

IACFP Bulletin

RESEARCH
PRACTICE
POLICY



from The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology

MAR / APR 2024

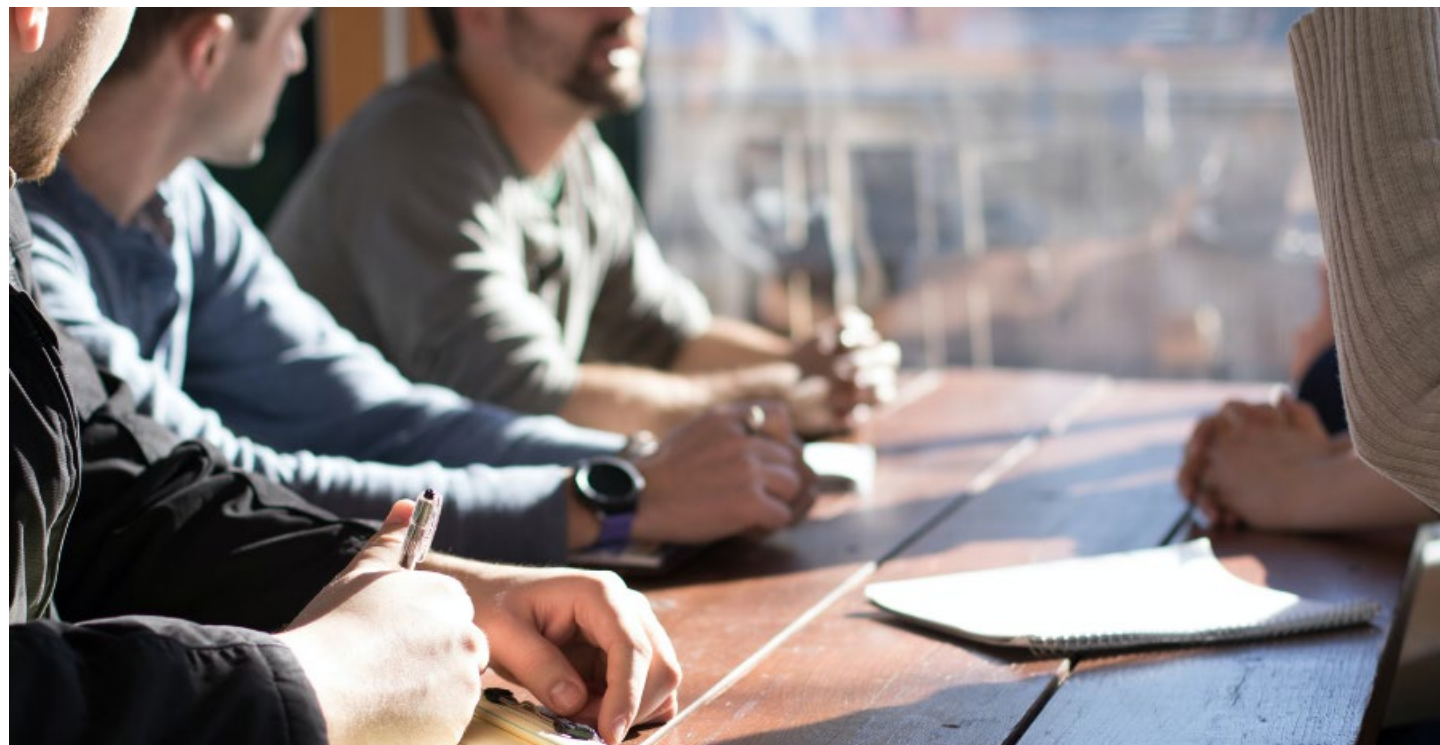


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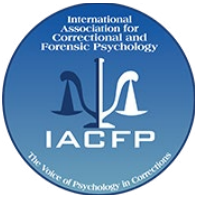
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WHO WE ARE

The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP)



The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP) is an organization of behavioral scientists and practitioners who are concerned with the delivery of high-quality mental health services to justice-involved individuals, and with promoting and disseminating research on the etiology, prevention, assessment, and treatment of criminal behavior.

IACFP members are not all psychologists and are not all active in the practice of forensic evaluations or correctional mental health. However, they typically have advanced degrees in behavioral sciences and engage in the administration, practice, teaching or research relating to incarcerated populations and those under community supervision. We have been promoting evidence-based and practitioner-informed practices and research to support correctional and forensic psychologists and other helping professionals who work with justice-involved individuals since 1954. Our goals are to:

- Promote the development of psychological practice in criminal justice and law enforcement settings.
- Contribute toward appropriate teaching of the psychology of crime, delinquency and criminal justice.
- Support the development and application of effective treatment approaches for individuals in the care of the criminal justice system.
- Stimulate research into the nature of criminal behavior, to exchange such scientific information, and to publish the reports of scholarly studies of criminal behavior.
- Concern ourselves with relevant public, professional and institutional issues which affect or are affected by the practice of psychology in the criminal justice system.

Our current areas of focus for funded projects are:

- Professional development
- International practice and an international leadership network, and
- Community corrections.

We are now accepting submissions.

The *IACFP Bulletin* has six issues per year, and is now accepting submissions. To inquire how to submit, please email executivedirectoriacfp@gmail.com with your proposed article topic.

Summary: Key Issues for Mental Health in Corrections

BILAL DARDAI / APR 2024

In a recent study that builds upon several prior studies, researchers Ryan Coulling, Matthew S. Johnston, and Rosemary Ricciardelli examine the myriad factors that affect the mental health and well-being of workers in the Canadian correctional system. The new study — published in the January 22, 2024 issue of *Frontiers in Psychology* — takes a qualitative approach to analyzing mental health in corrections by focusing on the comments that participants wrote in response to an open-ended question at the end of a comprehensive mental health survey. Through this data, the researchers identified several themes that provide a more thorough picture of the challenges in correctional work.

