



RESEARCH YEAR IN REVIEW

2022-2023

RESEARCH BRANCH • CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA



Correctional Service
Canada

Service correctionnel
Canada

Canada

DEDICATION



Lynn Stewart 1955-2019

The Research Year in Review is dedicated to Dr. Lynn Stewart, who influenced and mentored countless researchers and led studies with integrity, purpose and commitment.

Dr. Stewart joined the CSC Research Branch as the Senior Research Manager of the Interventions and Women Offenders team in 2009. Before coming to the Research Branch, Dr. Stewart completed her PhD at York University in Toronto, Ontario. Her thesis on moral development examined how children up to 16 years of age consider and approach moral dilemmas. In 1987, she began her career with CSC as a clinical psychologist at Warkworth Institution, and continued on to become a community district psychologist, where she worked with offenders on release.

Dr. Stewart's operational experience proved to be invaluable as she moved from the frontline to CSC's National Headquarters where her work focused on correctional interventions and the factors influencing why some offenders are successful and others not.

When interviewed for a Researcher Spotlight article in 2014, Dr. Stewart commented "CSC has a good reputation for being an evidence-based agency, and the researchers from CSC are well-respected internationally ... it's wonderful to work with people who are so passionate about their job. I think in general CSC is guided by evidence-based decisions, and it's because of that that we have a better idea of what we should be doing to promote public safety and humane corrections. I worked with program officers, parole officers, and quite rightly, they say, 'why should we be doing this? What's the evidence that this is going to be effective?' and if you can provide that answer for them, they're much more likely to have that buy-in that will support the initiatives."

During her time with CSC Research, Dr. Stewart authored over 60 research publications on topics ranging from sex offender programming to treatment responsivity factors and offender mental and physical health. Engaging CSC stakeholders to share and discuss research findings was just as important as the research itself and it was with ease that she translated results in a way that was relevant and meaningful to staff, executives and laypersons alike.

We continue to be humbled and ever so grateful for Dr. Stewart's contributions to the applied correctional research literature and celebrate the impact of her work in informing, influencing and shaping Research at the Correctional Service of Canada.

FOREWORD



A NOTE FROM THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER POLICY

It has been three decades since then-Commissioner Ole Ingstrup mandated the development of a corporate research function within CSC. As the first Research Officer, former Director General, and current Assistant Commissioner, Policy, I am pleased to have been a part of the evolution of research at CSC and of the expansive correctional knowledge base that was built over the past 30 years.

Since 1988, the unit has produced an impressive body of work that includes over 500 research publications. Research has and continues to add value to the organization by helping us understand changes in the offender population, the unique needs of various subpopulations, the impact of changes to policy, programs and interventions and where and how to better allocate resources that are often limited in order to maximize outcomes. This understanding is critical to our efforts to respond to the reintegration needs of those serving a federal sentence and is really the cornerstone of how we contribute to public safety.

There was a gradual evolution in the focus and purpose of Research over time. The first decade of work focused on building a knowledge foundation through profiling offender populations, defining critical concepts and determining how to measure them, as well as the development of several offender assessment tools. The information and evidence produced during the second decade of research allowed for concepts, measures and assessment tools to be validated, refined and expanded. While the latest decade has focused on determining how to realign, refocus and partner to ensure the most meaningful impact of Research on operations.

In 1989 Report R-5, Frank Porporino wrote in Research Report no.5 that “applied corrections research is defined more as a process than as a product” (p.6). The Research Branch has made great strides, particularly in the last few years, in working collaboratively with its operational partners recognizing that decisions rarely occur as a single event and that there are countless opportunities to inform, shape and ground discussions in empirical findings and research results. The contributions of research are only as impactful as the ability of others within the organization to engage with findings and use them in their day-to-day interactions, training initiatives, briefings, and recommendations where they have the potential to impact operational decisions.

The increasing demands on CSC’s Research Branch stemming from both formal and informal requests, demonstrates that CSC employees and senior leaders value the contributions being made by the unit in producing research that is relevant and operationally meaningful for the organization.

With this, thank you for engaging with the content of the Research Branch’s Year in Review and for sharing what you find relevant and meaningful with colleagues, managers, and stakeholders.

Larry Motiuk, PhD

Assistant Commissioner Policy

INTRODUCTION



The Research Branch of the Correctional Service of Canada is a centralized research unit operating within the Policy Sector at National Headquarters. As an in-house research unit, CSC's Research Branch is uniquely positioned to provide relevant, operationally meaningful and applied correctional research in support of CSC's mandate and corporate priorities.

The Branch strives to produce research that is timely, agile and that responds quickly and efficiently to urgent and priority requests while also balancing the need for and importance of more in-depth long-term projects.

Over the past 14 years, I have had the privilege of holding several positions within the Research Branch, including Director of the Addictions Research Centre, Director of Correctional Research and now as the Director General of the Branch. During this time, I have

observed a discernable shift towards a more accessible research function within the organization. This has been achieved through a more collaborative and actively engaged approach with operational staff across the sectors and regions in order to ensure that the research produced by the Branch addresses the most pressing priorities and needs of the organization. It has also been aided by a change in our research products, particularly the creation of one-page research summaries using plain language to make research results easily available and understandable for both staff and stakeholders.

As a result, the impact of our research continues to expand with better engagement of our stakeholders and closer partnerships with our operational counterparts. Increased trust in research within the organization has meant more frequent and meaningful engagement at all levels and, although the impact of our work is not always tangible, we know research findings are being used in various contexts, including to inform training, in discussions regarding resource allocations, and in briefing notes and recommendations to executives and politicians, just to name a few. In this sense, the unit really has upheld its original mandate – to conduct “applied research in corrections...that is readily applicable and useful, and from which maximum benefit can be derived for improvements in correctional policy and practice” (Porporino, 1989).

The intent of this Research Year in Review is to highlight the excellent work done by our research team and ensure that the findings are broadly disseminated, including outside of our organization and the Canadian federal correctional context. We therefore hope that you find this review valuable and that you share it with others who may benefit from this knowledge.

Andrea Moser, PhD

Director General
Research Branch, Policy Sector

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RESEARCH PLAN OVERVIEW 2022-2023

An annual Research Plan is developed to provide information on research commitments and activities planned for each fiscal year. It provides CSC staff, managers, and senior executives information about ongoing and upcoming research that can support evidence-informed decision-making at all levels of the organization.

Research commitments include studies designed to address recommendations from various external stakeholder including the Office of the Correctional Investigator as well as the Auditor General. Commitments also include a number of ongoing and continuous data tracking, analysis and reporting functions. As such, research projects included in the Plan may involve quick literature reviews or may involve recurring annual publications, multi-year initiatives spanning across several fiscal years (e.g. multi-phase studies or studies with data maturation requirements) and/or emerging research commitments.

Key areas of focus for the 2022-2023 fiscal year included tracking and analysis of trends in Sexual Coercion and Violence (SCV) reporting in federal custody, research on Security Threat Groups (STG), validation of the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) for Black offenders and revalidation of the scale for Indigenous and women offenders, as well as ongoing tracking and trend analysis on Structured Intervention Units (SIUs).

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AND ABSTRACTS

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION SYMPOSIUM - MAY 2022

Title of Presentation: The Many Faces of Risk Assessment: An Interdisciplinary Exploration

Presenter: Dr. Leslie Anne Keown

Abstract: Risk assessment, particularly in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), has a variety of faces and contexts. Seldom do we step back and ask some fundamental questions such as what we mean by risk or what kind of risk is being considered. In addition, risk assessment is primarily seen and addressed through a psychological lens. What additional insights would a sociological, anthropological or economics lens provide? This plenary talk highlighted some of these very questions and provided some reflections on possible answers.

Title of Presentation: The Changing Offender Federal In-Custody Profile

Presenters: Dr. Leslie Anne Keown and Dr. Larry Motiuk

Abstract: In-custody populations in Canadian Federal Penitentiaries have experienced substantial declines during the last 3 years. These declines have not been uniform and have influenced the composition of the in-custody population profile in a wide variety of ways. This session explored some of these changes and reflected on the challenges that these changes have now and in the future.

Title of Presentation: The Importance of Evidence-Based Assessment and Classification of Offenders – An International Perspective

Presenter: Dr. Andrea Moser

Abstract: Drawing on work in Canada as well as internationally, this presentation focused on how the evidence-based assessment and classification of offenders contributes to several key aspects of correctional management including the safety and security of offenders, correctional staff and the public, the humane custody of prisoners, and the ability to individualize case and sentence planning.

LEADERS IN COUNTERTERRORISM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE - MAY 2022

Title of Presentation: Radicalism and Prisons: A Canadian Perspective

Presenter: Dr. Andrea Moser

Abstract: Participated as an expert panelist to discuss contemporary global counter terrorism issues. These panels are made up of subject matter experts from across the globe. Dr. Moser was invited to lead the panel “Radicalism in Prison and Offender Management”.

THE CANADIAN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION - 5TH WORLD CONGRESS ON PROBATION AND PAROLE – SEPTEMBER 2022

Title of Presentation: Federal Gender Diverse Offenders in Canada

Presenters: Shanna Farrell MacDonald, Angela Smeth, Sarah Cram, & Dena Derkzen

Abstract: In accordance with Bill C-16, on December 27, 2017, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) implemented its interim policy for gender diverse offenders to identify operational practices that may require accommodation for these offenders, particularly regarding the placement of offenders in a federal correctional institution that aligns with their gender identity. CSC policy established the requirement to develop Individualized Protocols (IPs) for gender diverse offenders in relation to accommodation requests related to their gender identity. This study was undertaken to provide a profile of federal gender diverse offenders in Canada.

Title of Presentation: Gender Diverse Offenders: Policy and Practice in Correctional Service of Canada

Presenters: Luc Bisson & Dr. Andrea Moser

Abstract: An epilogue to the presentation Federal Gender Diverse Offenders in Canada, this presentation highlighted the evolution of gender identity and expression's legislation within Canada and CSC's strategy in addressing the needs of gender diverse person in Federal custody.

Title of Presentation: The Community Supervision Experiences of Justice-Involved Persons belonging to Ethnocultural Groups

Presenters: Sara Johnson

Abstract: The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Examining the community supervision experiences of justice-involved persons from various ethnocultural groups is critical to identifying potential sources of systemic discrimination in community correctional practices. This presentation provides baseline data on key indicators of the community supervision experience of individuals from various ethnocultural backgrounds serving federal sentences with CSC. Results demonstrate differences across groups in discretionary release rates, residency conditions, community employment, program participation and release outcomes. Overall, more in-depth research is necessary in many areas to ensure equitable treatment and community supervision experiences for all.

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISON ASSOCIATION (ICPA) – ICPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022, ORLANDO FLORIDA, USA

Title of Presentation: Driving Legislative Compliance in Structured interventions Units Using Real-time Operational Reporting

Presenters: Dr. Leslie-Anne Keown

Abstract: Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) were introduced to the Canadian Federal Penitentiary System in November of 2019. The legislation that covers these units included a number of new standards including minimum requirements for time out of cell and meaningful interaction. During the pandemic, it became important to maintain oversight of these new elements and help sites to improve performance while at the same time working through all the issues and restrictions the pandemic presented. Thus,

a series of real-time operational reports were developed to assist sites using a data visualization tool (PowerBI). These reports focused on offers of activities, actual time spent on activities, and the type of activities that were being offered in SIUs with the objective of showing whether or not SIUs were within the standards indicated in the legislation. This presentation will show these reports, discuss their development, and use throughout the pandemic, and illustrate how using these types of reports can assist with achieving legislative compliance.

Title of Presentation: Recognizing and Responding to the Profile Shift of the In-custody Population after COVID-19

Presenters: Dr. Larry Motiuk and Dr. Leslie-Anne Keown

Abstract: The two-year duration and multiple waves of the COVID-19 pandemic had a number of direct impacts on the federal (sentenced two years or more) custody population in Canada. Along with concerted efforts to maintain health and security in institutional settings throughout the waves of the pandemic, there were considerable shifts in size and composition of the in-custody population. In particular, substantial numerical declines were observed in both the federal (sentenced two years or more) men and women in-custody population (-1,640 or 12.4% and -103 or 14.8%, respectively). Not only were there changes around how many inmates there were across operational settings (size), it was coupled with observed shifts in the characteristics of these populations (composition). To better understand the population, selected statistics were gathered at mid fiscal year in September 2019 (pre-COVID), then at year-end 2020-21 and then again for 2021-22 in relation to eight major characteristics. Namely age, diversity, sentence length, major offence, offender security level, criminal risk, criminogenic needs, and past parole eligibilities. The operational restrictions imposed and changes in composition over the pandemic period presented some unique challenges in the delivery of custodial services and correctional interventions. This session will focus on describing how the shifts in custodial populations in Canadian Federal corrections system that were brought about by the pandemic period manifested itself and discuss the various challenges, lessons learned and new opportunities that will influence the correctional environment for the near future.

Title of Presentation: Contributing to Good Corrections through Applied Research: 35 Years in Review

Presenters: Dr. Frank Porporino and Dr. Larry Motiuk

Abstract: In the late 80's the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) turned resolutely towards realizing its new Mission of becoming a knowledge-based, rehabilitation focused correctional agency. As part of those efforts, its first ever Research Branch was established in 1988 signalling the fact that the agency was committed to conducting its own applied and operational research that could guide change in policy and practice. By 1989, the Research Branch was producing Forum on Corrections Research, a unique practitioner-oriented publication of its day that reviewed the relevance of research for practice, with articles authored both by CSC staff as well as other researchers and practitioners. Published from 1989 to 2007, a total of 19 volumes were published, printed, and distributed in English and French and made available via the CSC Research Webpage. In 1989, the Research Branch also held its first Research Symposium, inviting participation from other correctional research units (e.g., the US Federal Bureau of Prisons) and from academic colleagues across the country, an important research networking tradition that has continued over the years. The first official Research Report was published in 1989 and by 2022 the number of publicly available Research Reports and documents grew to more than 500. By 1990, CSC researchers began actively collaborating with their counterparts around the world in Europe, Asia, and Africa. A decade of involvement that began informally in the late 80's with the US Federal Bureau of Prisons transformed by the early 90's into a series of bi-annual meetings between the research units. Believing that sharing knowledge was as important as creating it, throughout the nineties and into the new millennium, the Research Branch continued to organize numerous gatherings that included participants from external organizations, government agencies, CSC operations, the Canadian academic community,

and the public/private sectors. In 1999, the Branch entered yet another phase of its evolution with the opening of the Addictions Research Centre (ARC) in Prince Edward Island. Until 2014, the ARC influenced a significant increase in CSC efforts to assist offenders in their rehabilitative journeys. The year 2001 was highlighted with the production of Compendium 2000 on Effective Correctional Programming, Volume 1 and 2, a comprehensive and critical appraisal of the empirical literature in the field of corrections and behaviour change that continues to be internationally referenced to this day. Also noteworthy in the early 2000s was a series of six annual Indigenous Research Meetings that engaged First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities on the topic of safe reintegration. The Research Branch had begun to regard practice-knowledge as being as important as research-knowledge, especially as it applies to Indigenous and other vulnerable populations. Over the last decade, the Research Branch has continued to evolve and produce cutting-edge research that meets the highest academic standards. Research products have evolved to include one-page Research at a Glance (RAAG) summaries of all reports as well as stand-alone one-page Research in Briefs (RIB) and Research Reviews (RR) that can provide practitioners and front-line staff with digestible high level research results in a timely manner. Seed funding was provided for creating a number of academic posts in the early years (at Carlton University and the University of Saskatchewan) and this has blossomed into several of the most productive corrections-focused University Departments in the country. Today, CSC benefits consistently and considerably from the results of Research Memorandums of Understanding and Service Exchange Agreements that have been arranged with various Canadian academic institutions on a range of specialized topics such as addictions, Indigenous assessment, staff wellness, and transgender inmates. From a small compliment of only 3 staff, the Branch has grown to a compliment of 20 full-time staff, supporting as well numerous graduate student placements. In remaining timely and relevant, and in setting annual priorities, the CSC Research Branch follows a structured process of consultation with Senior Management and operational stakeholders. Important areas of focus currently include developing a range of descriptive offender profiles, exploring the impact of Structured Intervention Units, gender diverse inmates, recidivism, radicalization, electronic monitoring, firearms training, and key correctional performance indicators. The Branch is committed to doing quality research, but it is especially gratified when operational staff do something with it.

Tracing the evolution of an in-house corrections research unit, this Workshop presentation will emphasize how sustaining quality in the conduct of research, a consistent focus on remaining operationally relevant, making efforts to translate research findings into policy and practice implications, and networking with the broader research community can support an agency like CSC to steadily Excel Beyond the 'Old' Normal. The presentation hopes to attract corrections professionals at all levels who may want a deeper understanding of how the research to practice gap can begin to be closed.

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISON ASSOCIATION (ICPA) – CORRECTIONAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2023 – PORTO, PORTUGAL

Title of Presentation: The Importance of Evidence-based Assessment and Intervention – From Intake to Prison to Sentence Completion in the Community

Presenters: Dr. Andrea Moser and Dr. Larry Motiuk

Abstract: Drawing on work in Canada as well as internationally, this presentation will focus on how the evidence-based assessment of offenders and the use of assessment results to guide appropriate interventions is the foundation of a “What Works” approach to corrections, contributing to the safety and security of offenders, staff and the public, the humane custody of prisoners, the ability to individualize case and sentence planning, and the monitoring of change over time.

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

The ***External Research Partnership Initiative (Collaborative Research)*** continues to support high quality research focusing on addictions and mental health in the offender population through the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with universities and other community organizations across Canada. Research capacity under this stream has expanded considerably over the past 5 years and currently includes 5 active research collaborations under MOUs.

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA (2019-2024)

- Risk Assessment tools for security classification for use with Indigenous Offenders

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA (2022-2026)

- Research focusing on gender diversity within the offender population

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY (2018-2024)

- A longitudinal study of occupational stress injuries and mental health status among new correctional officers in CSC institutions: Identifying risk and protective factors and areas of need
- Prevalence of trauma-related health conditions, including PTSD, in CSC employees. (follow-up to CIPSRT survey of frontline staff)

UNIVERSITY OF MONTREAL (2018-2023)

- Follow-Up Study of Quebec federal offenders on Opioid Substitution Treatment

UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À TROIS-RIVIÈRES (2022-2025)

- Research focusing on reintegration of young offenders (under 35)

PUBLICATION TYPES

RESEARCH REPORT (R)

A full text document detailing the context or background, methodology, analysis, results and a discussion of findings for a given research project.

RESEARCH AT A GLANCE (RAAG)

Provides an overview and highlights key findings of a Research Report or Brief.

RESEARCH REVIEW (RR)

Provides a summary of an area of research pertinent to on-going research efforts and/or organizational priorities (e.g., literature review; summary of a given article). It does not result in another form of publication. It permits the sharing of information that may not have otherwise been disseminated.

EMERGING RESEARCH RESULTS (ERR)

Provides a summary of emerging findings from one or several related research reports underway. This permits advance dissemination of research that will be of immediate relevance to the organization, its staff, or offenders.

RESEARCH IN BRIEF (RIB) (PREVIOUSLY RESEARCH SNIPPETS: RS)

Provides a summary of ad hoc research requests that will not otherwise appear in a Research Report or a Brief.

BRIEF (B)

Similar to a Research Report in that it provides information on background, methodology, analysis and results, but is generally more focused and shorter in length.

SUBSTANCE USE

research
highlights

Federal Men Offenders' Substance Use Patterns over Time: 2006 to 2019

Over time, a greater proportion of men offenders report lifetime drug use, poly-substance use, and CNS stimulants use. However, the proportion indicating lifetime injection drug use and prior in-custody substance use decreased.

Why we did this study

Substance use issues are prevalent among federal men offenders.¹ This study was conducted to examine changes in substance use patterns of men offenders, due to recent changes in substance use patterns among the general Canadian population, particularly substances used.

What we did

The Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse for men (M-CASA) is administered on admission to federal custody. It assesses pre-incarceration substance use patterns and severity of substance use. In total, 34,202 men were assessed between January 2006 and March 2019 (18% were Indigenous; n = 6,154).^{2,3}

What we found

Offenders reporting lifetime alcohol use remained constant at about 95% throughout the study period. However, offenders reporting lifetime drug use increased by 17%, from 60% in 2006-2007 to 77% in 2018-2019.

In 2006-2007, 73% of offenders had an identified substance use issue⁴ compared to 78% of offenders in 2018-2019. Examination across severity of substance use indicated that offenders assessed with a low level substance use issue increased by 7% (from 31% to 39%) during the study period – the largest increase across the severity categories.⁵ This pattern was particularly evident among offenders with alcohol use issues, with a 10% increase in those with low severity (from 34% to 44%) compared to a 5% increase for drug use severity (from 23% to 28%). The proportion of offenders with a moderate to severe issue remained stable (42% to 40%).

In 2006-2007, the three substances used most in the 12 months prior to arrest were cannabis (27%), cocaine/crack (23%) and opioids (8%).⁶ In 2018-2019, after alcohol (25%), the three drugs used most in the 12 months prior to arrest were cannabis (23%), cocaine/crack (11%), and central nervous system (CNS)

stimulants (11%). Reporting of CNS stimulant use increased from 4% in 2006-2007 to 11% in 2018-2019. Opioids continue to be reported; 10% of offenders reported its use in 2018-2019.

Fewer offenders reported reducing/quitting their substance use in 2018-2019 (84%) compared to 93% in 2006-2007. Offenders reported fewer attempts to reduce/quit their consumption; one-third of offenders in 2006-2007 reported four or more attempts compared to 19% in 2018-2019.

Offenders who reported poly-substance use (using multiple substances in one day) increased by 12% between 2006-2007 and 2018-2019, from 32% to 44%. However, the proportion of offenders reporting injection drug use (IDU) decreased by 5%, from 23% to 18%. Reports of substance use during a prior incarceration also decreased during the study period, from 30% to 21% of offenders.

