Evidence-Based Practice:
Principles for Enhancing Correctional Results in Prisons

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That all corrections staff want safer prisons and communities is a clear truism. At issue is whether a strategy exists that could achieve that goal. Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is such a strategy and it applies equally in community corrections and prisons. Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is the body of research and replicable clinical knowledge that describes contemporary correctional assessment, programming and supervision strategies that lead to improved correctional outcomes such as the rehabilitation of offenders and increased public safety. Such principles not only meet the public's expectations for quality, efficiency, and effectiveness but also reflect fairness, public safety and accountability. Accordingly, *all* staff, from Correctional Officers to Wardens, can contribute to meeting these goals and must share a common commitment to constantly utilize new knowledge to enhance practice. EBP is a preoccupation with mental health professionals as a means of applying research findings to improve clinical practice (Stout & Hayes, 2005), and it can be usefully applied to the field of corrections. This paper is intended to assist the National Institute of Corrections to focus ongoing discussions regarding how to support the implementation of EBP in US corrections.

A key theme of this paper is that effective correctional principles help situate community corrections and prisons as members of a corrections team to meet their shared responsibility to enhance public safety. This integration links probation, re-entry and prisons together using common principles:
> ➢ Dynamic and static risk instruments
> ➢ Supervision standards related to criminal risk and needs
> ➢ Prison classification methods
> ➢ Risk reduction through correctional programming

> Using research-based methods (Evidence-Based Practice), prisons and community corrections must work together as a team to ensure risk reduction through correctional programming. EBP also provides guidelines for the efficient management of correctional agencies to meet government requirements of efficiency and quality assurance.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to introduce prison administrators and staff to an accumulated body of knowledge regarding correctional practice to enhance their management of their prisons. Similar work has been highlighted in recent publications on community corrections by the National Institute of Corrections[1], but this paper is intended to provide a context for meaningful discussions regarding how to translate these earlier community-specific initiatives to "prison-based" realities. Importantly, this initiative to implement EBP in prisons is viewed to be an integration of prison-based and community-based corrections. Given their different settings, populations and goals, they reflect different points along the criminal justice continuum but are all interconnected such that success (or failures) in one area has impact on another. In this manner they form a corrections team with each dependent on the other for sharing of information, communication, and ideally cost-sharing certain assessment and programming requirements through integration of practices. As part of a broader government initiative, both community corrections and prisons have an obligation to utilize proven correctional practices in order to meet public safety concerns. Collaboration between prisons and community corrections provides the opportunity to meet this shared goal by highlighting their respective successes and developing shared strategies to address common challenges.

> **Project Vision:** Prisons are no longer simply viewed as places to incarcerate individuals who have broken the law or breached community supervision rules. Indeed, as exemplified by re-entry initiatives, current expectations are that prisons must prepare inmates for timely and safe return to their communities, forming a vital team with community corrections.

Transition from prison to the community

The requirement for prison administrators to attend to re-entry is underscored by statistics that indicate that 97% of the 1.3 million inmates now in US prisons will eventually be released and return to the community (Barnett & Parent, 2002). Alarmingly, many inmates will leave prison with no supervision or aftercare services, reducing the likelihood of successful return to the community. Accordingly, a strong transition process through which inmates are prepared for release, leave prison, return to communities, and eventually adjust to crime-free living is needed to most effectively protect the public. This means that the Mission of corrections should not just be to run safe, orderly, secure, and affordable prisons, but also to improve public safety by contributing to better inmate transition (Barnett & Parent, 2002). Within this context, EBP provides

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[1] Bogue, B., Campbell, N., & Clawson, E. (2004). *Implementing evidence-based practice in community corrections*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

guidelines and examples regarding the preferred state-of-the-art procedures to be used in inmate assessment, classification, programming and release preparation. This paper highlights those strategies that have proved to be effective and efficient. In addition, those proven to be inaccurate and ineffective strategies are noted in order that they may be rejected from use.

Beyond simply attending to policy interests and mission statements, improved transition from prison to the community has major practical implications. For instance, nearly 600,000 individuals are released annually from US prisons. Of the 459,000 US parolees who were discharged from community supervision, 42% were returned to incarceration (11% with a new sentence, 31% in some other way[2]) (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2001). Notably, when prison inmates are released to community supervision, continuity between their prison programs and community re-entry plans, yields reduced re-offense rates (Broome, Simpson, & Joe, 2002). As well, the same strategies that are successful in reducing prison misconducts (i.e., dynamic assessment of criminal risk; correctional programming) also generalize to yield reductions in recidivism (French & Gendreau, 2003). The benefits of this integration are multiple. In addition to increased public safety, the reduction in prison admission rates due to lower revocation rates will serve to decrease prison over-crowding and therefore the overall costs of incarceration.

Clearly, jails, prisons and community corrections are inextricably linked. First, inmates often graduate through levels of increasing sanctions. Arrests lead to initial jail time, convictions lead to initial probation, jails or prisons depending on the severity of the crime, community correctional failures and re-convictions lead to prison. Second, a minority of inmates account for the majority of criminal justice interventions, often having frequent contact with all components of the criminal justice field (Farrington, Joliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Kalb, 2001). These individuals have sometimes been referred to as chronic inmates or career criminals (Snyder, 1998). Third, many inmates are high need, resulting in repeated contacts with correctional, mental health and addiction agencies. These multiple users are a significant resource drain and management problem for all agencies. Integration and co-ordination, particularly in terms of standardized assessment and programming procedures, and sharing of information among agencies could markedly improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Fourth, skilled staff from one agency can share their best practices to assist partner agencies. For instance, addiction and mental health agencies may reduce the overall effectiveness of their intervention if they treat inmates similar to other non-correctional clients in terms of motivation, program needs, supervision, etc.

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[2] For illustration, a **_1%_** improvement in community supervision outcomes would reduce the number of readmissions by 1,423 inmates (459,000 × .31. × .01). At $54.11 daily cost ($63.57 daily cost in BOP facility - $9.46 daily cost for probation), this equates to a savings of 28.1 million dollars yearly. Please note that effect sizes for correctional programming are conservatively estimated to be between .10 and .20.

Successful community re-entry necessitates good communication between community and institutional corrections. Initially, community corrections can assist prison classification by providing information about the inmate's time in the community or in a remand jail. When it is time for the inmate to be returned to community, prisons can enhance public safety by highlighting the inmate's participation in correctional programming and identifying high-risk situations for which prospective supervisors must be particularly vigilant. Again, the team approach is critical. Prisons can provide effective correctional programming, thereby initially reducing risk whereas community corrections can also provide aftercare/programming in order to continue to manage risk. Management of the inmate is therefore a dynamic strategy, requiring communication among staff. This dynamic approach necessitates the selection and use of measures that are sensitive to change over time. In this manner, some of the early prison classification scales may be limited given their reliance on static factors (i.e., criminal history).

> Co-ordination between community and institutional corrections can simultaneously improve public safety through lower recidivism, thereby reducing prison admissions and the overall costs of corrections.

