Prisoner Rehabilitation-The Role of the Custodial Institution

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Introduction

Over the past decade the Queensland Department of Corrective Services has successfully become a leader in the provision of safe and secure containment through the implementation of new infrastructure and cutting edge technologies. Building on this strong foundation we are now focused on providing better access to meaningful rehabilitation opportunities for all offenders.

Correctional administrators and the judiciary have long recognised the importance of offender rehabilitation. In Queensland, the enacting of the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* enshrined in legislation the principle that Courts may impose sentences specifically to aid offender rehabilitation. However, well before that time Courts were considering rehabilitation when sentencing offenders (R v Bojovic [1999] QCA 206). Similarly, correctional administrators have traditionally valued rehabilitation programs, with 1896 heralding the introduction of a prisoner education program in Queensland (Government Statistician's Office, 1998). Again, this occurred well before corrective services in Queensland were given a legislative mandate through the *Corrective Services Act 2000* to engage in rehabilitative endeavours.

Despite a perception that community attitudes are becoming more punitive it can be stated that there remains strong community expectations that corrective services should be about rehabilitation as well as punishment. The time that offenders spend with us, either under community supervision or in custody must be utilised productively to promote change.

Corrections is literally the end of the line for some of the most isolated and disadvantaged sections of our community and as providers of correctional services there is no control over the who is placed under corrective service's jurisdiction. However as providers of correctional services we have the opportunity to engage these people. Corrective services can provide a place where rehabilitation efforts of many organisations and services can come together in a co-ordinated manner to address the needs of offenders and enhance community safety by assisting to prevent future criminal behaviour.

The Role of Corrections

Traditionally imprisonment was an exercise primarily in segregation and incapacitation. Prisons in the 16th and 17th century tended to be places where people were held before trial or while awaiting punishment. The principle of deterrence was the main aim during this time and punishment tended to be a public event designed to shame the offender and deter others from such behaviour. Prison was not generally used as a punishment in its own right (Howard League of Penal Reform, 2005).

Historically it has been the poorest and most disadvantaged elements of society that have experienced imprisonment. Most of those held in prisons have usually been petty offenders, vagrants and the disorderly local poor (Howard League, 2005).

During the 1800's prominent prison reformers undertook significant work with existing penal systems which established many practices still in use within correctional systems today. These included paid staff, outside inspection, adequate diet and provision of basic conditions for prisoners. Penal reform at this time also established the practice of separating men and women and children (Howard League, 2005).

At the beginning of the 19th century the principle of rehabilitation was gaining popular support primarily as a result of the influence of religion on punishment. It was believed that offenders could gain personal redemption and become productive members of society. During this period, the control of prisons become a state government function rather than a local policing function (Howard League, 2005).

However, in the past 30 years correctional administrators throughout the world have witnessed many changes and indeed challenges to the ethos of rehabilitation. In the 1970s the rehabilitation tide turned after New York sociologist Robert Martinson (1974) concluded from his review of 231 studies conducted between 1945 and 1967 that rehabilitation programs had "no appreciable effect on recidivism". Martinson's work was widely interpreted as 'nothing works' when it comes to offender rehabilitation (Howells & Day, 1999).

With the notion of rehabilitation seemingly discredited, criminal justice systems began embracing retribution as their underpinning philosophy (Braithwaite & Pettit, 1990). Criminal justice policy in the late 1970s and early 1980s consequently shifted to a 'get tough' approach (Cullen & Gendreau, 1988).

This was a time of significant unrest in prison populations and increased judicial intervention in the administration of prison systems (Zdenkowski, 2000). During this period there were also a number of commissions of inquiry and other governmental investigations examining the administration of corrections, court action by prisoners became commonplace and there was increasing pressure for corrections to become more transparent to public and

government oversight (Dawes & Grant, 2002). Some of the significant changes occurring Australia wide during the 1970s included the repealing of civil dead provisions, establishment of voting rights, right to marry, temporary leave of absence programs and remission for good behaviour. The workforce of prisons also began to change during this period with the introduction of female staff and professional positions such as social workers, welfare and education officers introduced (Lynn and Armstrong, 1996).

It is noteworthy that in Queensland the mid-1980s saw the creation of a ministerial portfolio primarily dedicated to corrective services; previously responsibility had come within either justice or welfare portfolios.

The rapidly increasing prison population both here and abroad led correctional administrators during the 1980s to focus their attention primarily on prison management. Significant challenges for this era included the HIV/AIDs epidemic and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. With correctional administrators searching for cost effective means of managing increasing numbers of prisoners "corporatism became influential in prison management" (Hall, 1996, p.402).

In Queensland, the notion of corporatism was reflected in Kennedy's (1988) *Commission of Review into Corrective Services in Queensland* report which recommended both the merging of the Queensland Prison Service and Queensland Probation and Parole Service into an entity to be known as the Queensland Corrective Services Commission, and the privatisation of Borallon Prison (as it was then known). Corporatisation of prisons in Australia commenced when, as Kennedy (1988) recommended, Borallon Correctional Centre began operations in January 1990 as the country's first private prison. Since then private prisons, or the privatisation of specific prison services, have become a feature corrections in many Australian jurisdictions.

Prison populations throughout Australia and many other western countries again burgeoned during the 1990s with a return to punitive criminal justice policies. Political parties increasingly began to electioneer on 'law and order' platforms in order to meet public demand for tough policies brought about by "heightened political and media interest in crime" (Weatherburn, 2002, p.137). The net result was an increase in Australia's prison population due to legislative and policy changes which favoured imprisonment and longer prison sentences (Carcach & Grant, 2000).

In 1998 a Commission of Inquiry was established to review the operations of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission and Queensland's correctional legislation. In delivering his findings the chief executive of the review team noted that:

> "In the past five years there has been a strong and growing perception within the community that the level and gravity of crime has increased……sensationalised reporting and an increased awareness of crime within the community have promoted successive governments

to act by providing increasingly lengthy and punitive sentences through the Courts……

The corrective services system has had to bear the brunt of the community's demand for law and order while coping with a government focus on efficiency and competitive business management techniques…. (Peach, 1998, p.2)

In implementing the recommendations of the review, the Queensland government established what is today known as the Department of Corrective Services, and rehabilitation is again becoming a key tenet of correctional philosophy.

Queensland: Managing Correctional Trends

The criminal justice system comprises of three very different functions, police, courts and corrective services. The guiding principle of through-care for offenders is about management of persons who come into contact with the justice system in ways which support their eventual re-integration back into the community.

