

annual REPORT

September 1, 2012

Background

Two years ago, the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative took a close look at what more it could be doing to reduce recidivism. The county already had a strong set of programs at work—but only about five percent of people booked into the jail were able to get classes and treatment, and fewer still received the support they needed after release. There needed to be a stronger investment in quality programs so that more men and women had the chance to successfully reintegrate into society.

The issue was not as simple as expanding classes, however. Other factors driving recidivism were wrapped within systems—like the unpredictable times of release from the jail or the fact that people calling the jail to help expedite bail or simply to learn if their loved one was in the jail could not get their questions answered if they called on weekends or after 3 p.m.

These were among the issues that led the Jail Collaborative to develop a three-year strategic plan with ambitious aims. Foundations and county, state and federal government supported the plan, and dozens of community organizations also invested their time, experience, and funds. That level of support explains how the Jail Collaborative was able to mount a Reentry Program that more than doubled the number of men and women who receive services; and developed a new Discharge Center that serves more than 6,000 people and a new Information and Referral service that answers calls from 40,000 people.

The Jail Collaborative continues to support these initiatives this year. Through a study being conducted by the Urban Institute, it will be learning from participants, family members, and service providers about what is working well and what needs to be improved. Their insight will help to guide the Jail Collaborative in choosing a course for the years ahead.

Progress in Year 2

The Jail Collaborative chose three strategies for reducing recidivism: begin a new reentry program, make necessary systems changes, and develop alternatives to incarceration. This report summarizes the progress on each of these strategies during the 2011-2012 year.

1. REENTRY PROGRAM

EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

The Reentry Program has been able to serve 377 additional people because of a new federal Second Chance Act grant. Five probation officers are now working intensively with sentenced offenders prior to release to develop individual service plans and refer them to available services in the jail; and for at least 6 months after release, ensure that clients are ready for reentry and linked to services in the community. These services can include on-ramp housing, drug and alcohol treatment, and the programs provided through Probation's Day Reporting Centers.

Each of the other services that are part of Reentry also served more people this year:

REENTRY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, BY SERVICE

REENTRY PROGRAM SERVICES	PARTICIPANTS 2010-2011	PARTICIPANTS 2011-2012
Employment & training (Urban League, Goodwill, Springboard Kitchens)	339	506
Education (AIU)	238	324
Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (Mercy Behavioral Health)	116	245
D&A education (Allegheny Correctional Health Services)	93	150
Aftercare (Mercy Behavioral Health, P.O.W.E.R.)	122	231
Family support (Family Services of Western PA, Amachi Pittsburgh, Lydia's Place/Renewal, and Justice Related Services)	160	201
Mentoring (HOPE, P.O.W.E.R.)	179	220
HARBOR housing (Goodwill)	6	31
Service Coordination (Justice Related Services)	161	386
Probation Reentry Services (Allegheny County Adult Probation)	n/a	377

CHOOSING THE HIGHEST RISK FOR SERVICE

Because the need for classes in the jail exceeds capacity, the Cabinet of the Jail Collaborative established priorities for Collaborative-funded services. They chose as the highest priority those individuals who are medium-high risk of reoffending and who are serving a county sentence. (The risk level is determined using a validated risk screen tool.)

BEGINNING THE RANDOMIZED STUDY

A large share of Reentry Program services are funded through a Second Chance Act grant. Allegheny County is now part of a national study of the impact of those services on recidivism. The evaluators are using a randomized controlled trial to determine the degree to which the program's services truly make a difference for the men and women who participate. The evaluation will be completed in 2014.

“**My life has changed for the better.** I have been maintaining a job. I am the primary caregiver for my kids, and our relationship is much stronger. **I'm not running in the street,** and when I run into situations that could get me in trouble, I know how to walk away and choose to do good things instead. **My life is full of new possibilities.**”

-Derrick, quoted in DHS *Making an Impact*, July 2012

2. SYSTEMS CHANGE

LAUNCHING A COMMON COMPUTER APPLICATION

This past spring, providers and other staff began using a new, web-based computer application to streamline and coordinate their work. This system, called the Jail Collaborative Application, allows providers to make referrals to other services, report on client outcomes, and run reports.

INCREASING FAMILY VISITS AND PHONE CALLS

One of the aims of the Reentry Program's Family Support service has been to increase the quality and number of contacts between inmates and their children and other family members. With the support of correctional officers and administrators in the jail, the program was able to design two new ways for inmates to connect with their families: Family Contact Visits, which take place on

Saturdays; and Family Phone Calls, which take place in the Reentry Center. (Both have the active involvement of Family Support Specialists.) Because of these additions, the number of visits/contacts with family have expanded:

CHANGE IN THE TYPES AND NUMBER OF FAMILY CONTACTS	JULY 1, 2011- JUNE 30, 2012
Traditional visits	1,202
Window Visits	1,043
Contact visits	159
New visits/contacts	1,190
Family Phone Calls	1,065
Family Contact Visits	125
All visits	2,392

SERVING MORE CLIENTS THROUGH THE DISCHARGE CENTER

The Discharge Center was able to serve 2,252 men and women in the final nine months of Year 1. With a full year of operation and more individuals being released directly through the Center, the number of individuals served increased to 6,229. If individuals need a bus ticket to get home, the Center staff provided them with one. If they were on medication while in the jail, they received a three-day supply and a prescription. And if they needed to call for a ride or to find a shelter, the staff assisted them. Because of the increase in clients, a part-time coordinator has been added to the staff during the evening hours.

REACHING MORE PEOPLE THROUGH THE I&R LINE

The Information and Referral line has responded to 39,687 calls from family members and others who call the jail during the weekend or after 3 p.m. on weekdays; this is 15,000 more calls than in Year 1. Without this service these calls would likely have gone unanswered.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

SELECTING PROVIDERS OF THERAPEUTIC HOUSING

After researching alternatives to incarceration and preparing a new design, the county issued a Request for Qualifications and selected four providers of therapeutic housing—with one providing therapeutic housing as restrictive intermediate punishment.

EXPANDING A DIVERSION PROGRAM

Building upon an existing program, the Collaborative has increased the number of individuals with substance use disorders who can be diverted to treatment, which promises to save money by reducing jail days and the number of rearrests.

About the Jail Collaborative

The Jail Collaborative is a large and broad group of people, all working to improve public safety by building a better system of reentry for people coming out of the Allegheny County. Its members include judges and community leaders, service providers and volunteers, grantmakers and elected officials.

The Cabinet that leads the Jail Collaborative is composed of the Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive, Allegheny County; the President Judge, Court of Common Pleas; the Administrative Judge for Criminal Division, Court of Common Pleas; the Warden of the Allegheny County Jail; the Director of the Allegheny County Health Department; and the Director of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. The Collaborative also has a Civic Advisory Committee, led by the president of a local foundation, that provides guidance and support from leaders in academia, business, philanthropy, and government.

Jail Collaborative Supporters

The Jail Collaborative's progress would not have been possible without the grants and support of:

- Allegheny County Department of Human Services
- Allegheny County Health Department
- Allegheny County Jail
- Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board
- Buhl Foundation
- FISA Foundation
- Grable Foundation
- Hillman Foundation
- Massey Charitable Trust
- McAuley Ministries
- McCune Foundation
- PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation
- POISE Foundation
- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Staunton Farm Foundation
- The Heinz Endowments
- The Pittsburgh Foundation
- U.S. Department of Justice