What it means

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) offers interventions and support for a variety of substance use issues. These results demonstrate decreases in IDU and substance use while incarcerated are promising. However, the increase in prevalence of substance use issues indicate that on-going support for substance use needs is important, particularly with respect to CNS stimulants and opioid use, as well as poly-substance use. Future research comparing offenders with a low versus a moderate to severe substance use issue may provide additional insight into these subpopulations.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ Kelly, L. & Farrell MacDonald, S. (2015). Lifetime substance use patterns of men offenders (RIB 14-43). Ottawa, ON: CSC.

² Data from phase 1 of the M-CASA implementation in the Atlantic and Ontario regions between 2002 and 2005 were also examined, but are not presented.

³ This sample represents 67% of federal men offenders admitted during the study period.

⁴ An identified substance use issue means that the offender's use negatively impacted on various life areas (e.g., criminal justice, marital/family, employment, etc.)

⁵ Severity categories: none, low, moderate, substantial, or severe. Severity level was assessed for the twelve month period prior to arrest and examines the impact of both alcohol and other drug use. Low severity indicates problematic substance use. Moderate to severe substance use issues may suggest a substance use disorder.

⁶ Alcohol use during the 12 months prior to arrest was always examined in the M-CASA, however, the structure of the question related to substance used most changed in 2014 to include alcohol as one of the response options.

Regional Examination of Federal Men Offender's Substance Use Patterns: 2006 to 2019

From 2006 to 2019, pre-incarceration opioid use increased in the Pacific region while pre-incarceration CNS stimulant use increased in both the Pacific and Prairie regions.

Why we did this study

Unique regional substance use patterns exist among federal offenders in Canada.¹ This study was conducted to examine changes in regional patterns of men offenders' substance use over time.

What we did

The Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse for men (M-CASA), administered at admission to federal custody to examine pre-incarceration substance use, assessed 34,202 men offenders between January 2006 and March 2019.² Offenders were categorized by region: Atlantic (9%; n = 3,124), Quebec (28%; n = 9,448), Ontario (34%; n = 11,771), Prairies (23%; n = 7,971), and Pacific (6%; n = 1,881).³ Year of assessment was categorized into two-year increments for analysis.

What we found

From 2006 to 2019, offenders indicating a history of lifetime drug use increased across all regions. The Atlantic region had the largest increase (23%; from 60% to 83%), followed by Ontario (18%; 53% to 71%), Prairies (11%; 75% to 86%), and Quebec and Pacific (both 10%; from 56% to 66% and from 72% to 82%, respectively). Lifetime alcohol use remained constant at around 95% in all regions, except Quebec which saw a 7% decrease during the study period (from 97% to 90%).

The proportion of offenders with an identified substance use issue⁴ increased in all regions, except the Prairie region, which decreased slightly from 89% to 86%. The driver of this increase was the proportion of offenders assessed with low severity issues⁵ – the largest increase was in Ontario (10%; from 31% to 41%). The proportion of offenders assessed with moderate to severe issues remained relatively constant during the study period, except in Quebec where there was a 5% increase.

Over time, cannabis became the most used drug across all regions, except the Pacific region where opioids was most prevalent (increased 9%, from 14% to 23%). CNS⁶ stimulants increased by 5% (from 7% to 12%) to become the third most used drug in 2018-2019 in the Pacific region, behind cannabis. In Ontario, cocaine/crack decreased by 9% (from 19% to 10%) though it continues to be one of the top three most used drugs. In

the Prairie region, CNS stimulants increased by 14% (5% to 19%) while cocaine/crack decreased by 27% (from 38% to 11%).⁷

Poly-substance use (use of multiple substances in one day) increased in most regions by 10% to 12%: Atlantic (34% to 45%), Quebec (28% to 38%), Ontario (26% to 37%), and Pacific (43% to 55%). The Prairie region only increased by 3% (48% to 51%), although, offenders in the Prairies and Pacific regions reported the highest percentage of poly-substance use in 2018-2019.

Offender injection drug use (IDU) decreased in all regions between 2006 and 2019, particularly in the Pacific region (from 33% to 19%). Moreover, substance use while incarcerated also decreased in all regions, with the greatest decline in the Prairies (from 34% to 19%).

What it means

Understanding regional differences in substance use can assist the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to tailor interventions and support, as well as information and prevention strategies, to prevalent substance use needs within the region (e.g., opioid use in the Pacific region and increased use of CNS stimulants⁸ in the Prairie region). Furthermore, knowledge of regional differences may assist in allocating interdiction resources in each region.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ Ritchie, M. B. & Farrell MacDonald, S. (2014). Regional comparisons of men and women offenders' substance use (RIB 14-45). Ottawa, ON: CSC.

² 18% were Indigenous; n = 6,154

³ Data from phase 1 of the M-CASA implementation in the Atlantic and Ontario regions between 2002 and 2005 were also examined, but are not presented.

⁴ An identified substance use issue means that the offender's use negatively impacted on various life area (e.g., criminal justice, marital/family, employment, etc.)

⁵ Severity levels: none, low, moderate, substantial and severe. Severity level was assessed for the twelve month period prior to arrest and examines the impact of both alcohol and other

drug use. Low severity indicates problematic substance use. Moderate to severe substance use issues may suggest a substance use disorder.

⁶ CNS = central nervous system

⁷ The top three most used drugs in Quebec (cannabis, cocaine/crack and opioids) and Atlantic region (cannabis, cocaine/crack and CNS stimulants) remained the same between 2006 and 2019.

⁸ For an examination of stimulant use and related harms in Canada, please refer to: <https://www.ccsa.ca/changes-stimulant-use-and-related-harms-focus-methamphetamine-and-cocaine-cenddu-bulletin>

Men Offenders' Substance Use Patterns: An Ethnocultural Comparison over Time (2006 to 2019)

CNS stimulant use increased among all ethnocultural groups, except Black offenders, and IDU increased among Other ethnocultural offenders.

Why we did this study

Indigenous and White offenders have greater substance use needs than other ethnocultural groups.¹ Substance use patterns change over time,² therefore, this study was conducted to explore the substance use patterns of ethnocultural men offenders over time.

What we did

Pre-incarceration substance use patterns of federal men offenders are assessed by the Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse for men (M-CASA) upon admission into custody. Between January 2006 and March 2019,³ a total of 34,202 men offenders were assessed and categorized into ethnocultural groups: White (63%; n = 21,405), Indigenous (18%; n = 6,154), Black (10%; n = 3,517), and Other ethnocultural groups (9%; n = 3,126).⁴ Year of assessment was categorized into two-year increments for analysis.

What we found

Offenders indicating lifetime drug use increased across all study groups; the greatest increase was in the Other group (21%, from 42% to 63%), followed by Indigenous (20%, from 71% to 91%), White (16%; from 63% to 79%), and Black offenders (12%; from 39% to 51%). Lifetime alcohol use decreased slightly among Black offenders and offenders in the other group by 4% (both from 91% to 87%). White and Indigenous offenders' lifetime alcohol use remained constant over the study period.

Across all ethnocultural groups, poly-substance use (using multiple substances in one day) increased over time. White offenders reported the largest increase (22%, from 34% to 56%), followed by Indigenous offenders (15%, from 45% to 60%), Other ethnocultural groups (11%, from 17% to 28%), and Black offenders (10%, from 13% to 23%).

Indigenous and White offenders reported a 6% decrease of injection drug use (IDU) (from 31% to 25% and from 26% to 20%, respectively). Reports of IDU among Black offenders also decreased by 2% (from 4% to 2%) but increased by 5% (from 2% to 7%) among the Other group. All groups reported a decrease in using substances while incarcerated; White and Indigenous offenders reported the largest decreases to 20% and 31%, respectively.

Across all ethnocultural groups, cannabis has been the most used drug over time and cocaine/crack has been the second

most used drug (see Table). Central nervous system (CNS) stimulant use has increased, particularly for Indigenous and Other ethnocultural offenders.

Most Used Drugs Over Time Across Ethnocultural Groups and same font as below

Ethnocultural Group	Time Periods	
	2006-2007	2018-2019
Black	Cannabis (30%) Cocaine/crack (3%) CNS stimulants (2%)	Cannabis (25%) Cocaine/crack (5%) Opioids (2%)
Indigenous	Cannabis (50%) Cocaine/crack (12%) Opioids (2%)	Cannabis (26%) Cocaine/crack (12%) CNS stimulants (17%)
White	Cannabis (26%) Cocaine/crack (24%) Opioids (10%)	Cannabis (22%) Cocaine/crack (12%) Opioids and CNS stimulants (both 11%)
Other Ethnocultural groups	Cannabis (27%) Cocaine/crack (15%) CNS stimulants and opioids (both 4%)	Cannabis (24%) CNS stimulants and cocaine/crack (both 7%) Opioids (6%)

What it means

These results demonstrate that substance use patterns have changed over time for all ethnocultural groups, specifically increases in lifetime drug use and poly-substance use. However, there are a few unique patterns across ethnocultural groups, such as the increased use of CNS stimulants among Indigenous offenders and the increase of IDU among the Other group.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ Garrel, S. & Farrell MacDonald, S. Substance use patterns of ethnocultural men offenders (RIB-20-04). Ottawa, ON: CSC.

² Cram, S. & Farrell MacDonald, S. Federal men offender's substance use over time: 2009-2016 (RIB-20-06). Ottawa, ON: CSC

³ Data from phase 1 of the M-CASA implementation in the Atlantic and Ontario regions between 2002 and 2005 were also examined, but are not presented.

⁴ Other ethnicities include Arab, Asian, Latin American, multi-ethnic offenders and offenders who did not self-report an ethnicity.

Characteristics, Institutional Behaviour, and Post-release Success of Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) Participants: Examining Differences across OAT Options

Understanding the differences across OAT treatment options highlights areas of need for on-going OAT enhancements.

Why we did this study

Ensuring that offenders have access to interventions that will assist them in addressing their substance use issues allows the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to support the safe reintegration of offenders into society. For offenders who misuse opioids, CSC offers Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT). Methadone has been offered in CSC institutions since 1998 and more recently, Suboxone has been added to the medication roster. Previous CSC research focused on methadone maintenance treatment exclusively. The current study examines both methadone and Suboxone based treatment.

What we did

Study cohorts consisted of 2,325 men federal offenders, and 273 women federal offenders, who participated in the CSC's OAT while incarcerated between October 2016 and 2018. Cohorts were further divided into three treatment type groups: methadone only (M-OAT), Suboxone only (S-OAT), and a group that changed medication types during the study period (Cx-OAT). Non-OAT comparison groups were also included. Men and women were examined separately. Demographics, offence, and sentence characteristics of these three groups were compared, and indicators of institutional behaviour and post-release success were examined.

What we found

Results indicated that men non-OAT offenders were younger, more likely to be classified as minimum security and more likely to be serving their first federal sentence. In contrast, men offenders in the Cx-OAT group were more likely to be classified as maximum security and serving a longer sentence.

Women offenders in the non-OAT and M-OAT groups were more often classified as minimum security while those in the Cx-OAT and S-OAT groups were more often classified as maximum security. Women in the non-OAT group were also most likely to be serving their first federal sentence.

Across all risk related indicators, the non-OAT men offenders were the least likely to be high risk or need.

The Cx-OAT group were the most likely to have positive urinalysis tests, disciplinary charges or institutional incidents, and flagged with mental health concerns. Interestingly, the S-OAT group was most likely to have an institutional incident recorded for diverting OAT medications.

The women S-OAT and Cx-OAT groups were more likely to be high risk than the M-OAT or non-OAT groups. The women S-OAT group was also most likely to be high need, across all indicators examined.

Among study groups and regardless of gender, the S-OAT groups were least likely to be released. The Cx-OAT groups were most likely to have a release suspension and were also the most likely to have a return to custody. Most returns to custody were due to technical revocations of release.

What it means

This study provides information about a group of offenders that have not been extensively examined within a Canadian context. Findings suggest that OAT treatment groups have varying characteristics, institutional adjustment, and post-release success. Capacity and modality enhancements, as well as continued research will further improve OAT provisions and support to participants.

For more information

Farrell MacDonald, S. & Beauchamp, T. Characteristics, Institutional Behaviour, and Post-release Success of Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) Participants: Examining Differences across OAT Options (Research Report R-436). Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

SECURITY THREAT GROUPS

research
highlights

Federal Offenders Affiliated with Security Threat Groups (STG)

Among in-custody offenders, STG affiliated offenders account for 13% of men and 6% of women offenders.

Why we did this study

Security Threat Groups (STGs)¹ impact the safety and security of correctional institutions in Canada and create operational management challenges for the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). CSC restricts the influence and power exercised by STGs and encourages offenders to disaffiliate. Understanding the prevalence and composition of STGs within the federal offender population assists CSC in the management of these offenders.

What we did

This study analyzed data from federal offenders in custody or under community supervision on May 24, 2020 (N = 22,791). Specifically, STG affiliation,² region, and ethnocultural group were extracted.³ Women (n = 1,404) and men (n = 21,387) were examined separately.

What we found

This study revealed that STG affiliated offenders account for 4% of the entire women's population compared to 11% for men. In-custody and Indigenous offenders accounted for a greater proportion of the STG-affiliated population (see Table).

Table:
Distribution of STGs in the Correctional Population

Ethnicity	Gender by Incarceration Status			
	Women		Men	
	In-Custody (N = 639) % (n)	Community (N = 765) % (n)	In-Custody (N = 12,715) % (n)	Community (N = 8,672) % (n)
Indigenous	13 (34)	6 (13)	22 (857)	13 (219)
Non-Indigenous	1 (2)	1 (5)	9 (813)	6 (432)
All Offenders	6 (36)	2 (18)	13 (1,670)	8 (651)

Half of STG-affiliated women were in the Prairie region and about one-fifth in the Pacific region during the study period, regardless of incarceration status. In-custody, 67% of STG-affiliated women

were associated with Indigenous gangs, while 25% were associated with street gangs, and 8% with other STGs.⁴ In the community, 39% of STG-affiliated women were associated with street gangs, 33% with other STGs⁴ and 28% with Indigenous gangs.

Among STG-affiliated men in-custody, almost half (46%) were incarcerated in the Prairie region, followed by the Ontario (20%), Pacific (17%), Quebec (12%), and Atlantic (5%) regions. Among STG-affiliated men in the community, one-third (32%) were under supervision in the Ontario region, followed by 29% in the Prairies, 18% in the Pacific, 17% in the Quebec, and 3% in the Atlantic regions.

STG-affiliated men offenders in-custody were more often affiliated with street gangs (57%) or Indigenous gangs (24%), while fewer offenders were affiliated with outlaw motorcycle gangs (9%), prison gangs (4%), traditional crime organizations (2%), and all other STGs (4%).⁵ In the community, street gang (47%) and outlaw motorcycle gang (21%) were the most common STG affiliation, followed by Indigenous gangs (17%), traditional organized crime (7%), prison gangs (4%), and all other STGs (4%).⁵

What it means

STG-affiliated offenders are more prevalent in CSC institutions, particularly in the Prairie, Ontario, and Pacific regions. Street and Indigenous gangs, in particular, account for the majority of STG-affiliated offenders. Current research is underway to examine the descriptive and behavioural differences between STG- and non-STG-affiliated offenders, as well as across types of STGs.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ STGs: formal or informal ongoing offender group, gang, organization with three or more members that are categorized as: street gangs, Indigenous gangs, prison gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, traditional organized crime, white supremacy groups, Asian gangs, subversive groups, terrorist groups, or hate groups (Commissioner's Directive 568-3, 2016).

² STG affiliation was confirmed using CSC's STG assessment information in OMS.

³ Data extracted from the Offender Management System.

⁴ Other STGs for women includes Asian gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, traditional organized crime, terrorist organizations, white supremacist groups, and other STGs.

⁵ Other STGs for men includes Asian gangs, cults, East European organized crime, extremist organizations, Jamaican gangs, racial extremist organizations, terrorist organization, white supremacist groups, and other STGs.

Women Offenders' Pathways to Security Threat Group Affiliation

Pathways to STG involvement were similar for all STG-affiliated women: social networks, marginalization, and childhood adversity; Indigenous women were most likely to have a history of abuse, family fragmentation and STG affiliated social networks.

Why we did this study

Previous research has found that women's pathways¹ to Security Threat Group (STG) affiliation are different when compared to men. Women join at a younger age and often become affiliated through their STG affiliated partner.² A review of the literature found that social networks, marginalization and childhood adversity³ were the three main pathways to STG affiliation.⁴ This study was undertaken to examine the specific STG pathways for federal women offenders in Canada.

What we did

All women (N = 105) with an STG affiliation under federal jurisdiction from 2013 to 2019 were examined;⁵ 45% were in-custody while 55% were under community supervision. Over three-quarters (78%, n = 82) were Indigenous.⁶

What we found

The majority of women (93%) were STG involved prior to incarceration, which was consistent across in-custody/community status, ethnocultural groups, and STG group.

Social networks. Overall, 53% of women had STG-affiliated friends, 20% had STG-affiliated partners while 31% had STG-affiliated family members. Nearly 59% percent of Indigenous women had STG-affiliated friends and 34% had STG-affiliated family members. In comparison, 35% of non-Indigenous women had STG-affiliated friends and 17% had STG-affiliated family members. However, non-Indigenous women were more likely than Indigenous women to have STG-affiliated partners (35% vs 16%).

Marginalization. Almost one-quarter (23%) of women experienced periods of homelessness while 39% were involved in street life.⁷ Most women (91%) experienced periods of unemployment and 18% were involved in the sex trade. Indigenous women were more likely than non-Indigenous women to experience periods of unemployment (95% versus 74%). In contrast with the literature that describes the sex trade

as women's main role in STGs,⁸ less than a quarter (22%) of Indigenous women and 4% of non-Indigenous women reported this involvement.

Childhood adversity. Three-quarters (72%) of women reported experiencing abuse; 92% indicated abuse prior to STG affiliation and 24% indicated abuse after STG affiliation. Indigenous women were nearly twice as likely to report experiencing abuse compared to non-Indigenous women (81% vs 44%, respectively). Most Indigenous women reported abuse prior to STG affiliation (96%) and 27% reported abuse after STG affiliation. Seventy-three percent of non-Indigenous women reported abuse prior to STG affiliation and 9% reported abuse after STG affiliation.

Also, 59% of women experienced family fragmentation and 44% experienced foster care. Over two-thirds (68%) of Indigenous women experienced family fragmentation and 54% experienced periods in foster care. Whereas 26% of non-Indigenous women experienced family fragmentation and 9% experienced time in foster care.

What it means

Social networks, marginalization factors, and childhood adversity are important pathways to STG involvement for all women offenders. However, this study suggests that certain STG pathways are more prevalent for Indigenous women than non-Indigenous women offenders, such as higher reports of abuse and family fragmentation, and the importance of STG affiliated social networks. Exploring the STG pathways for women better informs interventions and supports, especially those designed for STG disaffiliation. Future qualitative research would further inform our knowledge of women's pathways to STG affiliation.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ A pathway refers to the various factors that would lead someone to STG involvement. This does not refer to the Correctional Service of Canada's Pathways initiative for Indigenous offenders.

² Sutton, T. (2017). The lives of female gang members: a review of the literature. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 37, 142-152.

³ Childhood adversity includes history of abuse (physical, mental, emotional, sexual, or neglect), family fragmentation, and foster care experience.

⁴ Cram, S. & Farrell MacDonald, S. Pathways to security threat groups: a review of the literature (RR-21-01). Ottawa, ON: CSC.

⁵ STG affiliated women in the study will be referred to as women.

⁶ Non-Indigenous offenders (n = 23) include: White (12%), Black (4%), Asian (4%), and other ethnocultural groups (2%).

⁷ The offender technically has a home (i.e. family home, group home or foster care) but spends much of their time hanging out on the streets.

⁸ Sutton, 2017; Totten, M. (2009). Aboriginal youth and violent gang involvement in Canada: quality prevention strategies. IPC Review 3: Public Safety Canada.

Federal Women Offenders' Involvement in Security Threat Groups (STGs)

Actively engaged STG affiliated women were more likely to have committed a violent offence and were higher in risk and need than those who were inactive.

Why we did this study

The proportion of women offenders affiliated with a Security Threat Group (STG)¹ continues to increase. A recent study indicates that 4% of the federal women offender population is STG affiliated; 6% of women in-custody were assessed as part of a STG.² The involvement status of these women has not been previously examined. Therefore this study was conducted to explore the differences between active and inactive³ STG affiliated women offenders.

What we did

Federal women with a STG affiliation (N = 93) were included; 77% (n = 72) were Indigenous, 14% (n = 13) were White, and 9% (n = 8) were members of other racialized groups. A greater proportion were active (59%, n = 55) and 41% (n = 38) were inactive. Comparisons between women in-custody (44%, n = 41) and in the community (56%, n = 52) were also undertaken.

What we found

Almost half of actively and inactively involved women were aged 18 to 29 years. However, a greater majority of women in-custody (63% of those actively engaged and 71% of those inactive) were 18 to 29 years compared to STG affiliated women in the community (32% and 19%, respectively). Three-quarters of the women in the study were single,⁴ which was slightly higher for inactive women.

Three-quarters of women in the study group were serving their first federal sentence. Fewer women actively engaged were serving sentences of four years or less compared to those inactive (53% versus 66%); this pattern was consistent for the in-custody and community subgroups.

Women actively engaged were more likely to have committed a violent offence than those identified as inactive (64% versus 48%); actively engaged women were more likely to commit assault (26% versus 21%), robbery (15% versus 8%), or homicide-related offences (13% versus 8%), and less likely to commit property offences (4% versus 13%).

Actively involved women were more likely to be assessed as high risk and need compared those who were inactive, and were also less likely to have a high motivation level, reintegration potential, or accountability level. Correctional plan engagement was also lower for actively versus inactively engaged women (82% versus 95%). This pattern was evident for the in-custody and community subgroups.

Actively engaged women were more likely than those who were inactive to have a moderate to high need in the following DFIA-R domains: attitudes (83% versus 51%), marital/family relations (75% versus 69%), and personal/ emotional orientation (87% versus 77%) but were less likely to have identified need in community functioning (54% versus 66%), employment/ education (69% versus 74%), or substance abuse (75% versus 91%). Almost all of both study groups had need related to associates (94%).

Institutional and post-release outcomes⁵ show that those actively engaged women compared to inactive women continue to present operational and reintegration challenges: institutional transfers 63% versus 59%; filed grievances 96% versus 88%; suspension of release: 52% versus 33%.

