



Research at a glance

Residential Facilities: Offender Profile and Review of the Literature

International literature suggests that residential facilities are effective in reducing re-offending and contribute to other positive outcomes, especially for higher-risk offenders.

Why we did this study

Gradual and supervised community reintegration is known to contribute to public safety. In some cases, offenders' return to the community is facilitated through a period in a community-based residential facility, which acts as a bridge between the institution and the community. The extensive use the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) makes of such facilities underscores the importance of related research.

What we did

In order to have a better understanding of this population, and potentially inform operational practice, we examined the profile of offenders in the community at the end of March 2010 ($N = 7,339$) and March 2014 ($N = 7372$). Offenders on day parole, with residency conditions, and without any residency requirements were compared. A review of the literature on the effectiveness of residence in such facilities was also undertaken.

What we found

Not surprisingly, compared to those on day parole or without residency requirements, offenders with residency conditions tended to have more limited community stability, have more extensive criminal histories, and be assessed as presenting more elevated risk across a variety of markers.

In terms of differences over time, the proportion of offenders with residency conditions and on LTSOs was greater in 2014 than in 2010. Comparisons with a profile conducted a decade ago were also possible, and indicated that offenders in community-based residential facilities in 2014 presented more elevated levels of static risk (that is, risk as measured by criminal history, offence severity, and sexual offence history, if applicable) than those in 2003.

Based on a review of the literature, residential facilities seem to contribute to reduced rates of re-

offending, as well as a number of other positive outcomes such as reduced substance use and higher rates of employment. The literature suggests residency requirements are most effective when higher-risk offenders are targeted. Effectiveness can also be increased by pairing residency with community-based correctional programs, where appropriate.

What it means

The differences found between offenders on day parole and with residency conditions highlight the importance of differentiating between the two groups in terms of case management. This aligns with CSC's current approach, which includes matching the extent of offenders' contact with community parole officers to the level of risk they present.

The findings align very well with the broader risk-need-responsivity framework guiding much of CSC's case management, including recognition that interventions are most appropriately targeted at higher-risk offenders. CSC makes available community-based correctional and other programs to offenders, when appropriate. Overall, CSC's approach to the management of residency is generally consistent with international literature.

For more information

Gobeil, R., Keown, L. A., & Ritchie, M. B., & Biro, S. M. (2015). *Residential facilities: Offender profile and review of the literature* (Research Report R-360). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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