Background and Research Purposes

A number of studies have already illustrated that the particular stresses of working in correctional facilities can lead to serious mental health issues. Research has identified each of the below as incidents that staff may be exposed to as part of routine operational duties, all of which can be categorized as potentially psychologically traumatic events (PPTe):

- Assault of correctional staff
- Verbal aggression against correctional staff
- Witnessing violence between prisoners
- Witnessing prisoner self-harm, including suicidal behaviors or actions

(Sources: McKendy et al., 2021; Boudoukha et al., 2011; Viotti, 2016; Barry, 2017; Walker et al., 2017; Lerman et al., 2022)

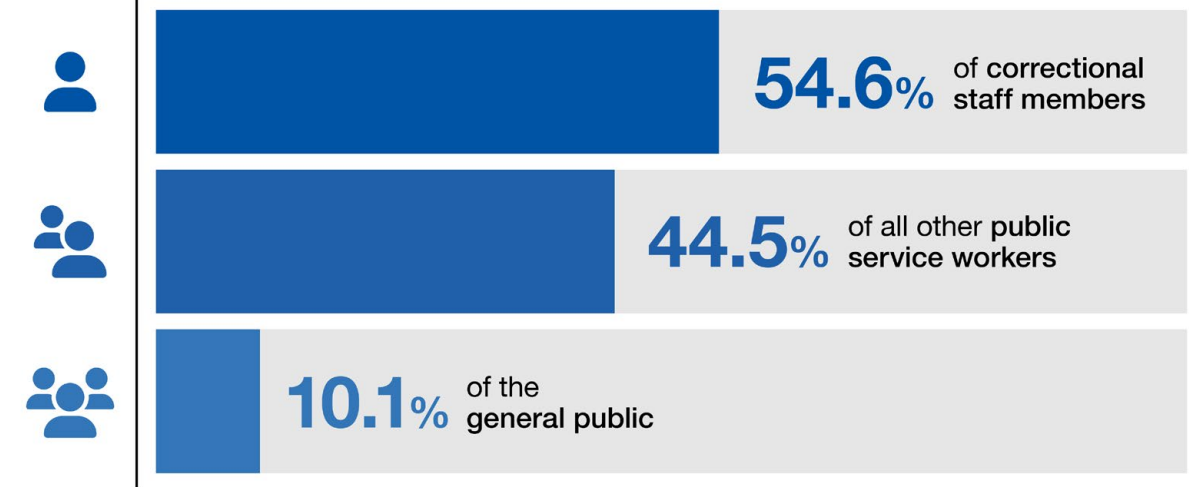
In addition to operational factors, studies also identified organizational stressors such as conflict between management and coworkers, and those involving employment conditions. These stressors included:

- Verbal assault (harassment, bullying, discrimination)
- Physical assault
- Insufficient or absent managerial response to staff concerns
- Workload / shift conditions
- Labor shortages
- Contractual employment
- Wages and benefits

(Sources: McKendy et al., 2021; McKendy and Ricciardelli, 2022; Triplett et al., 1996; Keinan and Malach-Pines, 2007; Swenson et al., 2008; Morse et al., 2011; Brower, 2013; Ricciardelli et al., 2020.)

Additional research (Carleton et al., 2018, 2022; Ricciardelli et al., 2018) indicated that well over half of correctional workers — 54.6% — presented signs of experiencing mental health disorders, which was a much higher prevalence than was found in other public safety workers (44.5%) or from government studies (Government of Canada, 2020) of the overall Canadian population (10.1%). Another study (Regahr, et al., 2019) observed that correctional workers specifically suffered from high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), major depressive disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder. Research on a group of Ontario-based correctional workers (Carleton, et al., 2020) also identified panic disorder and alcohol use disorder as potential

Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders in Canada



conditions caused by the requirements of prison work. A more recent study (Ricciardelli, 2023a) noted that cuts in funding and reduction of rehabilitation programs across the prison system were also contributing to the occurrence of PPTe as the unsupported infrastructure led to more hazardous conditions.

The purposes of this new study were to determine what aspects of correctional work were considered the most important to staff members in terms of assessing and improving the conditions causing such widespread mental health concerns.

“It is important to acknowledge how each type of stressor may lead to different mental health concerns...physical violence and injury — operational stressors — were most strongly associated with PTSD, while low support and job satisfaction, and a lack of appreciation — organizational stressors — were more apt to lead to symptoms of depression and anxiety.”

Methodology

Between 2018 and 2020, the research team administered an anonymous, confidential survey — based in part on the Correctional Worker Mental Health and Well-being Study — to 1,999 correctional workers across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Yukon Territory. Respondents held a wide range of roles within the correctional system, including:

- Correctional and probation officers
- Program officers
- Nurses, rehabilitative, and other healthcare staff
- Administrative staff
- Managers
- Teachers

Distribution and recruitment for the survey was assisted by labor unions and government representatives, and research ethics boards at two independent universities provided ethics approval to move forward with the study.

Additionally, the researchers provided protocols in the event that any participant was experiencing an urgent mental health crisis.

The survey was designed to be completed at the respondent's convenience — the link was received via email, could be completed on either work hours or free time, and allowed the respondent to stop, save their progress, and continue later. It was determined that participants' average completion time for the survey was 25-40 minutes.

Although the individual survey questions provided meaningful data, the key information being collected came from an optional item at the end of the questionnaire. Participants were provided with an open text field, and prompted: "If you have any additional information you would like to provide or additional feedback, please feel free to do so below." Approximately 9.6% of those who finished the survey (192 participants) provided this feedback, which was then organized, categorized, and coded using QSR NVivo software.