What it means

Distinct differences exist between actively and inactively engaged STG affiliated women across the indicators examined. Women who continue to actively engage in their STGs may benefit from additional supports aimed at their attitudes and personal/emotional orientation. Future research could explore the reasons why women chose to remain engaged versus disengage in STGs.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ STGs are categorized as street gangs, Indigenous gangs, prison gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, traditional organized crime, Asian gangs, white supremacy groups, subversive groups, terrorist organizations and hate groups.

² Farrell MacDonald, S. Federal offenders affiliated with Security Threat Groups (STG) RIB 20-09. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

³ Inactive STG affiliated offenders are not actively engaged in the STG but have not formally disaffiliated. ⁴ Single means the offender was not currently married/common law or was not previously married/common law.

⁵ The groups had comparable rates of correctional program completion (100% each), disciplinary charges (82% to 83%), institutional incidents (100% each), and returns to custody (10% each).

Examining Involvement Status of Security Threat Group Affiliated Men Offenders

STG affiliated men identified as inactive in the STG are more likely to have committed violent offences and serve longer sentences.

Why we did this study

Security Threat Group¹ (STG) affiliation remains a unique operational and population management concern for the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). A recent study indicated that 11% of men offenders were STG-affiliated, with higher proportions among in-custody and Indigenous sub-populations.² The involvement status of STG affiliated offenders has not yet been examined. This study was conducted to explore differences between actively engaged versus inactive³ STG affiliated men offenders.

What we did

Federal men offenders assessed as STG affiliated in the Offender Management System (OMS) were included. In total, 3,889 men offenders were examined; 42% were Indigenous, 31% were White, 16% were Black, 5% were Asian and 6% were members of other racialized groups. Sixty percent were identified as active (n = 2342) and 39% were inactive (n = 1504).⁴

What we found

Although almost three-quarters of STG affiliated men were 39 years or younger, actively affiliated men were more likely to be 18 to 29 years old than inactive men (39% versus 26%). Actively affiliated men were less likely to have been a key player or full member compared to those who were inactive (64% versus 70%).

Active engaged men were more likely to be serving their first federal sentence than those inactive (71% versus 45%) and were less likely to be serving an indeterminate sentence or sentence of 10 years or more (19% versus 28%). Fifty-eight percent of active and 73% of inactive affiliated men committed a violent offence; actively involved men were more likely to commit drug related offences whereas those inactive were more likely to commit homicide-related, robbery, or assault.

Overall, actively affiliated men had lower criminogenic risk and need ratings compared to inactive men. Sixty-eight percent of active and 75% of inactive were currently engaged in their correctional plan.

Comparisons of DFIA-R need domains for actively and inactively involved men showed that those still active had greater need in associates and attitudes, while those inactive had greater identified need in the remaining domain areas: community functioning, employment/ education, marital/family relations, personal/emotional orientation, and substance abuse.

Among men in-custody,⁵ actively affiliated men were less likely those inactive to have institutional incidents (82% versus 89%), disciplinary charges (63% versus 68%), or institutional transfers (75% versus 82%), although the proportions were high in both groups.⁶ However, they were also less likely to complete correctional programming during their sentence (70% versus 81%).

In the community, actively engaged men were less likely than those who were inactive to have a suspension of release or a return to custody (38% versus 48%; 12% versus 18%, respectively).

What it means

Among STG affiliated men offenders, there are distinct characteristics of those who remain actively engaged in the STG versus those who do not. The higher proportion of inactive STG affiliated men who committed violent offences and are serving longer sentences may indicate, in line with the literature, that STG affiliates seek to leave the group because they wish to avoid further consequences of their affiliation.⁷ Future research could explore the reasons for STG disengagement and how offenders identified as inactive navigate the correctional environment.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Sarah Cram and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

¹ STGs are categorized as street gangs, Indigenous gangs, prison gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, traditional organized crime, Asian gangs, white supremacy groups, subversive groups, terrorist organizations and hate groups.

² Farrell MacDonald, S. Federal offenders affiliated with Security Threat Groups (STG) RIB 20-09. Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

³ Inactive STG affiliated offenders are not actively engaged in the STG but have not formally disaffiliated.

⁴ Forty-three men offenders did not have an identified involvement status.

⁵ Fifty-nine percent (n = 2,340) of offenders in the study cohort were in-custody and 41% (n = 1,642) were in the community.

⁶ Analysis did not control for time in-custody.

⁷ Pyrooz, D., & Decker, S. (2011). Motives and methods for leaving the gang: understanding the process of gang desistance. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 39, 417-425.

POPULATION TRENDS
DURING THE PANDEMIC ERA

research
highlights

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

Substantial pandemic era declines in federal supervision populations were experienced by men, women and across regions.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-1,392 or 10.1 %) in the federal in-custody population from 13,720 at year-end in 2019-20 to 12,328 in 2021-22. Similarly, there was also a sizable decline (-903 or 9.6%) in the community supervision population from 9,382 at year-end in 2019-20 to 8,479 in 2021-22.

What we did

Historical federal institutional and community supervision counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (2019-20 to 2021-22) of the in-custody and community supervision counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and across the five different administrative regions of CSC: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and Pacific.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal in-custody population dropped significantly during the pandemic era. In-custody men¹ declined by 1,295 inmates or 10% from 13,035 in 2019-20 to 11,740 in 2021-22. In-custody women declined by 97 inmates or 14% from 685 in 2019-20 to 588 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking the custodial decline by region, it is notable that there is wide variation from a high of 18.9% in the Pacific region to a low of 2.8% in the Quebec region.

Table 1: Federal In-custody

	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	1,274	2,684	3,823	3,945	1,994	13,720
20-21	1,110	2,454	3,293	3,812	1,730	12,399
21-22	1,057	2,608	3,285	3,761	1,617	12,328
Net	-217	-76	-538	-184	-377	-1,392
Change	17.0%	2.8%	14.1%	4.7%	18.9%	10.1%

Source: CRS-M

As well, the official counts of the federal community supervision fell significantly during the pandemic era. Men² under community supervision men declined by 815 inmates or 9.4% from 8,651 in 2019-20 to 7,836 in 2021-22. Community supervision women declined by 88 offenders or 12% from 731 in 2019-20 to 643 in 2021-22.

In Table 2, for those under community supervision the Quebec region had the greatest decline of 19.4% whereas the Ontario region actually experienced a slight increase. .

Table 2: Federal Community Supervision

	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	887	2,257	2,583	2,255	1,400	9,382
20-21	861	2,104	2,673	2,130	1,345	9,113
21-22	822	1,830	2,593	1,937	1,297	8,479
Net	-65	-437	+10	-318	-103	-903
Change	7.3%	19.4%	0.4%	5.1%	7.4%	9.6%

Source: CRS-M

Notes: ¹Men in-custody was adjusted by 3 due to category other.

²Men community supervision was adjusted by 1 due to category other.

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been a sustained downward trend in the federal supervision population. It appears that with co-occurring reductions in federal admissions and returns, ongoing and targeted efforts at case preparation for safe release, and effective case management in the community when taken together resulted in a pronounced reduction in the number of federal inmates during the pandemic period. Moreover, this effect has translated over time into more successful expiration of sentences for those conditionally released and therefore under community supervision.

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk

Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Admissions

Substantial pandemic era declines in admissions to federal custody were observed except for Indigenous people.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of five fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial overall decline during 2020-21 (-1,725 or 24.6 %) in federal admissions from 7,003 in 2019-20 down to 5,278 in 2020-21. However, there was a sizable increase (+962 or 18.2 %) of federal admissions to 6,240 in 2021-22. Similarly, the number of Indigenous admissions declined in 2020-21 (-364 or 16.2%) from 2,245 in 2019-20 to 1,881 in 2020-21. As well, there was a notable increase in Indigenous admissions (+312 or 16.6%) in 2021-22.

What we did

Historical federal admissions counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (May 6, 2022) to establish a five-year trend (2017-18 to 2021-22) of the admissions to custody for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and whether they were Indigenous.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal admission population dropped significantly during the two years of the pandemic era. Men admissions declined by 653 inmates or 11% from 6,468 in 2019-20 to 5,815 in 2021-22. Federal women admissions declined by 110 inmates or 20.1% from 535 in 2019-20 to 425 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking the custodial admissions by Indigenous and gender representation, it is notable that Indigenous men admissions declined slightly by 48 inmates or 2% from 2,016 in 2019-20 to 1,968 in 2021-22. In 2021-22, Indigenous men represented 33.8% of men admitted to federal custody up from 29.8% in 2017-18.

Indigenous women admissions had declined very slightly by four inmates or 2% from 229 in 2019-20 to 225 in 2021-22. In 2021-22 Indigenous women represented 52.9% of women admitted to federal custody up from 41.3% in 2017-18.

Table 1: Federal Admissions

	All	Indigenous	All Men	Indigenous Men	All Women	Indigenous Women
17-18	7,193	2,205	6,653	1,982	540	223
18-19	7,333	2,256	6,800	2,034	533	222
19-20	7,003	2,245	6,468	2,016	535	229
20-21	5,278	1,881	4,859	1,700	419	181
21-22	6,240	2,193	5,815	1,968	425	225

Source: CRS-M Notes: All admissions include new warrant of committal, revocations, other (i.e., international transfers)

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been an overall downward trend in federal admissions with a pronounced trend break in year one of the pandemic (2020-21). However, it appears that the decline was less experienced among Indigenous admissions, particularly women. As a result, Indigenous women now constitute the majority of federal women being admitted to federal custody.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Releases

Pandemic era declines in releases from federal custody were observed except for Indigenous offenders who increased slightly.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of five fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced decline during 2020-21 (-521 or 7.2%) in federal releases from 7,246 in 2019-20 down to 6,726 in 2020-21. However, in year two there was a further decrease (-111 or 1.7 %) of federal releases to 6,615 in 2021-22. Similarly, the number of Indigenous releases declined in year one 2020-21 (-84 or 3.8%) from 2,230 in 2019-20 to 2,146 in 2020-21. On the other hand, in year two there was an increase in Indigenous releases (+128 or 6.0%) in 2021-22.

What we did

Historical federal releases counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (May 6, 2022) to establish a five-year trend (2017-18 to 2021-22) of the releases from custody for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and whether they were Indigenous.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal release population dropped during the two years of the pandemic era. Men release declined by 545 inmates or 8% from 6,699 in 2019-20 to 6,124 in 2021-22. Federal women releases declined by 56 inmates or 10% from 547 in 2019-20 to 491 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking the custodial release by Indigenous and gender representation, it is notable that Indigenous men release increased slightly by 48 inmates or 2.4% from 1,999 in 2019-20 to 2,047 in 2021-22. In 2021-22, Indigenous men represented 33.4% of men released from federal custody up from 28.1% in 2017-18.

Indigenous women releases had declined very slightly by four inmates or 2% from 231 in 2019-20 to 227 in 2021-22. In 2021-22 Indigenous women represented 46.2% of women released from federal custody up from 37.4% in 2017-18.

Table 1: Federal Releases

	All	Indigenous	All Men	Indigenous Men	All Women	Indigenous Women
17-18	7,454	2,150	6,885	1,937	569	213
18-19	7,267	2,096	6,713	1,876	554	220
19-20	7,246	2,230	6,699	1,999	547	231
20-21	6,726	2,146	6,247	1,954	479	201
21-22	6,615	2,274	6,124	2,047	491	227

Source: CRS-M

Notes: All releases include day parole, full parole, statutory release, and sentence expired.

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been an overall downward trend in federal releases with a more pronounced trend break in year one of the pandemic (2020-21). However, the decline was less experienced among Indigenous releases, particularly men who had actually increased in year two.

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Custody Population Profile: Men

There were substantial pandemic era shifts among men in the federal custody residual population.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-1,521 or 11.5 %) in the federal men in-custody population from 13,261 at mid-year in 2019-20 to 11,740 at year-end in 2021-22. It is noteworthy that the majority (98%) of decline in men was in the first year of the pandemic, sustained and dropped further in year two.

What we did

Federal institutional population counts and individualized case characteristics are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (Mid-year 2019-20 to Year-end 2021-22) of the in-custody counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) men and for selected characteristics: age, diversity, sentence length, major offence, criminal risk (index), dynamic factors (rating at intake).

What we found

As a result of the decline, the residual men in custody population (see Table 1) has become the following;

- 1) slightly older;
- 2) more diverse with White men moving below 50%, Black men staying stable, and the percentage of those who are Indigenous increasing;
- 3) sentence length continues to increase with those serving under 4 years declining in proportion while longer sentences and indeterminate sentences increase;
- 4) more serving sentences for murder or Schedule I offences than before the pandemic (75.7% vs 79.7%);
- 5) slight upward shift in criminal risk (less than 1%) towards those with a poor (high risk) rating rather than a medium risk rating while those with low risk have remained stable in proportion; and
- 6) an increase in offenders with higher criminogenic needs is very pronounced growing to over 81% of the current in-custody population.

What it means

It is clear there has been a sustained shift in the custody profile of men over the pandemic era into a longer serving population with increased potential for violent behaviour. This will have long-term impacts on program delivery and will likely disproportionately influence medium and maximum-security institutions into the near future.

Table 1: Federal Custody Population: Men

Characteristic	2019-20 N=13,261 % (n)	2020-21 N=11,778 % (n)	2021-22 N=11,740 % (n)
Age			
< 35	40.3 (5,350)	38.6 (4,544)	37.5 (4,403)
35 to 64	54.5 (7,230)	55.8 (6,574)	56.3 (6,615)
65+	5.1 (681)	5.6 (660)	6.1 (722)
Diversity			
White	50.4 (6,688)	47.3 (5,575)	47.2 (5,542)
Indigenous	29.2 (3,866)	31.0 (3,646)	31.8 (3,737)
Black	8.8 (1,169)	8.9 (1,043)	8.5 (1,001)
Other	11.6 (1,538)	12.8 (1,514)	12.5 (1,460)
Sentence Length			
< 4 years	35.7 (4,728)	32.0 (3,764)	31.2 (3,659)
4 years+	37.6 (4,980)	38.9 (4,582)	39.4 (4,629)
Indeterminate	26.8 (3,553)	29.1 (3,432)	29.4 (3,452)
Major Offence			
Murder (I or II)	21.6 (2,859)	23.3 (2,741)	23.4 (2,753)
Violent (Schedule I)	54.1 (7,178)	55.6 (6,546)	56.3 (6,613)
Drug (Schedule II)	13.2 (1,757)	12.0 (1,417)	11.5 (1,345)
Non-Violent (Others)	11.1 (1,467)	9.1 (1,074)	8.8 (1,029)
Criminal Risk Index			
Very Good (1-7)	22.0 (2,601)	21.4 (2,394)	21.9 (2,312)
Good (8-13)	21.5 (2,542)	21.3 (2,376)	21.4 (2,255)
Fair (14-17)	18.0 (2,128)	17.5 (1,963)	17.6 (1,852)
Poor (18-21)	14.4 (1,704)	14.5 (1,611)	14.0 (1,480)
Very Poor (22+)	24.2 (2,865)	25.3 (2,818)	25.1 (2,641)
Dynamic Factors Rating			
Low	2.2 (274)	1.5 (164)	1.7 (183)
Moderate	20.5 (2,585)	17.7 (1,960)	17.0 (1,866)
High	77.3 (9,737)	80.8 (8,936)	81.3 (8,945)

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Custody Population Profile: Women

There were considerable pandemic era shifts among women in the federal custody residual population.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-86 or 12.8 %) in the federal women in-custody population from 674 at mid-year in 2019-20 to 588 at year-end in 2021-22. It is noteworthy that there were successive declines in women over the pandemic period, -56 (or 8.3%) in the first year and -30 (or 4.9%) in the second.

What we did

Federal institutional population counts and individualized case characteristics are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (Mid-year 2019-20 to Year-end 2021-22) of the in-custody counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) women and for selected characteristics: age, diversity, sentence length, major offence, criminal risk (index), dynamic factors (rating at intake).

What we found

Because of the decline, the residual women in custody population (see Table 1) has become the following;

- 1) slightly older;
- 2) the proportion of the women offender profile that are Indigenous increased from 42% to 49.5% over the time period, even though the count for women inmates overall declined the number of Indigenous women increased during the pandemic period.
- 3) the high proportion of women serving a sentence of less than 4 years sustained over the period;
- 4) there was a substantial increase in the proportion of women serving a sentence for a Schedule I violent offence (38.9% to 46.9%);
- 5) the proportion of women with poor or very poor criminal risk ratings grew; and
- 6) the proportion of women assessed with high criminogenic need increased substantially (from 67.9% to 76.7%).

What it means

It is noticeable there has been a dramatic shift in the custody profile of women over the pandemic era into a relatively short sentenced population with increased potential for violence. Shifts like this are unprecedented and will have profound effects on issues such as population management, infrastructure and programming.

Table 1: Federal Custody Population: Women

Characteristic	2019-20 N=674 % (n)	2020-21 N=618 % (n)	2021-22 N=588 % (n)
Age			
< 35	50.7 (342)	51.5 (318)	46.6 (274)
35 to 64	47.5 (320)	46.6 (288)	51.0 (300)
65+	1.8 (12)	1.9 (12)	2.4 (14)
Diversity			
White	43.2 (291)	42.9 (265)	38.3 (225)
Indigenous	42.1 (284)	43.2 (267)	49.5 (291)
Black	4.9 (33)	3.9 (24)	3.4 (20)
Other	9.8 (66)	10.0 (62)	8.8 (52)
Sentence Length			
< 4 years	49.9 (336)	46.9 (290)	48.6 (286)
4 years+	29.7 (200)	32.7 (202)	30.6 (180)
Indeterminate	20.5 (138)	20.4 (126)	20.7 (122)
Major Offence			
Murder (I or II)	19.6 (132)	19.6 (121)	19.7 (116)
Violent (Schedule I)	38.9 (262)	44.3 (274)	46.9 (276)
Drug (Schedule II)	28.0 (189)	23.5 (145)	21.6 (127)
Non-Violent (Others)	13.5 (91)	12.6 (78)	11.7 (69)
Criminal Risk Index			
Very Good (1-4)	32.1 (193)	30.8 (189)	27.5 (147)
Good (5-8)	12.6 (76)	10.3 (63)	10.5 (56)
Fair (9-13)	22.8 (137)	23.8 (146)	22.2 (119)
Poor (14-18)	16.4 (99)	18.6 (114)	21.3 (114)
Very Poor (19+)	16.1 (97)	16.5 (101)	18.5 (99)
Dynamic Factors Rating			
Low	7.0 (43)	2.8 (16)	3.8 (20)
Moderate	25.1 (154)	22.3 (128)	19.5 (102)
High	67.9 (416)	74.9 (429)	76.7 (401)

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Custody Population Profile: Indigenous Men

There were substantial pandemic era shifts among Indigenous men in the federal custody population.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a minimal decline (-129 or 3.3%) in the federal Indigenous men in-custody population from 3,866 at mid-year in 2019-20 to 3,737 at year-end in 2021-22. It is noteworthy that all of the decline in Indigenous men was in the first year of the pandemic, whereas there was an increase in year two from year one.

What we did

Federal institutional population counts and individualized case characteristics are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (Mid-year 2019-20 to Year-end 2020-21 and Year-end 2021-22) of the in-custody counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) Indigenous men and for selected characteristics: age, diversity (First Nations, Metis, Inuit), sentence length, major offence, criminal risk (index), and dynamic factors (rating at intake).

What we found

Accordingly, the Indigenous men in federal custody population (see Table 1) has become;

- 1) slightly older as Indigenous men in-custody are more likely to be in the 35 to 64 age group than they were prior to the pandemic (48% to 51%);
- 2) stable representation First Nations, Metis and Inuit;
- 3) sentence lengths have become longer over this time period with the majority serving sentences of 4 years and over and indeterminate sentences;
- 4) there has been a profound change in offence type composition with more serving sentences for a Murder or Schedule 1 offence and combined this percentage has climbed to 84% by March 2022;
- 5) albeit the sentence length and offence type have changed over time, there does not seem to be an accompanying change in criminal risk; and
- 6) for dynamic needs, this population continues to be very high need and the proportion of those with a high need rating is now 90% - up from 86% in Mid-year. 2019.

What it means

There has been a major shift in the profile of Indigenous men over the pandemic era. Indigenous men are a longer sentenced population with increased need for intensive interventions. This will have long-term impacts on correctional planning, Indigenous-specific interventions and likely disproportionately influence medium and maximum-security institutions into the near future.

Table 1: Federal Custody Population: Indigenous Men

Characteristic	2019-20 N=3,866 % (n)	2020-21 N=3,646 % (n)	2021-22 N=3,737 % (n)
Age			
< 35	49.5(1,913)	47.4 (1,730)	46.5 (1,736)
35 to 64	48.0 (1,855)	49.7 (1,813)	50.8 (1,900)
65+	2.5 (98)	2.8 (103)	2.7 (101)
Diversity			
First Nations	68.2 (2,637)	69.4 (2,732)	68.3 (2,767)
Metis	28.2 (1,091)	27.2 (991)	30.0 (1,050)
Inuit	3.6 (138)	3.4 (125)	3.7 (139)
Sentence Length			
< 4 years	37.6 (1,452)	34.8 (1,268)	33.9 (1,266)
4 years+	37.7 (1,458)	39.4 (1,436)	39.8 (1,489)
Indeterminate	24.7 (956)	25.8%(942)	26.3 (982)
Major Offence			
Murder (I or II)	18.9 (731)	19.6 (714)	20.0 (748)
Violent (Schedule I)	62.2 (2,405)	63.0 (2,297)	64.0 (2,390)
Drug (Schedule II)	7.8 (300)	7.2 (261)	6.7 (250)
Non-Violent (Others)	11.1 (430)	10.3 (374)	9.3 (349)
Criminal Risk Index			
Very Good (1-7)	10.4 (369)	9.9 (346)	10.6 (365)
Good (8-13)	17.4 (615)	16.7 (585)	16.4 (569)
Fair (14-17)	18.7 (662)	18.8 (656)	19.2 (661)
Poor (18-21)	16.5 (585)	16.8 (588)	16.9 (582)
Very Poor (22+)	37.0 (1,308)	37.8 (1,323)	36.9 (1,272)
Dynamic Factors Rating			
Low	0.7 (27)	0.4 (14)	0.3 (11)
Moderate	13.0 (482)	10.1 (348)	9.8 (348)
High	86.3 (3,210)	89.5 (3,136)	89.9 (3,199)

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Custody Population Profile: Indigenous Women

There were substantial pandemic era shifts among Indigenous women in the federal custody population.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of pandemic period, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced an overall decrease for women in federal custody, however, for Indigenous women there was an increase +7 (or 2.5%) from 284 at mid-year in 2019-20 to 291 at year-end in 2021-22. It is noteworthy that there was an initial decline in Indigenous women in the first year of the pandemic. There was an increase in year two.

