation and expansion but they also had relevant concerns, issues they had questions about. Their perspective was pragmatic; for example, one SES officer made it clear that he did not think the UDI should be ended because of any shortfall in the community stakeholders being more engaged but rather that it might be helpful for more discussion upfront about their role. At the provincial level there was much support for and, issues aside, there was a clear willingness to collaborate with the UDI; as a Safer Communities official simply stated, ‘we would partner with it’. Federal prosecutors pointed out that since 2008 the trend in drug arrests and convictions in HRM has been basically a “holding pattern”, neither clearly increasing or decreasing, and that police (the Integrated Drug Squad) have been focusing on offenders “higher up the chain”; given that circumstance it was reasonable to offer some alternatives to selected lower level ‘runners’ and as long as charges were not laid there was no problem from their perspective with a UDI-type project.

Virtually all the officers and other CJS officials considered that extending the UDI to the North Dartmouth area would be quite appropriate; as one officer commented. “There may be no open-air drug dealing as in the Uptown, but there may be more drug dealing going on in the Dartmouth area”. An SES officer highlighted the similarities between the Uptown and North Dartmouth in terms of the level of drugs, the

characteristics of the ‘runners’, and the violence; in his experience the two sites were always “hotspots” for comstat presentations. Police officers working the North Dartmouth scene, from all ranks, considered the area “rife with drug abuse, assaults and prostitution” and reported “there is much crime and violence, drug dealing and prostitution and it is more, not less, than in earlier years”. Among most officers interviewed there it was commonly contended that Dartmouth gets the short-end of the HRP stick in terms of attention and resources and that the policing challenge there is not well-recognized at headquarters. The officers noted that the 2009 Safer, Stronger Neighbourhood program focused entirely on the Uptown area and never reached North Dartmouth. A senior officer commented that an UDI initiative in the area could expect buy-in from community leaders and activists and had no doubt that the police there could generate sufficient number of ‘runners’ fitting the criteria established in the UDI project. It was also noted that in recent months a small community group from North Dartmouth took the initiative in arranging a meeting with HRP to discuss related matters and that the discussion went well.

The interviews with councilors dealt with a wide range of issues and were not focused on the UDI or North Dartmouth’s drug issues. The councilors were though quite sympathetic to the idea of providing alternatives to arrest and incarceration and getting at the roots of violence and crime in the area, and all held that the municipality had the need, knowledge and interest to be more engaged in a broad policy sense in ‘root’ areas such as poverty, housing and so forth; as one councilor put it, “I appreciate the concerns of some councilors that the province has the resources and mandate so it should not escape its financial obligations BUT the municipality should be a player at the table, advocating and collaborating and being engaged even in a modest resource sense”. The councilors also generally held that the current council and mayor will be active in these regards.

PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Looking first at process considerations, the chief questions for the assessment are whether the UDI project was implemented as planned and with the effectiveness

anticipated. The evidence from the section on Implementation is that it was. The UDI team followed a tested, effective model (i.e., the HPNC model) and operationalized it appropriately; for example, the selection process, based on clear criteria for inclusion, yielded UDI participants that all the project partners were satisfied with, though there were some modest suggestions on the selection process advanced by the agency partners in the event of future UDI cycles. A key to the effective implementation was the capacity and availability of the UDI superintendent coordinator and the two community response officers attached to the Uniacke Square public housing complex. They expended considerable effort and engaged in numerous one-on-one meetings with project partners and UDI participants.