Effective Correctional Practice

Prisons administrators then have two primary goals – safely operating their prisons *and* preparing inmates for safe release. Interestingly, these goals are empirically related in that poor institutional behavior is predictive of higher rates of post-release recidivism (French & Gendreau, 2003; Motiuk, 1991). Substantial published research across multiple countries and correctional agencies has also demonstrated that a primary method to reduce prison misconducts *and* recidivism is through effective correctional programming (Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, & Cullen,1990; French & Gendreau, 2003; Lösel, 1995; McGuire, 1995, 2002). This means that if prison administrators want to ensure safer institutions and communities, then they need to provide correctional programming opportunities consistent with EBP.

For prisons, the preoccupation with short-term operational goals (i.e., admissions, transfers, accommodation, and the daily routine of the prison) is understandable but this can easily exhaust available fiscal and human resources. Such preoccupation leaves few resources left for the agency to meet its commitment regarding the broader goals of effective corrections and public safety. This, however, is a false economy since money spent on programming is cost-effective (Aos, Phipps, Barnoski, & Lieb, 1999). One possible strategy is to incorporate existing programs that have been demonstrated to be effective in one

setting for use in another. In this manner the initial start-up costs are greatly diminished and staff benefits from the implementation lessons from other jurisdictions.

> Failure to provide correctional programming (EBP) in prisons due to financial constraints is a flawed argument in light of evidence of effectiveness and overall cost-savings.

Evidence-Based Practice is therefore not an intellectual exercise for academics rather it is a pragmatic application of what is known to work with inmates to meet correctional goals in prison (and the community). Therefore, in order for EBP to be successfully implemented, the research findings must be made practical and relevant to prison staff (Taxman, Shepardson, Delano, Mitchell, Byrne, Gelb, & Gornik, 2004). For instance, staff need to realize that meeting the seemingly competing goals of managing prisons and treating inmates (i.e., providing programming) is actually consistent with their interest to have safer prisons and eventually lower rates of recidivism. Further, several of the predictors of prison misconducts are also predictive of recidivism (Gendreau, Goggin & Law, 1997), meaning some assessments could serve multiple purposes, (i.e., prison classification could inform community supervision). Most importantly, accurate inmate classification and effective programming are EBP tools that will increase prison safety and enhance community success.

> Correctional programming is *not* a "getting soft" approach to crime rather it is holding inmates accountable for their criminal behavior and providing ways for them to become prosocial.

Overview of Prison Research Findings

Prison Classification

Upon initial admission to jail and prison, accurate inmate classification is a primary concern for managing inmates. The goals of inmate classification have been provided by Austin (1998):
1. Guide and structure decision-making – provides a framework or roadmap for staff to follow in making decisions about placement.
2. Reduce bias – ensures that decisions are made according to policy and research evidence about factors related to institutional adjustment.
3. Improve the placement of inmates for treatment and public safety – facilitates decisions to separate low and high risk inmates and to assign inmates to appropriate work locations and correctional programs.
4. Manage inmates in a more effective manner – allocates resources according to needs and risk levels of inmates.

5. Respond to legal challenges – insulates prison administrators from criticisms that their decisions are capricious.
6. Utilize resources more effectively – helps administrators determine resource priorities and the likely benefits of specific strategies.

Notably, research also suggests that objective and statistical prediction instruments often yield more liberal decisions than professional judgment (Austin, 1983). For instance, using actuarial tools tends to significantly lower the average classification or security level (i.e., recommending placement at medium rather than maximum security), as well as the rate of false positive predictions (i.e., incorrectly identifying someone as an escape risk) (Buchanan, Whitlow, & Austin, 1986). It has been suggested that staff, left to their own professional discretion, will act more conservatively because there are serious potential consequences for under-classification such as institutional violence, inmate escape, and criminal/ violent offending in the event of escape. While over-classification also evokes consequences, especially for the inmates, they are less apparent than those caused by under-classification (Alexander, 1986; Hannah-Moffat, 2004). Recent prison classification research with women inmates has demonstrated that cases that are over-ridden from the classification assignment suggested by a statistical instrument, have higher rates of prison misconducts relative to the inmates appropriately placed at a particular security level (Blanchette, 2005).

Importantly, effective inmate assessment and classification are hallmarks to the effective management of prisons. Essentially this translates to having the right inmates at the right security level in order to reduce prison misconducts and escapes. Standardized assessment, however, can also be used to profile inmates to detect trends over time and to refer the right inmates to the right programs at the right time. In this manner, the recent challenges of increasing rates of incarceration and heterogeneous inmate populations (i.e., ethnic diversity, gang affiliation, varying and longer sentence lengths, varied treatment needs, different mental health issues, and different prison histories) can be better addressed. Indeed US prisons have been at the forefront of inmate classification research (Austin & McGinnis, 2004) but the link to programming has been under-utilized relative to other countries (Bonta, Bogue, Crowley & Motiuk, 2001).

Early classification scales focused solely on static risk factors but the accuracy of prison classification will increase with dynamic measures that reflect criminal risk factors for use in correctional programming.

One important goal of security classification is the minimization of institutional misconducts. This is accomplished by identifying those inmates most likely to have adjustment difficulties and address this through higher security placements or greater internal security within a prison. Thus, an important consideration in assessing the validity of a security classification model is the prediction of institutional misconducts and violent misconducts. To assist in this endeavor most jurisdictions implemented objective security classification systems 10 to 20

years ago (Hardyman, Austin, & Tulloch, 2002; Solicitor General Canada, 1987; Van Voorhis & Presser, 2001).

While most security classification systems appropriately include at least some static variables; many initial classification models are heavily weighted with static items (Van Voorhis & Presser, 2001). There is general consensus that age is one of the best predictors of institutional misconduct among both men and women (Brennan & Austin, 1997; Buchanan et al., 1986; Cooper & Werner, 1990; Fernandez & Neiman, 1998; Gendreau, Goggin, & Law, 1997; Hanson, Moss, Hosford, & Johnson, 1983; Hardyman, 2001; Harer & Langan, 2001; Motiuk, 1991; Proctor, 1994). Notably, however, the parameters appear to differ by gender. While age is negatively correlated with adjustment problems for both genders, women seem to 'burnout' later than their male counterparts. More specifically there is preliminary evidence that the relative rate of institutional infractions decreases at an earlier age for males than for females (Brennan & Austin, 1997; Hardyman, 2001; Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004).

History of institutional misconducts has also been hailed as one of the best predictors of both men's (Buchanan et al., 1986; Gendreau et al., 1997; Hanson et al., 1983) and women's (Blanchette et al., 2002; Hardyman et al., 2002) involvement in institutional misconducts and violent institutional misconducts. This is not surprising, as there is general agreement in the psychological literature that past behaviors are amongst the most promising predictors of future behavior (Andrews & Bonta, 2003).