Queensland Criminal Justice System – 2004/05

Police	**Courts**	**Proven Guilty Custodial orders**	**Corrective Services (Custodial)**
Number of Adult Offenders **205,614**	*Defendants Finalised* **140,110**	*Defendants Finalised* **9,204**	*Average Daily State* **5,329**
% of Qld population **5.2%**	*% of Qld population* **3.6%**	*% of Qld population* **0.2%**	*% of Qld population* **0.13%**

Proven Guilty Non-Custodial orders	**Corrective Services (Non-Custodial)**
Defendants Finalised **114,742**	*Average Daily State* **11,550**
% of Qld population **2.9%**	*% of Qld population* **0.29%**

* Statistics from Queensland Government Population Projections, 2006 Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland, Queensland Police Service Annual Statistical Review 2004/05, ABS Criminal Courts 2004-05 (4513.0), Queensland Department of Corrective Services Annual Report 2004/05

Largely as a consequence of the 'get tough' policies of the 1990s Australia's prison populations have seen dramatic levels of increase over the past decade. Between 1995 and 2005 Australia's prison population increased by 45.5%. Over that same period, Queensland's prison population increased by 86.6% (Carcach & Grant, 1999; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

Between 2001 and 2005 alone Queensland's prison population increased by 13.1% (Department of Corrective Services, 2005). The increase in the State's prison population has far exceeded Queensland's level of population increase, which between 2000 and 2005 was 2.2% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

Increasing prisoner numbers is a trend evident in many countries comparable to Australia. According to statistics obtained by the University of London's International Centre for Prison Studies (2006) between 1995 and 2001 the prison populations of the United Kingdom and the United States of America increased by 30.1% and 23.7% respectively.

In addition to a rise in prisoner numbers, the Queensland Department of Corrective Services is managing an increasingly complex and diverse prisoner population. The numbers of remand, short sentence, female and aged prisoners have all increased over the past decade.

Both the number of remand prisoners and the length of time remand prisoners spend in custody increased between 1995 and 2005. Between 1995 and 2005 the proportion of prisoners on remand in Queensland increased from 11.4% to 20.9%, an increase which near mirrors that observed in Australia's total prison population (Carcach & Grant, 2000; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005). The average length of time prisoners are spending on remand has also increased. In 1998 the median length of time Queensland prisoners spent on remand was 12.4 weeks (Carcach & Grant, 2000); by 2005 it had increased to 15.6 weeks (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

Queensland's sentenced prisoner population is increasingly being comprised of short sentence prisoners. As at 30 June 2005 almost a quarter (23.6%) of sentenced prisoners in Queensland were serving sentences of less than 12 months; 37.8% of sentenced prisoners were serving sentences of under two years duration (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005). Departmental statistics clearly show that female, Indigenous and younger prisoners are more likely to be serving a short sentence (Correctional Information System, unpublished). Previous unpublished research undertaken by the Department of Corrective Services shows that of all prisoners received into custody, that is both sentenced and remand prisoners, approximately 70% are serving sentences of less than two years; more than half serve sentences of less than six months.

As at 30 June 2005 females comprised 6.7% of Queensland's prison population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005). However, the number of females being incarcerated in Queensland has risen steeply since 1995. In Queensland between 1995 and 2005 there was a 246.2% increase in the

number of female prisoners, compared to an 80.5% increase in the number of male prisoners (Government Statistician's Office, 1998; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

Indigenous people continue to be over-represented in Queensland's correctional facilities. As at 30 June 2005, Indigenous people comprised 24.9% of Queensland's prisoner population (Department of Corrective Services, 2005). However, 31.1% of female remand prisoners are Indigenous.

The average age of Australia's prison population has been increasing, consistent with the ageing of Australian population in general (Carcach & Grant, 2000). Between 1995 and 2005 there was a 93.9% increase in the proportion of Queensland prisoners aged 55 years and older (Queensland Corrective Services Commission; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005). As a consequence, the median age of male prisoners in Queensland has risen to 32.0 years, with a median age of 33.0 years for female prisoners (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005). On 30 June 2005 there were 182 prisoners in Queensland aged over 60 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

The complexity and diversity of Queensland's prison population is further compounded by high levels of intellectual disability and mental illness. The Department of Corrective Services Intellectual Disability Survey (2002) conservatively estimated that at least 1.5% and possibly up to 14.8% of Queensland prisoners have an intellectual disability. In 1996 Queensland Health estimated that between 7% and 10% of Queensland prisoners had mental health issues (Queensland Health, 1996). However this is likely to be a gross underestimate, with more recent research finding that approximately half of prisoners suffer from a mental illness. Butler and Allnutt (2003) found that during a 12 month period 46% of prisoner receptions in New South Wales suffered with a mental illness. Similarly, Hockings and colleagues (2002) found that 57.1% of female prisoners in Queensland reported having been diagnosed with a mental illness, the most common of which was depression.

Resource Management

Crime costs the Australian community approximately $18 billion per year (Chisholm, 2000). Contributing to community safety by rehabilitating offenders and diverting low-risk offenders from jail and helping to break the cycle of re-offending has enormous benefits to the community as well as financial benefits to the Government.

What is important for society as a whole, and policy makers in particular, is to ensure that scarce tax dollars, that could be used for a host of competing alternatives, are efficiently allocated to effective organisational business processes and policies. Financial resources must be allocated in such a way to maximise the return (lower crime) per dollar spent.

Donato and Shanahan (1999) investigated the costs and benefits of a representative, rather than a single "real life" sex-offender treatment program.

This consisted of a combination of cognitive behavioural therapy with relapse prevention. The results from this study, based upon the assumption of one victim, indicated that the program was cost beneficial. Best estimates of the level of effectiveness, in terms of reduced recidivism, resulted in a benefit-cost ratio of 7.47. Thus, for each dollar spent on the program, society would gain roughly $7.5 dollars worth of benefits.

Currently public order and safety amounts to 9.4% of the total Queensland state budget. Of this 15% (416.2 million) is allocated to correctional services. This is equivalent to the approximate budgets for building 11 primary schools, providing 2500 frontline child safety officers or 5000 community mental health positions (Qld Ministerial Portfolio Statements 2006-07).

 Since 2004, the Department has undertaken targeted development of a positive relationship with Queensland Treasury to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the pressures the Department faces in being the end of the line for offenders progressing through the criminal justice system.