The designated internal and external processes were carried out to an appropriate degree and were effective. Internally the UDI proposal was discussed with the key departmental people, especially SES (crucial collaborators for generating the pool of possible participants and for maintaining enforcement pressure on drug dealing in the Uptown throughout the project cycle) and to some extent the Public Safety Office (valuable for information about such initiatives, some community contact and possible media issues). Also, it was important to communicate and receive formal support from the Police Board responsible for the oversight of HRP, especially given that the UDI project was bold and path-breaking and did not have formal approval from the provincial Department of Justice; that Police Board support was reportedly obtained at a December 2012 meeting when the deputy chief presented the UDI proposal on behalf of the HRP. Could the internal processes be improved in a subsequent UDI cycle? Perhaps, since while there were on-going discussions between the UDI coordinator and the pertinent SES officers, there appeared to be more opportunity through regular formal meetings to integrate better the enforcement and UDI unit activities, as suggested by some officers.

With respect to external processes, there were three crucial partnership relationships that needed to be developed and they were. The first pertained to the collaboration with the federal prosecution service since charges had been laid and this police action transferred control of the case processing to the prosecutors; approval of the UDI approach was reached with the prosecutors and that enabled the UDI project to proceed as planned. The second requisite partnership was with the established local

agencies providing the alternative programs for the selected UDI participants. This process was very successful, all the more so since the agencies made “seats” available for and even paid the UDI participants with no funding whatsoever from the HRP (none apparently was available for any programming activity), and entered a partnership with police about which they were initially quite wary. The agencies became quite positive about this partnership and quite willing to continue with it in subsequent cycles. There were suggestions to improve the partnership, including more consultation about the selection process and a few more general update meetings as there was only one and it came in January shortly after the programs started.

The third requisite external partnership that had to be developed by the UDI police team was with community stakeholders. This process was complex and entailed the UDI team meeting with specific individuals, acting on their own in-depth knowledge of the area plus contacts suggested by others, especially other selected stakeholders. The role of the community stakeholders was crucial in mentoring and representing the community concern about open-air drug trafficking, its impact on the community (in some way a “broken-window” effect but a more negative impact) and its caring about the drug traffickers and their families. What exactly the community stakeholders were expected to do or, better perhaps, how they were expected to effectively achieve the above general objectives, was not apparently specified in detail. This police-community partnership was developed and there is some evidence from the interviews with the community stakeholders and the UDI police team that more trust in and appreciation of one another did result. There is modest evidence that a by-product of this partnership relationship was more community information about the illicit drug activity. Whether or not the partnership relationship was as fully realized as either party might have wished is unclear and would require more research than was possible. Certainly, though, there is little doubt that a positive relationship did develop at least to some degree between police and key community leaders in the Square area. A few officers suggested appropriately that in future UDI cycles there should be more upfront discussions between police and the community stakeholders on what each can effectively contribute to the partnership, bearing in mind of course that police, having made arrests, have both authority and responsibility for subsequent case processing. There are as noted in the previous section

diverse views with the police service as to how much the police should be involved in such initiatives.

According to the UDI proposal advanced to Police Board, the key performance measures or outcomes would be

- Open air drug markets are shut down in the Uniacke Square area as measured by analysis of confidential debriefs/intelligence advising of drug activity and drug section surveillance.
- Drug related violence decreases in the area where the drug markets were closed as measured by comparison of the number of Persons Crimes within the Uniacke Square area before and after the project.
- Eligible participants diverted to the education/training program as measured by the number of participants who successfully pass the program.
- A new partnership with the community is forged, resulting in a strong new community anti-drug standard as measured through qualitative means and consulting with community stakeholders.

Outcome impacts could be expected to be modest given the small number of UDI participants and the short time frame of the UDI project and they were. Data on actual incidents for 2012 and 2013 for the Uptown area (i.e., atoms 408 and 409) indicate the following:

- Trafficking offences in “heavy drugs” (cocaine, other CDSA drugs) were considerably reduced from a high of 35 incidents in 2012 to but 12 in 2013. This decline actually was a decline to the more typical levels for the years 2005 to 2011; for example the average yearly number of “traffic in cocaine” incidents over the seven years prior to 2012 was 10, exactly the number in 2013 and roughly half the number in 2012. It is clear that 2012 stands out as having an atypically large number of trafficking offences and this would reflect the strategy of laying the groundwork for a major bust in advance of implementing the UDI program.
- There was ambiguous evidence for any reduction in the number of person crimes in 2013 compared with 2012. Robbery in fact increased from 16 to 21, attempted homicides went from 2 to 6 and non-domestic disputes rose from 55 to 81. However, assaults declined from 117 in 2012 to 99 in 2013.
- The above data pertain to a larger area than Uniacke Square but were the only data available to the researcher.
- Essentially the data do not strongly evidence performance measures (a) and (b) nor for that matter does the interview data obtained from the UDI participants or SES officers as to perceived significant decline in the drug

milieu in the area. The best evidenced assessment, taking all sources into account, is that visible public drug dealing in the area had reportedly been declining in the last few years and continued to do so in 2013 with a boost from the UDI project.

- There was no evidence for a displacement effect of the visible drug trafficking to other areas of the Uptown.
- With respect to performance measure (c), the outcome was fully achieved in that 4 of the 5 young adults offered the alternative processing of their case did accept that option and all 4 completed (graduated from) their program. SES sources indicate that none of the UDI participants engaged in drug trafficking while they were in their programs. Unfortunately it appears there has been some slippage since the program ended with one graduate quickly arrested and charged with trafficking.
- With respect to performance measure (d) police-community partnerships and a stronger community anti-drug dealing standard, there is evidence from interviews with the community stakeholders and the young adult UDI participants that such a stronger anti-drug standard was being developed; that evidence was consistent with SES officers' reports of more information ("tips") about drug dealers and stashes being communicated to them by community residents. There was also evidence from interviews with all parties to the UDI project of a more trusting collaborative relationship being formed between police and community leaders and activists.

Overall, then, the UDI project was well implemented and its processes appropriate and effective. Outcomes that pertained to the potential candidates were successfully realized, as, to a significant degree, was the performance measure relating to the police-community partnership. A solid beginning was established with respect to that partnership and future UDI cycles should enhance it.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The UDI project was a bold initiative given that the proposal called for alternative responses to serious crime beyond the existing restorative justice and adult diversion programs in place in Nova Scotia; that the HRP team had technically no formal authority over the cases and accused persons given that charges already had been laid; that there

were virtually no special additional HRP resources ear-marked for the initiative; that there would be a complete dependency on local experienced agencies to provide “on their own dime” the programming required for the UDI participants selected by the UDI team; and that crucial partnerships would be have to be developed with skeptical Uptown community stakeholders and perhaps wary fellow HRP officers in Special Enforcement Services and elsewhere in the HRP bureaucracy. Amazingly, the UDI team succeeded. As discussed above, agreements were achieved through internal and external consultations and discussions with all the appropriate players including the federal prosecution service responsible for processing drug trafficking charges, internally with the Special Enforcement Services leadership and the Police Board, with the three chosen collaborating program-providing agencies, and with a small group of community stakeholders from the Uptown area. The implementation model employed followed the successful High Point North Carolina approach and was well carried out.

The initiative appears to have been a model of what dedicated, determined people can do in a complex bureaucratic social system where, for one reason or another, good ideas usually die on the shelf. Still, the development did not occur in a vacuum. HRP at the Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety in 2007 had emphasized its commitment to a social development approach integrated with effective direct enforcement, and the department had spearheaded in 2009 a Safer, Stronger Communities (Neighbourhoods) initiative in collaboration with other HRM services and the provincial government in the troubled Uniacke Square public housing milieu. Since the Roundtable, many dimensions of violent crime and public safety concerns in HRM had declined appreciably but the drugs and violence and harm to the quality of community life in certain areas of HRM, notably the Uptown and North Dartmouth, were much less affected by these positive developments. The HRP officers, including those in Special Enforcement Services as well as in Community Response and Public Safety appreciated that some special strategies would have to be developed to deal with these anomalies. So did other CJS authorities and the community leaders in the designated areas.