Proctor (1994) noted that education level was one of the best predictors of poor institutional adjustment in his U.S. sample of 458 male inmates ($r = -.19$; $p<.01$). These findings supported earlier research by Motiuk (1991) and Stephen (1990; cited in Proctor, 1994), and were later replicated by Fernandez and Neiman (1998) with a large sample of over 13,000 male inmates. Accordingly, education is an important treatment target. Indeed, improvements in inmates' education level have proved to reduce recidivism rates (Boe, 1998; Porporino & Robinson, 1992).

Nonetheless, only some of the factors utilized in contemporary classification systems have empirical support. The following are the highlights of a review by Austin (1998):

Factors predictive of prison misconducts:

- Current age
  - Older inmates less involved in misconducts
- Gender
  - Females less involved in misconducts
- History of violence
  - Recent history predictive of continuation

- History of mental illness
  - More likely to be involved in misconducts
- Gang membership
  - Gang members more likely to be involved in misconducts
- Program participation
  - Inmates not involved in or not completed programs more likely to commit misconducts
- Recent disciplinary actions
  - Inmates with recent misconducts are more likely to continue

Factors not predictive:

- Drug and alcohol use
- History of escape
- Sentence length
- Severity of offense
- Time left to serve

For jurisdictions with standardized classification procedures, rates of prison misconducts are higher in maximum security, providing tacit evidence that good classification reduces rates of prison misconducts (at least at lower security levels). An even more robust finding is that behavioral correctional programming reduces prison misconducts (French & Gendreau, 2003). Indeed, they conducted a meta-analysis[3] of 103 effects for 21,000 inmates and found that correctional programs that met EBP criteria resulted in a 26% reduction in prison misconducts. Admittedly, some of the studies had weak methodology and/or program integrity, but these findings have profound implications for prison administrators wishing to have safer institutions. Further, and very encouragingly, such reductions in prison misconducts generalized to lower rates of post-release recidivism. Such findings reinforce the merits of an integrated vision of correctional agencies and how gains in one setting (prison) may yield improvements for partner agencies (re-entry, probation).

> Prison misconducts can be predicted and correctional programming that targets criminal risk factors significantly reduces the rate of prison misconducts *and* recidivism.

Summary

Research on prison classification preceded interest in risk assessment (cf Austin, 1998), although the latter is now a preoccupation of correctional researchers (Rogers, 2000). Risk assessment in particular has been emphasized as being

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[3] Meta-analysis is a method of integrating the quantitative findings from a number of studies, using statistical analysis to detect trends among the results obtained. A substantial number of studies in this meta-analysis involved US inmates.

important in sentencing guidelines, the use of expert testimony for civil commitment and sexual predator cases, as well as in a release decision making context. Both prison classification and risk assessment have shown parallel paths over the past 3 decades (Bonta, 1996). Specifically, initial interest in structured clinical ratings was replaced with the development of statistical scales in the late 1970's and 1980's. These static scales have now been overshadowed with dynamic scales that can reflect changes over time regarding an inmate's risk/need profile (VanVoorhis & Presser, 2001). In this manner, prison classification *is* risk assessment, but the outcome of interest is prison adjustment or escapes, not recidivism. Austin (1998) has described both external and internal classification systems. External prison classification focuses on prison custody levels, prison adjustment, and escapes. Not surprisingly the external system has been most influenced by research in terms of the development of new statistical and dynamic scales that are sensitive to gender and ethnicity (Austin & McGinnis, 2004; Blanchette, 2005; VanVoorhis & Presser, 2001). In contrast, internal systems consider cell allocation and program assignment and typically utilize conventional wisdom to inform decisions. Standardized intake assessment models can be developed, however, that systematically address program assignment. Further, these models meet theoretical requirements and practical considerations (Motiuik, 1997).

An Overview of Prison Classification and Risk Assessment

1. First clinical impressions were used to make decisions.
2. Second, static risk scales were developed reflecting mainly demographic and criminal history.
3. Third, scales that incorporate static and dynamic factors were developed assisting in program referrals and community supervision.

NOTE: With each improvement over time there was a resultant improvement in accuracy.

In addition to its impact on prison misconducts, inmate classification also informs custody placement. For instance, in Canada from 1992 to 1999 when a statistically-weighted custody classification scale was utilized in inmate classification instead of clinical opinion, the number of escapes from federal prison dropped 13.1% to 4.5% while at the same time the number of transfers to minimum security increased from 12.0% to 37.5% (Luciani, 2001). Since the costs for incarcerating an inmate are markedly less at minimum security than higher security, standardized classification systems can both increase public safety and reduce the overall costs of incarceration.

Lastly, it is important for correctional partners not to be confused about inmate classification. Contemporary models, like in risk assessment, use statistical estimates by combining static and dynamic factors. These models are used to

identify criminal risk factors (criminogenic needs) for targeting in structured programming or for enhanced supervision within a risk management approach. Reliance only on static factors severely limits the application of inmate classification in correctional programming. Accordingly, correctional programming is the primary strategy used to manage criminal risk, in both prison and the community.

> Prison classification is a specialized risk assessment (ideally using both static and dynamic factors) where the focus is prison adjustment or escapes _and_ a treatment plan. For risk assessment more generally the focus is on recidivism.

Correctional Programming

Similar to prison classification, correctional programming has witnessed a marked evolution over the past 3 decades. Self-help groups and therapeutic communities are becoming less popular given the improved efficacy of skills-based programs that focus on risk factors for criminality (Taxman et al., 2004). As well, off-the-shelf skills-based programs are becoming increasingly more available for a variety of treatment targets and populations (Multi-Health Systems, 2005; National Institute of Corrections, 2005). From a prison classification perspective, criminal risk information must be incorporated into standardized program assignment decisions.

For the past decade, the most critical factors to be targeted in correctional programs have been described as criminogenic needs. Criminogenic need factors are changeable factors that when changed have an impact on the probability of future criminality. For example antisocial attitudes are a criminogenic need and reductions of this need result in lower rates of re-offending. By definition, then, criminogenic needs are factors that are correlated with recidivism. According to the risk/need model (Andrews & Bonta, 2003) _effective_ correctional programming should restrict programming to _only_ consider criminogenic needs as treatment targets. Put another way, it is inefficient and ineffective to target needs that will not reduce re-offending (i.e., self-esteem) (Andrews & Bonta, 2003).

