A Comprehensive and Ongoing Approach to Offender Assessment and Case Management

Reentry in the State of Connecticut: Partners in Progress
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Offender Assessment and Case Management: Making Reentry Work
National and Statewide Perspectives

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Enormous Change and Progress in the Field...

• Clear goals around recidivism reduction
• Understanding of the importance of collaboration
• Principles of evidence-based practice
• Programs guided by research evidence
• Continuous, seamless process of planning and managing
• Bringing non-correctional partners to the table
• National initiatives of various kinds
The Challenge!

New Goals, Knowledge, Concepts, & Multiple Tools → Strategic Practice

Many Ways...

- State level policy and implementation teams
- New assessment protocols
- Refocusing programming within institutions
- New partnerships at the county level
- New program resources

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Many Ways...

One of them is to........

Reshape how we supervise and manage at the

CASE LEVEL

In the Past (Nationally), These Efforts...

• Have focused more on monitoring that engaging the offender…
• Have not looked to the evidence to guide practice…
• Have happened in “silos”…
• Have not been well-supported with the necessary interventions, resources, skills needed.
Assessments in the Past...

- Single points in time, unrelated
- Geared to targeting custody/control/supervision
- Largely static, unchanging factors
- “Put in the file”

Now, the Field Understands the Importance of...

- Periodic assessments shared across time and across boundaries
- Empirically-based, validated assessments of risk and need
- Dynamic factors
- Used to target BOTH security/custody/supervision AND programmatic interventions to reduce risk
Case Management and Supervision

• In the past, strategies focused on:
  – “levels”—how much attention?
  – Compliance with standard conditions
  – Compliance with special conditions
  – Identifying non-compliance
  – Returning offenders not in compliance to the court

Now, We Are Seeing...

• Not just how much attention, but what kind?
• Focus upon specific, assessed criminogenic need
• Attention to equipping the offender to be successful
• Using the lessons of evidence-based practice to shape our responses
• Using conditions to target risk/needs and be part of a case plan
Correctional Staff

• Working in collaboration with other case management team members
• Modeling and reinforcement of pro-social behavior as a way to encourage change
• Using “effective use of authority—firm but fair”
• Receiving skill-based training

The Offender

• Past approaches
  – Directed to comply with conditions
  – Object of surveillance
• Now…
  – Offenders as active participants in risk reduction efforts
  – Internal motivation is key
  – Engaged in “self-assessment”
  – Engaged with correctional staff in a “process of change”
New Approach Integrates...

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WHY?

Community Safety and Crime Prevention.

It seeks this goal through enhancing the ability of offenders to successfully complete supervision without re-offending.
Core Principles of New Approaches

• Evidence-based practice
• Single plan targeted by risk and criminogenic needs
• Engages and enhances motivation of the offender
• Multi-disciplinary, collaborative, supervision and case management teams
  – Offender
  – Corrections staff
  – Community partners/service providers
  – Informal networks of support

What So We Do?

• Assess the offender’s risk, needs, strengths, environment periodically and share
• Engage the offender and enhance motivation
• Model and reinforce pro-social behavior
• Develop and implement a case management plan
• Provide programmatic interventions to address highest areas of risk and criminogenic need
• Review progress periodically
One Size Doesn’t Fit All

- Target by risk and need
- Do less with low risk offenders
- Do more with mid-to high risk offenders
- Focus on needs that are driving the risk
- Pay attention to learning styles of offenders
- Do “enough”—dosage

Do It Together—Collaborate!

- Phase I: Institutional Phase
- Phase II: Pre-Release/Release Phase
- Phase III: Community
Required Supports and Tools

- Assessment protocols
- Case plan format(s)
- Interagency agreements/partnerships that provide access to case team partners and resources
- Clear position descriptions
- Performance appraisal system
- Policies and procedures
- Access to interventions
- Skill sets—interpersonal communication, assessment and case planning, motivational interviewing
- Case management tools that enable collaboration at the case level across traditional boundaries

Looking Ahead...

- We are in a time of great change…building on our experience and emerging new knowledge
- Opportunities for successful reentry and community safety are greater than ever before
  - Tools, knowledge, and consensus
- It is a “work in progress” nationally
- Connecticut has taken key steps in moving in this direction…