

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)

March 25, 2010

8:00 a.m.

Hy-Vee Hall

CJCC Members Present: Sally Kreamer, Bill McCarthy, John Sarcone, Judge Gamble, Tom Hockensmith, Valorie Wilson, Angela Connolly

Others present: Sue Elliott, Curtis Pion, Dillon Kraft, Major Donna Brooks, Michael O’Meara, Anne Sheeley, Rox Laird, E.J. Giovannetti, Nancy Robinson, Jeff Riese, Jason Pulliam

I. Approval of the February 25, 2010 minutes

Moved by Sarcone, Seconded by McCarthy to approve the minutes as presented.

II. & III. Recidivism Report/Overview of the 5th Judicial District Department of Correctional Services

Sally Kreamer, Director

Sally made a powerpoint presentation “*Evidence Based Practices – Reducing Recidivism and Doing What’s Best for You, the Public and the Offenders.*”

Research indicates certain strategies reduce recidivism. This is an overview of the 80 hour training that Correctional Services staff go through when hired. Risk reduction is a new intervention to reduce risks and therefore lower recidivism. Recidivism is defined as: subsequent convictions for felonies or aggravated misdemeanors of offenders who discharged (final closure) from correctional supervision within the report date range. OWI Continuum and Work Release Supervision Statuses are excluded due to most offenders going to parole supervision from these placements. Statewide rates for recidivism: overall 14.1%, 5th District 10.4%, average for district 13.95%, average for prisons 38.4%. Iowa has a lower rate in general. Probation rates are 22.6% for 5th District parole and 9.0% for 5th District probation. Interventions are making a difference. There were 4,988 success discharges in the 5th District for last year. The risk and charge type don’t always match up. There is a risk tool assessment done to prevent recidivism. They are consistently finding that starting in a high category and trying to get offenders down to a low category that it usually stays that way. The moderate and above high risk offenders have more than one risk assessment done.

There are eight evidence based principles used: assess risk and needs, enhance intrinsic motivation, target intervention, skilled training with directed practice, increase positive reinforcement, engage on-going support, resume relevant practices and provide measurement feedback.

Assess actuarial risk and needs gives a percentage of characteristics to identify high risk. This is set up using an actuarial tool (similar to what a car agency uses for insurance). Areas are looked at for valid predictors of crime, criminal history, education and employment, people who don’t trust the system, etc. They assess risk based on several factors: financial, family, friends, job, etc. Enhanced intrinsic motivation behavioral change is an inside job relating with offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways. All staff is trained in motivational interviewing and now getting ready for pre-treatment motivation. Target interventions: Who to treat? What to treat? How to treat? How much to treat (time structure, classes, etc)? Learning the style, motivation, gender and

culture of offender. The dosage principle, how much, higher risk, more time, structure and interventions. Seeking the biggest bang for the buck, high risk uses more resources. Risk management versus risk reduction. Risk management is not the issue. Risk reduction is difficult with the cuts that we have had at the state level.

Probation Officers are currently using behavioral programs/interventions (anger management, corrective thinking, etc), practice role playing/rehearsals and pro-social modeling. They have found that positive reinforcement works (verbal praise, treats/candy, prizes, etc) and fewer probation contacts are needed for regular group attendance. They try to engage on-going support in the offenders "natural community" (family members, other supportive people). They work with outside agencies for on-going support, encouraging contact with mentors, sponsors, family orientation and family treatment groups. There is a measuring accountability factor for staff performance to document offender change (reducing risk, skill development, etc). We are turning into fortress probation as there is not enough staff to home visit. What we are doing is working with private nonprofits, encouraging mentors, family orientation and treatment. People do better if they are employed and have family support. Measure relative practices. The accountability factor, measuring and accurately documenting offender change. We conduct monthly audits and provide verbal feedback.

There is one supervisor for every 13 staff, the state's goal is 1:15. Probation Officers caseloads are currently one and a half times higher than they should be (should be around 110, it is at 160). There is not enough time to case manage. Providing measurement feedback, we provide feedback to offenders about their progress and share feedback outcomes with staff, through case plan audits, group audits and results of performance outcomes.

Supervisor Hockensmith asked if we know that the 5th District is at 160, what are other districts? Sally stated that the case load formula shows that we are 33 Probation Officers short. The formula is disproportionate. The 1st District needs 11, the 5th District needs 33. Each percentage point has the number of offenders going to prison. If recidivism rates worsen, more people will go to county jail and prison.

Sally said the beds at Ft. Des Moines are full and there is a waiting list. They need to take a look at who should be in Ft. Des Moines and how to deal with that. Ft. Des Moines will not be receiving funds in the state's budget for a new facility. We need to figure out how to move forward. Judge Gamble asked how inmates get on the waiting list for Ft. Des Moines. Sally stated that they are working on Ft. Des Moines admission criteria. Judge Gamble asked if the people in jail on the waiting list go to Ft. Des Moines. Sally stated yes, but there are others on the street waiting to get in.

Evidence based practices is about lowering the risk and working with people but also about knowing who you are dealing with through risk assessment.

IV. Hennepin County Minnesota's Response

An e-mail was sent out to CJCC from Hennepin County, Minnesota's criminal justice committee. Hennepin County is looking for suggestions on how to deal with revenue shortfall and would like input from Polk County's CJCC on things we are doing in our criminal justice system. The Sheriff's staff has put together an extensive list to forward to them. Let Major Brooks know if you have anything you would like to be forwarded to Minnesota and she will handle.

V. Open discussion

Angela asked Sally if there is anything CJCC can do to help with her situation. Nancy Robinson suggested contacting the legislature next session to make them aware of what's going on. Other than funding, is there anything (i.e. wait lists, etc)? Volunteers were suggested. This has been done in the past but as they've lost staff, they've lost volunteers (no staff to monitor, etc). A private, non-profit group will be starting in April. This will be a volunteer academy (a volunteer pool of trained people that other agencies can use). Sheriff asked about groups like Bridges and Spectrum. Sally said Spectrum does training with 5th Judicial and they will use them to help. Bridges is located at Ft. Des Moines and does substance abuse. Meetings are scheduled with Urban Dreams and Creative Visions in the future. The problem with some of the agencies is they don't use the same practices (Evidence Based Practices) as the 5th Judicial District. We know what is effective and they must use evidence based practices. We send out surveys to clients to see if the organization is using cognitive behavioral programming.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 29, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.