Criminogenic needs reflected in public domain classification instruments (Offender Intake Assessment, Wisconsin Risk/Need Scale) are:

> ➢ Criminal History
> ➢ Education/Employment skills
> ➢ Financial skills
> ➢ Family/Marital situation
> ➢ Accommodation stability
> ➢ Leisure/Recreation interests
> ➢ Companions (prosocial or antisocial)
> ➢ Alcohol/Drug problem

  ➢ Emotional/Personal regulation
  ➢ Attitude/Orientation (prosocial or antisocial)

Criminal need/risk is related to treatment intensity in that those who are low risk should receive little to no treatment. As risk goes up so should the intensity of treatment such that those who are a high risk for offending should receive a high intensity intervention and aftercare. *How* programming is provided is also important. The responsivity principle states the styles and modes of treatment should be chosen in order to effectively influence treatment goals. For instance, inmates are adult learners and this should be considered when designing and delivering programs. Therefore, effective intervention programs are those that are matched with an inmate's risk, target criminogenic needs, and delivered in a manner that is effective in meeting treatment goals (Andrews & Bonta, 2003; McGuire, 2002; Taxman et al, 2004). Research has demonstrated that programs that follow these principles are much more likely to reduce re-offending, typically in the range of 20-40% (Dowden & Andrews, 2000). Accordingly, this empirically-supported model reflects the "What Works" approach to correctional programming and has been instrumental in shaping correctional programming in a variety of countries throughout the world. Further, the emphasis on evidence rather than ideology has prompted many countries to move from a punishment focus for which there is no empirical support to a human service model (cf. McGuire, 2002).

For prisons, inmate classification must translate into being able to differentially allocate resources and programming according to research evidence. Obviously this assumes a reasonable menu of programs exist within a particular prison or agency. Where there is only a single program available to address treatment needs, the options are greatly reduced. Nonetheless, it is important to avoid referring inmates to the program solely based on availability (e.g., she/he was drinking at the time of the crime but we only have a cognitive change program so she/he must take that program). Recently, there is evidence that the amount of programming is also important if gains are to be realized and maintained (Andrews & Bonta, 2003; Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005).

An additional issue that impacts both inmate classification and programming is that of inmate motivation. Essentially, this is a responsivity factor that influences inmate change (McMurran, 2002). Poorly motivated inmates have poorer program outcomes (higher refusal and dropout rates; poorer participation). Notably, poorly motivated inmates are more likely to be involved in institutional incidents and program dropouts have higher rates of recidivism (Dowden, Blanchette & Serin, 2005). As well, inmates at higher security have lower levels of motivation and more highly motivated inmates have lower rates of recidivism (Serin, 2005). Further, motivation must be addressed in order to avoid wasting valuable resources (i.e., referring inmates with low motivation to challenging programs). This suggests that primers may be an important adjunct to existing programming models (Marshall, Thornton, Marshall, Fernandez, & Mann, 2001).

Recently, preliminary research on a brief behavioral rating of treatment readiness (a broader construct than simply motivation and which includes problem definition, perceived benefits of treatment, and treatment goals) has demonstrated this to be an important predictor in program dropout for different types of offenders (Serin, Kennedy & Mailloux, 2005; Watson & Beech, 2002).

Another aspect of correctional programming that warrants discussion is that of inmate heterogeneity. For instance in the area of substance abuse preliminary research suggests there are inmates with similar addictions difficulties for whom there are different pathways to substance abuse and crime (Serin & Shturman, 2005; Serin, Scott, & Kunic, 2005). One group appears to abuse substances as part of a criminal and hedonistic lifestyle, whereas the other group appears to cope with negative affect (depression, anxiety) through substance abuse. For the first group crime is incidental but for the latter it is causal to substance use. These pathways imply different treatment needs and different aftercare/prognosis. In time such specificity may improve the precision by which we can refer inmates to correctional programs.

> Evidence-based practice is an informed strategy of correctional assessment and programming that attends to inmate risk, need and responsivity in order to manage inmate risk.

Guidelines

In some jurisdictions (i.e., Canada) providing correctional programming to inmates is actually mandated by legislation and described in correctional policy. Clearly the primary goal of correctional programming is to reduce recidivism but there are other benefits for correctional agencies. These include:

- ➢ Population management (impacting the flow of inmates out)
- ➢ Institutional management (reducing rate and seriousness of institutional incidents)
- ➢ Increasing case-based knowledge for risk management (identifying factors for probation staff to monitor)
- ➢ Facilitating re-entry to the community (continuity of care)

Recent reviews (McGuire, 2002) of the correctional literature combining research from multiple studies across many countries have yielded clear guidelines that have been demonstrated to improve correctional outcomes (i.e., reductions in recidivism). Some of these guidelines have been reflected in program review materials and incorporated into program accreditation criteria. Examples of what to do include:

- ➢ Systematic assessments of criminogenic needs and risk using standardized and validated procedures
- ➢ Address program design and implementation issues

➢ Consider staff selection & initial training
➢ Provide clinical supervision
➢ Develop standardized manuals
➢ Monitor service (doing what you say)
➢ Monitor change (is it working)
➢ Provide adequate dosage/ duration/ intensity of programming for risk level of inmates
➢ Consider program intensity, sequencing, and dosage
➢ Monitor change and be dynamic to reflect change during incarceration or supervision
➢ Conduct evaluation to confirm effectiveness
➢ Provide ongoing staff training and professional development

Measurement of program participation is a key aspect of program integrity. Recently some jurisdictions have developed standardized measures of program performance and linked this directly to inmate pay levels. Inmates get a per diem pay level for program involvement and better performance results in higher levels of pay (Correctional Service Canada, 2005). Performance is rated on a 4-point scale (excellent, good, fair, poor) in the following areas:

1. Full and active participation
2. Assignments completed
3. Interpersonal relationships
4. Attitude
5. Behavior
6. Effort
7. Motivation
8. Responsibility
9. Attendance/Punctuality

It is also worth noting here that there are many institutional activities (e.g., education, self-help programs – Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, chaplain services) that provide important support to inmates, but these would fail to meet the criterion of a correctional program as defined above. Moreover, these activities may contribute to better managed prisons but are significantly less likely to reduce prison misconducts or recidivism (French & Gendreau, 2003) than structured correctional programs. For instance, non-behavioral programs and educational/vocational activities have effect sizes of 0.10 and 0.02 respectively in reducing prison misconducts, compared to 0.26 for behavioral programs.

Correctional programming reduces recidivism by rates of 20-40% but it must adhere to strict criteria in order to be effective.

Staff:

Effective prison classification and correctional programming requires good staff (highlighted by rigorous selection, on-going training, and support from within an organization). Indeed, staff is a critical resource (Serin, 2003; Taxman et al, 2004) that can make or break a program. In correctional programs where staff display good communication, limit-setting and empathic skill, these result in improved program retention and greater disclosure about criminal risk factors, the latter which can be used in community supervision (Marshall, Serran, Moulden, Mulloy, Fernandez, Mann & Thornton, 2002). Research on treatment in general has indicated that the working relationship between staff and the client accounts for almost 1/3 of the change that occurs (Lambert, 1992). From this perspective, highly confrontational approaches will <u>not </u>build rapport and will in fact reduce treatment effects (Marshall et al., 2002; Viets, Walker & Miller, 2002). Minimally it is important to consider:

- ➢ Staff beliefs about inmates, change – punitive attitudes will reduce program effectiveness
- ➢ Fundamental skills:
    - o fair but firm
    - o empathic
    - o good interpersonal skills
- ➢ Provide ongoing training & support for staff

Staff characteristics (e.g., empathic and fair) and skills (e.g., verbal, able to set limits, and model appropriate problem-solving behavior) are important components in effective interventions (Marshall, 2005; Marshall & Serran, 2004). Further, strategies that are structured and require reinforced practice work best for inmates rather than non-directional and insight-oriented approaches (McGuire, 2002). Sanctions and punishment generally are not effective for sustained behavior change – either reducing misbehavior or replacing it with more appropriate behavior (McGuire, 2004; Smith, Goggin & Gendreau, 2002;). In the area of violence prevention, staff can learn skills to effectively engage inmates and defuse potentially violent situations through nonphysical intervention (Rice, Harris, Varney, & Quinsey, 1989). Since change is rarely an instantaneous burst of insight, staff must effectively model prosocial attitudes and skills in order to reinforce incremental gains by inmates (Marshall, Serran, Moulden, Mulloy, Fernandez, Mann & Thornton, 2002).