Findings and Interpretations

The researchers found that when given the freedom to offer unstructured responses, they often took the opportunity to describe the physical and psychological toll of the work, coming from both operational and organizational sources. Themes that emerged included:

- Stigma against acknowledgment of mental health concerns
- Lack of supportive relationships with management and other leadership
- Stress related to employment policies on time off
- Inadequate treatment for mental health issues
- Suggestions for improving the work environment

The lingering effects of PPTe were discussed in 18.75% of survey responses. One excerpted response from

a Saskatchewan correctional officer observed that: "Corrections is hard on the body and mind, it can wreck your only support systems through lack of time, energy, and understanding."

Approximately 10% of respondents discussed a workplace culture that discouraged any discussion of mental health issues across all levels of administration, including frontline work and management. One correctional officer from Newfoundland and Labrador stated: "There are numerous Correctional Officers with mental health issues in our workplace. Some/most are too proud to ask for help. This is fear of what your co-workers will say about you, including management." Others expressed that they needed to see change throughout the Canadian mental health system in terms of mental health frameworks, and that the stigma surrounding discussion of these issues could be dispelled by leadership.

"If correctional work is no longer to be 'a job that honestly takes your soul with it'...then it is necessary to rethink how correctional workers can live and work with their PPTe and related mental health concerns."

However, a significant number of respondents — nearly 32% — identified management issues and dysfunctional relationships within their organizational hierarchy as another major cause of stress. Managers were alleged to be unsupportive, and behaving as though mental health concerns were a personal issue rather than an institutional problem to be solved. As one Manitoba probation officer bluntly pointed out: "Senior management at our corrections facility have been quoted as saying 'It's not our problem' regarding staff suicide AND staff mental health." Bullying behavior was also specifically mentioned by 5% of respondents, with 80% of them saying that the behavior was being directed towards them by supervisors.

"There is a need to support all correctional workers in recognizing their mental health needs, which is essential to create a space where all correctional workers are open to treatment, intervention, and support."

Management was also mentioned as a hurdle when it came to concerns about time off policies — approximately 29% of respondents had specific criticisms about how these were implemented in their facilities. A teacher from Manitoba described a workplace in which management was often "investigating" the use of sick time to ensure it was not being abused. They added in their survey response: "Corrections is not supportive of Mental Health concerns. The Attendance management policy is very anti Mental Health. The whole policy causes added anxiety and stress to any mental health concerns."

Treatment options were brought up in 16.67% of responses, although in several instances the respondents had concerns about the quality of treatment available and the financial burdens placed upon them to receive it. One correctional officer from Saskatchewan stated that "the PTSD treatment that I received for 8 months was not helpful and mostly outdated," while another correctional officer from Manitoba felt that "the department needs access to psychologists who are trained to deal with PTSD and workplace trauma." Other responses discussed the possibilities of better training for peer support and the overall need to evolve the workplace culture of correctional facilities.

Conclusions

The results of this new study appear to validate and support previous research on the subject of mental health for corrections workers. The findings were consistent across an array of regions and facilities, and that the feedback provided also aligned with prior research

focused on one Canadian province as well as research that employed more structured and targeted questions. The research team feels that their work illustrates the ongoing need to provide greater organizational support to correctional workers, as well as shift the culture towards open acknowledgment of mental health and the stress factors of corrections work. By doing so, there will be opportunities to lower the prevalence of mental health disorders within correctional staff.

Source

["We must be mentally strong": exploring barriers to mental health in correctional services \(Frontiers in Psychology, Jan 22, 2024\) Ryan Coulling, Matthew S. Johnston, and Rosemary Ricciardelli \[https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1258944/full\]](https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1258944/full)

Summary: Approaches to Effective Correctional Rehabilitation

BILAL DARDAI / APR 2024

A new study of correctional rehabilitation programs conducted by Susan Dewey, Brittany VandeBerg, and Susan Roberts — published in Vol. 104 (2) of *The Prison Journal* earlier this year — provides a distillation of three methods for delivering those services: holistic, pragmatic, and community oriented. Based on observations and interviews with hundreds of non-uniform correctional professionals working in eight different prison systems in the United States, the researchers manage to draw detailed outlines of each strategy, as well as identify both the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Background and Research Purposes

Non-uniformed staff fulfill several different roles outside of the responsibilities of correctional officers, each of which contribute to the routines and social climate of a correctional facility. These roles include:

- Administrators
- Mental health counselors
- Teachers
- Group facilitators
- Vocational instructors

The various activities they oversee — which include education, reentry preparedness, and family-connection work — help cultivate a prison environment conducive to rehabilitation that subsequently reduces the risk of recidivism when incarcerated individuals complete their sentences. By engaging with prior academic literature and gathering perspectives from these personnel, the

researchers sought to understand the frameworks that constituted a successful rehabilitation program, as well as the obstacles that each framework might face in their particular facilities.

Methodology

To conduct their study, the researchers contacted the administrators of 12 state prisons from different American geographical regions, looking to gather a diverse array of experiences. Eight of those prisons agreed to participate in the study, and for purposes of specific anonymity, the researchers characterized them by region as follows:

- Appalachia
- Deep South
- Great Lakes
- Great Plains
- Midwest
- North-Central
- Urban East Coast
- West

These eight prisons represented not only different regions, with particular cultural differences in the surrounding communities, but also different facility sizes.

To collect the data needed for the study, lead researcher Susan Dewey spent an average of ten days at each prison. Each visit included interviews with correctional staff responsible for overseeing rehabilitation services, as well as separate interviews and observation of

“Positive prison social climate is inherently therapeutic in orientation because it requires supportive communication and the belief that incarcerated people can change their lives for the better and avoid recidivism post-release (Bennett & Shuker, 2018).”

rehabilitation participants. The interview questions themselves were designed by Dewey and researcher Susan Roberts, prompting responses on five larger themes:

- Successes (questions regarding program achievements)
- Instruction (questions regarding educational delivery methods and processes)
- Student profiles (questions regarding the backgrounds of prisoners within the program)
- Student motivation (questions regarding incentives to succeed in the program and impacts of individual characteristics for each student)
- Collaboration (questions regarding relationships with other agencies)

On average, Dewey interviewed 30-50 staff members at each prison, with 5-15 of these staff members being senior staff. Conversations ranged from short, informative interactions to phone calls that lasted multiple hours at a time.

