



Research at a glance

Community Services for Women under Supervision

KEY WORDS: *women offenders, community supervision, community services*

What it means

Overall, it was found that the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has active relationships with many community services/organizations. Most of these organizations offer services which align with the needs of federally sentenced women under supervision in the community; however, some disparities in the number and type of community services were reported both intra- and inter-regionally. Given the positive role played by community organizations in the reintegration process, an understanding of the availability of services could guide the development and maintenance of community partnerships. Future research should examine whether identified regional disparities in the availability of services are related to data collection methods (informant report). In addition, a focus on the role that the presence of services plays in the choice of parole locations would be beneficial.

What we found

Areas with the most federally sentenced women also reported the greatest number of services; however, this was not universal. Not all locations in which women were supervised reported services. The most commonly offered services were mental health and/or addiction, housing and/or basic needs, and education and/or employment-related services. At least one-third of the reported organizations offered these services. Regional differences in the availability of services were observed. For instance, housing and/or basic needs services were most commonly offered in the Québec and Pacific Regions.

Why we did this study

The population of federally sentenced women has been growing in recent decades and about half of these women are being supervised in the community. These women often rely on community services to assist in their successful reintegration. Thus, knowledge of the services available to further support women's reintegration could assist CSC by ensuring that beneficial partnerships are maintained as well as highlighting areas of continued need for partnership development.

What we did

This project focused on the community organizations to which federally sentenced women were actively referred and those with which CSC had an active partnership to understand the types and locations of available services and the relationship between the number of services available and the number of women supervised in an area.

Available community resources were provided by knowledgeable stakeholders through a request for information about the community services to which they actively referred women. In some cities, lack of response may have led to an underestimation of services. Service types included: education and/or employment; mental health and/or addiction; parenting and/or child care; the development of behavioural competencies/skills; housing and/or basic needs; legal and/or financial services; cultural; and additional community support.

Regional summaries included service density maps and ratio comparisons using the number and location of women in the community, supervision service locations (e.g., parole offices, women's supervision units), and the reported community organizations offering services. This analysis highlighted gaps in community support and could be used as an indication of where to develop community partnerships.

For more information

Thompson, J., Trinneer, A., McConnell, A., Derkzen, D., Rubinfeld, S. (2014). *Community Services for Women under Supervision* (Research Report R-311). Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada

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