Trained and empathic staff are the cornerstone to effective corrections. Since many staff have extraordinary skills and experience, successful methods must reflect expertise from the ground up as well as the top down. Punitive and confrontational strategies, however, have proved ineffective.

Impact

Thus far the description of Evidence-Based Practice in prisons has highlighted the use of reliable and valid assessments for prison classification and to inform program referrals; the delivery of correctional programs according to "What Works"; and the key role that staff plays in meeting correctional objectives. In combination these strategies lead to the achievement of gains that have important consequences. From a societal perspective, reductions in recidivism translate into fewer victims. From a financial perspective, effective correctional practices mean cost avoidance and cost-savings to the broader criminal justice system (perhaps not to a specific prison, however). Finally, the policy implications are that standardized correctional practices and the demonstration of effectiveness to political overseers meet possible concerns about governance and highlight excellence to the public (and private) sector.

In summary, there is a large body of research that supports specific correctional practices to achieve common correctional goals. For prisons this translates into reduced misconducts, reduced escapes, increased rates of inmates placed at lower security without incident, increased participation in programming, improved community re-entry and transition, and increased rates of release success.

Prison Realities:

This section attempts to address key issues that may impact the implementation of EBP in prison.

1. Organizational Culture and Priorities:

Prisons are hierarchical, with Wardens having considerable authority and accountability. They are tasked with managing diverse inmate populations (sometimes keeping them separated to avoid violent incidents as in the case of incompatibles and gangs); providing essential services such as meals and accommodation; ensuring the security of staff and inmates; and, meeting the numerous policies that are designed to keep prisons running smoothly.

The daily priority is to avoid major problems. Critical to the successful incorporation of evidence-based practice in prisons is the recognition that it needs to work for prisons. Accordingly, they need to identify potential entry points whereby revised or enhanced practices can address existing concerns. For example, improved staff selection and training regarding the principles of EBP could lead to fewer altercations between staff and inmates, which in turn could reduce staff absenteeism due to injury and improve management-union relations (Rice, Harris, Varney & Quinsey, 1989). Also, punitive and confrontational strategies offer short-term solutions to managing difficult

situations but fail to achieve the long-term outcomes of interest, (i.e., reduced misconducts, lower rates of recidivism; French & Gendreau, 2003). Such strategies must be discouraged and replaced with proven, effective methods of conflict resolution.

Organizational readiness is a term used to describe the extent to which an institution/organization is ready to embrace change (Lehman, Greener & Simpson, 2002). This approach recognizes that successful knowledge transfer of research to practice is predicated on the agreement between management and staff on key goals. Identifying sites for which there is common interest to improve correctional practice would seem to be an important prerequisite to getting buy-in and implementing EBP within prisons.

EBP underscores the necessity and benefits of an agency to shift or revise priorities and focus. The path to effective prison management includes all of the following: dynamic assessment, inmate classification, staff training, correctional programming, and community supervision. EBP identifies predictable benefits in support of this shift in focus. For instance, the available evidence suggests that effective correctional programming will reduce prison misconducts by 26% and contribute to safer community re-entry. At a time of increasing fiscal restraints, EBP provides a road map or a proactive method of allocating resources within prisons that yields cost-savings and cost-avoidance as well as improved correctional results. Given that these savings and results occur across the whole criminal justice system, they represent an important management tool of shared responsibility and shared credit.

2. Staff Recruitment and Training:

Staff are the cornerstone to effective corrections. According to demographics, there will considerable demand for new staff as older staff reach retirement age. Their departure will introduce a potential vacuum of expertise and it is important to address this in a proactive manner. Further, the ethnic composition of prisons is changing and recruitment efforts should reflect this diversity in order that staff/inmate interactions are gender and culture sensitive. Such sensitivity enhances interactions, potentially leading to less problematic and less violent exchanges between staff and inmates.

A key component of EBP is to provide staff with the necessary skills to achieve excellence. Moreover, training must reach the front-line staff in order to achieve correctional results. Notably, staff are tasked with the responsibility of translating an organization's vision into action. Further, training will help ensure staff act appropriately because it is consistent with "good corrections", not out of concern for sanctions by management. This means staff and management in a prison must be a team, with a consistent message delivered to inmates and

stakeholders. The intention is that this team will extend to community corrections, as well.

3. Role of Staff:

Unlike community corrections where the principle role is that of parole or probation officer, there are significantly more distinct role restrictions for staff working in prisons. This does not ignore the fact that many parole officers find the "carrot and stick" role challenging (Maruna & LaBel, 2003), but recognizes that staff provide specific functions and rarely move beyond these boundaries. For instance, correctional staff are not often called upon to do formal counseling, although many clearly have exceptional interpersonal skills that contribute to safe institutions. Some countries are trying to increase role diversity by having uniformed staff co-lead correctional programming in prisons, but these are early days in such efforts.

It is unrealistic to believe that *all* staff should receive similar training regarding EBP. Training should be complementary such that *all* staff receive the vision and understand common correctional goals, (i.e., humane and safe prisons; preparation of inmates for safe re-entry; and, communication with correctional partners). Additional training for specific applications and competencies would then be provided for identified groups. Combining groups of staff in the orientation training provides a common purpose and appreciation for the importance of the different staff in meeting the common goals of the agency. Table 1 highlights the importance of staff training in achieving correctional results.

Table 1. The potential impact of specific staff issues for different correctional results.

Correctional Results	Staff Issue
Institutional misconducts & incidents	Staff selection; Staff training; Professional Development; EAP. CISM; Mediation; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Leadership & mentoring; Correctional practices.
Escapes, breaches	Staff training; Professional Development; Staff skills; Correctional practices.
Re-admissions & recidivism	Staff training; Professional Development; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices.
Program completion	Staff selection; Staff training; Professional Development; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices; Leadership & mentoring.
Case preparation	Staff selection; Staff training; Professional Development; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices; Leadership & mentoring.
Parole grant rate	Staff selection; Staff training; Professional Development; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices.
Compliance with supervision	Staff selection; Staff training; Professional Development; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices.
Staff sick leave & turnover	Staff selection; Staff training; Profession Development; EAP. CISM; Mediation; Staff characteristics & values; Staff skills; Correctional practices; Leadership & mentoring.