What we did

Federal institutional population counts and individualized case characteristics are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (Mid-year 2019-20, to Year-end 2020-21 and 2021-22) of the in-custody counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) Indigenous women and for selected characteristics: age, diversity, sentence length, major offence, criminal risk (index), and dynamic factors (rating at intake).

What we found

The shift in the population of Indigenous women is notable in the following ways (see Table 1):

- 1) slightly older as Indigenous women are more likely to be in the 35 to 64 age group than they were prior to the pandemic (40% to 42%);
- 2) First Nations and Inuit women have decreased whereas Metis women have increased;
- 3) sentence lengths have become shorter over this time period with the majority serving sentences of less than 4 years;
- 4) there has been a profound change in offence type composition with more serving sentences for a Murder or Schedule 1 offence and combined this percentage has climbed to 71% by March 2022;
- 5) albeit the sentence length is shorter and offence type have changed to more Schedule I offences over time, there appears to be a slight increase in criminal risk; and
- 6) dynamic need in this population continues to be very high and the proportion of those with a high need rating is now 88% - up from 85%.

What it means

Overall, there has been a significant shift in the federal custody profile of Indigenous women over the pandemic era into a shorter sentenced population that have previous histories with the criminal justice system and an increased need for culture-informed programs and services.

Table 1:
Federal Custody Population: Indigenous Women

Characteristic	2019-20 N=284 % (n)	2020-21 N=267 % (n)	2021-22 N=291 % (n)
Age			
< 35	59.2 (168)	65.2 (174)	57.0 (166)
35 to 64	40.1 (114)	34.1 (91)	42.3 (123)
65+	0.7 (2)	0.7 (2)	0.7 (2)
Diversity			
First Nations	79.6 (226)	75.7 (202)	75.0 (218)
Metis	19.0 (54)	24.3 (63)	29.7 (72)
Inuit	1.4 (4)	0	0.3 (1)
Sentence Length			
< 4 years	51.1 (145)	52.4 (140)	52.6 (153)
4 years+	31.0 (88)	31.8 (85)	30.6 (89)
Indeterminate	18.0 (51)	15.7 (42)	16.8 (49)
Major Offence			
Murder (I or II)	16.5 (47)	15.0 (40)	15.8 (46)
Violent (Schedule I)	51.4 (146)	54.7 (146)	55.0 (160)
Drug (Schedule II)	20.1 (57)	18.4 (49)	18.2 (53)
Non-Violent (Others)	12.0 (34)	12.0 (32)	11.0 (32)
Criminal Risk Index			
Very Good (1-4)	17.0 (43)	15.2 (40)	16.4 (44)
Good (5-8)	11.8 (30)	8.0 (21)	8.2 (22)
Fair (9-13)	27.3 (69)	26.8 (71)	25.7 (69)
Poor (14-18)	20.2 (51)	25.4 (67)	26.6 (71)
Very Poor (19+)	23.7 (60)	24.6 (65)	23.1 (62)
Dynamic Factors Rating			
Low	2.7 (7)	0	1.2 (3)
Moderate	12.7 (33)	7.6 (19)	10.6 (28)
High	84.6 (220)	92.4 (232)	88.2 (232)

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Custody Population Profile: Black Men

There were substantial pandemic era shifts among Black men in the federal custody population.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-168 or 14.5 %) in the federal Black men in-custody population from 1,169 at mid-year in 2019-20 to 1,001 at year-end in 2021-22. It is noteworthy that the majority (75%) of decline in men was in the first year of the pandemic, sustained and dropped further in year two.

What we did

Federal institutional population counts and individualized case characteristics are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (April 14, 2022) to establish a three-year trend (Mid-year 2019-20 to Year-end 2021-22) of the in-custody counts for federally sentenced (two years or more) Black men and for selected characteristics: age, sentence length, major offence, criminal risk (index), and dynamic factors (rating at intake).

What we found

Consequently, due to the decline, the Black men federal custody population profile has shifted (see Table 1) to be:

- 1) slightly older;
- 2) the proportion of Black men who are serving indeterminate sentences has increased from 29.1% to 35.0% and this has been accompanied by a decline in those serving sentences of less than 4 years from 25.6% to 20.9%;
- 3) serving a sentence for Murder (I or II) has increased from 24.6% to 29.1%;
- 4) there has been minimal upward shift in criminal risk with only a slight shift between low and medium risk; and
- 5) the proportion of Black men who are rated high on dynamic need has grown from 72.6% to 80.2%.

What it means

In summary, there has been a sustained shift in the number and custody profile of Black men over the pandemic era into a longer serving population coupled with increased potential for violent behaviour. This will have long-term impacts on correctional programming and likely disproportionately influence medium and maximum-security institutions into the near future.

Table 1: Federal Custody Population: Black Men

Characteristic	2019-20 N=1,169 % (n)	2020-21 N=1,043 % (n)	2021-22 N=1,001 % (n)
Age			
< 35	55.9 (653)	54.7 (571)	52.7 (528)
35 to 64	43.0 (503)	43.7 (455)	45.5 (455)
65+	1.1 (13)	1.6 (17)	1.8 (18)
Sentence Length			
< 4 years	25.6 (299)	22.5 (235)	20.9 (209)
4 years+	45.3 (530)	43.8 (456)	44.1 (442)
Indeterminate	29.1 (340)	33.7 (352)	35.0 (350)
Major Offence			
Murder (I or II)	24.6 (287)	28.3 (295)	29.1 (291)
Violent (Schedule I)	52.1 (609)	51.7 (540)	50.9 (510)
Drug (Schedule II)	15.7 (183)	14.3 (149)	13.2 (132)
Non-Violent (Others)	7.7 (90)	5.7 (59)	6.8 (68)
Criminal Risk Index			
Very Good (1-7)	23.3 (255)	20.6 (212)	20.9 (199)
Good (8-13)	24.9 (273)	26.1 (268)	25.3 (240)
Fair (14-17)	18.1 (198)	18.7 (192)	17.9 (170)
Poor (18-21)	14.2 (156)	15.1 (155)	15.9 (151)
Very Poor (22+)	19.5 (214)	19.5 (200)	20.0 (190)
Dynamic Factors Rating			
Low	3.5 (39)	1.3 (13)	1.3 (12)
Moderate	23.9 (268)	21.0 (207)	18.5 (177)
High	72.6 (814)	77.7 (767)	80.2 (766)

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Day Parole Releases

Pandemic era declines in day parole releases were observed across men, women and Indigenous offenders.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of five fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced an overall decline during 2020-21 (-577 or 23%) in federal day parole releases from 2,541 in 2019-20 down to 1,964 in 2021-22. Exploring the differential impacts of the pandemic era on various subpopulations with respect to early release helps to better inform and improve population management strategies.

What we did

Historical federal day parole releases counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (May 6, 2022) to establish a five-year trend (2017-18 to 2021-22) of the day parole releases from custody for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and whether they were Indigenous.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal day parole release population dropped during the two years of the pandemic era. Men day parole releases declined by 536 inmates or 24% from 2,248 in 2019-20 to 1,712 in 2021-22. Federal women day parole releases declined by 41 inmates or 14% from 293 in 2019-20 to 252 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking day parole release by Indigenous and gender representation, it is notable that day parole releases for Indigenous men decreased by 75 inmates or 18% from 423 in 2019-20 to 348 in 2021-22. In 2021-22, Indigenous men represented 20.3% of men day parole released from federal custody up from 17.8% in 2017-18.

Indigenous women released on day parole had declined very slightly by five inmates or 5% from 93 in 2019-20 to 88 in 2021-22. In 2021-22 Indigenous women represented 35% of women released from federal custody up from 30% in 2017-18.

Table 1: Federal Day Parole Releases

	All	Indigenous	All Men	Indigenous Men	All Women	Indigenous Women
17-18	2,622	504	2,301	409	321	95
18-19	2,683	554	2,368	452	315	102
19-20	2,541	516	2,248	423	293	93
20-21	2,313	489	2,076	413	237	76
21-22	1,964	436	1,712	348	252	88

Source: CRS-M

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been an overall downward trend in federal day parole releases with a more pronounced trend break in year two of the pandemic (-228 and -349, respectively). However, the day parole release decline was experienced more by all men (-172 and -364, respectively) and less so for Indigenous men (-10 and -65, respectively). On the other hand, it appears that day parole releases for Indigenous women had actually increased in year two of the pandemic era (-17 and +12, respectively). The net effect of sustained day parole releases combined with fewer admissions¹ to federal custody have contributed to a substantially reduced carceral population².

¹RIB 22-06 Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Admissions

²RIB 22-05 Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on Conditional Release Outcomes

Pandemic era decrease in revocations were observed for both men and women offenders.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of five fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced an overall decrease during 2020-21 (-273 or 12%) in revocations of conditional release from 2,297 in 2019-20 down to 2,024 in 2020-21. However, there was a sizable increase (+222 or 11%) of revocations to 2,246 in 2021-22. Similarly, the number of Indigenous revocations declined in 2020-21 (-68 or 8%) from 894 in 2019-20 to 826 in 2020-21. As well, there was a notable increase in Indigenous revocations (+157 or 19%) in 2021-22.

What we did

Historical federal conditional release revocation counts are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M). Data were extracted (May 6, 2022) to establish a five-year trend (2017-18 to 2021-22) of the revocations on conditional release for federally sentenced (two years or more) men, women and whether they were Indigenous.

What we found

Overall, official counts of the federal revocations population dropped during the two years of the pandemic era. Revocations of men on conditional release declined very slightly by 15 offenders or less than 1% from 2,120 in 2019-20 to 2,105 in 2021-22. Federal women revocations declined by 38 offenders or 21% from 179 in 2019-20 to 141 in 2021-22.

As reflected in Table 1, when unpacking conditional release by Indigenous and gender representation, it is notable that revocations for Indigenous men increased by 98 offenders or 9.4% from 794 in 2019-20 to 892 in 2021-22. In 2021-22, Indigenous men represented 42.4% of men who were revoked of conditional release up from 37.1% in 2017-18.

Indigenous women revocations had declined slightly by nine offenders or 9% from 100 in 2019-20 to 91 in 2021-22. In 2021-22, Indigenous women represented 64.5% of women revocations up from 54.4% in 2017-18.

Table 1: Conditional Release Revocations

	All	Indigenous	All Men	Indigenous Men	All Women	Indigenous Women
17-18	2,131	816	1,982	735	149	81
18-19	2,255	840	2,110	759	145	81
19-20	2,297	894	2,120	794	179	100
20-21	2,024	826	1,880	759	144	67
21-22	2,246	983	2,105	892	141	91

Source: CRS-M

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there had been an overall downward trend in revocations of conditional release with a more pronounced reduction in year one of the pandemic. However, the revocation decline was experienced more by women than men and less so for Indigenous men and women. The net effect of a slight decline in re-admissions due to revocations of conditional release combined with fewer overall admissions¹ to and sustained release² from federal custody have contributed to a substantially reduced carceral population³ during the pandemic period.

¹RIB 22-06 Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Admissions

²RIB 22-07 Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Releases

³RIB 22-05 Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie Anne Keown

Pandemic Era Impacts on Drug Overdoses and Suicides

Pandemic era declines in drug overdoses and suicides were observed among inmates in federal custody.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of five fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a substantial decline (-1,392 or 10.1 %) in the federal in-custody population from 13,720 at year-end in 2019-20 to 12,328 in 2021-22. Exploring the differential impacts of the pandemic era on behaviours of concern such as overdosing and suicidal behaviour helps to better inform and improve active intervention strategies.

What we did

Historical federal incidents of overdoses and suicides as well as deaths in custody are recorded in CSC's Corporate Offender Management System (OMS). Data were extracted (May 28, 2022) to establish a five-year trend (2017-18 to 2021-22) of the overdoses interrupted, overdose deaths, suicide attempts and suicide deaths among federally sentenced (two years or more) offenders in custody.

What we found

As reflected in Table 1, official counts of the drug overdoses interrupted dropped during the two years of the pandemic era. Drug overdose incidents declined by 60 inmates or 41% from 148 in 2019-20 to 88 in 2021-22. Federal custody overdose deaths declined by 5 inmates or 83% from 6 in 2019-20 to one in 2020-21.

Table 1: Overdoses Interrupted and Deaths

	Overdoses Interrupted	Overdose Deaths
17-18	71	5
18-19	90	7
19-20	148	6
20-21	102	1
21-22	88	6

Source: OMS

In Table 2, the number of the suicide attempts also dropped during the two years of the pandemic era. Suicide attempt incidents declined by 31 inmates or 21% from 146 in 2019-20 to 115 in 2021-22. Similarly, federal custody suicide deaths declined by three inmates or 27% from 11 in 2019-20 to eight in 2021-22.

Table 2: Suicide Attempts and Deaths

	Suicide Attempts	Suicide Deaths
17-18	121	6
18-19	104	6
19-20	146	11
20-21	109	6
21-22	115	8

Source: OMS

What it means

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period, it is clear that there was an overall downward trend in drug overdoses being interrupted with a more pronounced trend break in the first year of the pandemic (-46 and -14, respectively). Moreover, this appears to have translated into a substantial decline in-custody deaths due to overdose. In relation to suicide attempts, a substantial decline was observed in the first year of the pandemic with a slight rise in year two (-37 and +6, respectively). Similarly, suicide deaths had declined in year one of the pandemic then rose again (-5 and +2, respectively). Although there were some disruptions to normal operations during the pandemic period (i.e. visits, programs, temporary absences), CSC front-line staff continued to focus on these areas of concern and to provide critical services and interventions.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Kent Merlin

Pandemic Era Impacts on Day Parole Releases to Private Residences

There was a substantial pandemic era shift in more Day Parole releases to private residences, with relatively few revocations.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two fiscal years, marked by the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic era, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced a decline (-579 or 23.0%) in Day Parole releases (a discretionary release granted by the Parole Board of Canada) from a benchmark of 2,541 in 2019-20 down to 2,313 in 2020-21 and 1,962 in 2021-22. The pandemic placed limits on offender movements, including releases to congregate living situations such as Community Correctional Centres (CCCs) and Community-Based Residential Facilities (CBRFs). Consequently, alternatives such as private residences were considered in releasing offenders.

What we did

All releases from federal custody are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Data on Day Parole destinations were extracted from OMS to establish a three-year trend of releases (i.e., pre-pandemic 2019-20 to pandemic era 2020-21, 2021-22), specifically those to other locations.

Over the pre- and pandemic period, 750 offenders were identified as having been released on "Day Parole – Other Location". Upon review, 47 (6.3%) releases were identified as provincial cases and removed from the study sample, leaving 703 federal cases. A manual case file review revealed another subset of 120 (17.1%) cases involving release to a CCC/CBRF or other facility (i.e., long-term care), resulting in a total of 583 federal offenders released to a private residence. Of these, 518 or 88.9% occurred during the two years of the pandemic era. These cases were examined to identify post-release outcomes.

What we found

As reflected in Table 1, there was a considerable increase in the number and variety of Day Parole private residence releases during the pandemic era. In the first year of the pandemic, the number of Day Parole releases to a private residence rose substantially from 65 the previous year (2019-20) to 297 in 2020-21, a significant 4.6-fold increase. Moreover, this increase appears to have been sustained, with a relative 3.4-fold increase in the second year (2021-22) of the pandemic.

Also displayed in Table 1 are the various types of home placements associated with Day Parole private residence releases, including homes of parents, intimate partners, other family members, non-family members, or even a personal residence alone. Notably, during the two years of the pandemic era, the largest percentages were accounted for by placement to a parental or intimate partner's home (209 or 40.3% and 173 or 33.2%, respectively).

Table 1:
Day Parole Releases: Private Residences

Home Location	2019-20 N=65 (n)	2020-21 N=297 (n)	2021-22 N=221 (n)
Parent's	46.2% (30)	43.8% (130)	35.7% (79)
Intimate Partner	24.6% (16)	33.3% (99)	33.0% (73)
Another Family Member	21.5% (14)	17.8% (53)	26.7% (59)
Non-family Member	6.2% (4)	3.7% (11)	3.6% (8)
Alone	1.5% (1)	1.3% (4)	0.9% (2)

In Table 2, a follow-up of the pandemic era home placements found that 8 out of 518 (1.5%) were revoked.

Table 2: Day Parole Outcomes: Revocations

Home Location	2019-20 N=65 (n)	2020-21 N=297 (n)	2021-22 N=221 (n)
Parent's	(0)	4.6% (6)	(0)
Intimate Partner	(0)	(0)	1.4% (1)
Another Family Member	21.4% (3)	(0)	1.7% (1)
Non-family Member	(0)	(0)	(0)
Alone	(0)	(0)	(0)
Total	4.6% (3)	2.0% (6)	0.9% (2)

What it means

Although there was a downward trend in Day Parole releases during the pandemic, there was an upward shift in the number of Day Parole private residence placements, particularly to the homes of parents and intimate partners. It appears that with positive prosocial supports, residential releases can be successful.

For more information

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

For more information, please contact the [Research Branch](#).

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Laura McKendy

Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Population Forecasts

Pandemic era impacts in 10-year federal population forecasts were manifested for men, women, and across regions.

Why we are doing this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) regularly refreshes its provisional federal institutional and community population examined in 2017-18 and found to be reflective of observed counts with very narrow margins of error (<1%).^{1,2} In any population forecasting exercise, a major assumption is that things will remain the same, they rarely do. Over the course of two fiscal years (2020-21 and 2021-22), marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, CSC exhibited unprecedented declines in the in-custody (-1,392 or 10.1%) and community supervision (-903 or 9.6%) populations.³ The following provides an update on new 10-year population estimates to fiscal year-end 2031-32.

What we did

A forecasting database of weekly snapshots of institutional and community supervision counts from 1990-91 to 2021-22 was derived from CSC's Offender Management System. The historical time series in-custody and community supervision populations were used to develop provisional scenarios for men and women to 2031-32. Again, projections for men and women were estimated separately, as historical trends for these two groups differ.

SAS/ETS software was used for exploring and analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model. Computing estimates for each security level across the five administrative regions of CSC added precision by taking into account variations that occur over time with these sub-populations. Federal in-custody population forecasts are taken to the last Tuesday midnight institutional count of the fiscal year.

In testing the forecasting model over the last seven fiscal years (2015-16 to 2021-22), the national and regional counts were found to be reflective of the end-of year forecasts with very low margins of error (-0.26 to 0.25%).

What we found

As reflected in the table below, for men in-custody on 29 March 2022, the actual count was reported to be 11,617. For fiscal year-end 2031-32, the 10-year forecast for men is estimated to be 12,291. For women, the actual custody count in 2022 was reported to be 589 and the 10-year forecast for 2032 is estimated to be 677.

For men the 10-year forecast difference of +674 or 5.8% is a substantially lower percentage than for women at +88 or +14.9%. Also displayed below, for men under community supervision on

29 March 2022, the actual count was reported to be 7,859. For fiscal year-end 2031-32, the 10-year community forecast for men is estimated to be 7,349, a decline. On the other hand, for women the actual community count in 2022 was reported to be 644 and the 10-year forecast is estimated to be 649. For men, the 10-year forecast difference of -510 or -6.5% is a substantially higher percentage than for women at +5 or +0.8%.

National and Regional Population Forecasts to 2031-32

	Custody Forecast	Net Change	Community Forecast	Net Change
Atlantic	1,131	+88	801	-24
Quebec	2,610	+75	1,661	-193
Ontario	3,654	+410	2,536	-63
Prairies	3,937	+171	1,766	-162
Pacific	1,635	+17	1,233	-64
National	12,967	+761	7,997	-506
Men	12,291	+674	7,349	-510
Women	677	+88	649	+5

Note: Some numerical differences may be due to rounding.

¹ RIB-18-05 - Forecasted and Actual Federal Custody Populations: 2017-2018

² RIB-18-09 - Forecasted and Actual Federal Community Populations: 2017-18

³ RIB-22-05 - Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

What it means

While the national 10-year custody forecast being higher than the current institutional count was expected, it appears that the in-custody population will not return to pre-pandemic levels for more than a decade. However, the national community supervision count currently being higher than the end-of year national forecast is surprising and reflective of significant declines of both the custody and community populations exhibited during the pandemic.

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Ben Vuong

Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Security Level Forecasts

Pandemic era impacts in 10-year population forecasts were shown for men across maximum, medium and minimum security.

Why we are doing this study

Annually, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) updates its provisional federal population forecasts using a robust methodology developed decades ago. However, over the course of two recent fiscal years (2020-21 and 2021-22), marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, CSC experienced an unprecedented trend break in the historical time series with a major decline in the federal custody (-1,392 or 10.1%) populations. Consequently, a pause occurred in the forecasting exercise during the pandemic era. Then, in 2022 new 10-year in-custody population projections were estimated to fiscal year-end 2031-32.¹

What we did

A database of weekly snapshots of institutional counts from 1990-91 to year-end 2021-22 was derived from CSC's Offender Management System. Security level projections for maximum-, medium, and minimum-security were estimated only for men as the women security level distributions were deemed too low for forecasting models. SAS/ETS software was used for analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model.

What we found

As tabled below, for men in-custody on 29 March 2022, the actual count in maximum security was 1,590, a decline of -327 or 17.1% over the pandemic period from 1,917. For 2031-32, the 10-year forecast for men in maximum-security is estimated to be 1,642, an increase of 52 or 3.3% but projected to be 275 or 14.3% below the pre-pandemic population. With the exception of the Quebec and Pacific regions, all others are projected to grow.