Findings and Interpretations

Based upon these hundreds of interviews, the researchers identified three distinct approaches towards providing rehabilitative services in prison.

The Holistic Approach

This approach “serves all incarcerated people, irrespective of sentence length, and argues that rehabilitative services should encompass the totality of an incarcerated person’s needs through team-based efforts by security, mental health, education, and case management staff.” Family support services and mental health treatment are emphasized within this system as a means of reducing the likelihood of recidivism. One well-known example of this approach is the Norwegian “import model,” which also establishes consistent support for prisoners after their sentence is complete, with educators, healthcare providers, and other non-uniform staff continuing to offer services after release.

However, critics of this approach point out that there are complicated hurdles to employing a fully holistic model, including:

- Restrictions on time and/or space for classes or group meetings
- Security concerns and emergency lockdown protocols
- Facility transfers
- Expected limitations on contact between staff and former prisoners

Others also note that the inherent power dynamics in correctional facilities run counter to the supportive environment a holistic approach seeks to create.

Despite these concerns, the researchers did hear from their study participants that they considered two aspects of a holistic model to be effective: (1) the use of individual assessments and evidence-based programs built from the assessment data, and (2) greater focus on mental health or substance abuse disorders that required diagnosis and treatment. Administrators and

other staff from the Midwestern and North Central locations described how assessments were used to build better case plans and ensure that prisoners were being directed to the correct rehabilitation programs for their needs. Multiple administrators across the study sites also described the importance of looking past an inmate's criminal history at the possibility that they suffered from a mental health disorder in need of proper medication.

Both strategies also relied on well-implemented procedures for inter-staff communication — such as mandatory weekly meetings to keep all personnel informed — and clear distinctions between uniformed or non-uniformed staff. A participant from the Appalachian research site described the roles succinctly: “uniform staff [are] solely responsible for maintaining safety and security and non-uniform staff [are] responsible for therapeutic programs and classes.” This clarity not only prevented non-uniformed workers from being asked to handle unsafe situations they were not trained for, but also engendered trust within the prisoners that the rehabilitation program was being administered by appropriate professionals.

Regardless of the methods employed in each prison, study participants agreed that a successful holistic approach required a well-articulated mission with a philosophy and implementation understood and practiced by all staff.

“A Great Plains participant noted the importance of training all staff in core correctional practices to bolster awareness of criminogenic factors and provide staff with the tools [to] address behavior by starting with the least restrictive discipline, using communication skills, using reflective listening.”

The Pragmatic Approach

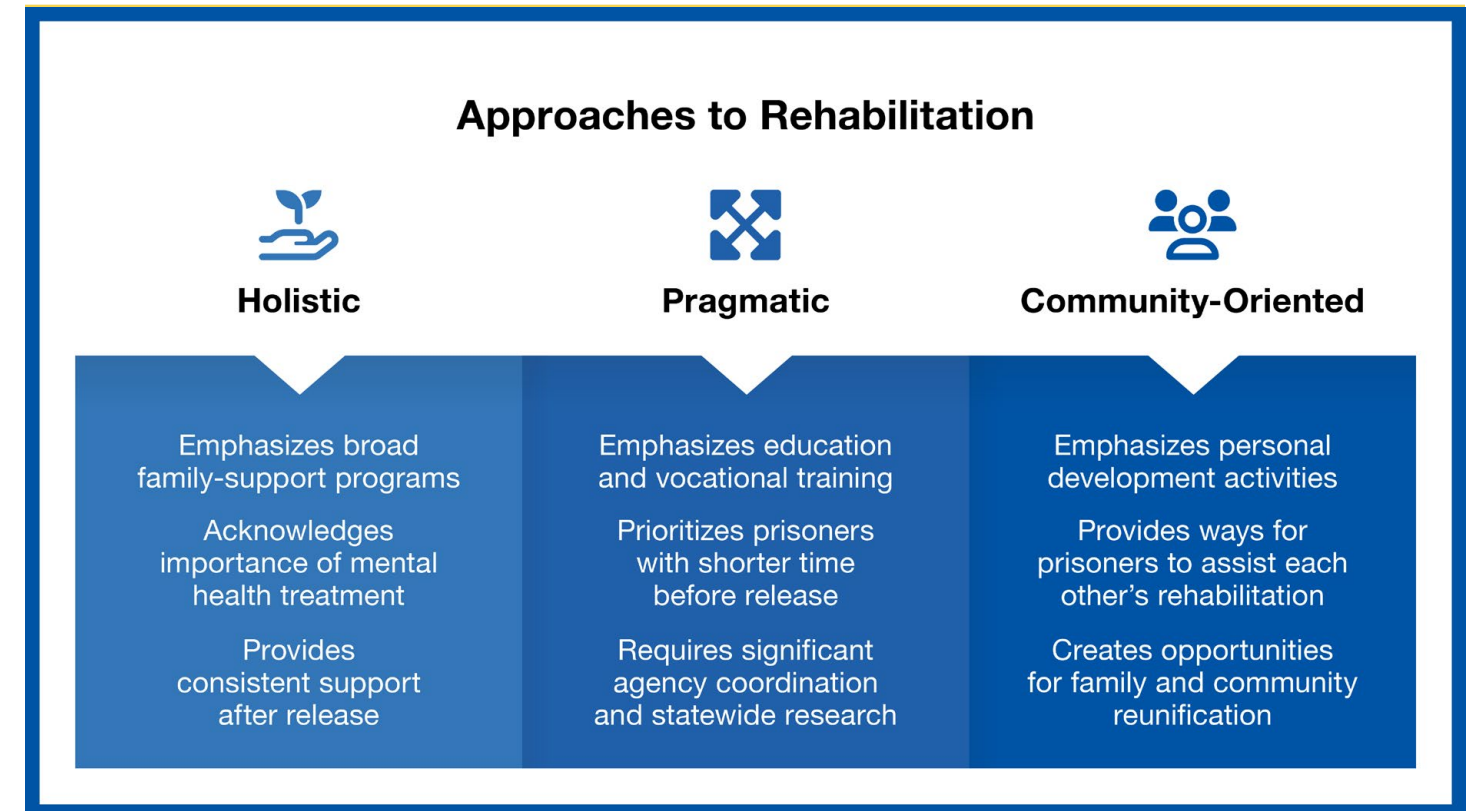
This approach is underpinned by the idea that “rehabilitative services should result in increased