4. Additional Considerations:

Gangs are an inevitability of institutions. It is likely that EBP initially has little to offer to specifically address concerns about gang activity. Nonetheless, it potentially provides a useful new approach to consider. For instance, principles of EBP could be applied to managing inmates' institutional behavior and establishing expectations about inmate competencies. These expectations could be used in conjunction with prison classification strategies to set limits for misbehavior and provide supportive environments for inmates who meet these expectations. Appendix B provides examples of an inmate competency behavioral rating strategy. Essentially, this strategy outlines expectations regarding inmates' interactions with staff and other inmates, following rules, motivation to follow a treatment plan, behavioral consistency, acceptance of

responsibility, gang affiliation, predatory behavior, and substance use. Criterion scoring could be established to differentiate among inmates and to inform cell placements within a prison.

As noted in the competency index, drugs, threats and extortion are important issues that prisons have to address. At this point, EBP likely has little specific to offer in addressing these activities, although these appear to be a system of illicit rewards that contribute to the inmate hierarchy. Disrupting the reward system could lead to possible changes within the inmate subculture power structure.

Finally, there is some evidence that Bureau of Prison data can be used to create a "threat index" that might reduce gang violence and other forms of prison misconducts (Gaes, Wallace, Gilman, Klein-Saffran, & Suppa, 2002). That is, using data from a centralized database, researchers were able to demonstrate that gang affiliation increases likelihood of prison violence even after controlling for known predictors of prison violence (e.g., youth of perpetrators, prior violence). Gang affiliation was also related to type of violence, with core gang members being more likely to be involved in violent misconducts than peripheral gang members, who were more likely to be involved in violent misconducts than unaffiliated peers.

5. Excellence in Prison Practice:

Prisons have much to be proud about in terms of correctional practice. Notably, there is evidence of exceptional correctional practices in terms of prison classification and correctional programming. Knowledge transfer of EBP in prisons would increase if agencies utilize *both* static and dynamic risk factors to distinguish among inmates' security needs *and* incorporate statistical estimates of criminal risk and escape potential. These factors should also be used to determine inmates' programming needs while incarcerated and upon release to the community. Central to the integration of prison and community corrections is that programming is seen as a continuum. In this manner, programming initiated in prisons can be extended and/or supported upon release. In some cases, programming in the community may be an appropriate model, but each case must be judiciously assessed. As well, this continuum of programming necessarily implies a common program model and similar if not complementary assessment strategies for prisons and community corrections. EBP indicates that similar assessment and programming strategies are effective in both prisons and community corrections so it is both inefficient and ineffective to have different correctional approaches simply based on convenience. For example, an inmate who was responding well to a skills-based addictions program in prison could find an Alcoholics Anonymous program in the community to be insufficient in maintaining sobriety and hence remaining crime-free.

6. Implications for Correctional Practice:

Objective inmate assessment and classification are the cornerstones to good correctional decision-making. Nonetheless, it is critical to balance measurement with practicality in order to get buy-in from prison administrators. Too much time invested in measurement (i.e., cumbersome or lengthy scales) or too little evidence that EBP can yield improvements for prison staff and administrators will impede implementation efforts and consistency. Both are necessary for successful knowledge transfer of EBP.

More often than not, improvements in correctional practice can be realized simply be using existing inmate information, measured more systematically and aggregated through automation. Such automation permits the profiling of changes in the inmate population and linking this to classification and programming models over time. In this manner resources are maximized rather than wasted (i.e., it makes no sense to develop a particular program if the trends suggest other programs are more required based on inmate numbers).

7. Anticipated Goals & Outcomes:

An important aspect of knowledge transfer of EBP is that the goals and outcomes must be specific to prisons. Accordingly, institutional incidents, escapes, gang affiliation, over-classification or under-classification to security level, and noncompliance with programs are all important areas to address. Inmate competencies, prison classification, and correctional programming are all potential components that can address these issues and make prisons safer.

Goals and outcomes must address real prison concerns. For prison staff this means the living and working environment in prisons must improve through the implementation of EBP. Reductions in recidivism by inmates released tomorrow will have little salience for prison staff if there are not obvious gains in the quality of prison life. Also, for administrators, EBP must assist in the effective and efficient allocation of financial and human resources in the management of their prisons (i.e., provide a defensible rationale). In this manner, they can feel in greater control of decisions and part of a broader correctional mandate. Administrators, prison staff, and inmates are all interconnected in making improvements to the prison environment.

8. Integration with Community Corrections:

Preparing inmates for safe re-entry to the community is an important expectation for prisons. Further, the number of inmates returning to the community is significant and aftercare improves successful re-entry. Therefore, integration is an issue for both prisons and community corrections. Such integration between prisons and community corrections (i.e., through the development of regional

working groups) will ensure the sharing of best practices and focusing on mutual and unique challenges for improved correctional outcomes.