In relation to medium-security, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was 6,602, a decline of -445 or 6.3% over the pandemic period from 7,047. By year-end 2031-32, the medium is estimated to be 6,585, a slight decrease of 17 or 0.3%. With the exception of the Ontario region, all others are projected to decline.

With respect to minimum-security, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was 1,803, a decline of -390 or 17.8% over the pandemic period from 2,193. By year-end 2031-32, the minimum population is estimated to be 2,058, a substantial increase of 255 or 14.1%. All regions are projected to increase but is projected to be 135 or 6.2% below the pre-pandemic population.

Federal Security Level Forecasts for Men to 2031-32

Maximum	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	163	484	310	480	480	1,917
21-22	139	416	269	433	333	1,590
31-32	156	411	295	467	313	1,642
Net	+17	-5	+26	+34	-20	+52
Change	12.2%	1.2%	9.7%	7.9%	6.0%	3.3%

Medium	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	698	1,437	1,970	2,032	910	7,047
21-22	584	1,411	1,793	2,004	810	6,602
31-32	562	1,389	1,889	1,948	797	6,585
Net	-22	-22	+96	-56	-13	-17
Change	3.8%	1.6%	5.4%	2.8%	1.6%	0.3%

Minimum	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	184	339	667	693	310	2,193
21-22	148	313	474	665	203	1,803
31-32	171	354	602	721	211	2,058
Net	+23	+41	+128	+56	+8	+255
Change	15.5%	13.1%	27.0%	8.4%	3.9%	14.1%

¹ RIB-22-19 - Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Population Forecasts

What it means

During the COVID-19 pandemic period there was a significant decline in the federal men in-custody population. While the men in-custody is projected to increase over a 10-year horizon, it appears that by 2031-32 the maximum- and minimum-security men populations will have grown whereas the medium-security will have plateaued.

For more information

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For more information, please contact the [Research Branch](#).

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Ben Vuong

Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Community Status Forecasts

Pandemic era impacts in 10-year population forecasts were evidenced across day and full parole as well as statutory release.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two recent fiscal years (2020-21 and 2021-22), marked by the COVID-19 pandemic era, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced an unprecedented decline in the federal community supervision (-903 or 9.6%) population¹. Consequently, a pause occurred in the annual forecasting exercise. Then, in 2022 new 10-year community supervision population projections were estimated to fiscal year-end 2031-32.²

What we did

Weekly snapshots of community supervision counts from 1990-91 to year-end 2021-22 was derived from CSC's Offender Management System. Community status projections for day parole, full parole, and statutory release were estimated to 2031-32 for men and women combined. SAS / ETS software was used for analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model.

What we found

As tabled below, on 29 March 2022, the actual count on day parole was 1,396 a decline of -167 or 10.7% over the pandemic period from 1,563. For 2031-32, the 10-year forecast for day parole is estimated to be 1,352, a decrease by 2031-32 of 44 or 3.2%. With the exception of the Atlantic region, all others are projected to decline and the total on day parole is estimated to be 211 or 13.5% below the pre-pandemic population.

In relation to full parole, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was 4,130, a decline of -442 or 9.7% over the pandemic period from 4,572. By year-end 2031-32, the full parole is estimated to be 3,735, a slight decrease of 395 or 9.6%. All regions are projected to decrease by 2031-32 and the total on full parole is estimated to be 837 or 18.3% below the pre-pandemic population.

With respect to statutory release, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was 2,475, a decline of -258 or 9.4% over the pandemic period from 2,733. By year-end 2031-32, the statutory release population is estimated to be 2,499, a relatively small increase of 24 or 1.0%. With the exception of the Atlantic and Prairies regions, all others by 2031-32 are projected to decrease but the total number on statutory release is estimated to be 234 or 8.6% below the pre-pandemic population.

What it means

During the COVID-19 pandemic period there was a significant decline in both the federal institutional and community supervision populations. While the community supervision population is projected to decrease over a 10-year horizon, it appears that by

2031-32 the day and full parole populations will be lower whereas the statutory release population will be roughly the same.

Federal Community Status Forecasts to 2031-32

Day Parole	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	153	324	390	375	321	1,563
21-22	136	259	423	297	281	1,396
31-32	151	239	413	281	278	1,352
Net	+15	-20	-10	-16	-3	-44
Change	11.0%	7.7%	2.4%	5.4%	1.1%	3.2%

Full Parole	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	519	1,175	1,225	1,006	647	4,572
21-22	474	963	1,237	840	616	4,130
31-32	433	816	1,159	755	567	3,735
Net	-41	-147	-78	-85	-49	-395
Change	8.6%	15.3%	6.3%	10.1%	8.0%	9.6%

Statutory Release	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	200	595	785	809	344	2,733
21-22	198	468	776	717	316	2,475
31-32	203	499	801	670	319	2,499
Net	-5	+31	+25	-47	+3	+24
Change	2.3%	6.6%	3.2%	6.6%	0.9%	1.0%

¹ RIB-22-05 - Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

² RIB-22-19 - Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Population Forecasts

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Ben Vuong

Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Residency Forecasts

Pandemic era impacts in 10-year population forecasts were evidenced for community residency.

Why we are doing this study

Over the course of two recent fiscal years (2020-21 and 2021-22), marked by the COVID-19 pandemic era, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) experienced an unprecedented decline in the federal community supervision (-903 or 9.6%) population.¹ A pause occurred in the annual forecasting exercise and in 2022 new 10-year community supervision population projections were estimated to fiscal year-end 2031-32.²

What we did

Weekly snapshots of community residency counts from 1990-91 to year-end 2021-22 was derived from CSC's Offender Management System. On 29 March 2022, residency was a condition for a total count of 2,555 or 30% of those 8,503 recorded to be on community supervision. More specifically, 1,396 (54.6%) were on Day Parole, 58 (2.3%) were on Full Parole with residency, 803 (31.4%) were on Statutory Release with residency and 298 (11.7%) were on Long Term Supervision with residency. The Community residency projections for day parole, full parole with residency, statutory release with residency and long term supervision with residency were estimated to 2031-32 for men and women combined. SAS / ETS software was used for analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model.

What we found

As tabled below, on 29 March 2022, the actual count on community residency was 2,555 a decline of -116 or 4.3% over the pandemic period from 2,671. For 2031-32, the 10-year forecast for community residency is estimated to be 2,368, a decrease by 2031-32 of -169 or 6.6%. With the exception of the Atlantic region, all others are projected to decline.

Federal Community Residency Forecasts to 2031-32

	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	Pacific	Total
19-20	230	560	749	594	538	2,671
21-22	208	519	788	525	515	2,555
31-32	228	450	771	455	482	2,386
Net	+20	-69	-17	-70	-33	-169
Change	9.6%	15.3%	2.2%	13.3%	6.4%	6.6%

¹ RIB-22-05 - Pandemic Era Impacts on the Federal Supervision Populations

² RIB-22-19 - Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Population Forecasts

What it means

For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic period there was a significant decline in both the federal institutional and community supervision populations. Notwithstanding the community supervision population is projected to decrease over a 10-year horizon, it appears that by 2031-32 those requiring residency will be fewer.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Ben Vuong

Pandemic Era Impacts on Federal Custody Turnover Rates

Men, women and Indigenous in federal custody are turning over at increasingly higher rates.

Why we are doing this study

Along with recent declines in the federal custody population, it appeared that relatively high turnover rates were maintained throughout the first year of COVID-19 pandemic period.¹ Custodial turnover rates are reflective of the results of focused efforts being made by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to prepare, safely release and deliver successful reintegration outcomes. The correctional expectation is that by delivering evidence-based interventions and services to diverse groups while in custody will lead to improved public safety.

What we did

Three fiscal years (2019-20 to 2021-22) of release and count data reflected in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized were disaggregated for men and women federal inmates and within groups, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous. Although there are various other methods to calculate a turnover rate, the approach used in human resources was chosen. The federal custody turnover rate refers to the percentage of all those released (Releases) during a period over the average number of inmates (Average) calculated by dividing by two the number of inmates at the beginning and the end of the fiscal year. Consequently, the turnover percentage is $[(R) / (A) \times 100]$.

What we found

In **Table 1**, statistics show for men that while there has been a decline in the custody population during the two years of COVID-19 pandemic period, the overall turnover rate has increased (50.0% in 2019-20 and 52.0% in 2021-22). However, it is also noteworthy that recently Indigenous men have seen an increasing and higher turnover rate than Non-Indigenous, 55.5% and 50.4% respectively.

Table 1:
Federal Releases / Average Custody - Men

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2019-20	1,990 / 3,866 (51.5%)	4,709 / 9,374 (50.2%)	6,699 / 13,235 (50.0%)
2020-21	1,931 / 3,751 (51.5%)	4,318 / 8,655 (49.9%)	6,249 / 12,405 (50.4%)
2021-22	2,048 / 3,692 (55.5%)	4,070 / 8,068 (50.4%)	6,118 / 11,759 (52.0%)

Table 2 statistics show that for women while substantially higher turnover rates than men, for women there has been a return to pre-pandemic rates over the past three years from 78.9% to 81.4%. It is also observed that Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women had equivalent population turnover rates over the pandemic era.

Table 2:
Federal Releases / Average Custody - Women

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2019-20	230 / 285 (80.7%)	317 / 408 (77.7%)	547 / 693 (78.9%)
2020-21	201 / 273 (73.6%)	278 / 379 (73.4%)	479 / 652 (73.5%)
2021-22	227 / 279 (81.4%)	264 / 324 (81.4%)	491 / 603 (81.4%)

What it means

Albeit there have been recent declines in the federal custody population during the pandemic, it appears that relatively high turnover rates have been maintained throughout the two years of the period. Noteworthy is the higher federal custody turnover rate observed for women relative to men. While it now appears that Indigenous men are turning over more quickly than Non-Indigenous, it may be indicating a compositional change of men inmates. This later finding calls for further exploration.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk

Day Parole Home Placements During the Pandemic: Understanding Case Characteristics

During the pandemic, Private Residence Day Parole releases involved offenders who were lower risk and need.

Why we are doing this study

Over the pandemic period, the Parole Board of Canada considered private residences as alternatives to Day Parole placements at Community-based Residential Facilities [CBRFs] (i.e., Community Correctional Centres and Community Resource Centres). A previous study¹ found that during the pandemic era, there was an upward shift in the number of Day Parole Private Residence placements, particularly to the homes of parents and intimate partners. It was also observed that these particular home location releases were highly successful. This analysis unpacks the case characteristics of these Day Parole releases.

What we did

All Day Parole releases from federal custody are recorded as standardized reports in CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). Case-level data on Day Parole releases over the Pandemic era (2020-21, 2021-22) were extracted from OMS to establish comparison groups comprised of all Day Parole releases (N=4,276) and those released to Private Residences (N=518). Selected characteristics included age, diversity, sentence length, major offence, criminal risk index (CRI), and dynamic need (at release).

What we found

In comparison to all Day Parole releases over the pandemic era, the Day Parole to Private Residences population (see Table 1) can be described as:

- 1) being slightly younger;
- 2) diverse, though with lower Indigenous representation;
- 3) serving shorter sentences (≤ 4 years) with considerably fewer having long sentences or indeterminate sentences;
- 4) less likely to be serving sentences for murder (1.4% vs 8.3%) or violent offences (38.4% vs 47.0%);
- 5) having very good or good criminal risk index ratings (89.6% vs 61.5%); and
- 6) having low dynamic or criminogenic needs (54.2% vs 11.2%).

What it means

Profile differences emerged between Day Parole releases to CBRFs and Private Residences. Day Parole home placements were more likely to involve offenders serving shorter sentences for non-violent offences, with lower risk and need. Such profile characteristics likely explain their high success rate on Day Parole (98.5%). The finding that fewer Indigenous offenders were released to private homes suggests that other release options may need to be developed and equipped with appropriate supports.

Table 1: Population Profile: Day Parole Releases

Characteristic	All Day Parole Releases N=4,276 ^a % (n)	To Private Residences N=518 ^a % (n)
Age		
< 35	39.7 (1,696)	47.1 (244)
35 to 64	54.2 (2,318)	45.8 (237)
65+	6.1 (262)	7.1 (37)
Diversity		
White	57.1 (2,443)	59.7 (309)
Indigenous	21.6 (925)	13.1 (68)
Black	8.1 (347)	7.9 (41)
Other	11.3 (483)	17.8 (92)
Sentence Length		
≤ 4 years	61.0 (2,610)	77.8 (403)
Over 4 years	29.9 (1,279)	20.8 (108)
Indeterminate	9.1 (387)	1.4 (7)
Major Offence		
Murder (I or II)	8.3 (354)	1.4 (7)
Violent (Schedule I)	47.0 (2,008)	38.4 (199)
Drug (Schedule II)	30.5 (1,305)	47.3 (245)
Non-Violent (Others)	14.2 (608)	12.9 (67)
Criminal Risk Index^b		
Very Good + Good	61.5 (2,630)	89.6 (464)
Fair	17.5 (748)	7.3 (38)
Poor + Very Poor	17.4 (746)	2.6 (13)
Dynamic Factors Rating		
Low	11.5 (493)	54.2 (281)
Moderate	53.6 (2,290)	40.3 (209)
High	34.9 (1,493)	5.4 (28)

Note: ^aMissing cases are not presented in this table. The number of missing cases for DP releases (Private Residences) was 78 (8) for diversity, 152 (3) for CRI, and 1 for Major Offence.

¹ RIB-22-18 - Pandemic Era Impacts on Day Parole Releases to Private Residences

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk, Laura McKendy and Shanna Farrell MacDonald

GENERAL POPULATION TRENDS

research
highlights

Federal Recidivism Rates: 2011-12 to 2020-21

More federal offenders are successfully reaching sentence expiry and not readmitted to federal custody within 5 years.

Why we are doing this study

Federal recidivism rates are reflective of the results of concerted efforts being made by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to deliver safe reintegration outcomes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders. It is anticipated that placing special attention on delivering targeted interventions for diverse groups while on conditional release will lead to improved public safety and contribute to closing observed performance gaps.

What we did

CSC routinely reports information on public safety outcomes using the automated Performance Direct (PD) system. PD standardizes the historical reporting of two important metrics: 1) the number of offenders successfully reaching sentence completion without readmission (no revocations, no charges or reconvictions), and 2) the number of offenders not returning to federal custody within 5 years of sentence expiration. Performance outcomes over a ten-year period (2011-12 to 2020-21) were examined for the entire federal offender population and the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations separately.

What we found

In Table 1, statistics show that the number and percentage of offenders on conditional release successfully reaching sentence expiration date has increased over the past ten years (54.27% in 2011-12 and 61.45% in 2020-21). More specifically, the relative improvement over time has increased by 383 offenders (or 15.4%). However, it is noteworthy that Indigenous offenders on conditional release display lower rates of successful completion than non-Indigenous.

Table 1:
Successfully Reaching Sentence Expiry Date

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2011-12	350 / 905 (38.67%)	2,140 / 3,683 (58.10%)	2,490 / 4,588 (54.27%)
2015-16	392 / 1,052 (37.26%)	2,236 / 3,587 (62.34%)	2,628 / 4,639 (56.65%)
2020-21	540 / 1,204 (44.85%)	2,333 / 3,471 (67.21%)	2,873 / 4,675 (61.45%)

Table 2 shows that the number and percentage of federal offenders not readmitted to federal custody within 5 years of sentence expiry date (SED) has increased over the past ten years (81.38% in 2011-12 and 87.51% in 2020-21). In particular, the relative improvement over time has increased by 494 (or 13.3%) offenders. As well, it is notable that non-Indigenous offenders have lower rates of federal readmission than Indigenous offenders.

Table 2:
Not Readmitted within 5 Years Following SED

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2011-12	664 / 885 (75.03%)	3,038 / 3,664 (82.91%)	3,702 / 4,549 (81.38%)
2015-16	745 / 960 (77.60%)	3,285 / 3,832 (85.73%)	4,030 / 4,792 (84.10%)
2020-21	904 / 1,121 (80.64%)	3,292 / 3,674 (89.60%)	4,196 / 4,795 (87.51%)

What it means

Notwithstanding the substantial reductions in both federal recidivism measures for Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders during the past decade, there are some notable between group differences. These performance outcomes suggest that CSC continue to offer a differentiated approach to these diverse groups based on their respective needs and requirements for augmented community support.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Kent Merlin

Federal Custody Turnover Rates: 2018-19 to 2020-21

Men and women in federal custody are turning over at relatively high rates, at roughly 50% and 75% respectively.

Why we are doing this study

Federal custody turnover rates are reflective of the results of focused efforts being made by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to adequately prepare, safely release and deliver successful reintegration outcomes for both men and women as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders. It is expected that by delivering appropriate interventions and services to diverse groups while in custody and then while on conditional release will lead to reduced incarceration and improved public safety.

What we did

Three fiscal years (2018-19 to 2020-21) of release and count data reflected in CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized were disaggregated for men and women federal inmates and within groups, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. While there are various other methods to calculate a turnover rate, the approach used in human resources was chosen. The federal custody turnover rate refers to the percentage of all those released (Releases) during a period over the average number of inmates (Average) calculated by dividing by two the number of inmates at the beginning and the end of the fiscal year. Consequently, the turnover percentage is $[(R) / (A) \times 100]$.

What we found

In Table 1, statistics show for men that while there has been a decline in the custody population during the COVID-19 pandemic period, the overall turnover rate has remained constant (50.1% in 2018-19 and 50.4% in 2020-21). However, it is also noteworthy that recently Indigenous men have seen a slightly higher turnover rate than non-Indigenous, 51.5% and 49.9% respectively.

Table 1:
Federal Releases / Average Custody - Men

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2018-19	1,870 / 3,762 (49.7%)	4,842 / 9,670 (50.1%)	6,712 / 13,432 (50.1%)
2019-20	1,990 / 3,866 (51.5%)	4,709 / 9,374 (50.2%)	6,699 / 13,235 (50.0%)
2020-21	1,931 / 3,751 (51.5%)	4,318 / 8,655 (49.9%)	6,249 / 12,405 (50.4%)

Table 2 statistics show that for women in federal custody there has also been a recent decline over the COVID-19 pandemic period. Nevertheless, the population turnover rate, while substantially higher than men, for women there has been a downward trend over the past three years from 80.4% to 73.5%. It is recently observed that Indigenous and non-Indigenous women have equivalent population turnover rates.

Table 2:
Federal Releases / Average Custody - Women

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
2018-19	219 / 281 (77.9%)	335 / 408 (82.1%)	554 / 689 (80.4%)
2019-20	230 / 285 (80.7%)	317 / 408 (77.7%)	547 / 693 (78.9%)
2020-21	201 / 273 (73.6%)	278 / 379 (73.4%)	479 / 652 (73.5%)

What it means

Notwithstanding recent declines in the federal custody population, it appears that relatively high turnover rates have been maintained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic period. Equivalent federal custody turnover rates are observed for men and women and similarly for Indigenous and non-Indigenous inmates. While women are turning over more slowly over time, it may simply be signaling a significant change in the residual composition of women inmates. This later finding warrants further investigation.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk

Comparing Federal Women Admissions and Custody Profiles: 2020-21

Profiles of women admissions and in-custody differ substantially due to the accumulation of individual's with longer sentences.

Why we are doing this study

Population profiles of federally sentenced women will yield different pictures depending on whether they are based on admissions drawn over a period time or an in-custody snapshot taken at a particular point in time. Demographic and sentence information is recorded for every offender and thereby the entire population. These profile variables can serve to inform a strategic correctional management framework that includes needs, capacity, process and performance assessments.

What we did

From the Correctional Service of Canada's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M) reporting platform, data were gathered on the 2020-21 federal women admissions and year-end in-custody population (419 and 618, respectively) in relation to five major characteristics, namely age, diversity, sentence length, major offence and offender security level. Given the recent declines in federal admissions of 21.4% (533 in 2018-19 to 419 in 2020-21) and year-end in-custody counts of 11.8% (701 in 2018-19 to 618 in 2020-21) over the last three years, one may expect to see the impact of muted growth and reduced populations.

What we found

Statistics show that women admissions and year-end in-custody are roughly equivalent proportionally in age distributions and diversity representation. These profiles reflect populations where the majority are under 35 and almost equivalent in White and Indigenous representation.

However, the profile of women admissions differs from the year-end custody population in that substantially more are serving shorter and fewer having an indeterminate sentence; more are convicted of drug offences and fewer for murder; and less are classified as maximum security and more undetermined due to the security classification process still in progress at the time of data extraction. These observed differences between admissions and in-custody snapshots are explained by the accumulation of longer sentenced individuals in the in-custody snapshots, particularly those convicted of murder with later eligibility dates for conditional release.

What it means

The general finding is that the federal women admission population differs from a year-end in-custody snapshot in being comparatively younger, serving shorter sentences, and less often for murder or classified maximum security. The relatively high

percentage of Indigenous women admissions and in-custody populations requires strategic planning to ensure the delivery of appropriate and effective programming for safe reintegration.

Population Profiles of Federal Women

Characteristic	Admissions ¹ % (n)	Year-end Custody ² % (n)
Age		
< 35	55.8 (234)	51.5 (318)
35 to 64	43.4 (182)	46.6 (288)
65+	0.7 (3)	1.9 (12)
Diversity		
White	48.7 (204)	42.9 (265)
Indigenous	42.2 (177)	43.2 (267)
Black	2.1 (9)	3.9 (24)
Asian	2.4 (10)	3.6 (22)
Other	4.6 (19)	6.5 (40)
Sentence Length		
< 4 years	74.2 (311)	46.9 (290)
4 years+	24.3 (102)	32.7 (202)
Indeterminate	1.4 (6)	20.4 (126)
Major Offence		
Murder (I or II)	1.4 (6)	19.6 (121)
Violent (Schedule I)	46.5 (195)	44.3 (274)
Drug (Schedule II)	33.9 (142)	23.5 (145)
Non-Violent (Others)	18.1 (76)	12.6 (78)
Security Level		
Maximum	5.3 (22)	9.5 (59)
Medium	49.9 (209)	54.7 (338)
Minimum	23.6 (99)	25.1 (155)
Undetermined	21.2 (89)	10.7 (66)

Notes: ¹ Warrant of Committals 63.7%, revocations 34.6%, other 1.7%; ² 48% of the 2020-21 women admissions are reflected in the 2020-21 year-end custody snapshot.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Mike Hayden

Comparing Federal Men Admissions and Custody Profiles: 2020-21

Profiles of men admissions and in-custody differ substantially due to the accumulation of individual's with longer sentences.