work opportunities by tailoring vocational training to statewide needs among employers willing to hire formerly incarcerated people, engaging in multi-agency coordination to provide realistic workforce training, and forming partnerships with agencies to ease the transition to community.” Programs are built around high school equivalency and vocational training in addition to mental health services, and are prioritized towards those prisoners with shorter-term sentences. The explicit aim of this rehabilitative approach is to provide both the skill sets and opportunities to attain and keep employment after release, which studies have shown to be a key factor in reducing recidivism.

There are, however, systemic barriers to former prisoners finding employment, and those who are opposed to the pragmatic rehabilitation approach argue that a focus on training prisoners to be productive workers — rather than placing an emphasis on how education can help empower and improve an individual — is dehumanizing.

- The researchers determined that a successful pragmatic approach required three key facets:
- Understanding of statewide employment needs and employers willing to hire former prisoners
- Multi-agency coordination to establish relevant training programs around these needs
- Agency partnerships that provide transitional support back into communities

Research of a region's most pressing workforce needs give the correctional system a roadmap for their rehabilitation efforts. This research also requires state agencies to confirm that employment opportunities within that workforce exist among businesses willing to hire a formerly incarcerated individual. A participant in the Western location discussed a three-year cycle of surveying local employers; in one instance they learned that home construction was experiencing a labor shortage, while in another instance they learned that auto body and painting work was a viable post-incarceration



career path. Vocational programs in the facility were adjusted accordingly. Job fairs also play a vital part in making this facet functional.

The establishment of relevant training programs requires a “realistic” view of employment opportunities for former prisoners. A participant from the North Central location gave examples of forklift management and recycling certification as feasible, and administrations from the Midwestern, Western, and Great Plains facilities offered a carefully screened option for some prisoners to work off-site with prospective future employers, while drawing a salary that can be used to pay off punitive fines or send money home to their families.

By coordinating with agencies dedicated to post-incarceration transition, the programs are also able to assist by providing required documentation or preparing a resumé. Non-profit organizations may also be partners with a correctional facility to inform prisoners about community services that will be available to them both before and after their release. In the Deep South and

North Central administrations, for example, resources are provided for:

- Skills-based training
- Assistance for military veterans' benefits
- STD testing
- SNAP program assistance
- Child support payment assistance

By assuring that formerly incarcerated individuals are able to return to their communities on solid footing, the pragmatic rehabilitation approach aims to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

The Community-Oriented Approach

This approach advocates that rehabilitative services should be reframed as “positive social change by providing incarcerated people with opportunities to model good citizenship both in prison and in community, including through peer mentoring.” In other words, rehabilitation consists of encouraging a prisoner's view

of themselves as a member of society who can make positive contributions, allowing them to reunite with both their families and communities. This approach also, uniquely, frames the correctional system as an institution that has been historically weighted against marginalized individuals due to systemic racism, classism, and condescension towards those with substance abuse issues; as such, it makes a point to serve all prisoners regardless of crime or sentence.

This approach may be considered “idealistic,” however, and critiques of community-oriented rehabilitation point out that correctional facilities are mandated to first be secure. There is also a seeming contradiction within this approach, in that prison must be understood as an institution that “punishes, rehabilitates, oppresses, and protects public safety” all at once.

Study participants identified multiple opportunities to model better citizenship both within the facility and after release, including:

- Cohabitation between prisoners with shared personal development goals
- Incentive-based models of acknowledging success
- Peer support and leading facilitation groups within the prison
- Reconnection with family members
- Work that creates positive community impact
- Interactions with community leaders
- Providing peer support for other released prisoners

The advantages of a shared housing setup were mentioned by participants from several regions, with one response from Appalachia adding that there were particular benefits to housing prisoners with similar goals and circumstances who were within a year of completing their sentences, as “this short timeframe enabled provision of a specialized curriculum which, in turn, dramatically improved interactions between incarcerated people and staff.” They did note, however,

that the relative safety of such living arrangements in comparison to the general population presented a double edge — the prisoners had motivation to make progress in their program to feel more secure, but a participant in the Urban East Coast location observed prisoners deliberately failing high school equivalency exams to remain in their education unit.

As prisoners showed progress in their rehabilitation, incentives offered included tangible rewards such as student-of-the-month distinctions and special meals, as well as new opportunities for greater responsibility and activity. In the Urban East Coast and Appalachian facilities, for example, prisoners were allowed to set up their own facilitation groups and even submit program proposals for review. In the Deep South location, prisoners started facilitation groups and also engaged with their community by supporting social clubs among their fellow incarcerated individuals.

Peer tutors and mentors volunteered to assist paid teaching staff, often by using their common experiences to better relate to students. In the Western location, these peer tutors were acknowledged for “making academic material relatable to incarcerated people who may not have had positive experiences with education prior to their incarceration.” Some participants did note the need for peer mentor training, however, as the nature of the correctional environment does not tend to provide positive models for one prisoner having authority over another.

Reunification with family and opportunities to assist the outside community are crucial for the success of a community-oriented approach. Some facilities provide multidimensional options to encourage family connections, such as cooking courses, letter-writing programs, family days, and graduation ceremonies. Some also devised novel ways to give prisoners responsibility over initiatives that benefited the outside community, such as fundraisers for domestic violence victims or growing fresh produce to be donated to food depositories.