Figure 1

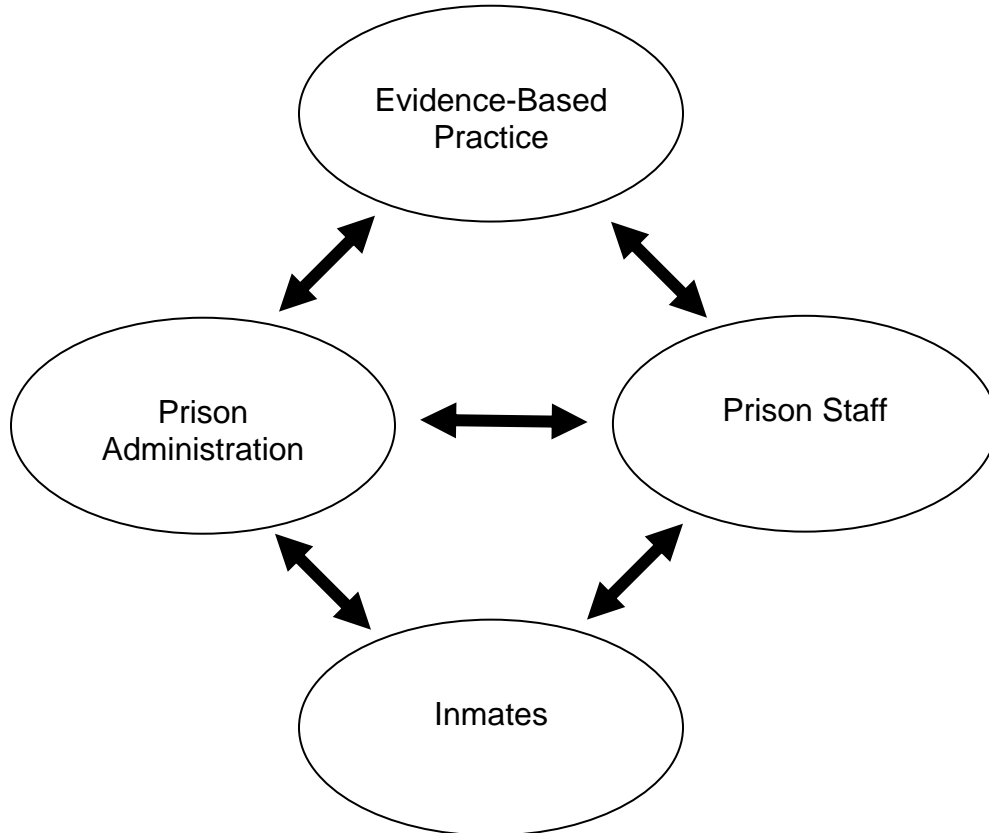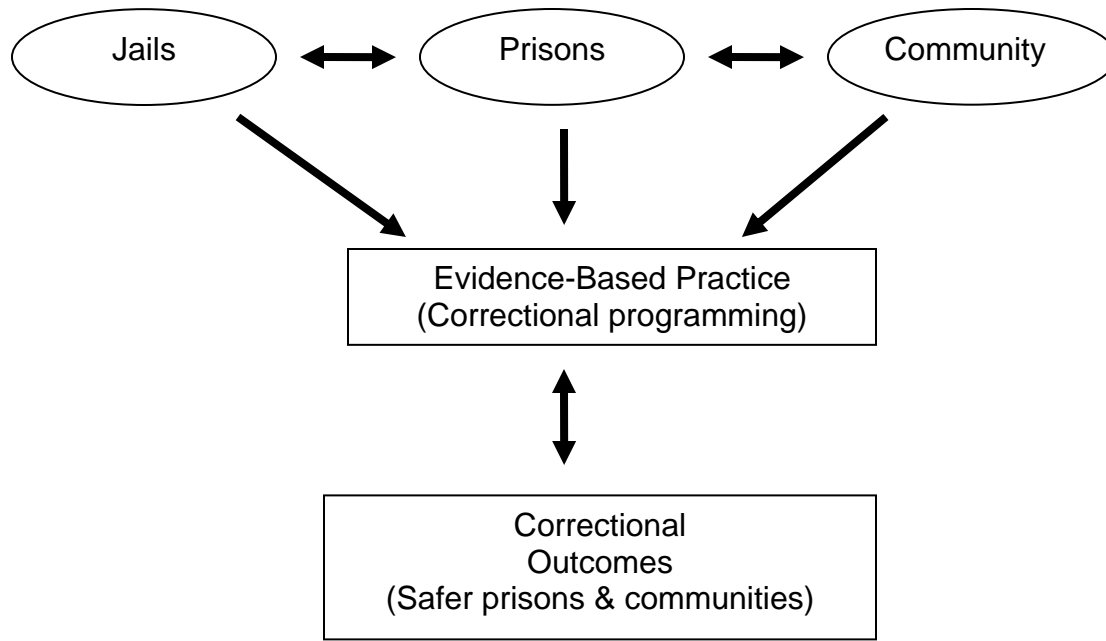**Integration of Evidence-Based Practice in Prisons to Achieve Correctional Results**

Figure 2

Continuum of Correctional Services

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   ┌─────────┐        ┌─────────┐        ┌───────────┐
   │  Jails  │ ◄────► │ Prisons │ ◄────► │ Community │
   └─────────┘        └─────────┘        └───────────┘
         │                 │                   │
         ▼                 ▼                   ▼
        ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │      Evidence-Based Practice            │
        │      (Correctional programming)         │
        └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                          ▲
                          │
                          ▼
        ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │             Correctional                │
        │              Outcomes                   │
        │      (Safer prisons & communities)      │
        └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
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9. Corporate Accountability

Increasingly, governance models focus on quality assurance and good correctional practice. Much is known about what not to do, (i.e., punitive and confrontational intervention; targeting non-criminogenic needs; not matching intervention to risk/need assessments; failure to provide staff training; poor staff selection; low program integrity; purchasing assessment or treatment services without adequate oversight). Increasingly Wardens could be held accountable to explain why the principles of effective corrections were not followed in the event of negative events (misconducts, riots, sensational community failures upon release).

Similar to other countries (Canada, UK, New Zealand), the government interest in accountability could evolve such that performance evaluations of Senior Executives' (i.e., Warden and Probation Supervisor) could be linked to their understanding and utilization of EBP regarding their use of staff training, their assessment approaches and classification procedures, and their programming models. This paper is intended to initiate discussions about how EBP might champion best practices and transform prison corrections.

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Appendix A

Eight Evidence-Based Principles for Effective Practice: Linking to Prison-Based Corrections

Note: An important aspect of EBP is its recognition that staff are the cornerstone for effective practice. Skilled staff using procedures and methods supported by research will yield effective correctional results. EBP is therefore a framework to follow in order to achieve excellence and relies on all staff contributing towards a common goal. All staff are connected and an important link in the process of achieving the goals of public safety and effective correctional practice.

1. Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs.

   ➢ Prison-based corrections have a long history effective risk assessment in the development of objective inmate classification approaches (Austin, 1998). These classification approaches are used to assign inmates to appropriate levels of prison security and placement within a prison according to predictors of prison adjustment and escape. Increasingly these approaches consider both static and dynamic criminal risk factors.

2. Enhance Intrinsic Motivation.

   ➢ Inmates vary in terms of level of motivation (e.g., more inmates at maximum security are rated as low in motivation).

   ➢ Motivation is related to institutional misconducts and post-release recidivism. Hence, it is an important factor to consider for incarcerated inmates and those under community supervision.

3. Target Interventions.

   ➢ Inmate classification is used to develop structured correctional plans in terms of security placement and program requirements.

a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk inmates.

   ➢ Higher risk inmates require higher intensity correctional programs.

b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.

   ➢ In order to be effective, correctional programs must target factors that are related to risk of criminal behavior. Importantly, they will be more effective if they are structured, cognitive-behavioral, and skills-based. This means such approaches like Alcoholics Anonymous do *not* meet the criteria for

evidence-based practice. They may be appropriate *activities* for inmates, but they are not correctional programs.

c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender when assigning programs.

> ➢ Correctional programming, like learning, must be matched to the needs and style of the inmate in order to maximize effectiveness. Young, impulsive, resistant inmates require different intervention strategies than older, more insightful and motivated inmates. Further, programming must be sensitive to culture and gender.

d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70% of high-risk inmates' time for 3-9 months.

> ➢ Program intensity should vary according to the prison security level, with higher risk inmates requiring higher intensity programming. Further, programming needs to be structured, be of sufficient duration (based on risk/need level) and provided sufficiently frequently for skills to be developed.

e. *Treatment*: Integrate treatment into the full sentence/sanction requirements.

> ➢ Correctional programming should be provided throughout an inmate's sentence *and* aftercare is important to maintain treatment gains. In fact, correctional programming completed within an institution *must* be integrated into a community re-entry plan. Such integration requires close communication between prison and community correctional partners.