Why we are doing this study

Statistics Population profiles of federally sentenced men will yield different pictures depending on whether they are based on admissions drawn over a period time or an in-custody snapshot taken at a particular point in time. Demographic and sentence information is recorded for every offender and thereby the entire population. These profile variables can serve to inform a strategic correctional management framework that includes needs, capacity, process and performance assessments.

What we did

From the Correctional Service of Canada's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M) reporting platform, data were gathered on the 2020-21 federal men admissions and year-end in-custody population (4,854 and 11,778, respectively) in relation to five major characteristics, namely age, diversity, sentence length, major offence and offender security level. Given the recent declines in federal men admissions of 28.6% (6,803 in 2018-19 to 4,854 in 2020-21) and year-end in-custody counts of 12.4% (13,448 in 2018-19 to 11,778 in 2020-21) over the last three years, one may expect to see the impact of muted growth and reduced populations.

What we found

Statistics show that men admissions and year-end in-custody populations are roughly equivalent proportionally in diversity representation. These profiles are reflective of populations where the majority are non-White and among them the largest representation are Indigenous.

However, the profile of men admissions differs from the year-end custody population in that substantially more are younger and serving shorter sentences; fewer are convicted for murder; and less are classified as maximum security and more are as yet undetermined due to the security classification process still in progress at the time of data extraction. These observed differences between admissions and in-custody snapshots are explained by the accumulation of longer sentenced individuals in the in-custody snapshots, particularly those convicted of murder with later eligibility dates for conditional release.

What it means

The general finding is that the federal men admission population differs from a year-end in-custody snapshot in being comparatively younger, serving shorter sentences, and less often for murder or classified maximum security. The relatively

high percentage of Indigenous men admissions and in-custody populations requires strategic planning to ensure the delivery of appropriate and effective programming for safe reintegration.

Population Profiles of Federal Men

Characteristic	Admissions ¹ % (n)	Year-end Custody ² % (n)
Age		
< 35	50.7 (2,460)	38.6 (4,544)
35 to 64	46.7 (2,268)	55.8 (6,574)
65+	2.6 (126)	5.6 (660)
Diversity		
White	47.8 (2,318)	47.3 (5,575)
Indigenous	34.8 (1,688)	31.0 (3,646)
Black	6.7 (323)	8.9 (1,043)
Asian	4.0 (193)	5.2 (609)
Other	6.8 (298)	7.7 (905)
Sentence Length		
< 4 years	64.1 (3,113)	32.0 (3,764)
4 years+	32.7 (1,588)	38.9 (4,582)
Indeterminate	3.2 (153)	29.1 (3,432)
Major Offence		
Murder (I or II)	2.8 (136)	23.3 (2,741)
Violent (Schedule I)	61.6 (2,989)	55.6 (6,546)
Drug (Schedule II)	18.2 (883)	12.0 (1,417)
Non-Violent (Others)	17.4 (846)	9.1 (1,074)
Security Level		
Maximum	8.2 (398)	13.6 (1,599)
Medium	46.5 (2,258)	62.3 (7,336)
Minimum	16.9 (820)	16.0 (1,882)
Undetermined	28.4 (1,378)	8.2 (961)

Notes: ¹ Warrant of Committals 60.3%, revocations 38.7%, other 1.0%; ² 30% of the 2020-21 men admissions are reflected in the 2020-21 year-end custody snapshot.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Women Admissions to Federal Custody: 1995-96 to 2020-21

Over the past quarter century, admissions of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women to federal custody have risen.

Why we are doing this study

In Canada, persons sentenced to serve two years or more by the courts are admitted to federal custody. While at year-end 2020-21 women represented 5.0% (618/12,396) of the federal custody population, the representation of Indigenous women at 43.2% (267/618) is concerning.

What we did

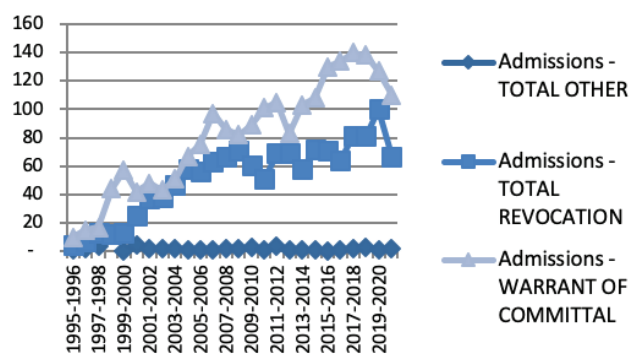
Over a twenty-five year period (1995-96 to 2020-21) there has been a total of 10,438 women admissions; 67.2% (7,010) admitted on a new warrant of committal, 30.1% (3,147) for a revocation of conditional release and 2.7% (281) for other reasons. Indigenous women accounted for 33.6% (3,504) and Non-Indigenous for 66.4% (6,934) of total women admissions from 1995-96 to 2020-21.

Among Indigenous women admissions, 60.0% (2,103) were admitted on a warrant of committal, 38.7% (1,356) were for a revocation of conditional release and 1.3% (45) for other reasons. With respect to Non-Indigenous women admissions; 70.8% (4,907) were admitted on a warrant of committal, 25.8% (1,791) were for revocation of conditional release and 3.4% (236) for other reasons.

What we found

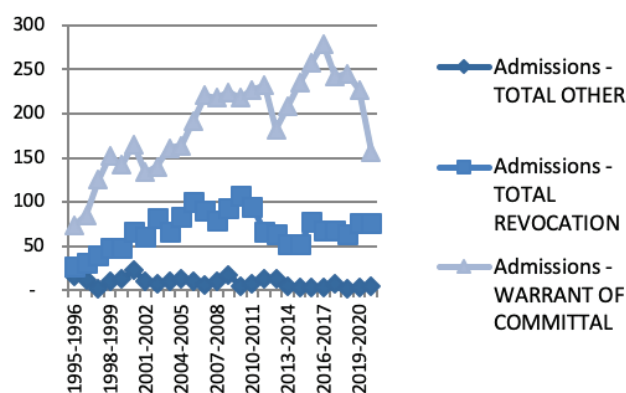
As reflected in the Figure 1 below, there has been a steady rise of Indigenous women being newly admitted to federal custody and revoked on conditional release over time.

Figure 1: Indigenous Women



As reflected in the Figure 2 below, there has also been a steady rise in the number of Non-Indigenous women newly admitted to federal custody. However, it appears that the number returned to federal custody on a revocation has plateaued over the past decade.

Figure 2: Non-Indigenous Women



What it means

The increasing numbers and proportions of Indigenous women being sentenced to federal custody over time point to the need for concerted upstream intervention efforts in the criminal justice system to break this trend line and reduce disproportionate representation. As well, the relatively higher percentage of Indigenous women being revoked on conditional release (38.7% versus 25.8%) suggests continuing to enhance community release supports.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk

HEALING LODGES

research
highlights

Impacts of Indigenous Healing Lodges for Women

Healing Lodges improve women's dynamic risk and offer unique opportunities for gradual reintegration.

Why we did this study

Healing Lodges are environments centred on Indigenous values, traditions, and beliefs. They offer culturally responsive services and programs for Indigenous offenders to encourage healing and rehabilitation. The goal of this study was to examine the impacts that Healing Lodges have on Indigenous offender reintegration and post-release outcomes, as well as the cumulative effect of Indigenous-specific services and interventions.

What we did

As part of a larger study, this research examines Healing Lodges for women. Indigenous women released from Correctional Service of Canada-operated or Section 81 Healing Lodges (N = 134) were compared to a matched control group of Indigenous women released from mainstream institutions (N = 134) between April 2013 and March 2018.

What we found

At intake, women Healing Lodge residents were higher in dynamic risk and lower in reintegration potential. Considerable reductions were observed in dynamic risk for women over the course of their sentence. Compared to Indigenous women released from mainstream institutions, Healing Lodge residents were less likely to be rated high in dynamic risk at release and were more likely to demonstrate improvements in the areas of Personal/Emotional, Substance Abuse, and Associates. These findings indicate that the profile of women Healing Lodge residents differed from Indigenous offenders released from mainstream institutions.

Women Healing Lodge residents showed a greater interest in Indigenous opportunities at intake and participated in culturally-specific services to a greater degree throughout their sentence. This included the development of a Healing Plan, having at least one Elder Review, and having Indigenous services staff assigned to their caseload. Healing Lodge residents were also more likely to be assigned to and complete Indigenous correctional programs and other programs (e.g., employment, vocational training, Indigenous cultural programs) over the course of their full incarceration period.

Compared to their counterparts, Healing Lodge residents participated in more Escorted and Unescorted Temporary Absences as well as work releases. Despite these efforts at gradual reintegration, Healing Lodge residents were less likely to receive a discretionary release. Overall, women released from a Healing Lodge also had commensurate post-release outcomes to women released from other institutions, particularly when controlling for risk and need factors.

A final objective of the study was to examine the relative contribution of Indigenous-specific interventions and services on post-release outcome. Women who demonstrated an interest in Indigenous opportunities at intake (i.e., interest in developing a healing plan, a Section 81 release, or Section 84 release) had a 65% lower risk of return to custody compared to those who did not. The single predictor of returns to custody may be explained by the small sample size for women.

What it means

Taken together, the results of this study highlight the benefits that Healing Lodges and culturally responsive interventions have in the support of reintegration for Indigenous women offenders. The findings of this study reveal that Healing Lodge residents demonstrated notable improvements in dynamic risk areas as well as greater participation in culturally-specific opportunities. Despite their unique profile, Healing Lodge residents had comparable post-release outcomes to their counterparts. Through qualitative methods, future research will provide a more holistic understanding of Healing Lodges for women.

For more information

Hanby, L., Ridha, T., Sullivan, R., & Farrell MacDonald, S. (2022). Indigenous Healing Lodges: Impacts on Offender Reintegration and Community Outcomes (Research Report R-437). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Impacts of Indigenous Healing Lodges for Men

Healing Lodges and culturally-specific interventions offer benefits that support offender reintegration for men.

Why we did this study

Healing Lodges are environments centred on Indigenous values, traditions, and beliefs. They offer culturally responsive services and programs for Indigenous offenders to address the factors that led to their incarceration, as well as prepare them for release. The goal of this study was to examine the impacts that Healing Lodges have on Indigenous offender reintegration and post-release outcomes, as well as the cumulative effect of Indigenous-specific services and interventions.

What we did

As part of a larger study, Indigenous men released from Correctional Service of Canada (CSC)-operated or Section 81 Healing Lodges (N = 614) were compared to a matched control group of Indigenous men released from mainstream CSC institutions (N = 614) between April 2013 and March 2018.

What we found

At intake, men Healing Lodge residents were higher in dynamic risk and lower in reintegration potential. Healing Lodge residents were higher in static risk at both intake and release, though they were considered higher in motivation at release. These findings indicate that the profile of men Healing Lodge residents differed from Indigenous offenders released from mainstream institutions.

Men Healing Lodge residents showed a greater interest in Indigenous opportunities at intake and participated in culturally-specific services to a greater degree throughout their sentence. This included the development of a Healing Plan, having at least one Elder Review, participation in Pathways Initiatives, having Indigenous services staff assigned to their caseload, as well as previous Healing Lodge placements prior to their release. Healing Lodge residents were also more likely to be assigned to and complete correctional programs and other programs, both over the course of their full incarceration period and at the Healing Lodge in particular. While Healing Lodge residents were also more likely to complete employment programs, men in the control group were more likely to complete educational programs and vocational certificates at their releasing institution.

Compared to their counterparts, Healing Lodge residents participated in more Escorted and Unescorted Temporary Absences as well as work releases. Despite these efforts at gradual reintegration, Healing Lodge residents were less likely to receive a discretionary release. Overall, compared to Indigenous men released from mainstream institutions, Healing Lodge residents had equal suspensions of release and returns to custody, and once controlling for other factors, had an equal risk of revocation with a new offence.

A final objective of the study was to examine the relative contribution of Indigenous-specific interventions and services on post-release outcome. Once controlling for relevant risk, need, and offender characteristics, men who completed Indigenous cultural programs at a Healing Lodge had a 54% lower risk of revocation of release, while men who participated in Pathways Initiatives had a 29% lower risk. These analyses indicate that these are not redundant interventions and both offer benefits that may help offenders succeed upon release.

What it means

Taken together, the results of this study highlight the benefits that Healing Lodges and culturally responsive interventions have in the support of Indigenous offender reintegration. Despite a more challenging population, Healing Lodge residents demonstrated positive changes in motivation level over the course of their incarceration, as well as greater participation in reintegration opportunities. While this represents a comprehensive quantitative study, future research will provide a holistic understanding of the experiences at men's Healing Lodges.

For more information

Hanby, L., Ridha, T., Sullivan, R., & Farrell MacDonald, S. (2022). *Indigenous Healing Lodges: Impacts on Offender Reintegration and Community Outcomes* (Research Report R-437). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Comparison of CSC-operated and Section 81 Healing Lodges

The profile, opportunities, and post-release outcomes of Indigenous offenders differ based on Healing Lodge type.

Why we did this study

Healing Lodges are environments centred on Indigenous values, traditions, and beliefs. Whether operated by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) or by an Indigenous community through a Section 81 agreement, Healing Lodges offer culturally responsive services and programs for Indigenous offenders to address the factors that led to their incarceration, as well as prepare them for release. A goal of this study was to consider the profile and correctional outcomes of Indigenous offenders released from CSC-operated Healing Lodges and those released from Section 81 Healing Lodges.

What we did

As part of a larger study on Healing Lodges, Indigenous offenders released from CSC-operated Healing Lodges (N = 527) were compared to offenders released from Section 81 Healing Lodges (N = 221) between April 2013 and March 2018.

What we found

Despite comparable assessments at intake, Indigenous offenders released from a Section 81 Healing Lodge were more likely to be considered high in reintegration potential and lower in dynamic risk at release. Over the course of their sentence, Section 81 residents demonstrated greater improvements in the dynamic need areas of Associates, Attitudes, Community Functioning, Marital/Family, and Substance Abuse. CSC-operated and Section 81 Healing Lodge residents were similar in their level of improvement in the Employment and Personal/Emotional domains.

Indigenous offenders were more likely to complete educational programs, correctional programs, and Indigenous-specific cultural programs (non-correctional programs) at CSC-operated Healing Lodges. Section 81 residents were more involved in Indigenous services throughout their sentence, including developing a Healing Plan, having at least one progress Elder Review, and participating in Pathways Initiatives.

While residents of CSC-operated Healing Lodges participated in more Escorted Temporary Absences (ETAs), Section 81 residents had more Unescorted Temporary Absences. Indigenous offenders that had resided in a CSC-operated Healing Lodge were comparable in release characteristics to those that had resided in a Section 81 in terms of type of release (i.e., day/full parole vs. statutory release) and Section 84 releases. Those who were released from a Section 81 Healing Lodge were, however, more likely to also reside in a Section 81 while on release.

While there were no significant differences in the rates of suspensions or returns to custody due to revocation, Indigenous offenders released from a Section 81 Healing Lodge spent a significantly greater period in the community prior to their first suspension or revocation of release. In cases of suspension, the Section 81 released offenders were also more likely to have those suspensions cancelled or withdrawn (55.4% versus 43.3%, respectively). Offenders released from a CSC-operated Healing Lodge were significantly more likely to return to custody with a new offence (10.4% versus 5.0%), though it was not possible to control for the impact of other factors (e.g., reintegration potential) due to small base rates.

What it means

Overall, Section 81 released offenders had more favourable post-release outcomes. Offenders released from CSC-operated Healing Lodges benefit from more programming and ETAs, though they continue to present as higher risk at release. While both types of Healing Lodges offer relevant interventions and services, which improve outcomes for Indigenous offenders, the varying results likely reflect a difference in offender profile at release. This study highlights the importance of having Indigenous communities involved in supporting offenders in their healing journey and reintegration.

For more information

Hanby, L., Ridha, T., Sullivan, R., & Farrell MacDonald, S. (2022). *Indigenous Healing Lodges: Impacts on Offender Reintegration and Community Outcomes* (Research Report R-437). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Kwìkwèxwelhp Healing Village: Resident, Elder & Staff Experiences

KHV offers unique environment that supports the healing journey and reintegration of Indigenous residents.

Why we did this study

There is growing evidence for the relevance of Healing Lodges in providing culturally specific and effective interventions for Indigenous offenders. Through qualitative methods, the goal of the current research is to gain an understanding of the impacts that Healing Lodges have on Indigenous offenders, as well as the challenges that are currently facing the operation of Healing Lodges. This research represents a collaboration between the Research Branch and the Indigenous Initiatives Directorate and aims to provide a more holistic understanding of Kwìkwèxwelhp Healing Village (KHV) through the experiences and perspectives of residents, Elders, and staff.

What we are doing

As part of a larger study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 residents as well as 11 Elders and staff at KHV in February 2020. Interviews were conducted by two members of the research team, each taking approximately thirty minutes to an hour to complete. The interviews focused on the participants' experiences, involvements, and observations at the Healing Lodge.

What we have found so far

From the perspectives of residents, Elders, and staff, KHV is a unique environment that emulates a community and provides a sense of belonging and purpose. The cultural and spiritual environment fostered at KHV rooted in Sts'ailes First Nation traditions encourages residents to engage in their healing journeys and work towards achieving a sense of balance within themselves. The many and diverse range of ceremonies, cultural activities, and opportunities for hobby crafts further support residents in their healing journeys and connection to culture.

Elders are considered the pillars of KHV and essential to its vision, stability, and integrity. For residents, Elders are highly regarded as integral for guiding them through their healing journeys given the knowledge, compassion, and teachings they share. The interactions between residents and staff are open and barrier-free, with staff regarded as particularly approachable, engaged, and genuine in their desire to help residents.

KHV has a strong partnership with Sts'ailes First Nation, providing a reciprocal connection both for the community to be involved with KHV and for residents to get involved in the community. The opportunity to hold joint ceremonies in the longhouse (on the grounds of KHV) is viewed as a sacred privilege by residents. Additionally, the range of Temporary Absence opportunities to the community for residents to attend treatment programs, assist with service work, and attend ceremonies are seen as vital for forming connections and supporting reintegration.

While a holistic, interdisciplinary approach is taken at KHV, there were challenges noted related to hiring and retaining quality staff, given substantial turnover. In addition, with the emphasis on building a supportive relationship with residents, there are challenges with hiring Correctional Officers who embrace the approach of KHV and have the necessary skills for practicing dynamic security.

An additional challenge experienced at KHV is finding balance between the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) policies and Indigenous beliefs, traditions, and practices. For instance, while tobacco is banned from CSC facilities, this is viewed as an impediment to fully engaging in the culture given that it is one of four sacred medicines used as offerings and in ceremonies.

What it means

While there are a number of positive aspects at PSC, gaps The impact of the Elder-driven approach is apparent in the effective functioning of this Healing Lodge. In many cases, KHV is instrumental in helping initiate or progress a resident's healing journey and connection to Indigenous identity and culture.

Given that CSC policies are written for minimum-security facilities as a whole, providing KHV and other Healing Lodges with a distinct identity may help address challenges related to the applicability of broader policies to the unique operational demands of Healing Lodges.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Laura Hanby & Thana Ridha

Pê Sâkâstêw Centre: Resident, Elder, and Staff Experiences

While PSC has a positive impact on residents, there remain challenges in providing a traditional healing experience.

Why we did this study

There is growing evidence for the relevance of Healing Lodges in providing culturally specific and effective interventions for Indigenous offenders. Through qualitative methods, the goal of the current research is to gain an understanding of the impacts that Healing Lodges have on Indigenous offenders, as well as the challenges that are currently facing the operation of Healing Lodges. This research represents a collaboration with the Indigenous Initiatives Directorate and aims to provide a more holistic understanding of Pê Sâkâstêw Centre (PSC) in Mâskwâcîs, Alberta, through the experiences and perspectives of residents, Elders, and staff.

What we are doing

As part of a larger study, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 residents (Oskapios/Owîciyîsiwak), as well as 9 Elders and staff at PSC in January 2020. Interviews were conducted by two members of the research team, each taking approximately thirty minutes to an hour to complete. The interviews focused on the participants' experiences, involvements, and observations at the Healing Lodge.

What we have found so far

PSC provides an environment for offenders to work on themselves as they begin or continue their healing journey and connection to Indigenous identity. The various opportunities for engaging and learning hobby crafts, such as drum and rattle making, beadwork, and star blankets, were identified as particularly valuable for residents. These opportunities benefit the residents through their associated teachings and serve as an avenue for connecting to culture. Beyond hobby crafts, other activities and social programs, including resident and community run-groups help keep residents occupied in a prosocial manner while further assisting them through their healing journey.

Despite some of the unique opportunities available at PSC, residents, Elders, and staff, do not perceive PSC as operating in its full potential as a Healing Lodge that forefronts Indigenous culture and traditions. The security emphasis and infrastructure (e.g., fences, x-ray machine, metal detector) resemble that of higher security institutions and are not representative of a true traditional healing experience. Additionally, Elders were reported to have little control and input in the operation of the Healing Lodge.

The recent decrease in cultural Escorted Temporary Absences (ETAs) with Elders was identified as an issue given that these opportunities fostered engagement and allowed residents to both assist and participate in community ceremonies. Despite

residents signing a Solemn Agreement upon arrival to PSC, there appears to be a lack of accountability, enforcement, or interventions provided for residents who may be complacent and disengaged in their healing journey.

In regards to staff and resident relations, there is an expressed lack of inclusivity and rapport marked by limited staff participation and engagement in ceremonies/events alongside residents. A need for more Indigenous staff, particularly representation from the local community was identified as a necessity within PSC.

What it means

While there are a number of positive aspects at PSC, gaps were identified in offering a traditional healing experience and promoting an Indigenous way of life. Based on the experiences of residents, Elders, and staff, it is clear that a better balance is required between the security aspects of Correctional Service of Canada and the original vision of the Healing Lodge as an environment guided by Indigenous culture, teachings, and traditions.