Graduation events hosted by the Appalachian administration have featured governors, attorney generals, and other well-known people to celebrate incarcerated people’s success along with their invited guests, with guest lists sometimes including over three hundred people.

Finally, this approach attempts to create openings for former prisoners to come speak or lead groups for those involved in the rehabilitation process. This form of peer support offers benefits to both the incarcerated individuals and those who have been released.

Conclusions

The research team acknowledges that there are very few comparative studies available that illustrate best practices for non-uniformed correctional staff to facilitate rehabilitation. The three approaches that the study identified — holistic, pragmatic, and community-oriented — each offered their own particular advantages as they were implemented across different regional correctional institutions. The participants did also describe common challenges to all approaches:

- Larger prison populations cause delays in implementation

- Untreated or undiagnosed mental health conditions were obstacles to program goals
- Scarcity for continuity of care, external partnerships, and other resources outside of the facility

The study participants did largely express enthusiasm for their programs, and believed there was value in continuing to develop and share innovative approaches in rehabilitation.

Source

[Approaches to Successfully Delivering Rehabilitative Services in Prison: Perspectives from Non-Uniform Correctional Staff in Eight States](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00328855231222410) (The Prison Journal 2024, Vol. 104(2)), Susan Dewey, Brittany VandeBerg, and Susan Roberts [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00328855231222410]

New UNICRI Report Provides Insight and Recommendations on Digital Rehabilitation

CHERYLN TOWNSEND / APR 2024

The United National Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) published the report *Digital Rehabilitation in Prisons* in March 2024 (available [here](#)). The document was written by Victoria Knight and Stuart Ross, consultants at UNICRI, under the overall guidance and editing of Mana Yamamoto, Matthew Burnett-Stuart, and Alice Roberti. An expert group that included representatives from academia as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations also provided input for the report. I recognized several of the authors and advisors as practitioner leaders in contemporary correctional psychology, rehabilitation, probation, and prisons.

The report examines the potential benefits of introducing new technologies to assist the strategic efforts of secure and community corrections organizations to facilitate the rehabilitation of justice-involved individuals. It is noteworthy that this report was published just before the fifth global Technology in Corrections Conference, a joint event by Europris and ICPA. This report focuses on both the benefits and challenges of digital rehabilitation. It provides guidance in three broad areas:

- The ethical principles that should guide the use of digital rehabilitation in prisons
- Planning for the development, implementation, and continuing provision of digital resources to support rehabilitation
- The applications and systems that can be used to support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and promote desistance

What I liked most about this report is that it references both international rules and principles as well as research

regarding rehabilitation. It presents the material in a very organized way and provides building blocks for implementing and enhancing digital resources. It also provides examples of resources that are currently being used globally in correctional programming.

The report does not suggest that an organization must make significant financial investments to move forward. In fact, it states at the outset that “it should not be assumed that digital rehabilitation is only possible if jurisdictions make costly investments in digital infrastructure, including equipment and architecture. Many of the examples in this report involve the use of the same digital platforms that have become a part of everyday life. **The intention of this report is to present guidelines and options that will enable prison agencies, at different levels of digital maturity, to select a development pathway appropriate to their needs and those of the people in their custody.**” (emphasis added)

The first section of the report focuses on ethical principles and human rights, understanding digital rehabilitation, and developing a digital rehabilitation strategy. The six guiding ethical principles for digital prisons are:

- Legality
- Privacy and transparency
- Normality
- Equality and fairness
- Proportionality
- Agency

Key to these principles is the focus on the justice-involved individual rather than on the marketing of specific digital resources, which helps provide a framework for humane

rehabilitation. In addition, the report utilizes the *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation* formulated by the United Nations to present considerations when balancing human rights and the digital rights of justice-involved individuals. The four areas of concern that the report outlines are:

- Balancing digital rights with the need to ensure adequate security and public protection
- Providing access to digital technology as part of the normalization of prison regimes
- Addressing digital inequality
- Safeguarding personal information

In another European project, DIGICOR, these areas of concern were also identified as related to staff competencies, access, and professional development.

The chapter on developing a digital rehabilitation strategy presents a clear and thoughtful outline on how to address two questions:

1. What is the scope of this strategy, and how does it relate to our goals and priorities, level of digital readiness, and the resources that are available?
2. How do we get there?

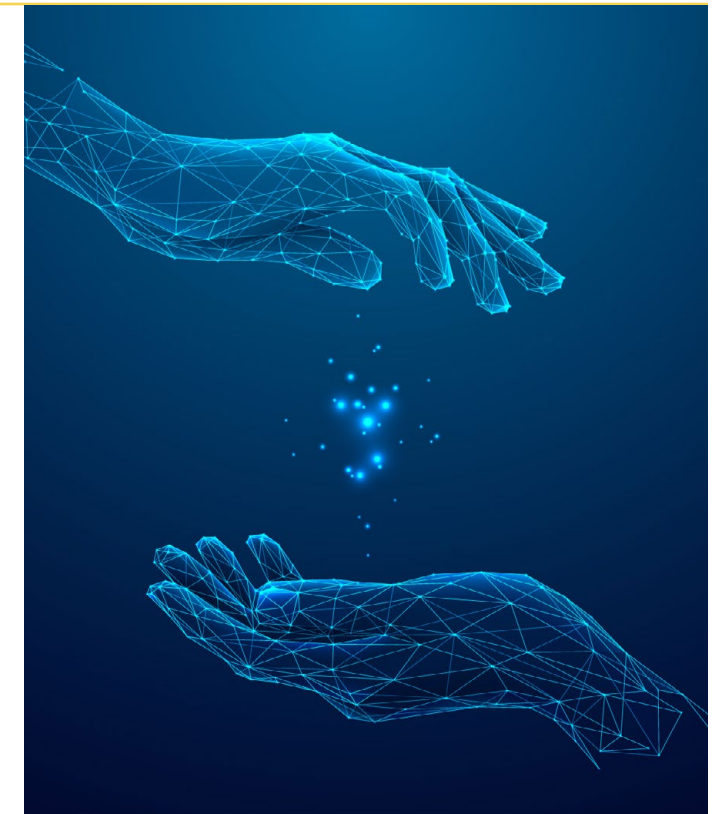
Two case examples are provided in the report: studies of Finland’s Smart Prison and the correctional system in New South Wales (Australia). It also outlines the strategy development process without proposing a “one size fits all” solution. A clear message is that “decisions should be driven by human needs rather than the enticement and promise of technology.”