Queensland Public Order and Safety Budget Allocations (2006/07)
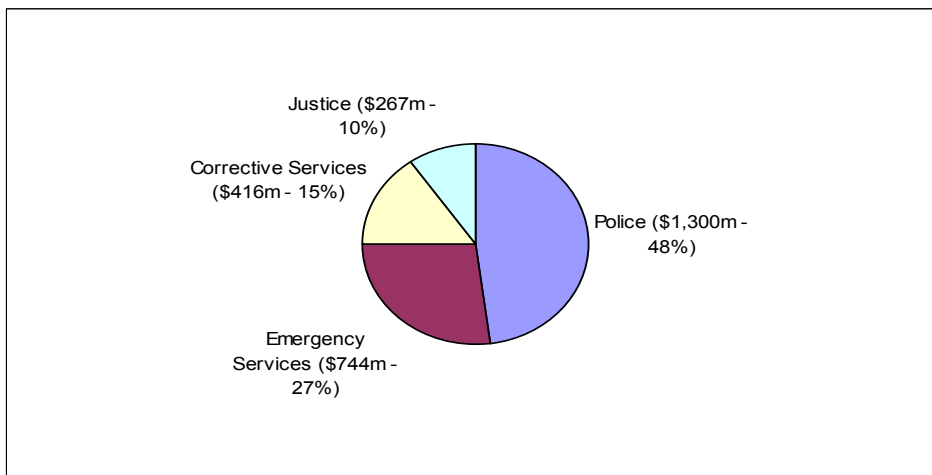
The daily cost per prisoner per day in secure correctional centres was $147.60 per day compared to a national average of $177.40. Whilst the daily cost of managing an offender in prison in Queensland is lower than in many other Australian jurisdictions it is still much less costly to supervise offenders in the community than in secure custody. The cost of supervising an offender in the community (per day) is approximately $10.71.

Since the 2004 organisational re-structure the Department has received significant increases in resources in all of its key areas of facility-based containment, community-based supervision and correctional intervention.

Custodial corrections has received increased capacity through the funding for the refurbishment of Sir David Longland Correctional Centre, full utilisation of capacity at Woodford, Maryborough and Brisbane Women's correctional centres, expansions at Townsville and Arthur Gorrie correctional centres and the construction of a new women's facility at Townsville. These projects

amounted to an increase in the Department's capital works budget from $46 million in 2005/06 to $236 million in 2006/07.

In terms of community-based supervision, the most significant reform initiative in community corrections since 1988 was funded in the 2006/07 budget. Five million in funding was provided to establish a new model of community-based supervision.

The Department engaged in significant consultation and review of the trends involved in the decline of the use of community based orders. The Department of Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Treasury a range of other key government agencies involved with offenders such as Housing and Police as well as a wide range of community groups were involved in the development of new models for community-based supervision of offenders.

The new probation and parole model will provide increased supervision and surveillance of offenders in the community and successful completion of orders and provision of increased rehabilitation opportunities should also have an effect on reducing prisoner numbers. From 2007-08, $10 million will be provided annually in increased resources.

In the area of correctional intervention, services for prisoner mental health have been increased in partnership with Queensland Health with an additional $2.4 million in the 2006/07 financial year. In addition, $0.58 million has been provided to assist with additional health and medical resources for aged and infirm prisoners. This was in addition to previous funding of 5.9 million for enhanced capacity in the delivery of sex offender programs and 1.6 million to revise and replace all the offender criminogenic programs.

New Directions for Queensland Corrective Services

Queensland Corrective Services is committed to protecting the community through safe and humane containment and by giving offenders skills and education. New strategies developed by Queensland Corrective Services include a revitalised focus on non-custodial supervision of offenders, significant reform of correctional intervention and significant legislative initiatives all of which provide new directions for Queensland in the management of offenders.

The Department's strategic emphasis has been on providing a "through-care" approach to offender management. The underlying philosophy of through-care is that recidivism can be reduced by giving offenders a "whole of sentence" plan that starts when they enter the correctional system and continues after they have been released into the community.

Integrated Offender Management System

The Integrated Offender Management System supports the Integrated Offender Management Strategy which was launched in 2004. The strategy involved the redesign and realignment of offender management practices to achieve an integrated approach across all areas of correctional service

delivery. The strategy's key principle is about the practical implementation of through-care for offenders. The Department identified that such re-structures required support by information systems to provide an integrated view of the offender and have the capacity to exchange data and information between different sections of the Department and with other criminal justice agencies.

The Integrated Offender Management System was a strategic initiative implemented in 2005 to improve offender management through the integration of operational practices supported by shared assessment tools and information systems. The benefits for the Department from the introduction of this integrated information systems has been improved consistency in procedures across the Department, improved information sharing, less duplication of processes and that relevant information from all functions is accessible to all authorised staff enabling better decision-making and overall offender management.

Improved management of activities and functions provided by the integrated approach to offender management will contribute to a reduction in re-offending by improving through-care. Any reduction in re-offending contributes to the improvement of community safety.

The integrated Offender Management System positions the Department of Corrective Services for participation in the Queensland Government's initiative for the exchange of information within the criminal justice system through a shared data initiative, the Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS).

Community-based Sentencing (Probation and Parole)

Responding to the ever increasing complex needs of the courts, in the past community corrections in Queensland has attempted to diversify its services without any significant change to its business model or resource base. As a result the business model merged assessment, case management, compliance and intervention functions into the role of one community correctional officer. This resulted in conflicting functions for officers, and reduced the overall effectiveness of services.

The new Probation and Parole Service provides a new business model for community supervision orders and post prison orders that minimises the risks that offenders present to the community. The new Probation and Parole model proposes a re-developed case management focus as the central co-ordinating function and a dedicated compliance and surveillance function to separate the regulation functions of probation and parole from offender supervision and ensure an offender centred approach. Increased intervention capacity will be developed through the provision of dedicated offending behaviour program staff and infrastructure.

Effective service delivery is based on translating offender needs into intervention objectives and then motivating and engaging offenders to comply with plans for meeting these objectives. The overall aim is to facilitate the successful completion of a community-based order. Additional difficulties

faced by models of offender management are that the user group receiving the services is not voluntarily requesting the intervention rather they are mandated in some form. Whilst research suggested that mandated services are as effective as non-mandated services it notes that more support and different relationship structures between the user and service provider are required (Yazar, 2004).

Evidence suggests that the philosophies and attitudes held by staff regarding their role strongly influences the overall effectiveness of intervention with an offender. If staff are primarily compliance focused overall intervention is less likely to be effective than if staff are focused on meeting the identified needs of offenders. High levels of communication and interpersonal skills are required and there needs to be strong governance/reporting structures built into any processes to ensure consistent implementation. Finally, processes for ongoing monitoring must be part of organisational processes to ensure continued high standards in service delivery (Taxman, 2002).

Induction and Assessment

Timely, relevant measures of offender risk and need at the individual and aggregate levels are essential for the implementation of evidence-based practice in corrections. Assessing offenders in a reliable and valid manner is a prerequisite for the effective management of offenders and the targeted allocation of resources across the model.