Examination of the processes and outcomes associated with stated UDI’s performance measures evidences the positive results of the initiative. The processes were appropriately and pain-stakingly effected; both internal and external agreements and

partnerships were put into place and the sequential planning phases – the initial large bust, the selection process, the partnership with the agencies and the dramatic and emotional community Call-IN – followed as generally planned and with the result that a group of four young adult drug traffickers entered the alternative - to- court programs. There were suggestions for changes relating to process issues but these were largely valuable calls for more formal meetings among the partners to supplement the continuous individual interactions that the UDI police team had with the various role players and the four participants. In general, as evidenced in the above sections, the role players and the participants were quite pleased with the implementation processes.

The outcomes were more difficult to assess for several reasons especially the short time span of the UDI cycle involved and the modest scale of the initiative (just four low level and easily replaceable traffickers removed from the drug milieu) which made questionable any expectations for a significant community-level impact. The performance measures or outcomes that pertained to the potential candidates were successfully realized, as, to a significant degree, was the performance measure relating to the police-community partnership. A solid beginning was established with respect to that partnership and future UDI cycles should enhance it.

Looking forward there are six recommendations that are offered:

- The UDI initiative should be continued in the Uptown area. Social change in community standards and the enhancement of collaborative partnerships between police and community stakeholders take concerted effort over a period of time. Excellent work in these regards has occurred building on past initiatives, and some shortfalls have been identified so it is important to move forward, not fold the tent (close the initiative) and feed extant criticism in the Uptown community about the exceedingly short-term nature of outside-directed initiatives. The assessment found strong pervasive support for continuance among all the varieties of role players involved in the project.
- The UDI model should be extended to North Dartmouth. Again, there was strong pervasive support among all the interviewees for such an expansion. And clearly

it makes much sense. North Dartmouth has higher levels of violence and a drug scene less open-air but certainly as deeply-rooted and extensive as that which characterizes the Uptown. The two communities share many other attributes though extensive public housing per se is not one of them. In North Dartmouth there are instead many modest sized, low-cost rental, privately owned complexes which act as magnets for the social problems; this difference may require and benefit from slightly modified intervention approaches such as incorporating HRP's CFMH programs. HRP police working in the area, some concerned community groupings that have met with HRP and the areas' HRM councilors, properly call attention to need for an integrated social development-enforcement approach such as the UDI.

- The assessment indicated that there should be some fine-tuning of certain aspects of the UDI approach. One would be the better integration of enforcement and the UDI approaches; much informal communication has occurred but some formal quarterly meetings among the pertinent SES officers and the UDI police team (plus perhaps others police and officials as deemed appropriate) can improve and hone the quality of the communication to the betterment of the police work.
- There is also some value in considering supplements to the programming for the UDI participants. It would seem, based on the experience of the first group of UDI participants, that without directly confronting some of the myths that the "runners" have absorbed in the drug milieu about good payoff and low risks of low level trafficking, and without linking them up better to real legitimate employment opportunities, the UDI participants are highly vulnerable to slipping back into "the business" after they complete, with high expectations, their programs.
- A major issue emerging from the interviews concerns the extent and quality of the involvement of the community through the collaborating community stakeholders. There are some complex issues involved such as how much direction can be and should be "downloaded" to the community in such programs. It appears important to appreciate that both police and community are properly engaged in such initiatives, that these expectations are intrinsic to the police role

as reflected in the official HRP espousal of social development and the concept of community ownership. There needs to be more discussion between police and community stakeholders, based on this project's experience, and upfront in future cycles, of how the contribution on the community side could be fleshed out.

- The UDI project was a significant achievement with minimal resources. As it is continued and expanded, resources will be necessary in all phases from forging initial agreements and relationships to monitoring and more formalization of processes to research and assessment. The pilot project has proved its worth so now some greater investment is required and appropriate.