The desire to have Elders play a larger role in the direction and decision making of PSC (e.g., in resident selection, operations, consultation) may provide a more stable vision and environment for the Healing Lodge. Further, removing barriers for Elders to take residents on cultural ETAs would be beneficial in preparing residents for reintegration, while exposing them to a sense of community.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

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Prepared by: Laura Hanby & Thana Ridha

Willow Cree Healing Lodge: Resident, Elder, and Staff Experiences

WCHL supports the healing journey of Indigenous offenders through cultural opportunities and Cree teachings.

Why we did this study

There is growing evidence for the relevance of Healing Lodges in providing culturally specific and effective interventions for Indigenous offenders. Through qualitative methods, the goal of the current research is to gain an understanding of the impacts that Healing Lodges have on Indigenous offenders, as well as the challenges that are currently facing the operation of Healing Lodges. This research represents a collaboration with the Indigenous Initiatives Directorate and aims to provide a more holistic understanding of Willow Cree Healing Lodge (WCHL) through the experiences and perspectives of residents, Elders, and staff.

What we are doing

As part of a larger study, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 residents (referred to as “Nîcisânak” or brothers) and 9 Elders and staff at WCHL in November 2019. Interviews were conducted by two members of the research team, each taking approximately thirty minutes to an hour to complete. The interviews focused on the participants’ experiences, involvements, and observations at the Healing Lodge.

What we have found so far

From the perspectives of the Nîcisânak, Elders, and staff, WCHL has a positive effect on the healing journeys of the Nîcisânak. It offers a holistic approach that increases accountability and presents opportunities for introspection, and reflection. Ceremonies and the support of Elders were identified as playing a central role in guiding the healing process of Nîcisânak and providing opportunities for understanding and connecting to their culture. Overall, there is a sense of gratitude from the Nîcisânak for the environment of WCHL that fosters personal growth and allows them to gain knowledge about their culture, engage in ceremonies, and belong to a community.

Elders and staff highlighted the inclusive, barrier-free nature of the relationships promoted throughout the Healing Lodge. A strong sense of community was apparent in the relationships between the Nîcisânak, and the dynamics with staff were often described as supportive and positive. While there is representation of staff from Beardy’s and Okemasis First Nation, this was described as both a benefit (e.g., increased community involvement) and a challenge (e.g., potential for conflicts of interest).

In addition to delivering nationally recognized correctional programs, a variety of in-house programs are offered at WCHL. These programs in the areas of parenting, grief, family violence, substance abuse, and anger management were identified as particularly beneficial for Nîcisânak, and often fill a gap for those

who either have completed or do not qualify for correctional programs. One of the main challenges raised at WCHL is the limited hobby crafts, social programs, and unstructured leisure activities. Part of this issue may be attributed to the lack of a designated Social Programs Officer.

An additional challenge experienced at WCHL is the shortage of Escorted and Unescorted Temporary Absences (ETAs/UTAs), as well as work releases. Opportunities to attend and participate in ceremonies in the community was identified as particularly beneficial for the Nîcisânak, highlighting the importance of cultural ETAs and UTAs.

What it means

The experiences of the Nîcisânak, Elders, and staff reveal a unique environment at WCHL that encourages a stronger knowledge of and connection to Indigenous culture. The interventions and opportunities offered at WCHL support the healing journeys of Nîcisânak, while addressing their needs, attitudes, and behaviours through an Indigenous lens.

In order to keep the Nîcisânak occupied in a prosocial manner and further engaged in their culture, hobby crafts, unstructured leisure activities and social programs represent an area of opportunity for WCHL. Additional opportunities for gradual release would be beneficial in promoting connections to the community and reintegration.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Laura Hanby & Thana Ridha

Experiences at Men's CSC-Operated Healing Lodges: A Qualitative Examination

Men's CSC-operated Healing Lodges offer an environment that help guide residents through their healing journeys.

Why we did this study

Healing Lodges are environments that use Indigenous values, traditions, and beliefs to offer culturally-relevant services and programs for Indigenous offenders. The goal of the current study was to qualitatively examine the experiences at the men's Correctional Service of Canada (CSC)-operated Healing Lodges, in order to gain understanding of the impacts, interventions, and overall operation of these sites.

What we are did

To capture a holistic and comprehensive understanding, this study entailed semi-structured individual interviews with residents, Elders, and staff members from across the three CSC-operated Healing Lodges for men; Pê Sâkâstêw Centre, Kwikwêxwelhp Healing Village, and Willow Cree Healing Lodge. In total, interview data was collected and thematically analyzed for 36 residents, 7 Elders, as well as 22 staff members.

What we have found

The narratives revealed various opportunities offered within the Healing Lodges for residents, many of which are cultural-specific or weave Indigenous perspectives and approaches. The opportunities include a range of ceremonies and activities, programs, education/vocational and employment opportunities, as well as different temporary absences. While the amount and breadth of these opportunities varies by Healing Lodge, the cultural ceremonies and activities, such as hobby crafts, as well as the in-house programs, appear to be crucial for keeping residents engaged in both their culture and healing journeys. Additionally, occasions to take part in cultural temporary absences and community service work arise as meaningful efforts towards gradual reintegration.

The experiences shared through the interviews further revealed that the environment within the Healing Lodges, which emphasizes Indigenous culture, offers a space that is seen as unique from mainstream institutional settings. The Healing Lodges allow residents to focus on their path towards healing by fostering a space for engaging in introspection, finding balance within themselves, and enabling a sense of commitment and accountability.

The relationships present within the Healing Lodges demonstrate a unique sense of community. For the most part, Healing Lodges are marked by strong connections and collaborations between residents, open and dynamic relationships with staff, and strong bonds with Elders built on support and guidance.

Finally, the research findings shed light on some of operational challenges and best practices present across these Healing Lodges, including those related to community engagement, the

resident population, and staffing. In particular, maintaining an inclusive partnership with the local Indigenous communities, establishing a rigorous transfer process for residents, as well as hiring and retaining Indigenous and culturally competent staff appear to be essential for the overall successful operation of these sites. Despite the prominent benefits of Healing Lodges, arising as a common challenge across the sites is the merging of CSC policies or practices with the unique operational needs of Healing Lodges as being environments guided by Indigenous culture and traditions.

What it means

Taken together, the emerging themes and findings highlight the various unique opportunities, cultural environment, supportive relationships, and operational aspects of the Healing Lodges that collectively help guide residents through their healing journeys and support reintegration. While previous quantitative research has demonstrated that Healing Lodges promote safe reintegration (Hanby et al., 2020), this study supports the significance of men's CSC-operated Healing Lodges in offering culturally appropriate approaches that are responsive to the needs of Indigenous offenders.

For more information

Ridha, T., Hanby, L., & Sullivan, R. (2022). Experiences at Men's CSC-Operated Healing Lodges: A Qualitative Examination (Research Report R-444). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS

research
highlights

Using Technology to Deliver Community-Based Correctional Programs: A Pilot Study

Remote community-based correctional program delivery is promising when in-person delivery is not possible.

Why we did this study

Advancements in technology has led to its integration in the correctional system. One area where this may be particularly advantageous is in the delivery of community-based correctional interventions, as the delivery of these services can pose a significant challenge when offenders are released into remote communities or locations where these services are not readily available. The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of alternative service delivery. Using technology such as tele- or videoconference may provide a solution for those who cannot access in-person community-based correctional programs.

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is piloting an initiative to provide community-based correctional programs to offenders in remote locations through the use of tele- or videoconferencing. The current study aimed to provide evidence of the viability of this initiative to inform its continued use in the future.

What we did

There were 126 program enrollments, representing 123 offenders, who received a remote program (maintenance and self-management correctional programs). The majority of participants were men (89.7%), Indigenous (55.6%), and from the Prairie region (79.4%). Casefiles contained within the Offender Management System, an electronic offender record system, were reviewed. Further, feedback was solicited from eight Correctional Program Officers (CPOs) who delivered remote programming.

What we found

In the majority of file reviews, programs were delivered through the use of teleconference or phone technology and occurred on a one-on-one basis. In most cases, remote programming was administered due to the offender living in a remote community.

Results suggest that the majority of participants had a positive attitude towards remote programming and a positive working alliance with the CPO. Further, remote delivery was generally perceived by CPOs to be comparable to in-person delivery across a variety of measures (e.g., offenders' ability to express thoughts and feelings, comprehension of program content, motivation and engagement, working alliance).

Although remote program delivery was generally positive, there were challenges associated with remote delivery. For example, CPOs reported that remote delivery made it more difficult to explain program content to participants when compared to in-person delivery. Further, both technical and logistical challenges were common. For example, a lack of consistent phone access was a common technical challenge; whereas missed, late,

or rescheduled sessions due to offender or external reasons, such as forgetfulness or employment, were common logistical challenges encountered. Positively, in the majority of cases challenges were able to be resolved and were not perceived to affect the quality of program delivery.

What it means

The preliminary results of this study suggest that remote program delivery may be comparable to in-person delivery in terms of offender engagement and motivation, and the development of a positive working alliance. While not without challenges, remote delivery offers benefits, such as flexibility in program scheduling to accommodate other priorities offenders may have in the community. However, this initiative would benefit from further research to identify best practices in remote delivery. At this time, research only supports the use of remote program delivery on a one-on-one basis when in-person delivery methods are not possible primarily due to technological limitations and offender accessibility issues.

For more information

Wardrop, K., Sheahan, C., Hodges, J., & McKendy, L. (2022). Using technology to deliver community-based correctional programs: A pilot study (Research Report R-438). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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The Relationship between the Timing of Completion of Correctional Programs and Recidivism Outcomes

The optimal timing of program completion appears to be just prior to day parole eligibility.

Why we did this study

In response to a recommendation included in the recent evaluation report on the Correctional Service of Canada's reintegration programs, the current study examines the relationship between timely access to programs and recidivism outcomes to inform the optimal timing of program delivery throughout an offender's sentence.

What we did

This study included a cohort of offenders with determinate sentences released on their first federal term between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2020 who completed a main Integrated Correctional Program Model (ICPM) program or Women Offender Correctional Program (WOCP). Offenders were excluded from the final sample if they had a program non-completion on file, as this would affect the timing of their first main program completion. The final sample consisted of 7,367 men and 1,266 women.

What we found

The findings showed that, for most programs, later completion was associated with decreased revocation rates (see Table 1), with reductions in recidivism plateauing after offenders' day parole eligibility date.

What it means

The current findings represent an important contribution to our understanding of how to optimize the efficiency of correctional programs. Offenders who complete correctional programs closer to release likely benefit from the recency of the experience and are better able to apply the skills learned in program to challenging situations faced in the community. Optimal program completion appears to be just prior to day parole eligibility as this balances the need to prepare offenders for their earliest possible release and positive revocation outcomes. Continued efforts to optimize program delivery in advance of earliest possible release would be beneficial.

For more information

Wardrop, K., & Sheahan, C. (2022). The relationship between the timing of completion of correctional interventions and recidivism outcomes (Research Report R-439). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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Table 1:
The association between timing of first main program completion and recidivism outcomes

	For every 1% increase in the proportion of the sentence passed at the time of program completion:	
	Change in hazard of any revocation	Change in hazard of any new offence
Men's moderate intensity programs		
ICPM-MT program	▼ 1%	▼ 6%
Indigenous-ICPM-MT and Inuit Integrated (non-sex offender) programs	≅	▼ 3%
Hybrid programs	≅	▼ 4%
Sex offender programs	▼ 1%	▼ 6%
Men's high intensity programs	▼ 1%	▼ 5%
Women's moderate intensity programs		
WOCP	▼ 1%	▼ 6%
Indigenous-WOCP	≅	▼ 3%

Note. ▲ indicates that the likelihood of a recidivism outcome decreased as proportion of sentence at program completion increased. ≅ denotes no statistically significant change in the likelihood of recidivism outcomes depending on the timing of program completion.

Qualitative Examination of Overrides for Correctional Programming for Women Offenders

While the proportion of overrides was higher than anticipated, the reasons were consistent with policy guidelines.

Why we did this study

Effective February 5, 2018, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) changed its policy for program assignments, requiring all offenders to be referred to programs based on the Criminal Risk Index (CRI). The CRI is a tool used to assess static risk and guide offender intervention levels. A recent evaluation of Correctional Reintegration Programs (CSC, 2019) found that more than half of the women offenders who completed programming were overridden into a program, as they did not initially meet the program referral criteria.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a qualitative examination of the reasons of overrides of the CRI referral criteria for women offenders and to examine their consistency with policy guidelines regarding overrides.

What we did

Analyses were conducted with an admission dataset (N = 709; 34% Indigenous), which included all offenders whom were admitted to federal custody with a new warrant of committal during their first term between February 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019. The CRI scores and levels were extracted, as were basic demographic (gender, ethnicity), offender intake assessment, sentence, offence, program assignment information, and program override information.

All offenders who were identified as having an override were coded, which focused on the reasons for an override to a higher intensity program and the reasons for an override to a lower intensity program.

What we found

An examination of demographic characteristics indicated that the majority of women were serving shorter sentences and were convicted of drug-related offences. The criminogenic needs that were most salient for women offenders appeared to be those related to personal/emotional orientation, substance abuse, and associates. In addition, the majority of the study group were low (45%) to moderate (45%) criminal risk, based on the CRI.

While a large proportion of program referrals aligned with CRI scores (n = 591; 85%), there appeared to be higher than expected percentages of overrides from high to moderate intensity (21%) and from engagement only to moderate intensity (26%) and the extent to which varied by Indigenous ancestry, region, offence type, and sentence length. Further analyses demonstrated that of those women who completed moderate intensity programming, 20% (n = 64) did not initially meet the program referral criteria for moderate intensity and were overridden into the program. These results were consistent across Indigenous ancestry.

File reviews of the reasons for overrides showed that among women who were overridden from engagement only to moderate intensity, a large proportion were assessed as having a moderate to severe substance use problem and there was an established link between their substance use and their criminal behaviour. All women who were overridden from moderate to high intensity had exhibited a pattern of persistent violence where a large proportion of their current offence(s) included elements of gratuitous violence. The most frequently documented reason for an override from high to moderate intensity was the presences of significant factors that would mitigate their risk (e.g., gaps in offending, limited history of violence).

What it means

Overall, the results of this study demonstrated that the rationale of program overrides was consistent with policy guidelines. Nonetheless, the proportion of overrides was higher than anticipated, which raises potential challenges in aligning programming needs with response strategies.

For more information

Smeth, A., Derksen, D., Cram, S., & Ridha, T. Qualitative Examination of Overrides for Correctional Programming for Women Offenders (Research Report R-440). Ottawa, Ontario: CSC.

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

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Qualitative Examination of Specific Responsivity Factors of Correctional Program Participants with Mental Health Symptoms, Cognitive Impairment, or Learning Disabilities

Correctional Program Officers are aware of the responsivity factors of offenders and make a concerted effort to provide accommodations, tools, and support to address these concerns.

Why we did this study

A recent evaluation of the Correctional Service of Canada's correctional reintegration programs found offenders with mental health, intellectual deficit, learning disability, anxiety/hesitance (men only), or brain injury responsivity factors reported the lowest rates of receiving accommodations to help them participate in correctional programs. This study aims to identify how Correctional Program Officers and Indigenous Correctional Program Officers (CPOs and ICPOs) address the various specific responsivity factors that may interfere with offenders' participation in correctional programs.

What we did

This study involved a thematic review of casefiles from the Offender Management System, an administrative database containing offender records. The study sample included 77 offenders admitted to federal custody between July 1, 2017 and March 31, 2020 who participated in a moderate intensity correctional program. To identify individuals with responsivity needs that would affect program participation, they had to have an indication of a responsivity need as determined by casefile coders, and must have met at least one of the following: (a) an active learning disability need; (b) an active cognitive impairment need; or (c) 'considerable need or higher' rating on the Mental Health Needs Scale.

What we found

The findings showed that CPOs and ICPOs recorded responsivity needs in the 'Attendance and Participation' section of the final program report for 100% of cases reviewed for the adapted programs and for the majority (65.5%) of cases reviewed for the non-adapted programs, although coders identified a responsivity factor elsewhere in the offender's program reports for the remaining 34.5%.

Participants often had multiple responsivity factors, which CPOs and ICPOs observed as interfering with their program participation. Responsivity factors were most commonly observed to interfere with participants' abilities to understand, learn, or apply program content. These factors were also more frequently recorded among adapted program participants than non-adapted participants.

In the majority of cases, CPOs and ICPOs provided various accommodations, tools, and support to address responsivity needs, although adaptations were more common in the adapted program streams. CPOs and ICPOs commonly simplified program concepts and materials, prompted participants to use program skills, and worked one-on-one with the participant to review material or complete work. Notably, there were also many instances of the participants taking the initiative to address their responsivity factors by asking for extra support and assistance.

While not consistently recorded, CPOs and ICPOs deemed the program adaptations to be effective in addressing responsivity factors of offenders in the majority of cases where this information was documented.

What it means

The results of this study provide evidence that CPOs and ICPOs are aware of participants' specific responsivity factors, and that they make a concerted effort to address these factors using a variety of accommodations, tools, and support. However, responsivity factors were not consistently recorded in administrative files for non-adapted programs. More support may be required to ensure these needs are adequately identified, addressed, and reported.

For more information

Sheahan, C., Tanga, M., Wardrop, K., & Bah, R. (2022). Qualitative examination of specific responsivity factors of correctional program participants with mental health symptoms, cognitive impairment, or learning disabilities. (Research Report R-441). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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**ETHNOCULTURAL OFFENDER
POPULATION**

research
highlights

Black Federal Offenders in Structured Intervention Units and the Mainstream Population

Black offenders in SIUs distinguish themselves from others in SIUs and those in the mainstream population.

Why we did this study

In 2019, Bill C-83 transformed federal corrections to focus on rehabilitation and mental healthcare. This legislation also brought about the elimination of both administrative and disciplinary segregation and introduced Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) for those inmates who could not be managed in the mainstream population. In 2020-21, a total of 323 (representing 6.7%) Black offenders were admitted to the federal system and at fiscal year-end there were 1,043 (representing 8.9%) in federal custody. Comparing the case characteristics of Black inmates in SIUs with others in SIUs as well as the mainstream Black inmate population may yield some important information especially with respect to providing targeted interventions to these individuals.

What we did

All federal offenders in SIUs were drawn from Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) Offender Management System on February 28, 2021. On that date, there were 24 Black men in SIUs and there were 1,015 in the mainstream institutional population. For those in SIUs, 88% were serving federal sentences for violence offences whereas 80% in the mainstream population. In accordance with the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the reasons for SIU placement were: 13 (or 54%) jeopardizes the security of the institution or the safety of any person, 11 (or 46%) inmate is in danger, and 0 interferes with an investigation. SIU group comparisons were made in relation to the Black SIU, non-Black SIU, as well as Black and non-Black mainstream inmate population at that time.

What we found

An intake assessment measure was used to gather criminal history background (Criminal Risk Index or CRI). Analyses revealed that in SIUs, Black inmates were less likely than non-Black to have a high/very high risk of re-offending rating (65% and 74%, respectively). Substantial differences also emerged for the Black SIU population relative to the Black mainstream institutional population with respect to CRI high/very high risk of re-offending (65% and 34%, respectively).

For Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis (case needs) assessed at intake to federal custody there were considerable differences observed between Black and non-Black inmates in SIUs. Overall, the Black SIU population relative to the non-Black SIU, Black and non-Black mainstream populations were found to be rated as "high needs" (96%, 98%, 70%, and 73%, respectively).

Upon closer examination, Black SIU inmates were more likely than non-Black SIU inmates to be assessed as "high needs" in the Associates domain (55% and 49% respectively).

An unpacking of domain indicators revealed that Black SIU inmates were more likely to be suspected of affiliation with street gang / organized crime (48% and 24%, respectively).

Also notable, Black SIU inmates were more likely than non-Black SIU inmates to be assessed as "high needs" in the Employment / Education domain (23% and 13%, respectively). On the other hand, Black SIU inmates were less likely than non-Black SIU inmates to be assessed as "high needs" in the Marital/Family domain (5% and 17%, respectively); the Community Functioning domain (5% and 10% respectively) and most striking the Substance Misuse domain (14% and 61%, respectively).

Albeit lower for the Black SIU relative to the non-Black SIU population, noteworthy is the presence of "high needs" in the Attitudes domain (68% and 79%, respectively) and "in the Personal/Emotional domain (55% and 70%, respectively). In the Attitudes domain, there were found to be characteristics such as: displays negative attitudes towards the criminal justice system (95% and 89%, respectively); displays negative attitudes towards the correctional system (76% and 78%, respectively); and supports instrumental / goal-oriented violence (95% and 88%, respectively). For the Personal/Emotional domain the following were found: being impulsive (86% and 93%, respectively), frequently acts in an aggressive manner (81% and 80%, respectively), and frequently interprets neutral situations as hostile (67% and 50%, respectively).

What it means

These analyses confirm that the Black SIU population distinguish themselves as a group from the non-Black SIU and mainstream Black inmate population in a number of important attitudinal and cognitive-behavioural ways. Overall, Black inmates in SIUs display complex needs and require intensive levels of service. This reinforces that interventions be culturally relevant and focused on motivation to change, problem solving, violence prevention and interpersonal relations. Moreover, these services need to be delivered by well-trained and qualified correctional practitioners.

For more information

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie-Anne Keown

Indigenous Federal Offenders in Structured Intervention Units and the Mainstream Population

Indigenous Offenders in SIUs distinguish themselves from others in SIUs and those in the Mainstream Population.

Why we did this study

In 2019, Bill C-83 transformed federal corrections to focus on rehabilitation and mental healthcare. This legislation also brought about the elimination of both administrative and disciplinary segregation and introduced Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) for those inmates who could not be managed in the mainstream population. In 2020-21, a total of 1,688 (representing 34.8%) Indigenous offenders were admitted to the federal system and at fiscal year-end there were 3,646 (representing 31.0%) in federal custody. Comparing the case characteristics of Indigenous inmates in SIUs with others in SIUs as well as the mainstream Indigenous inmate population may yield some important information especially with respect to providing targeted interventions to these individuals.