Evidence shows the most effective assessment tools to be those that focus on dynamic and static risk factors for offending behaviour, profile the needs of offenders and have been validated on similar populations. The research also notes that assessment and induction processes should be supported by sufficiently detailed and accurately written procedures to ensure effective implementation (NIC, 2004) .

Research clearly shows that offender assessments are most reliable and valid when staff are formally trained to administer such tools. In the new probation and parole service being established in Queensland, assessment and service provision functions have been separated from offender supervision. This allows practitioners to develop in-depth competencies in specific functions leading to greater effectiveness in delivering those tasks, gains in efficiency for the organisation and a more developed career stream for staff (Levine and Fleming, 1986). Consistency is greater across the State as fewer staff are conducting assessments and these staff are provided with better guidelines and have increased objectivity as they are not involved in the provision of interventions or direct offender management.

Within the new model all offenders having contact with the probation and parole service either direct from court or via post-prison release, will pass through the induction and assessment area. In effect assessment will become a core practice that guides decision-making and resource allocation across the other areas of the model.

Offender Management

The majority of research in relation to direct offender management models has occurred on issues related to caseload size and levels of surveillance and monitoring. Little research has been completed on case management, risk assessment or models testing different philosophies of supervision.

Existing offender management models presume that offenders have the capacity and skills to make the required behavioural changes necessary to prevent re-offending. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that in most cases offenders do not have these basic skills. As such behavioural interventions are one of the major characteristics of an effective offender management model. Behavioural interventions include the modelling of desired behaviour, providing opportunities to practise the behaviour, teaching relapse prevention measures and providing appropriate feedback (that is, reinforcement of pro-social behaviours and discouragement of antisocial behaviours).

Offender management should have three main objectives. Firstly, supervision should engage the offender in a process of change. Secondly, it should assist the offender in understanding his/her behaviour and thirdly, provide assistance in managing his/her behaviour. In probation and parole service, functions such as the construction and review of offender management plans, arranging and coordinating elements of supervision, monitoring progress, incorporating feedback, maintaining the engagement of the offender in the overall process and deciding on required enforcement action to increase compliance should all be integral parts of the offender management process.

There is a considerable amount of literature available from the mental health and social work fields where the concept and practice of case management originated (Holt, 2000). Establishing a good relationship with offenders and then providing structured direction are key to reducing recidivism. Recent evaluations of practice within probation and parole across different jurisdictions have found that many probation and parole officers do not have adequate time to focus upon these core functions. Bonta et al (2000) recently found that the average length of session between the probation officer and the probationer was slightly more than 22 minutes. Given that in most jurisdictions probation and parole staff also have to undertake a large number of other activities (example, making referrals, administrative and compliance work) a model which allows for more time in direct contact with offenders should increase the overall effectiveness of community supervision.

If increasing offenders' motivation to undertake behavioural change is important in reducing recidivism, factors that influence motivation need to be identified. Research shows any processes in which the worker collaborates in identifying mutually agreed-upon goals increases effectiveness, particularly a focus on linking the level of service to the capacity of the client and building in a process of progressive skill attainment aids in increasing self-efficacy, reduces information overload and increases success.

Personal contact facilitated through regular reporting by the offender provides the means to monitor behavioural change and supply direction in relation to the successful completion of the order. Contacts can take the form of face-to-face interactions, telephone calls, collateral contacts (example, employer, family member, sponsor etc) and notification and contact with service agencies (example, drug treatment, mental health etc). Frequently the assumption is that the number of contacts should be increased the higher the risk posed by an offender. However, research has shown that it is the interaction that occurs as part of that contact which is important (O'Leary & Clear (1984). Surveillance focused models have shown no effectiveness in reducing recidivism. Models must contain elements of intervention and behaviour change modelling to have any effect on reducing recidivism.

Firstly, a contact should be focused on developing and maintaining a professional relationship addressing the needs of offenders and the causes of their offending behaviour. Secondly, the contact should be used to match services to the identified needs of an offender and assist the offender in accessing these services. Finally, the contact should be used to implement a focus upon compliance to new strategies of behavioural change and any stipulated conditions. The proposed model would alter the basic focus of existing reporting requirements by focusing on it as an intervention, instead of as a tool to monitor compliance (Taxman, 2002).

In models of probation and parole the responsibility to bring about change rests quite heavily with the offender but without a consequent acknowledgment of the capacity building and support required by offenders to implement behavioural change. Commonly, methods of linking offenders to services entails telling offenders where they can go to receive assistance in the community and possibly checking with the offenders to see if they have accessed the agency. Research has found in evaluations of service delivery in probation and parole very few examples of an officer contacting the agency directly or networking with the agency to incorporate the required support in relation to the learning or assistance received by the offender (Bonta et al, 2000).

Providing information is also important in the case management process. Providing feedback to offenders regarding their progress across all areas of intervention (including external services) builds accountability and is associated with enhanced motivation for change, lower rates of attrition, and improved successful outcomes on a range of measures.

Increasing positive reinforcement and strengthening the focus on intervening with offenders via supervision should not be done at the expense of swift, certain and appropriate responses for negative and unacceptable behaviour. Research indicates that strong support and supervision practices combined with exposure to clear and consistently enforced rules usually results in increased compliance (Burke, 2001).

This is particularly important for probation and parole services in Queensland as anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a lack of consistency and equity

regarding the management of non-compliance. This can be attributed to the different philosophies, supervision styles and interpretation of agency policies by correctional staff which can lead to unintentional disparities in responding to breaches (Burke, 2001).

Under the current mode of practice probation and parole officers juggle a dual role of the helper and the enforcer. This involves engaging in a range of surveillance techniques as well as providing therapeutic counselling. The new model separates the functions of compliance from case management to obtain objectivity, resulting in greater consistency in practice.

The 'what works' literature suggests that offenders who fail to successfully complete community-based orders tend to do worse and re-offend than those who successfully complete. This analysis was supported in research regarding the relationship between enforcement and reconviction (May & Wardell, 2001).

Research notes that over three quarters of offenders breached at court were reconvicted within two years (Hearnden & Millie, 2003). Those breached at court were more likely to be reconvicted than those who completed their orders successfully or had orders terminated early for good behaviour. This research reinforces that the use of breach action as last recourse may have a positive effect on reducing reconviction. All literature emphasises public safety as the highest priority in all decisions relating to managing non-compliance (Burke, 2001).

The enforcement of community penalties is an important factor in maintaining the confidence of the judiciary and the public in community sentences as an acceptable form of punishment. The Department has engaged stakeholders, particularly the judiciary in promotion of the new model.

Whole of Government Initiative

The Collaborative Offender Response Taskforce (CORT) is an initiative being developed as part of the new Probation and Parole model. CORT is based upon the United Kingdom's Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which grew out of the closer working relationship developed between the police and probation services in the late 1990s.

