Bridging the Health Care & Criminal Justice Systems

Prepared by: Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
CCJRC

Eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health & safety

- Policy advocacy
- Trainings/Education
- Campaigns
- Resource for justice involved people
Presentation Roadmap

- Importance & Need for Healthcare Services
- Criminal Justice 101
- Healthcare Coverage for Justice Involved People
- What’s going on in Colorado?
- Considerations & Resources
- Take Care Health Matters Campaign
Importance & Need for Healthcare Services

- Over 120,000 justice involved people in Colorado on any given day.

- Approximately 70% have the ability to have health insurance through Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program).

- Providing health care, particularly behavioral health services, to justice involved individuals has been shown to reduce recidivism rates & improve health outcomes.
Importance & Need (cont.)

• People incarcerated in the Dept. of Corrections (FY2016) with a moderate to severe need:
  • Females: 71% medical, 77% mental & 79% substance use disorder
  • Males: 36% medical, 35% mental & 73% substance use disorder

• Higher rates of chronic health conditions such as HIV and Hepatitis C.

• People released from incarceration are at an increased risk to die from an overdose, especially within 2 weeks post-release, than the general public.
Criminal Justice 101
Colorado CJ System Snapshot

There isn’t just one single criminal justice system:

❖ Judicial
  • Court System, including Problem Solving Courts
  • Probation

❖ Law Enforcement
  • Jails

❖ Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC)
  • Prisons
  • Parole

❖ Community Corrections Facilities
  • Oversight from: CDOC, Judicial, Office of Behavioral Health, Community Corrections Boards, Office of Community Corrections/Department of Public Safety
The court system in Colorado is divided into 22 independent Judicial Districts. Each has courts that will hear different kinds of cases, i.e. criminal, civil, family law, etc. Some operate “specialty courts” like drug court or veterans court.

Each Judicial District has an independent Probation Office and a Chief Probation Officer. Probation Officers are officers of the court.

Each judicial district has an elected District Attorney who is responsible for filing and prosecuting criminal cases.

Colorado has a unified state Public Defender's Office that represents indigent clients. The Public Defender has numerous offices across the state. There are also defense attorneys in private practice across the state.
Jails are operated by the local county, generally the county Sheriff’s Department. Some municipalities also have their own jail.

There are 56 county jails in Colorado. Some counties do not operate their own jail but have an agreement with another county jail.

People can be in jail for many different reasons.

Each jail has their own policies regarding the delivery of medical & behavioral healthcare services.
The Colorado Dept. of Corrections (DOC) manages, supervises and operates 19 state prisons and contracts with 3 private prisons.

Most people released from prison will be required to serve a period of supervision, called “parole” after they are released. Parole officers work for the Dept. of Corrections, not the court. There are numerous parole offices across the state.

The state also contracts with community corrections programs, aka “halfway houses” in numerous (but not all) judicial districts. There are currently 34 community corrections programs in Colorado.
Colorado Prison Facilities

Map Design: Ryan Hollamby (OPA) June 12th, 2013
Non-Denver Metro Community Corrections Facilities
Denver Metro Community Corrections Facilities
Criminal Justice System Recap

• Court System (~ 80k on probation)
  • 22 Judicial Districts (JD)
  • Each JD has a Chief Probation Officer
  • Close to 80 Problem Solving Courts

• Law Enforcement (thousands)
  • 56 County Jails

• Corrections (~ 20k in prison & 10k on parole)
  • 19 state prisons & 3 private prisons
  • 34 Community Corrections facilities
Health Care Coverage for Justice Involved People
Most justice involved individuals will be eligible for Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program).

Clients are **NOT** eligible for Health First Colorado if they are considered an inmate of a public institution & are being held involuntarily.
What’s Going on in Colorado?
Considerations & Resources
Take Care Health Matters Campaign
Take Care Health Matters

- Website
- Resource Guide
- Presentations & Trainings
- Client Level Materials
- Technical Assistance
- Advocacy & Support
Why access to healthcare matters......

• "I mean I went from a sleeping under a bridge (for) three years and now I have been clean about a year and half. I go to methadone treatment on a regular basis. Medicaid saved my life."

• “I'm actually going to go get surgery next Monday and I'm pretty sure the copay is like $6 bucks, so yeah, Medicaid works for me awesome. I love it. Without it, I probably wouldn't be sitting here talking to you.”

• “I always put my health on the back burner. Because I've needed this hip replacement for three or four years. Now I've FINALLY got it done. Now I'm almost totally recovered. I'd say in another month or two. I can start to walk on it. I can't walk as far, but I will. And it will probably be another couple of months before I'm healed. I also had all my dental work done. They've (Medicaid) paid for all my co-pays on my medicines. Yeah, Medicaid has been a life saver.”
Questions? Comments? Discussion?

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