

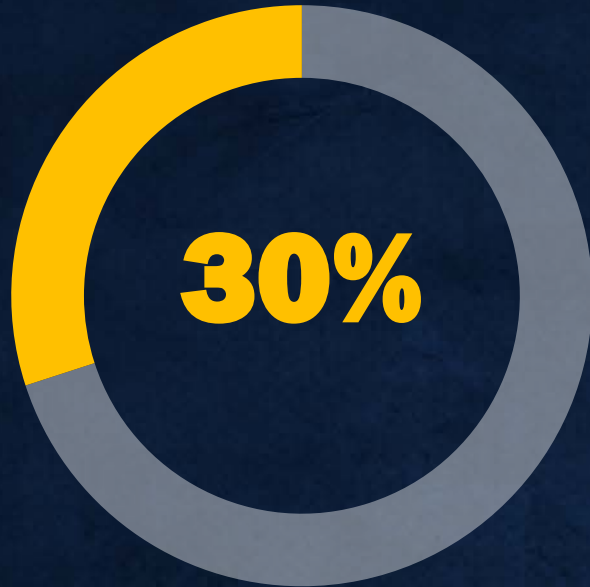


HOW MANY?

Estimating the Size of the Los Angeles County Jail Mental Health Population Appropriate for Release into Community Services

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County jails: the largest mental health facilities in the U.S.



Percentage of incarcerated individuals in the LA County jail system in mental health housing units and/or prescribed psychotropic medications on average in 2018



There is increasing interest in “diverting” these individuals from the criminal justice system to community-based clinical services

2015: LA County established the Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR)



4474

Number of people who have been diverted into community-based care through ODR-supported programs



How many in the incarcerated population are appropriate for diversion?

2018: LA County Board of Supervisors directed study of divertible population and development of diversion road map

How many in LA's jail mental health population are appropriate for diversion?



ODR staff review cases to determine if an individual is a candidate for diversion



District attorneys, public defenders, and judges consider legal factors

We developed sets of clinical and legal criteria to classify cases into 3 categories:

- ✓ **appropriate for diversion**
- ? **potentially appropriate for diversion**
- ✗ **not appropriate for diversion**

How many in LA's jail mental health population are appropriate for diversion?

We developed sets of clinical and legal criteria to classify cases into 3 categories:

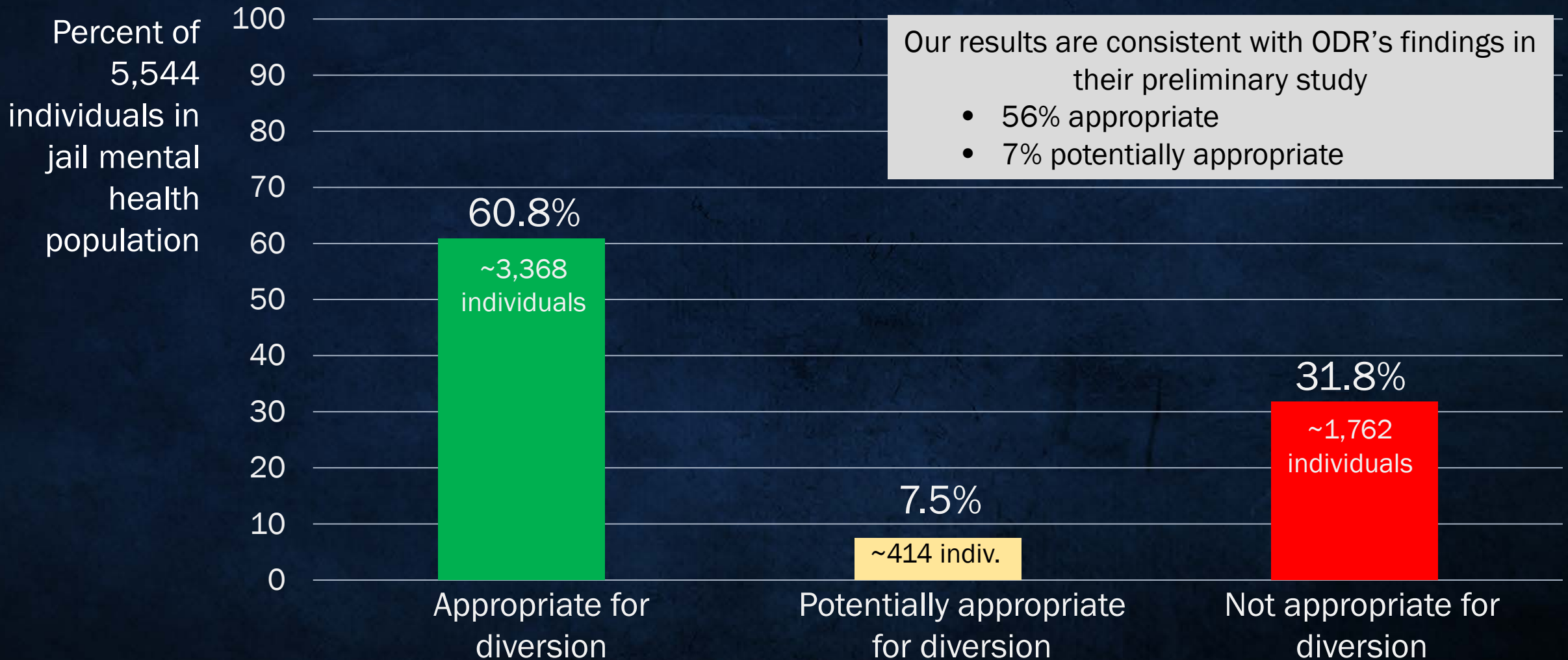
✓ **appropriate for diversion**

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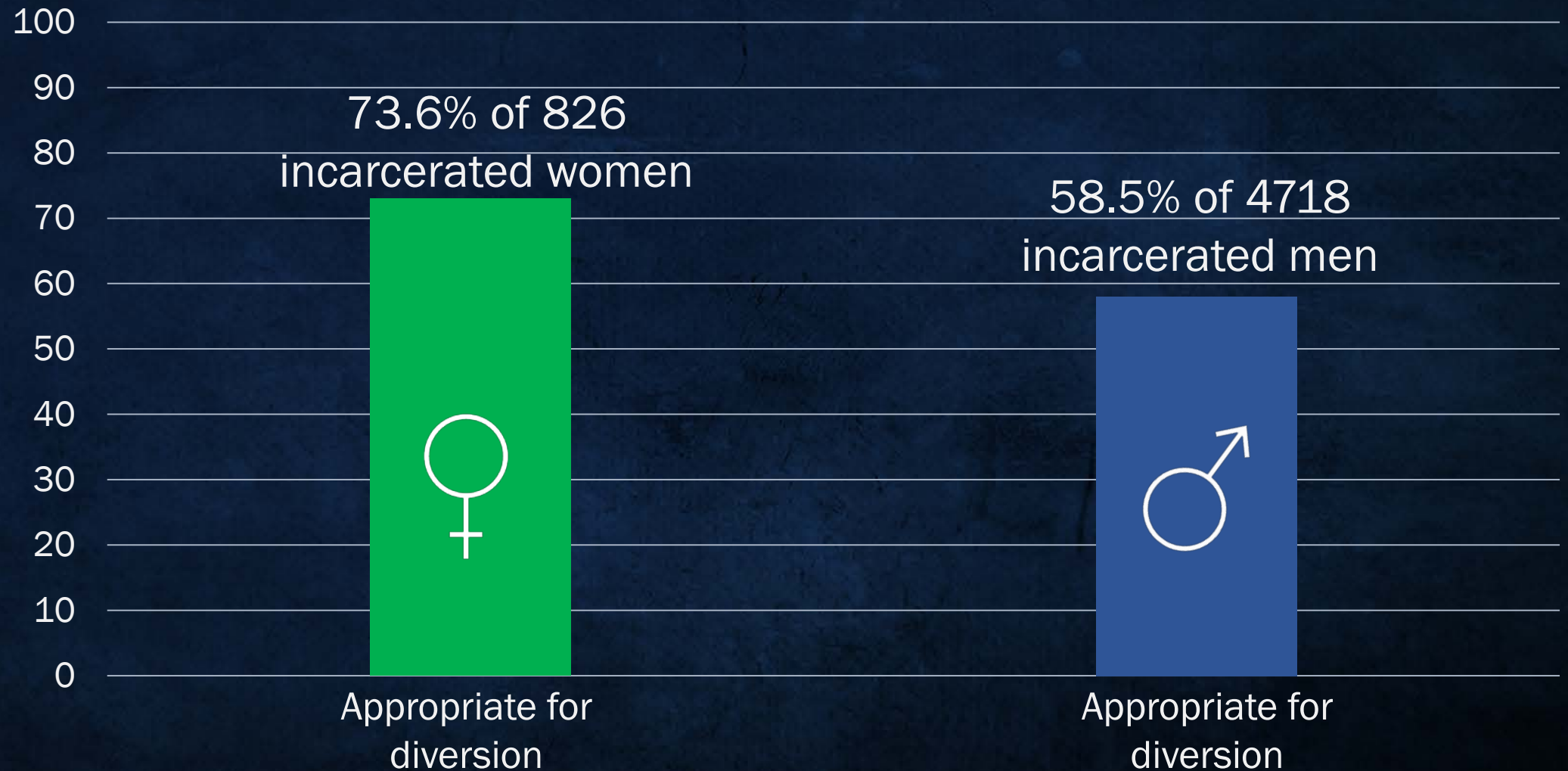
✗ **not appropriate for diversion**

- Study **focused on ODR's decisionmaking** when operationalizing our categories
- Tested **reliability of the criteria** against preliminary study conducted by ODR
- Applied criteria to **random sample of 500 individuals** from the jail mental health population
- Results used to **estimate the proportion** of the full jail mental health population that would be classified into each category

Study shows that more individuals are appropriate for diversion than not



More women than men are appropriate for diversion





Knowing these numbers
is the **first step**
toward understanding the
types of programs, staff, and
funding needed
to treat those individuals in
the community

Going forward, it would be helpful to know:

- **Levels of care** needed
- How many could be served in **existing programs**
- What **other types** of programs are needed
- **Other points** at which individuals could be diverted (e.g., at initial police contact)
- How to **meet the needs of people who cannot be diverted** (e.g., through jail mental health services or reentry programming)



Study limitations



Criteria not validated against true “successful” diversion nor against diversion outcomes



Limited ability to consider full range of stakeholder input into the diversion process



Estimates likely represent the upper bound of those who might be appropriate for diversion

Recommendations



Track the process and outcomes of diversion more carefully



Increase ODR's capacity for data collection and integrating with other sources of data in the County (e.g., treatment utilization, recidivism)



Consider ways to ensure that diversion is appealing to public defenders and individuals facing legal proceedings – such as increasing pre-plea offerings



Collaborate with other local and state level stakeholders to provide a robust set of initiatives and programs to address mental illness in justice-involved populations



Discussion and Questions

Thank You