The MAPPA model through the *Criminal Justice Act 2003* places a duty on the Police, Probation and Prison Services in England and Wales to work together to co-ordinate and manage dangerous offenders in the community better, with other relative public services.

CORT is a collaborative arrangement that will be established by Queensland Corrective Services with the Queensland Police Service to manage the risk posed by sexual and violent offenders on community based orders.

While the primary agencies involved in a CORT panel remain Queensland Corrective Services and Queensland Police Service, a variety of other

agencies may also be involved in the panel process. These include the Department of Justice and Attorney General, Department of Health, Department of Housing, Department of Child Safety, Department of Communities and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy. A CORT panel is a formal forum in which agencies are able to bring specialist knowledge, information and capabilities that will benefit public safety and impact on an offender's management plan. Either the Department of Corrective Services or Queensland Police Service will have the capacity to call or chair a CORT panel.

Indigenous Over-representation Reduction

In Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 3.5 per cent of the general population but nearly one quarter (23.4 per cent) of the prison population and 12 per cent of offenders in the Probation and Parole Service.

The Department has continued to pursue strategies to address over-representation including:

- Providing support and specialist advice to Local Justice Groups and the courts, including the Murri Courts
- Utilising justice groups to provide supervision for Probation and parole offenders
- Consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations, communities and elder representatives in relation to policy and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders
- Employing Indigenous counsellors and/or Family Support Officers at all secure corrective services facilities to provide welfare services and conduct programs for Indigenous people
- Developing culturally appropriate rehabilitation programs including the *Ending Offending Program* targeting problem drinking and offending behaviour and *Ending Family Violence Program* and the *Indigenous Sex Offender Program*
- Strengthening Work Outreach Camps (WORC) to provide further opportunities for the Department to work with local people in the delivery of community projects; and
- Contributing to the Government's whole of government response to the Cape York Justice Study – Meeting Challenges Making Choices.

In 2001 the Queensland Government commissioned the *Cape York Justice Study* which investigated the serious problems facing Cape York communities. The ensuing recommendations were consistent with recommendations from the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* in outlining the need for the expansion of probation and parole services throughout remote areas with significant Indigenous populations. This, it argued, would enable greater use of orders such as Intensive Corrections Orders enabling the diversion of Indigenous offenders from custody.

The Probation and Parole Service represents a further strengthening of these strategies and represents a substantial commitment to furthering the Department's obligations under the *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement*.

The key principle behind the Probation and Parole Service strategy is to address Indigenous over-representation by establishing a sustainable presence in rural and remote Indigenous communities by improving service delivery and expanding resources. This increased presence will improve rehabilitation services and develop local capacity for supervision and delivery of culturally aware programs for Indigenous communities.

In the past a lack of funding and other obstacles to providing services to rural and remote areas has limited the Department's capacity to provide adequate supervision, surveillance and case management services in these areas. With the roll-out of the new Probation and Parole Service a permanent presence of supervision and program staff will be provided at Thursday Island (3 staff), Doomadgee (2 staff), Normanton (1 staff) and Mornington Island (2 staff). This represents a significant improvement in service delivery for these areas which previously received supervision and program visits no more than once or twice a month (including court circuit visits).

In order to divert Indigenous offenders from prison, the new model has been designed to provide adequate supervision levels to allow for the expanded use of Intensive Corrections Orders to all Indigenous communities. This includes the capacity to provide twice-weekly supervision with a component of Community Service.

Improved Services to the Courts

A key to ensuring the success of the new probation and parole model is increasing the quality of engagement with the courts. To ensure this a Court Advisory Service is proposed to maintain consistent, high quality breach management practices; a Judicial Liaison Unit is proposed to provide a communication channel between the Department and courts; and a system of Court Liaison Officers is proposed to provide a daily support function with a focus on Indigenous offenders.

Under the current model, each Probation and parole officer handles his or her own breach processes. Inconsistent approaches to breach management and prosecutions have lead to varied standards of practice across the State. Consultations with magistrates have indicated that the time breaches take to return to court is too long. The concern is that delays undermine the deterrent value of non-compliance as well as the authority of the court. It is proposed to place a professional prosecutor in each region. This will improve the Department's training capacity, quality of court briefs and provide a professional prosecution service that will be available throughout the State.

Judicial Liaison Unit

Consultation with the judiciary has clearly highlighted the need to provide regular and reliable strategic information to keep the judiciary, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Public Defender better informed about the Department's services and community-based orders. At present there is no forum for the Department to effectively update the judiciary about strategic or operational changes. For instance, there is a clear desire by the judiciary to gain a better understanding of the rehabilitative programs offered by the Department.

The Judicial Liaison Unit will provide an interface between the Department and the judiciary and will provide up-to-date information specific to each judge and magistrates' jurisdiction. The unit would also be responsible for providing consistent and standardised information to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Public Defender. Additionally, it would provide information to Regional Directors and operational data to Area Managers to assist in their ongoing operational liaison with the judiciary.

Court Liaison Officers

Integral to regaining the confidence of the judiciary is providing services that assist or enhance the daily business of the court. In Brisbane, The Probation and Parole Service has recognised this and provides a Court Liaison Officer in the Brisbane Magistrates Court. Along with providing a daily support function to all courts, this position provides significant support for the Brisbane Murri Court by providing accurate and timely pre-sentence advice in consultation with Community Justice Groups.

Due to the success of this position it is proposed that this role be replicated in the Northern and Far Northern Regions to provide Court Liaison Officers in both the Cairns and Townsville Magistrates' Courts. Both these courts have high percentages of Indigenous offenders.

Correctional Intervention

While correctional administrators were struggling during the 1980s to cope with the burgeoning prison population, scholars again turned their attention to rehabilitation. Thornton (1987) published a re-analysis of Robert Martinson's data and concluded that the 'nothing works' thesis was unfounded. Also in 1987 Gendreau and Ross reviewed over 200 rehabilitation studies published between 1981 and 1987 and concluded that rehabilitation of offenders could be accomplished, with significant reductions in recidivism rates noticed.

Increasing budget constraints, increasing prisoner numbers and increasing costs of operation have occurred world-wide. As a result there is an increased focus on the need to reduce recidivism with reported lifetime rates of approximately sixty percent of all offenders experiencing repeat episodes of

contact with corrective services (ABS, 2004). Correctional intervention through programs and services assist rehabilitation by challenging anti-social behaviour, attitudes, values and beliefs and by addressing the multiple factors (risks, needs and responsivity) that contribute directly to criminal behaviour.

