

Correctional substance abuse essay examples

[Health & Medicine](#), [Mental Health](#)



Introduction

The current state of correctional mental health

Mental health is one of the most delicate issues that surround our

correctional facilities. The matter needs to be handled with great caution

being that it can be an expensive affair, yet the numbers of cases where

persons with mental health issues being incarcerated are still on the rise.

This report seeks to look deeper into some of the elements that need further

scrutiny in order to make the facilities more accommodative to the mentally

ill. We also look at some structural and design strategies that are highlighted

as key to success in the issue.

Body

Looking back to the year 2005, a special report published by the Bureau of justice statistics. Focusing on mental health as a menace in the correctional

facility system stated that more than half of the population was not mentally

stable. Imagining a situation where a population of 705, 600 in state run

facilities, 78, 800 and 479, 900 both in federally run and locally run facilities

respectively, had mental problems. Something was amiss. These shocking

data was gathered a year before by way of personal interviews carried out

between the experts and the inmates at the time.

In order to be more objective and accurate, the definition of mental health

problem was review to suit the current studies being done. In this case, only

those who showed symptoms of mental problems within the last 12 months

were considered. The results got were still shocking. In the state prisons,

federal and local prisons, 56%, 45% and 64% of the inmates respectively had

mental problem. This situation called for a fast solution being that the number of mentally ill inmates was now over represented in the system.

The various elements that lead to the success of best practice in correctional mental health

In order to have a deeper understanding of some of the elements that the correctional facilities are bound to change hence experience best practice, the elements can be divided into four distinct categories. They are known to be the backbone of achieving best practice correctional facility policy. The first one being having better knowledge generation systems, or which can be share with other partners, improvement of service delivery, especially for the mentally ill, development of better management practices and also building stronger support and partnership programs with other institutions that can facilitate the achievement of the facility's goal of best practice.

The correctional facilities after experiencing an influx in the number of inmates suffering from mental problems were compelled to act fast. The correctional facilities after going back to the drawing board identified some of the elements that needed fine tuning in order to make their services more efficient, hence best practice. We will b highlighting a few of them.

It was established that in order to gain positive grounds in regards to offering better conditions in the facilities, especially for those with mental problems, it was to be of best practice to develop a superior system of communication within, and without the facilities. The information systems at the moments were not as inclusive as expected. A superior system was expected to bring more information about the inmates to the table hence facilities can have better understanding of the persons hence formulate appropriate strategies

to help. In order to have a successful program, it was of utmost importance for the correctional facilities to come up with an innovative approach in tackling the issue of mental health. Innovation in this cases meant having systems that can work best for them without causing unwarranted changes in the way these system currently operated. The sole aim being that innovation would help install a system that is cost friendly yet effective. With the changing times, the correctional facilities were bound to develop new policies in regards to how inmates suffering from mental health problems were to be handled. The new policies were to ensure that inmates are settled in appropriate population in the facilities, given excess to facilities and resources that would help them improve their conditions and even provide needed information in regards to the same.

Structure and design elements that provide for an effective and successful correctional mental health program

It is of utmost importance to come up with a clear structural frame work that the correctional facilities can adopt in regards to achieving better service delivery, especially from the mentally ill population. The structural design acts as a guiding feature hence clear expectations and outcomes highlighted. In the long run, if implemented correctly, a correctional facility can surely change for the better.

In order to achieve an effective yet successful correctional program for the mentally ill, a facility is expected to develop a system that promotes improvement in mental health. In order for this promotion to see the light of day, it is important to ensure that the facility provide enough resources for the inmate to be able to gather information in regards to their various

mental conditions hence deal with them appropriately. In the same line, in order to further the benefits that come with the promotion of better mental health within the facilities, the staff in the correctional facilities should also have access to resources that aid their duties, especially when trying to help the mentally ill. The involvement of family, friends and even former co-workers in improving an inmate's life is a necessary strategy in helping them recover. The outside network acts as a pool of information.

In order to better serve inmates who suffer from mental illness, another strategy that has been known to facilitate better outcome is enforcing systems for early screening and assessment of an individual mental health condition at the time of admission. This creates better grounds for developing programs that can aid in improving their lives while in the facility. Initial screening and assessment provides the basis for further strategic evaluation programs for the individuals. The information got can also be used during other comprehensive assessment session, and also during services that require referral.

The third strategy in ensuring efficiency and success in the lives of inmates suffering from mental problem is the development of a solid support and treatment service system. This ensures that the inmate's treatment programs are structured by qualified personnel only. The staff should also be very much aware of the way the treatment programs typically work in this correctional facilities hence develop only the best. This can entail matching mental patients to an environment conducive to their treatment plan. The medication program is also expected to blend in with the individuals needs. Mentally unstable inmates have been known to be suicidal at times. In the

correctional facilities, putting in place a system that helps staff monitor patients regularly hence prevent suicide can go a long way into improving both efficiency and success in the facility's goal of improving the lives of the inmates. Other factors that can be considered in regards to achieving best practice in the correctional facilities include helping inmates deal appropriately with their transitional process from the community to the correctional facilities. This includes ensuring continuity of medication hence stability of mental condition. Creating partnership between the facility and other community based groups can greatly help in improving the operations of the facility in regards to efficiency. A good example would be partnering with a local counseling team to also involve providing the services to inmates.

Conclusion

The issue of dealing with the mentally ill inmates can prove to be very challenging. This is driven by the fact that it is more expensive and also demands a lot of time and resources, in comparison to dealing with a mentally stable population. In order to achieve better service delivery in these institutions, different elements can be fine tuned hence better strategy development in the execution of the services while dealing with the inmate. All these effort are known to be channeled towards ensuring that the inmates live a better life while incarcerated hence better chances of rehabilitation while still in the correctional facilities.

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