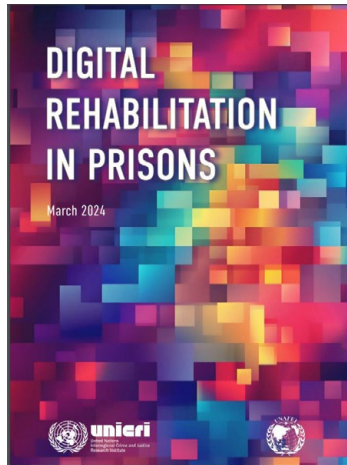
The second section is a gold mine for practitioners. It covers the following topics:

- Digital Education and Vocational Training
- Self-Service Kiosks and In-Cell Devices
- Treatment and Behavior Change Programmes

- Re-Entry and Transitional Support
- Family Contact and Support
- Staff Digital Engagement and Training

As each of these topics is covered, the report offers references to research, good practice, areas of concern, and case examples. While many ideas and innovations are described in this section of the report, care should be taken to not jump to this section before completing the strategy development process for a jurisdiction. The final topic, “Staff Digital Engagement and Training,” is a consideration for utilizing digital resources. When staff are engaged in the development process and able to offer their perspectives on the needs of the justice-involved individuals they are serving, the process becomes relevant to the people who will be responsible for implementation. And when they are prepared to utilize digital resources and supported to assume responsibility for implementation, the result may not only be improved rehabilitation outcomes but also longer-term staff retention.





The final section of the report focuses on the future — focusing the key research, policy, and regulatory issues that must be addressed for the continued use of digital rehabilitation. While the report does not go into great detail within this section, it does outline the

UNICRI has implemented a new programme this year to support the development of digital rehabilitation strategies in two pilot countries: Namibia and Thailand. The training programme, best practices, and lessons learned from these two countries and this programme overall will be beneficial to all organizations serving justice-involved individuals. We look forward to learning from their efforts.

Finally, the report offers a checklist for moving toward digital rehabilitation. It provides an outline of the considerations for different levels of maturity on this journey. An important reminder might come from the report’s foreword, written by UNICRI Acting Director Leif Villadsen:

“Around the world, criminal justice systems are facing the challenge of rehabilitating prisoners effectively to reduce reoffending rates and create safer societies. Innovative digital technologies show promise in providing access to rehabilitation programmes and flexible, effective prison based interventions. However, the integration of technology requires a balance between digital and in-person modalities and a commitment to human rights and ethical considerations.”

Rehabilitation is, after all, about people.

concerns that must be addressed to ensure a human-centered approach to a more effective and rehabilitative criminal justice system. The specific recommendations made are:

- Conduct mixed-method research to determine how users interact with digital rehabilitation tools, with the aim to uncover practical insights that can guide the optimization of these applications.
- Conduct a broader examination of the role of security technologies in prisons to understand how they influence the rehabilitation environment. This examination should include both rehabilitative and security aspects and offer a more complete view of the digital landscape’s role in corrections.
- Increase research activities to assess the impacts of digital rehabilitation comprehensively, focusing on the identified priority areas to gather evidence on the tangible benefits and potential limitations.
- Undertake a meta-analysis of existing research to clarify the costs and benefits associated with digital rehabilitation services, considering all related expenses, including those borne by end-users.

IACFP International News, Research, and Resources for Mar/Apr 2024

CHERYLN TOWNSEND / APR 2024

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Student Research Award Application Process Open



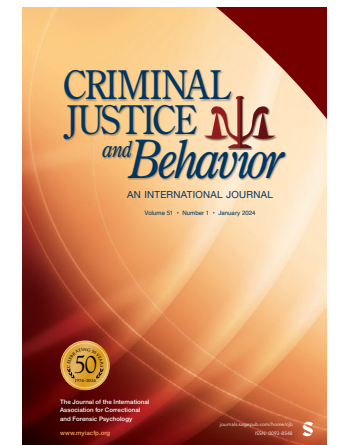
The IACFP believes that rigorous scholarship provides the foundation to continue advancing our understanding of criminology and the justice system. To that end, we invite student researchers to apply for the IACFP Student Research Award, which offers two awards of \$2500 each to pursue a relevant project. The application is due by Friday, May 17.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Student Research Award and submit an application.

50th Anniversary of *Criminal Justice and Behavior*

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, the IACFP Board has partnered with SAGE Publishing to make one article of each monthly issue accessible for free to everyone. *CJB* editor-in-chief Dr. Kristy Holtfreter chooses each month’s

article to be included on the [Sage Journals “Collections” page](#), which will then remain available throughout 2024!



The March 2024 free access article is “Incremental Validity of MMPI-3 and NEO PI-3 Scores in Public Safety Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Evaluations” by Megan R. Whitman, Kaci

Holmes, Laura Sue Elias, Bruce M. Capp, and Yossef S. Ben-Porath. The April 2024 free access article is “Predicting Future Recidivism From Changes in School Grades and Moral Agency” by Glenn D. Walters.