A comparative analysis of Australian correctional intervention services identify that all explicitly state a commitment to facilitate rehabilitation through the provision of transitional or integration services (Borzycki, 2005). However the nature of working in an integrated manner and the need for implementation support has not previously been prioritised with a past focus on content and a "silo mentality" in certain locations and with certain providers including internal Departmental staff (IPAA National (2002).

Part of the problem remains the pressure to provide programs and services to offenders without adequate assessment of their appropriateness for each program or service. The research reveals that the effectiveness of offender rehabilitative programs is maximised with adherence to some basic principles of intervention, that is, risk, need and responsivity (Andrews and Bonta, 1998).

The Department is faced with growing challenges to its rehabilitation service delivery. The demand for programs has increased markedly, largely through the growth in prisoner numbers and diversity of offender needs including mental illness, intellectual and physical disabilities. Programs and services are required to be delivered in varied and diverse environments, ranging from custodial centres to remote Aboriginal communities.

Offender Intervention Programs

Although there is no reliable evidence to show imprisonment reduces the likelihood of subsequent recidivism, support for the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in reducing offender recidivism has been accumulating for more than 30 years (Andrews and Bonta, 2003).

Throughout the 1990s Canadian researchers Andrews and Bonta, often in collaboration with various colleagues, published widely, articulating the psychology behind criminal conduct and the characteristics of effective rehabilitation. Their research, and that of many other scholars, has clearly shown that correctional treatment programs can reduce recidivism when programs are "well grounded in psychological theory and/or research" (Howells & Day, 1999). In what has been termed the 'what works' literature, it has been demonstrated that to be effective offender programs need to: (i) be directed to offenders who are at most risk of re-offending, (ii) target the criminogenic needs of offenders, (iii) be tailored to the offender's learning abilities, (iv) maintain best practice for offender treatment programs, and (v) be undertaken in a context which allows for discretion on the part of professional staff such as psychologists (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990; Andrews, 1995; Andrews & Hoge, 1995; Andrews & Bonta, 1998).

A recent international review of the efficacy of sex offender programs summarised 43 studies of over 9000 participants (Hanson, Gordon, Harris, Marques, Murphy, Quinsey, & Seto, 2002). Even with the inclusion of programs of dubious merit, the review reported a significant reduction in sexual offending recidivism from 17% to 10% and general offending recidivism from 51% to 32%. This is an important finding given that sex offenders are more likely to re-offend by committing offences other than sex offences.

Based on the two year recidivism rates provided in the Report on Government Services 2004, even with a modest effect of 10% reduction in re-offending, prisoners who participate in a rehabilitation program could have their 'return to prison' rates reduced from 32% to 22%, and their return rates to prison or probation and parole reduced from 49% to 39%. With the same rationale, offenders leaving probation and parole could have their return to prison or probation and parole reduced from 16% to 6%.

The Department continues to improve service delivery and the focus on intervention to assist rehabilitation. A major strategic agenda of reform in this area is seeking to improve the use of limited resources and undertake extensive evaluation of existing programs and service to provide the required evidence to Queensland Treasury in relation to the contribution intervention services can make to successful reduction of recidivism.

Characteristics of Effective Programs

Building on evidence of the effectiveness of rehabilitation, treatment programs consistent with 'what works' principles noted previously have been shown to be much more effective than those that do not have those characteristics (Andrews and Bonta, 2003).

These evidence-based principles, of which five principally inform rehabilitation policy and practice in corrections agencies in Canada, the USA, the UK, New Zealand and Australia, underpin the Department's Integrated Offender Management Strategy and guide the Department's offender management practices.

Evaluations of the Department's major rehabilitation programs in 2002 including - Cognitive Skills, Violence Intervention, Anger Management, Community Corrections Sex Offender, Sex Offender Intervention, and Substance Abuse: Preventing and Managing Relapse - were completed. Evaluators reported poor congruency with the principles of effective programs and identified several program issues that were likely have a negative impact on program effectiveness.

Through a recent strategic project titled the Program Improvement Project, substantial progress has been made towards revision and replacement of these programs and implementing rehabilitation program practice consistent with the 'what works' principles of effective programs. Many of the systems and procedures needed to support these principles have been developed and

put in place. A comprehensive training agenda has been undertaken in relation to the new programs.

The research suggests that there are minimum levels of dosage required to reduce recidivism, which is dependant on the offenders risk and need (Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005). The appropriate intensity of offending behaviour programs for high risk offenders has been suggested to be upwards of 100 more contact hours (Lipsey, 1995). The new suite of offender intervention programs now established in 2006 meet these best practice guidelines and are supported by new governance, training and on-going support mechanisms to improve practice in the delivery of intervention programs.

New program referral guidelines are informed by these principles and ensure that all intervention intensity matches re-offending risk and targets assessed criminogenic needs. Given the intensive nature of the new programs, evidence demonstrates that for offenders who do not have identified high risk/need are more effectively serviced through other rehabilitative opportunities including participation in literacy and numeracy courses; adult and vocational education and training; prisoner employment; and services provided by external agencies.

Offender Services

Offenders are more likely to be less educated and have less stable employment histories. Having a criminal record, particularly imprisonment, can contribute to poor labour market outcomes, such as unemployment and low wages. Research in Australia has noted that adult offenders have average school leaving age of Year 10 or below, training levels well below the Australian average, and greater rates of unemployment.

Reports by the Australian Council for Social Service (2002) and the Australian Government Productivity Commission (2004) highlight the significant impact of unemployment upon the health of individuals, on opportunities to seek affordable housing, and upon the likelihood of committing crime. The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA, 2001) has highlighted how prisoners and ex-prisoners face employment discrimination and reduced job opportunities due to limited levels of education and training (Callan & Gardner, 2005).

Another feature of prison populations world-wide is the over-representation of Indigenous peoples in correctional systems. Indigenous prisoners are also likely to have even worse education and training deficits than non-Indigenous prisoners. They usually have less than Year 10 education and little to no training or skills development prior to incarceration. Indigenous job seekers have unemployment rates of 20% (compared to Queensland average of less than 5%) (Callan & Gardner, 2005).

There is acknowledgement in much of this research that corrective services has an important role to play through the provision of opportunities to address these issues (Callan & Gardner, 2005). A variety of studies have estimated reductions in recidivism of 10% to 60% by providing adult basic education, vocational education and training (VET) and practical experience in skill development. In Queensland, approximately one in five prisoners participates in some form of vocational, education and training (VET) program before release.

Amos, Miller and Drake (2006) conducted a review of corrections industry training programs and found that these programs achieve, on average, a statistically significant 7.8% reduction in recidivism rates of program participants compared to those who do not participate in prison industries. However it is noted that improvements in the integration of accredited training with these practical skill development programs could increase these effects markedly (Callan & Gardner, 2005).

