

A Multidisciplinary Approach to Promoting the Continuum of Care To Improve Offender Reentry Initiative Outcomes

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Abstract

Offender reentry into the community is a complex transition that presents an even greater challenge when the offender has ongoing medical or mental health conditions. As offender reintegration into communities has become a national priority, the Montana Department of Corrections has implemented a pilot program at the Montana Women's Prison that is a multidisciplinary approach to the offender reentry initiative. The primary focus of the program is to provide individualized reentry planning that promotes the successful correction-to-community transition through education, access and enrollment of Affordable Care Act health insurance and multidisciplinary discharge planning.

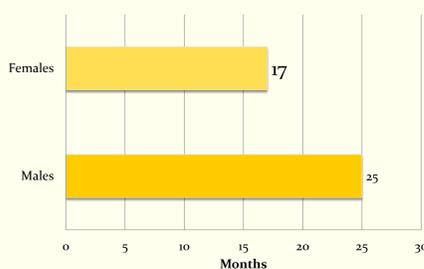
MWP Pilot Program

The Clinical Services Division has identified that 95 percent of offenders at MWP access medical services and 80 percent access mental health/ chemical dependency services. Discharge services include a month's supply of medication, a copy of their current medication prescriptions and the opportunity to request a copy of their healthcare records. In addition, ACA navigators provide in-person education and enrollment assistance at the prison prior to discharge. A community-based ACA navigator appointment will also be scheduled for each discharging offender.

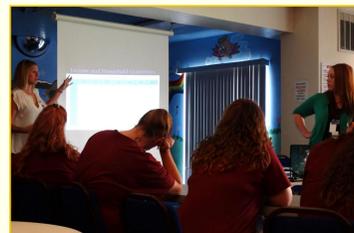
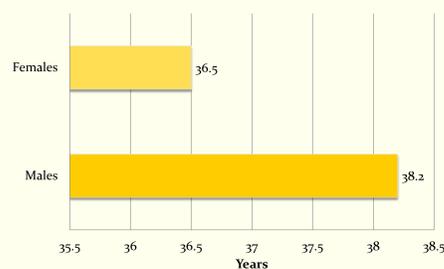
Discussion

The Montana Department of Corrections has implemented a leadership initiative to expand successful offender reentry through research, analysis and discussion. The Clinical Services Division, Office of Offender Reentry and Statewide Reentry Task Force are implementing internal programs, strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations and utilizing evidence-based practices to improve offender reentry initiative outcomes. More than 97 percent of all offenders are eventually released from prison and return to the community. Most of these offenders have accessed medical and/ or mental health services and will require continued services in the community.

Average Length of Stay



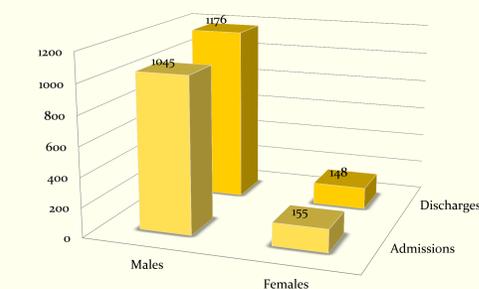
Average Age at Discharge



"The Affordable Care Act Seminar was very helpful. It helped educate me on what all I need to do once I get out."



"I am advocating for the ACA as I feel it is very important for those of us getting out of prison with nothing."



Admissions and Discharges

Educational Objectives

1. Discuss the importance of educating offenders about health care insurance enrollment to promote a successful integration into the community.
2. Identify the Affordable Care Act Navigator and In-Person Assistance Programs available to assist offenders with understanding their health plan options and accessing enrollment opportunities.
3. Summarize efforts being pursued to promote the continuum of care during the offender reentry initiative.

Future Strides

The Clinical Services Division, in conjunction with Department directives, has established a strategic plan to further expand medical and mental health discharge planning services. Program development at other correctional facilities, which includes ACA navigators providing in-person education and enrollment assistance for discharging offenders has been initiated. Community-based services are essential to promoting the continuum of care to improve offender reentry initiative outcomes.