2 Research

Provincial and Territorial Correctional Service Workers: A Canadian National and Jurisdictional Assessment of Mental Health

This article, published in the [Journal of Criminal Justice, Volume 91 \(2024\)](#), is authored by R. Ricciardelli, R.N. Carleton, T.L. Taillieu, S. Dorniani, M.S. Johnston, M. Carbonell, R. Coulling, E. Andres, and T.O. Afifi. As noted in the abstract, correctional workers (in a broad array of job titles) from all 13 provincial and territorial services across Canada self-selected to complete an online mental health and well-being survey.

The study illustrates yet more reason to invest in and support those who work in all facets of corrections.

“The current results suggest provincial and territorial CWs report mental health challenges much more frequently than the diagnostic prevalence for the general public (10.1%) and need additional supports. Unexpectedly there were absent elevations associated with data collected after the onset of COVID-19.”

Character, Circumstances, and Criminal Careers: Towards a Dynamic Developmental and Life-Course Criminology

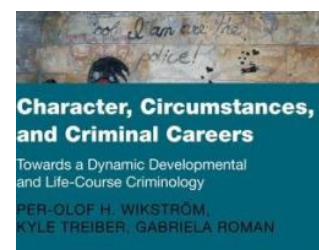
The Centre for Analytic Criminology has announced the publication of its latest book, analyzing data from the longitudinal Peterborough Adolescent and Young Adult Development Study (PADS+) and testing Situational Action Theory (SAT). The authors are Per-Olof H. Wikstrom, Kyle Treiber, and Gabriela D. Roman.

The book seeks to answer two questions:

1. Why do young people engage in acts of crime?
2. What is it that drives their criminal careers?

For those practitioners working with adolescents and young adults within the criminal justice system and community corrections, the results may be especially informative.

As noted on the University of Cambridge website, “This book makes the case for a more dynamic Developmental and Life Course criminology (DLC), theorising and exploring the relationship between personal characteristics and environmental features and their changes across a critical developmental period for criminal careers: adolescence into young adulthood. It



presents advanced statistical analyses of crime trajectories and their association with patterns of development and personal experiences, and examines whether childhood predictors, such as social

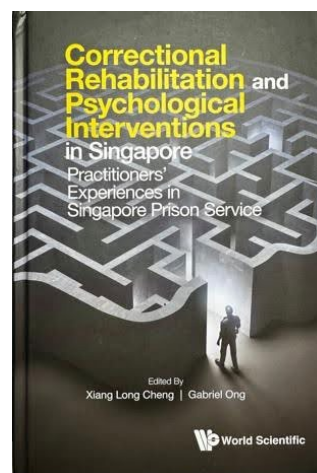
disadvantage and social adversity, are linked to future trajectories of crime. It presents a special analysis of the age-crime curve and its explanation. It also provides the most recent and updated statement of Situational Action Theory (SAT) and its Developmental Ecological Action (DEA) model, including comparisons between the basic assumptions and propositions of SAT and selected major criminological theories.”

You can find out more about the book at [this link](#).

3 Practice

Correctional Rehabilitation and Psychological Interventions in Singapore

A new book, *Correctional Rehabilitation and Psychological Interventions in Singapore: Practitioners' Experiences in Singapore Prison Service*, edited by Xiang Long Cheng and Gabriel Ong, was recently published by World Scientific Publishing Co. It is an excellent resource for practitioners, since SPS takes an evidence-based approach and references international best practices in its intervention work.



The book is divided into three sections:

- The first section focuses on the theories and models that inform SPS' approach towards rehabilitation.
- The second section provides an overview and eight chapters on working with special populations. It includes SPS' work with high-risk offenders, drug abusers, young offenders, women offenders, adult violent offenders, sexual offenders, and those with mental health issues.

- The final section consists of two chapters that focus on the training that has been provided to specialists, psychologists, and front-line correctional staff to prepare them to be a part of correctional rehabilitation. This includes not only their roles in transforming environments but also investment in their own well-being.

This is an excellent and practical resource for practitioners.

Police-Mental Health Collaborations

The Council of State Governments Justice Center has been involved in supporting the development of collaborative efforts between law enforcement, other

governmental organizations, NGOs, and mental health service providers for a number of years. In an effort to address the increasing numbers of individuals with significant mental health needs being drawn into the criminal justice system, they have worked with several local communities to formalize their work for replication. In March 2024, *Police-Mental Health Collaborations: Implementing Effective Law Enforcement Responses for People Who Have Mental Health Needs — The Project Coordinator's Handbook* was published, and is now available [here](#). The handbook is a guide for those who are planning, implementing, and investing in quality improvement of a community's efforts to meet the needs of this distinct population.

4 Upcoming Conferences



2024 IAFMHS Conference, June 18-20, 2024

The upcoming annual conference of the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services (IAFMHS) will be taking place in San Francisco, CA from June 18-20, centered around the topic “Prevention in Forensic Mental Health.” More information can be found [here](#).



EAPL 2024 Annual Conference of European Association of Psychology and Law, July 9-12, 2024

The 2024 annual conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law will be held in Caparica, Portugal on July 9-12, 2024. The theme of the conference is “New Challenges in Research and Practice.” More information can be found [here](#).



ICPA 2024 Annual Conference, September 1-6, 2024

Make plans now to attend the ICPA Annual Conference in Singapore, and to participate in the special 20th Anniversary events for the Yellow Ribbon Project. More information can be found [here](#).



Correctional Mental Health Care Conference, July 21-22

Two days of information laser-focused on correctional mental health care issues: juvenile, substance abuse, suicide prevention, trauma, self-care, and more...plus the opportunity to take the CCHP and specialty exams on-site.

More information on this event can be found [here](#).



American Correctional Association Congress of Corrections, August 15-18, 2024

The American Correctional Association Congress of Corrections will be held in Nashville, TN on August 15-18, 2024.

More information can be found [here](#).



International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP)

Promoting evidence-based and practitioner-informed practices and research to support correctional and forensic psychologists and other helping professionals who work with justice-involved individuals since 1954.

Learn more about IACFP or become a member at www.myiacfp.org.