The research indicates that jurisdictions engage in prison industries programs to achieve a number of goals including providing prisoners with a structured day, reducing the operating costs of the prison, providing prisoners with specific work skills, and generating some level of income to off-set the cost to the taxpayer of incarceration (DCS, 2005b). Cox and Carlin (1998) found that prisoners believed involvement in VET provided positive learning experiences, increased personal satisfaction, improved self-esteem and encouraged prisoners to undertake further study. *4% of prisoners believed the skills learned through VET programs would help them to gain employment.

In 2004-05, three quarters of eligible prisoners in Australia were employed, most (43%) in service industries providing essential services within prisons such as cooking, cleaning and maintenance, with 31% engaged in commercial prison industries (SCRGSP, 2006). In Queensland, which accommodated on average 23% of Australia's prisoner population during 2004-2005, 29% of prisoners were employed in commercial industries, compared to 38% employed in service industries (SCRGSP, 2006).

The most successful programs (from recent evaluations) are those which combine in-prison skill development with post-release job search assistance and follow-up support (Strawn, 1999). Queensland's Post Release Employment Assistance Service for Prisoners (PREAP) is an excellent example of such a service. The PREAP program involves individual skills audits and training needs analysis, career path planning, literacy, numeracy assessment and provision of a referral to an external job search provider for post-release employment support, work experience, job search training, and post placement (in external employment) support (Callan & Banks, 2004).

The National Strategy for Vocational education and training for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia (ANTA, 2001) aims to assist and guide correctional administrations to achieve a situation where vocational education and training is an integral part of rehabilitation interventions provided to offenders. Noonan (2004) has noted that how a correctional system views rehabilitation is critical

to the ways in which it supports vocational education and training. With the introduction of a legislative mandate through the *Corrective Services Act 2006* Queensland is seeking to ensure that skills development through vocational education and training, integration with prison industries and post-release support in relation to employment is given priority as a successful intervention preventing re-offending.

External Partnerships

Most correctional research now acknowledges the relevance of partnership models in correctional service delivery given the high co-morbidity of problems in offending populations. A focus on integrated outcomes, with agencies and stakeholders ensuring core delivery within an offender-focused outcome framework would appear likely to be significant more effective in reducing recidivism than previous systems.

Characteristics that have been linked to reductions in recidivism include intervention that attends to extra-personal circumstances, particularly within the family, intervention that is provided outside of formal correctional settings or at least with structural links to community, systematic efforts to integrate offenders into the community through employment, housing, transport and access to services, and the personal qualities of those providing the interventions. Recidivism risk can be further reduced by integrating intervention and supervision efforts across custodial and probation and parole settings (Borzycki, 2005).

The delivery of public services is also often not the sole responsibility of a single department. Increasingly there is a delivery chain of public, private and voluntary organizations who provide different but complimentary aspects of a service. One positive trend that has occurred in is the increased use of integrated, multi-agency partnerships (Borzycki, 2005).

Decisions by one organisation about delivery may restrict or enhance the extent to which other agencies can meet their objectives. This requires careful planning and a willingness to compromise and the development of protocols for dealing with issues such as information sharing, confidentiality and privacy. Where outcomes rely partly on other organisations, it is important to be very clear on responsibility and accountability for each provider and show how it contributes to the whole (Commonwealth Grants Commission, 2004). Documentation clarifying the contributions and expectations of each of the partners is also important to ensure continuity if individual officers change in organisations (Commonwealth Grants Commission, 2004).

Supervised Early Release

Administrative forms of early release such as conditional release and remission are inconsistent with the modern principle that the point at which a prisoner is released should be determined by either the sentencing court or an independent parole board. Early discharge was originally provided for in the

Prisons Act 1890 and subsequently incorporated into the Prisons Act 1958 and the Corrective Services Act 1988.

In other jurisdictions, supervised release is the preferred method for release from custody for both short and longer sentences. In New Zealand, Canada, South Australia, New South Wales and Western Australia, prisoners serving short sentences are paroled after fixed periods without consideration by a parole board, with the non-parole portion of a sentence fixed either by legislation or by a court at the time of sentencing.

Previous research outlined earlier in this paper discussed the trends in the use of short sentences and use of custodial imprisonment in place of community-based supervision. As a world-wide trend, the increase in imprisonment is a reflection of increasing community expectations regarding increased surveillance and supervision of offenders and the need for community safety to be paramount in criminal justice decision-making. Observations about the appropriateness of correctional managers administratively altering sentences set by courts have been made by various commissions of review into corrective services. For example, the *Commission of Review into Corrective Services in Queensland 1988* recommended the complete abolishment of remission (Kennedy, 1988).

Key changes under the Corrective Services Act 2006

The *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* has been amended to provide that a court will be required to fix a date for the supervised release to parole (court ordered parole) of a prisoner sentenced to three years imprisonment or less after the commencement of the *Corrective Services Act 2006*. This will enable courts, the community and prisoners to anticipate with greater confidence the circumstances and planning required regarding a prisoner's release (DCS, 2005c).

In recognition of community concern regarding sexual and violent offenders and the need for on-going assessment of the risk posed by such offenders to the community, sex offenders and serious violent offenders are not eligible for court ordered parole and must apply to a parole board for supervised release to parole. A sex offender sentenced to three years imprisonment or less will be eligible to apply to a parole board for parole after serving half of their period of imprisonment. A serious violent offender sentenced to three years or less will be eligible to apply to a parole board for release on parole after serving 80 per cent of his or her period of imprisonment (DCS, 2005c).

The *Corrective Services Act 2006* provides that a prisoner serving imprisonment of three years or less must be released to parole at the time fixed by the sentencing court. Court ordered parole is automatically cancelled where a prisoner is convicted of another offence.

Prisoners leaving custody face many personal, social and economic challenges and research indicates that they are less likely to re-offend after exiting custody if they receive appropriate support upon release. Supervised

release provides an important means of assisting prisoners to reintegrate into the community while enhancing community safety. The new legislative scheme provides every prisoner with the opportunity of supervised early release, allowing corrective services staff to assist prisoners to reintegrate into the community by providing support and assistance (DCS, 2005c).

Kennedy (1988) believed that as a general principle, it should be accepted that all prisoners should have a period of supervision in the community prior to release on the basis that corrections are better undertaken in a community setting and that community supervision is a better idea than release on remission.

The new corrective services legislation provides recognition to repeated findings that community supervision allows the safety of the community to be protected by ensuring that the movements and activities of prisoners in the community are regularly monitored and that any conditions regarding attendance at programs or other requirements are adhered to (see Borzycki, 2005). Supervised early release now provided business processes which are consistent with the community expectation that a prisoner sentenced to a term of imprisonment should be subject to control and restriction of liberty for the full duration of their sentence (DCS, 2005c).