> ➢ Programming is the single method that correctional agencies have to reduce risk of recidivism. It is therefore essential that programming form an integral component of inmate activity in prisons. In some jurisdictions (e.g., Correctional Service of Canada) inmate pay is directly linked to program participation. Inmates receive appropriate pay levels for participating in programs as outlined in their correctional plan.

4. Skill Train with Directed Practice (use Cognitive Behavioral treatment methods).

> ➢ Effective correctional programs require inmates to increase skills, not vocabulary. Practice is required to improve skills and this process is incremental and requires staff oversight.

> ➢ Some preliminary work has been initiated to identify inmate competencies that are important in positive institutional adjustment and program completion.

5. Increase Positive Reinforcement.

> The evidence is that behavior change is enhanced if rewards are applied to reinforce positive behavior and that they outnumber punishers. As well, punishment must be applied consistently and quickly in order to be effective, often problematic in corrections. Change is an internal process that benefits from modeling and reward.

6. Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities.

> In addition to evidence that community aftercare is important to maintain treatment gains, prisons are also communities. Accordingly, staff require support from management and each other in order to address the negative influence of antisocial attitudes and behavior inherent in prisons.

7. Measure Relevant Processes/Practices.

> Like the military, corrections are a family, with staff facing inordinate challenges and often looking towards each other for support against inmates. Perhaps because of this, they are reluctant about changes in procedures and roles.

> Accordingly, staff must be reassured that change will meet their needs in addition to the needs of inmates and management. One important strategy is to identify goals that impact the quality of prison life and measurable correctional outcomes (e.g., changes in objective inmate classification to reduce institutional misconducts and assaults against staff/inmates; using self-help activities such as Alcoholics Anonymous to keep inmates active and prepare them for involvement in more structured substance abuse correctional programming).

8. Provide Measurement Feedback.

> Staff need to know that their efforts are appreciated and that such efforts improve the safety and quality of interactions within prisons.

> Measurement that identifies effective practices needs to be directly linked to allocation of resources. With the reality of diminishing and limited resources, there must be a rationale for keeping certain programs/procedures and ending others. Objective measurement of improved correctional outcomes should be the standard for such decisions.

Appendix B

<u>Measuring Inmate Competencies</u> (Serin, 2005)

Where possible, ratings should involve consensus among the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) members. Also, while the competencies apply to all security levels, specific benchmarks regarding acceptable behavior may vary by security levels. Further, security information including disciplinary charges provides an important source for the MDT to consider.

1. Ability to interact with other inmates

2	Easily interacts with other inmates, mingles with others, is sociable, and gets along with others. Is neither overly aggressive nor withdrawn.
1	Generally gets along with most other inmates. Have some minor conflicts with some inmates.
0	Generally doesn't get along with other inmates. Have major conflicts, including assaults or threats.

2. Ability to follow rules

2	Readily follows rules and guidelines without complaining to staff or other inmates. Doesn't need to be reminded of expectations.
1	Generally follows rules but sometimes complains to staff or other inmates. Occasionally needs to be reminded of expectations.
0	Generally doesn't follow rules. Confrontation towards staff regarding the rules and expectations / incites in group setting.

3. Respectful of staff

2	Consistently respectful of <u>all</u> staff (work, programs, security, case management, administrative) in terms of verbal interactions and behavior.
1	Generally respectful of staff (work, programs, security, case management, administrative) in terms of verbal interactions <u>or</u> behavior.
0	Generally disrespectful of staff in terms of verbal interactions and behavior (demanding, demeaning, rude, excessive use of profanity, invades personal space).

4. Respectful of other inmates

2	Consistently respectful of <u>all</u> inmates in <u>all</u> areas of institution (work, programs, recreation, on range or unit) in terms of verbal interactions <u>and</u> behavior.
1	Generally respectful of inmates in <u>most</u> areas of institution (work, programs, recreation, on range or unit) in terms of verbal interactions <u>or</u> behavior.
0	Generally disrespectful of inmates in terms of verbal interactions and behavior (demanding, demeaning, manipulative, invades personal space).

5. Engagement in Correctional Plan

a)   Stated motivation

2	Inmate is self-motivated, accepts overall Correctional Plan, states he/she wants to follow plan.
1	Inmate may not fully accept overall assessment and is ambivalent about participating in Correctional Plan.
0	Inmate strongly rejects the need for change / is unwilling to participate in recommended programs or other interventions.

b)   Consistency

2	Inmate states motivation to follow plan and demonstrates behavior consistent with this (attends group, is not late for work placement, completes homework, is respectful to staff and other inmates).
1	Inmate states motivation to follow plan, but demonstrates behavior somewhat inconsistent with this (skips some group or work-days, is sometimes late for work placement, fails to complete homework, is sometimes disrespectful to staff and other inmates).
0	Inmate states motivation to follow plan, but demonstrates behavior completely inconsistent with this (skips most group or work-days resulting in being fired from job or expelled from group, is frequently late for work placement, doesn't complete homework, is often disrespectful to staff and other inmates).

c)   Acceptance of responsibility

2	Inmate fully accepts his responsibility for his criminal behavior and his/her need to make changes for successful reintegration.
1	Inmate accepts some responsibility but minimizes and/or rationalizes.
0	Inmate rejects any responsibility, blaming others and circumstances.

6. Gang affiliation

2	Inmate rejects involvement with gangs and can associate with inmates regardless of gang membership.
1	Inmate maintains some gang affiliation through association, but is not actively wearing colors or recruiting others to join.
0	Inmate actively demonstrates gang membership in terms of clothing and associations. Involved in criminal gang activity.

7. Predatory behavior

2	Inmate is not manipulative, nor exploitative of other inmates or staff. Not interested in using others for own interests.
1	Inmate maintains some criminal values and attitudes (e.g., only the strong survive) but does not overtly prey on others for his/her own gain.
0	Inmate extorts or manipulates others for personal gain (canteen, money, favors) with either little concern for their needs or a sense of entitlement.

8. Substance abuse

2	Regardless of whether this has been a problem in the past, inmate is uninvolved in illicit substance use and is willing to submit to voluntary urinalysis.
1	Inmate generally remains free of substance use. Infrequent positive urinalysis. Refuses to submit to random urinalysis.
0	Inmate frequently tests positive for substance use. Reportedly active in drug subculture. Refuses to submit to reasonable grounds urinalysis

Monthly Competency Ratings

Using the prior review as a benchmark, the purpose of the monthly review is to determine the extent to which the inmate's overall behavior has improved, remained the same, or deteriorated.

This can be accomplished through a review of each competency or a global assessment.

Change

	Overall Rating	Behavioral Examples
-	Deterioration (since last review)	
0	No Change (since last review)	
+	Improvement (since last review)	

Applying Ratings

There are several options to consider. One is to identify certain key competencies that must be met to warrant placement in a particular cell location. A related option is to require all inmates in a preferred range to have no zero ratings. Yet another is to have a global rating (I feel this has the potential of self-fulfilling prophecy and loses the richness of having 8 competencies). Yet another is to set up a preliminary scoring model. This is described below. The competencies are scored and then applied to a decision grid.