

2nd Chance act Prisoner Reentry Meeting Minutes
Policy Workgroup
September 24, 2009 1-3pm
Solem Public Safety Center, Pierre
Multi-Purpose Room

In Attendance: Terry Dosch Council of Mental Health, Sharon Sonnenschein DSS, Mark Lauseng SD Housing Development (representing Lorraine Polak), Todd Kolden DOL, Grady Kickul DHS, Jeff Bathke DHS, John Fette Dept. of Military & Veteran's Affairs, Roger Campbell Tribal Govt. Relations, Amy Iversen-Pollreisz DHS, Kevin McLain DOC Administration, Laurie Feiler DOC Admin, Roland Loudenburg Mt. Plains Evaluation, Nancy Allard UJS, Gib Sudbeck DHS, Brady Kerkman DOC Admin, and Robyn Seibel DOC Admin.

Absent: Colleen Winter DOH, Ed Lightenberg Board of Pardons and Paroles

Opening

- Laurie Feiler reviewed highlights from April 1, 2009 Policy Workgroup meeting.
 - A binder was handed out to the attendees that contained the grant program narrative, budget detail and narrative, timeline, and the five year plan. Laurie Feiler explained the different items that were in the binder to the attendees.
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Meeting Discussion Highlights

- The PowerPoint was reviewed. (attached)
- Kevin McLain reviewed budget details of the grant. \$750,000 of federal funds, cash match is \$375,000 funds that will be put aside for the grant, and In-kind match is \$375,000 which will be from parole agents and other staff working with individuals involved with the grant program.
- Four new positions have been budgeted for this grant program. The Project Manager will oversee the grant program which will help move agenda items forward.

- As part of the grant reporting requirement, we will be tracking the impact this project has on recidivism in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Overall there will be effort put into reducing recidivism throughout the state.
 - There will be further discussion on services that can be accessed by the individuals within the program at a later time.
 - When talking to local groups, it has been identified that mentors will be needed. The focus will be based on the idea that individuals who may not have family or friends will need a mentor. Mentoring is a work in progress for this program.
 - Goal two of the grant project indicates current programming accessed by the inmates will be evaluated. Evaluation will focus on inmates being released in November 2009 through January 2010
 - Refer to the PowerPoint on pages 14 and 15 for the next tasks.
 - Most parole violations are from alcohol law violations and absconding. Female offenders come back due to substance abuse and absconding. Native Americans have a high return to prison rate because of absconding. More research will be done to determine what is causing these violations.
 - The SD female population is higher than the national average. Approximately 60% are in prison for alcohol and drug use. A female offender diversion program focusing on diversion from a parole violation or coming to prison in the first place may be considered.
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Roland Loudenburgs Summary of Recidivism Analysis Findings

- Roland reviewed his PowerPoint. (attached)
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Round Table Discussion Highlights

Sharron Sonnenschein DSS – Individuals leaving prison need a place to stay, food, or prescriptions. She further explains that processing applications for economic assistance can take some time. Arrangements should be made to start the initial work to get the process moving before inmates are released. For example, someone from DSS can talk to a group of inmates that will be releasing making the process smoother.

Grady Kickul from Division of Rehabilitation Services – A policy was developed with the DOC for Transition Case Managers to obtain referrals of people with disabilities months prior to release. This may help them be available for further assessments once released. The program has not been evaluated since it was implemented. There will be discussion

with Case Managers to learn how the program is working and review areas that can be improved. Grady said approximately 7% of Vocational Rehabilitation clients are DOC releases and he emphasized need for “soft skills”. For example, learning how to interview or dress for an interview.

Nancy Allard UJS – approximately 2-3 years ago they secured funding for adult chemical dependency and mental health treatment. In Meade County (4th Circuit) there is a very structured drug court program with a high success rate. They would like to not reinvent the wheel but use resources to prevent going to prison along with this reentry program. Possibly focus work with DOC on diversion program in Pennington County.

John Fette Military and Veteran Affairs – Inmates may be able to access benefits the VA offers which can help their dependents. It may be beneficial for a Veteran Service Officer to come to the prison and discuss VA benefit options before they are released. The inmate’s dependents may qualify for an allowance. Also, the Department of Labor has a veteran representative that can help with job finding skills. John explained that there is a directory available which lists Veteran Service Officers for each county and tribe and community-based outpatient clinics for veterans. Vets should be identified at assessment.

Todd Kolden DOL – The model reviewed today is a lot like the case management approach they take with their employment issues. Staff are trained in case management but deal with employment directly and they are trained to identify barriers. There are 18 veteran representatives around the state who are also trained in case management. The ultimate goal is to provide a seamless transition for individuals. The DOL holds a 2-3 day workshop for military individuals to teach soft skills before they get out of the military. There is also a tax credit program for businesses who hire ex-felons and so far there have been over 700 ex-felons hired under the tax credit program. There is focus on good employment and retention. Once the individual finds a job they follow up with them once a month for 90 days. They talk to the individual and the employer to see if things are going well.

Roger Campbell Tribal Government Relations – There are no programs to address problems indicated with the 2nd Chance Act. Roger expressed interest in targeting absconding population among Native America inmate population.

Terry Dosch Council of Mental Health/Substance Abuse – Five member groups in Rapid City and Sioux Falls expressed interest in this project (Carroll Institute, Keystone, Southeast Mental Health, City/County Alcohol & Drug Program, and Behavioral Management Services.) Most resources available are for non-target out-patient services and emergency services are very limited. The Community Mental Health Centers target kids with serious emotional disorders and adults with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI). Chemical Dependency counselors are good at going into incarceration settings and working with clients. In addition, he has pointed out there is a lack of services for sex offenders and feels this is a very important component for the reentry program. Sees case management as a “systems of care” approach to have one plan that works for all disciplines.

Mark Lauseng SDHD – There is a barrier for ex-felons releasing from prison who are trying to access low-income housing. There are federal requirements with restrictions; but landlords turn many ex-felons down for housing even though there are some who are eligible.

Gib Sudbeck & Jeff Bathke DHS – Bridging the gap can be expanded. Once it is known that an inmate will be released to the community, a letter should be sent out to local groups to help establish a connection before they are released. There are social groups and civic organizations the inmate can join. Offering help with the FAFSA before they leave prison may be beneficial otherwise once they leave the prison, they may never try to access it.

Amy Iversen-Pollreisz DHS – Reiterated Terry's comments where we should tie systems together and determine what the individual inmates needs are and getting a support system in place before they are released. When new needs come up are they being addressed before its too late and the individual is back in prison. Focus on individual response to failure, not a blanket approach.

Next Meeting

January 6, 2009. Time yet to be determined.

Robyn Seibel, Corrections Specialist 10/08/09