Re-integration of Offenders

Best practice internationally notes the use of a through-care framework as most suitable in structuring any partnerships between government administrated correctional services and community-based external providers. Re-settlement or re-entry of offenders has been noted in research as one of the most crucial aspects of through-care in offender intervention. The advantage of external service providers in this context is their ability to provide community based support to offenders.

Research has documented the high levels of social need found among ex-prisoners, exacerbated by reluctance on the part of some service agencies to meet their needs (including, in some cases, deliberate policies to exclude them due to difficulties in servicing them). Ironically, it was pointed out, the group which received the least attention or assistance — short-term prisoners — was the group with both the highest levels of social need and the highest rates of reconviction (Home Office, 2004).

Research has shown that in offending populations up to two-thirds had been unemployed before going to prison, nearly a third had no accommodation to return to after release, over half had no qualifications and well over half were involved in substance misuse — and linked these explicitly to their exceptionally high rates of reconviction, arguing that failures by mainstream agencies to meet such needs constituted a major obstacle to their rehabilitation. In other words, the problem of re-offending is located primarily in the exclusion of ex-prisoners from effective services to meet their practical needs (Home Office, 2004).

There is currently no official data collected on the number of prisoners released in Australia. An estimate by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services suggested there were approximately 43,000 prisoners released yearly (Andersen, 2001). Re-entry support services aim to support offenders released from prison and assist their re-entry into the community. The types of re-entry services that have been identified as most useful for offenders include accommodation, drug treatment and mental health support, referral assistance and advocacy and services supporting the families and children of offenders.

Referral and access to accommodation (brokerage with Dept of Housing service providers) has consistently been recognised in international criminological research as critical to the success of prisoners post-release. There remains a lack of empirical research on the impact of unstable housing and homelessness on recidivism rates but what has been undertaken notes the majority of prisoners have high needs in this area (Conway, 1999). Recent research in Australia found that 61% of those who were homeless prior to imprisonment had re-offended by 9 months post-release. Prisoners who received post-release support in relation to accommodation were significantly less likely to return to prison with 24% of those in contact with a service returning compared to 45% who did not receive specialist accommodation support (Baldry et al, 2006).

A number of reports have been released both within Queensland and nationally examining the needs of families and children of offenders. Children of imprisoned parents are likely to suffer from a variety of long-term impacts including adverse mental health outcomes, increased exposure to infectious diseases and increased contact with the criminal justice system (Quitly et al, 2003).

Assisting these groups to support offenders and themselves has been noted to assist in reducing re-offending (ACT Standing Committee on Community Services and Social Equity, 2004; Dennison, Foley & Stewart, 2005). Maintaining family and community contact, in particular establishing functional and supportive relationships post-release is a key factor in reducing recidivism (NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues, 1997). The findings of an analysis of offender need (completed with Queensland custodial centres in 2005) notes that transport services to enable visits by family and friends were regarded as one of the most important services to be made available.

Another specific identified need relating to domestic violence and victimisation for female offenders has been noted in numerous research reports (Johnson, 2004; Sorbello et al, 2002; Byrne & Howells, 2002). The experience of domestic violence victimisation is a significant feature of the female prison population and has far reaching consequences both in terms of management within the facility and responsivity to core programs. Issues which have been raised include PTSD symptoms, self esteem issues, drug use, response to

male staff, trust issues generally and transition arrangements for return to the community.

Referral to drug treatment agencies and mental health services (example ATODS, AA, Dept of Health community service providers) are also an important part of successful post-release outcomes and require attention in partnership work between corrections and external organisations. Studies by the Australian Institute of Criminology into the drug use careers of offenders have found that 62 percent of all offenders reported being intoxicated at the time of their most serious offence, 24 per cent were high on illicit drugs, 21 per cent on alcohol and 17 per cent on the two combined. The overall impact of drug use and addition on offending behaviour is clear, in this study of those who reported drug use, 51 per cent attributed all or most of their criminal offending to substance abuse and addiction (Makkai & Payne, 2003)

Poor mental health of prisoners, inadequate healthcare, and the 'revolving door' for prisoners with mental health problems are common themes in current prison writing. Up to 40% of prisoners have a literacy age of 11 or under; there were 102 suicides last year; 20% of men coming in to prison have previously attempted suicide; while 40% of women coming in to prison have previously attempted suicide (Hore, 2005).

Referral and advocacy support for prisoners to assist in building their capacity to access existing services in the community and support their on-going interaction with these agencies is an important aspect of partnerships between corrections and external organisations. It is part of effective offender management to ensure that the links with community based agencies are effective, operational and provide on-going support for offenders after corrective services jurisdiction ceases.

Conclusion: The future of corrections

As can be seen from the previous sections the Queensland Department of Corrective Services is committed to continual improvement of the services it provides in the management of offenders. The Department has implemented a range of new business processes and systems designed to ensure that its' functionality is informed by empirical research and identified best practice in correctional jurisdictions nationally and internationally.

Since 2004 the Department has been realigning structures, functions and responsibilities in order to maximise efficiencies in managing workload, accountability and risk and devolving decision-making, where prudent to the field. The result has been a new organisational structure that has enhanced the status of governance and accountability whilst focusing on key strategic outcomes.

Strategically the Department is seeking the provide effective through-care for offenders. This is through offender management strategies which focus on achieving outcomes to support continuing rehabilitation from the start of an

offender's sentence until after correctional supervision ceases. The new Corrective Services Act 2006 provides a clear statement on rehabilitation, the directorates have implemented new models of service delivery and processes supporting proper through-care for offenders within the system.

In particular the creation of a new organisational focus on rehabilitation and through-care was provided in the creation of three new directorates, Offender Assessment and Services, Offender Programs and Services and Strategic Policy and Services. Since their inception these Directorates have made significant progress in a number of key areas. All these directorates have undertaken significant staff re-training and professional development and introduced a range of new performance measurement and evaluation processes to ensure the Department can clearly provide information to the Queensland Government and specifically Queensland Treasury on the outcomes achieved for offenders and the Queensland community for the financial input provided.

In order to succeed the Department of Corrective Services needs to continue to ensure that there are no escapes from secure custody and that we continue to provide Australian best practice in the safe and secure containment of offenders within custody. We must continue to improve our assessment and case management of high risk offenders through new initiatives such as intensive structure case management and co-ordinated whole of government initiatives.

To achieve this the Department will continue to improve its service internally and seek additional resources to ensure service to other parts of the criminal justice system and Queensland community is of a high standard. The role of corrective services in modern society must focus on practical partnerships, whole-of-government strategies and effective business practices to reduce re-offending and enhance community safety.

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