What we did

All federal offenders in SIUs were drawn from Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) Offender Management System on February 28, 2021. On that date, there were 91 Indigenous men in SIUs and there were 3,536 in the mainstream institutional population. For those in SIUs, 88% were serving federal sentences for violence offences compared to 82% in the mainstream population. In accordance with the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the reasons for SIU placement were: 38 (or 42%) *jeopardizes the security of the institution or the safety of any person*, 53 (or 58%) *inmate is in danger*, and 0 *interferes with an investigation*. SIU group comparisons were made in relation to the Indigenous SIU, non-Indigenous SIU, as well the Indigenous and non-Indigenous mainstream population at that time.

What we found

An intake assessment measure was used to gather criminal history background (Criminal Risk Index or CRI). Analyses revealed that in SIUs, Indigenous inmates were more likely than non-Indigenous to have a high / very high risk of re-offending rating (75% and 72%, respectively). Substantial differences also emerged for the Indigenous SIU population relative to the Indigenous mainstream institutional population with respect to CRI high / very high risk of re-offending (75% and 53%, respectively).

For Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis (case needs) assessed at intake to federal custody there were considerable differences observed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous inmates in SIUs. Overall, the Indigenous SIU population relative to the non-Indigenous SIU, Indigenous and non-Indigenous mainstream populations were found to be rated as "high needs" (96%, 99%, 81%, and 69% respectively).

Upon closer examination, Indigenous SIU inmates were more likely than non-Indigenous SIU inmates to be assessed as "high needs" in the Personal/Emotional domain (78% and 64%, respectively). Unpacking the Personal/Emotional domain the following were found: being impulsive (93% and 92%, respectively), difficulty solving interpersonal problems (88% and 86%, respectively), and ability to generate choices is limited (86% and 74%, respectively). Also notable, Indigenous SIU inmates were more likely than non-Indigenous SIU inmates to be assessed as "high needs" in the Substance Misuse domain (68% and 46%, respectively).

Albeit lower for the Indigenous SIU relative to the non-Indigenous SIU population, noteworthy is the presence of "high needs" in the Attitudes domain (76% and 79%, respectively). In the Attitudes domain, there were found to be characteristics such as: displays negative attitudes towards the criminal justice system (90% and 89%, respectively); displays negative attitudes supports instrumental / goal-oriented violence (90% and 88%, respectively); and values a substance abusing lifestyle (85% and 73%, respectively).

What it means

These analyses confirm that the Indigenous SIU population distinguish themselves as a group from the non-Indigenous SIU and mainstream Indigenous inmate population in a number of important cognitive-behavioural and attitudinal ways. Overall, Indigenous inmates in SIUs display complex needs and require intensive levels of service. This reinforces that interventions being offered to those inmates placed in SIUs need to be culturally relevant and focused on motivation to change, problem solving, violence prevention and substance use issues. Moreover, these services need to be delivered by well-trained and qualified correctional practitioners.

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie-Anne Keown

Initial Custody Placements of Federally Sentenced Black Men

Federally sentenced Black men account for 8% of all initial custody placements over the past five fiscal years.

Why we did this study

The Office of the Auditor General recently produced a report on systemic barriers in corrections. In response to one of the recommendations, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) agreed to undertake a validation exercise on the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) specifically on Black men. In order to lay the groundwork for future research on the CRS with respect to predictive validity, initial security classification data were drawn over a five-year period. The initial security level (maximum, medium or minimum) decision of every federally sentenced person is based on the combined professional appraisals of three separate factors: institutional adjustment, escape risk and risk to public safety. CRS results are incorporated into an overall security classification assessment but they do not solely define the final Offender Security Level (OSL) decision.

What we did

The CSC's RADAR-PRIME Reporting System standardizes the historical reporting of a wide variety of metrics at the national and regional levels. Population Management – Initial Assessment and Placement records the congruence between CRS designations and OSL. Comparative OSL data were drawn for five separate fiscal years (2017-18 to 2021-2022) for Black men offenders.

What we found

As reflected in Table 1, initial security classification data show that over the past five years Black men have decreased both numerically and proportionally. It appears that about 15% were placed at maximum security and this amount has been relatively constant over the time period.

Table 1: Initial Security Level Placement

Year	All Men	Black Men # (%)	Black Men Maximum	Black Men Medium	Black Men Minimum
17-18	4,557	345 (7.6%)	55	198	92
18-19	4,617	380 (8.2%)	62	221	97
19-20	4,340	382 (8.8%)	56	240	86
20-21	3,077	229 (7.4%)	36	142	51
21-22	3,600	291 (8.1%)	34	181	76
Total	20,191	1,627 (8.1%)	243 (14.9%)	982 (60.4%)	402 (24.7%)

Source: RADAR-PRIME Reporting System

Table 2 presents overall CRS and OSL concordance rates for Black men of 70.5%. The CRS-OSL under-ride rates to lower security were greater than over-ride rates to higher security for Black men at 20.8% and 8.7%, respectively.

Table 2: Congruence between the CRS and OSL

Black Men				
CRS-OSL	Max	Medium	Minimum	Total
No Change	223	689	235	1,147 (70.5%)
OSL Lower=Under	0	171	167	338 (20.8%)
OSL Higher=Over	20	122	0	142 (8.7%)
				1,627

Source: RADAR-PRIME Reporting System

What it means

The disproportionate representation of Black men in federal custody has been largely influenced by increasing numbers and proportions of new admissions to federal custody. However, during the pandemic era (2020-21 & 2021-22) there has been a noteworthy decline. The observation that Black men reflect an annual average of 8% initial assessment and placement decisions necessarily raises broader upstream concerns in the criminal justice system.

The relatively higher under-ride rate (20.8%) of the CRS by final OSL decisions combined with the substantial over-ride rate (122/1,627 or 7%) of CRS minimum to OSL medium for Black men suggests that other factors might be operating in the classification decision-making process. Psychometric examinations of the CRS and initiatives to develop culturally informed initial security assessment processes may yield more

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Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie-Anne Keown

A Qualitative Study of Ethnocultural Offender Correctional Experiences: Programs, Services, and Community Connections

Ethnocultural offenders constitute a heterogeneous group united by strong motivations to participate in and benefit from correctional programs and services.

Why we did this study

In Canada, research on racialized persons in the correctional system has generally focused on Indigenous offenders. Less is known about the correctional experiences of Ethnocultural offenders (i.e., non-White, non-Indigenous persons who want to preserve their cultural identity and related practices). Black persons make up the largest proportion of Ethnocultural offenders.

What we did

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect information on (1) the experiences of Ethnocultural offenders participating in correctional programs and services while incarcerated and (2) the perceived relevance and utility of correctional programs supporting the return of Ethnocultural offenders to their community.

Offenders on conditional release who self-identified during CSC's admission screening protocol as being of ethnocultural background were eligible to participate during the recruitment period (2019-08-01 – 2020-08-31). N = 39 offenders volunteered for the study, including 14 women and 25 men, 13 of whom (34%) self-identified as Black.

What we found

Most of the participants rated their cultural identity as important, women (92.9%) more so than men (83.4%). However, the findings highlight the definitional complexity and heterogeneity of persons categorized as Ethnocultural. When identifying as a member of a racial, cultural, and/or ethnic group, those interviewed used terms that crossed racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, and geographic lines. Nine participants chose not to identify as belonging to a racial group. Religion was often tied to characterizations of culture, and culture linked to race and geographic space (e.g. "Afro-Caribbean", "Filipino").

When asked if they felt their ethnicity, culture, spirituality, or religion affected access to programs or services, women (57.1%) were more likely than men (16.7%) to answer in the affirmative. Still, almost all of those interviewed (87.5% men, 100% women) participated in and completed programs while in prison. Employment skills training and education were described as the most useful programs. Almost all interviewees reported taking part formally or informally in social program activities.

The majority (89.4%) of participants reported feeling prepared to return to the community. Women (85.7%) were more likely than men (66.7%) to agree there were services or resources they would have liked to access but were not available or offered.

Most men (62.5%) and half (50%) of the women interviewed reported that program facilitators made an effort to respect their ethnocultural background and needs, though overall only about half (51.3%) described members of their case management team or other institutional staff as having made an effort to acknowledge the same. Nearly half (47.4%) of participants reported specific instances of feeling disrespected.

What it means

Ethnocultural offenders constitute a heterogeneous group that is, however, characterized by a strong motivation to participate in and benefit from correctional programs and services. Women are more likely than men to experience their ethnocultural background as central to their identity and to experience it as a barrier or obstacle. While offenders reported being prepared for release, greater knowledge and resources to address the needs of such a diverse group may improve the abilities of institutional staff to work effectively with ethnocultural offenders.

For more information

Greco, C., Brown, G.P., Barker, J. et al., (2022). A Qualitative Study of Ethnocultural Offender Correctional Experiences: Programs, Services, and Community Connections. (Research Report R-443). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody – Population Trends

Most ethnocultural groups in CSC's offender population have increased, and some are overrepresented.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 1 of a three-part study examined diversity trends over an 11-year period in the federal offender population specific to non-White and non-Indigenous offenders.

What we did

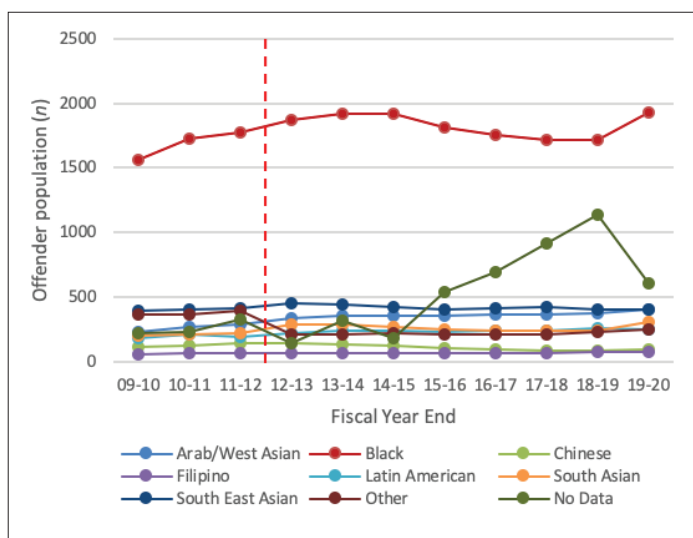
Diversity trends were examined from end of Fiscal Years 2009/2010 to 2019/2020. Data from CSC's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized were compared to Statistics Canada 2016 Census data. Ethnocultural groups were based on self-reported data collected at intake.

What we found

Most ethnocultural (non-White and non-Indigenous) groups of men and women at CSC increased over the period examined. However, overall, the rate of growth of the ethnocultural population in CSC has slowed considerably compared to what was seen between 2000 and 2009¹. Relative to the Canadian general population, Black men and women and Southeast Asian men were overrepresented in CSC's population. Arab/West Asian men were found to be the fastest growing offender group, increasing by 76% over the study period. South Asian, Chinese, Filipino, and Arab/West Asian men were underrepresented in the federal offender population.

The population trends for men during the study period are displayed in Figure 1. Although there was a decline in the Black men offender population from 2015/2016 to 2018/2019, this decline mirrored an increase in the number of offenders in the 'No Data' group (i.e., no ethnocultural data). Conversely, the population of Black men increased between 2018/2019 and 2019/2020, which paralleled the decline in the 'No Data' group. Similar trends were seen among Black women, where the decline from an earlier high at 2012/2013 coincided with an increase in the 'No Data' group.

Figure 1:
Number of men at CSC, end of Fiscal Year snapshots 2009/2010 to 2019/2020 by ethnocultural group.



Note. Vertical red line indicates change in self-identification categories at CSC. The 'Other' category includes men offenders identifying as Japanese, Korean, Multiracial/ethnic, Unknown and Unable to Specify. Includes men serving provincial sentences at CSC, n = 1,696.

¹Gottschall, S. (2012). Ethnic diversity in Canadian federal offender admissions (Research Report R-263). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

What it means

CSC's offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding population trends and overrepresentation of certain ethnocultural groups can provide important information with respect to areas for further examination and action to support offender reintegration activities.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody – In-Custody Indicators among Women

Compared to other groups of women, a greater proportion of Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women experienced several positive in-custody outcomes.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 2 of a three-part study examined in-custody indicators, looking for differences among ethnocultural, White, and Indigenous offenders. This summary focuses on results for women. It is important to identify differences as they can inform CSC of areas for further examination and action to support a diverse offender population.

What we did

In-custody measures for all federally sentenced offenders admitted into CSC custody between April 1, 2016 and September 30, 2018 were examined (N = 893 women), with some outcomes examined prior to Day Parole Eligibility Date (DPED; N = 813 women). Ethnocultural groups with over 20 individuals were examined, with the remaining groups categorized as ‘Other’. Due to sample sizes, this resulted in four groups: White, Black, Indigenous and Other Ethnocultural women offenders. Offender ethnocultural group is based on self-reported data collected as part of an intake assessment.

What we found

Table 1:
In-Custody Results Summary among Women

	Black	Other	Indigenous	White (%)
Initial Placement in Minimum Security	+++	+++	---	54
CRS Recommended a more restrictive setting	+++	+	+	15
Incidents as Instigator	---	--	+++	52
Any Visit	--	+	---	54
Educational Achievements	+++	+++	+++	64
Escorted temporary Absence	+++	++	++	31
CSC Employment	++	-	++	67
CORCAN	--	++	-	23
Program Enrollment	---	--	--	87
Program Completion	+	++	--	68

Note. Symbols denote trends in relation to comparison group (White offenders). ○ = +/-2%. - = -2% to -5%. -- = -5% to -10%. --- = -10% or less. + = +2% to +5%. ++ = +5% to +10%. +++ = +10% or more. † = Information suppressed due to n less than 5. OSL at Min = Initial Placement in Minimum Security. CRS>OSL = CRS recommended a more restrictive setting than actual security placement. Inc. I/A = Incidents as Instigator/Associate. Ed. Ach. = Educational achievements by DPED of those without a high school education. ETA = Escorted Temporary Absence by DPED. CSC Emp. = CSC Employment by DPED. Pgm. Enroll = Enrollment in moderate or high intensity correctional program by DPED. Pgm. Comp. = Moderate or high intensity program completions by DPED among those enrolled.

As per Table 1, women identifying as Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural were more likely to have initial security placements in a less restrictive setting than White women, and were more likely to be placed in a lower security level than recommended by the Custody Rating Scale.

Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were less likely to be involved in institutional incidents as an instigator or associate, had greater participation in Escorted Temporary Absences (ETAs) by DPED, and had higher educational achievements by DPED (among those without a high school education) as compared with White women.

Black women had greater participation in CSC employment but lower participation in CORCAN by DPED than White women. The reverse trend was observed for women of ‘Other’ ethnocultural identities. Lower CORCAN participation may be due to a number of factors, including participation in other interventions and activities identified in offenders’ correctional plans. ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were slightly more likely than White women to have at least one visitor, whereas Black women were less likely. Finally, women identifying as Black, ‘Other’ ethnocultural identities and Indigenous were less likely to enroll in moderate or high intensity correctional programs when eligible than White women. However, of those enrolled, Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were most likely to complete programs.

Results indicated that Indigenous women tended to have higher initial security ratings, greater involvement in institutional incidents, and a lower proportion receiving at least one visitor compared to other women. Conversely, compared to White women, a greater proportion of Indigenous women demonstrated educational achievements by DPED (for those without a high school education), participated in ETAs by DPED, and had obtained CSC employment by DPED.

What it means

CSC’s offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding differences across various indicators, including those related to in-custody experiences for women, can identify opportunities for CSC to enhance the support of offenders from different ethnocultural groups.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody— Community Supervision Indicators among Women

Women of Black and “Other” Ethnocultural Identities were more likely to be released from minimum security and less likely to experience a revocation than White or Indigenous women.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 3 of a three-part study examined community supervision indicators, looking for differences among ethnocultural, White, and Indigenous offenders. This summary focuses specifically on the results for women. It is important to identify differences as they can inform CSC of areas for further examination and action to support a diverse offender population.

What we did

Offenders on their first term releases during fiscal years 2015/16 to 2016/17 with a minimum follow-up period of 8 months were identified (N = 753 women). Ethnocultural groups with over 20 individuals were examined, with the remaining groups combined as ‘Other’. For women, due to sample size, this resulted in four groups: White, Black, Indigenous and Other Ethnocultural women offenders. Offender ethnocultural group is based on self-reported data collected as part of an intake assessment.

What we found

Table 1 presents a summary of the differences in results for Black, ‘Other’ ethnocultural and Indigenous women in comparison to those for White women. Women of Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural identities were more likely to be released from a minimum security institution as compared with White women, while Indigenous women were less likely. Black women were more likely to be granted a period of discretionary release than White women and less likely to have a residency condition imposed upon statutory release. Overall, ‘Other’ ethnocultural women had comparable rates of discretionary release and were less likely to have a residency condition applied to statutory release. Indigenous women were less likely to be granted discretionary release and more likely to have residency condition applied to their statutory release.

Although ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were more likely to gain a period of employment within 8 months of release, they were less likely than White women to have a positive employment outcome. Black and Indigenous women were less likely to secure employment within 8 months than White women and less likely to have a positive employment outcome. Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were less likely to enroll in community self-management programs within 8 months of release, and less likely to complete such programs when enrolled as compared with White women. Although Indigenous women were more likely to enroll in a community self-management program, they were less likely to complete it.

Fewer than five Black or ‘Other’ ethnocultural women experienced a revocation, and no women from either group experienced a revocation with offence within 8 months of release. In comparison, 9% of White women and 16% of Indigenous women on discretionary release had a revocation within 8 months of release, as did 24% of White and 46% of Indigenous women on non-

discretionary release. Further, 1.5% of White women and 7% of Indigenous women had a revocation with offence within 8 months of release (for any release type).

Table 1:
Community Supervision Trends Among Women

	Black	Other	Indigenous	White (%)
Released from Minimum	++	+	---	67
Discretionary Release	++	○	---	72
Statutory Release	†	†	+++	25
Employment	--	++	---	56
Any Positive Employment	---	--	---	37
Enroll in Self-Management Program	---	--	++	61
Self-Management Program	---	-	---	85
CORCAN	--	++	-	23
Program Enrollment	---	--	--	87
Program Completion	+	++	--	68

Note. Symbols denote trends in relation to comparison group (White offenders). ○ = +/-2%. - = -2% to -5%. -- = -5% to -10%. --- = -10% or less. + = +2% to +5%. ++ = +5% to +10%. +++ = +10% or more. † = Information suppressed due to n less than 5. Min. = Minimum security. Disc. Release = Discretionary Release. SR = Statutory Release. Emp. = Employment. SMP = Self-Management Program (community).

What it means

CSC’s offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding differences across various indicators, including those related to community supervision, can identify opportunities for CSC to enhance the support of offenders from different ethnocultural groups.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody – In-Custody Indicators among Men

This study identified differences across various in-custody measures for ethnocultural men.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 2 of a three-part study examined differences with respect to in-custody indicators among ethnocultural, White, and Indigenous offenders. It is important to identify differences as they can inform CSC of areas for further examination and action to support a diverse offender population.

What we did

Study 2 examined the profile and select in-custody measures for all federally sentenced offenders admitted into CSC custody between April 1, 2016 and September 30, 2018 (N = 10,249 men), with some outcomes examined prior to Day Parole Eligibility Date (DPED; N = 9,064 men). Ethnocultural groups with over 20 individuals were examined, with the remaining groups categorized as 'Other'. Offender ethnocultural group is based on self-reported data collected as part of an intake assessment.

What we found

Table 1:
In-Custody Results Summary among Men

	Arab/ West Asian	Black	Chinese	Filipino	Latin Amer- ican	South Asian	South- east Asian	Other	Indig- enous	White (%)
Initial Placement in Minimum Security	-	---	+++	+++	+	○	+++	--	---	37
Incidents as Instigator	++	+++	---	-	○	+++	+	+++	+++	44
Any Visits	+++	○	---	+++	+++	+++	+++	○	---	54
Escorted Temporary Absence	○	○	+++	+++	○	+	++	○	○	7
Educational Achievements	+++	+	†	†	+++	○	○	--	○	38
CSC Employment	++	○	+	+++	+	++	+++	-	+	73
CORCAN	-	-	-	-	-	--	--	--	---	29
Vocational Certifications	++	+	+	+++	+	++	+	-	--	37
Program Completion	+	++	---	†	--	+	○	--	○	38

Note. Symbols denote trends in relation to comparison group (White offenders). ○ = +/-2%. - = -2% to -5%. -- = -5% to -10%. --- = -10% or less. + = +2% to +5%. ++ = +5% to +10%. +++ = +10% or more. † = Information suppressed due to n less than 5. OSL at Min = Initial Placement in Minimum Security. Inc. I/A = Incidents as Instigator/Associate. ETA = Escorted Temporary Absence by DPED. Ed. Ach. = Educational achievements by DPED of those without a high school education. CSC Emp. = CSC Employment by DPED. VOC = Vocational Certifications by DPED Pgm. Comp. = Moderate or high intensity program completions by DPED among those enrolled.

higher initial security ratings than White offenders, while others (Chinese, Filipino, Latin America and Southeast Asian) had lower initial security ratings, as indicated by overall proportion placed in minimum security. With respect to institutional incidents, men identifying as Arab/West Asian, Black, South Asian, Southeast Asian, 'Other' ethnocultural and Indigenous identities were more likely to have an incident as an instigator/associate.

Men from most ethnocultural groups had a comparable or greater proportion with at least one visitor than White men, except Chinese and Indigenous men. All groups also had a comparable or greater proportion with an Escorted Temporary Absence by DPED. Among men without a high school education, most groups demonstrated comparable or greater educational achievements by DPED than White men.. All groups except 'Other' ethnocultural and Indigenous men also had higher vocational certificate completions by DPED. Furthermore, all groups except 'Other' ethnocultural had comparable or greater participation in CSC employment by DPED, but all groups had lower CORCAN participation. However, this lower CORCAN participation may be due to a number of factors, including participation in other interventions and activities identified in offenders' correctional plans (such as related employment programs or correctional programs) and different availability of CSC and CORCAN employment in institutions. Regarding moderate or high correctional program participation, Arab/West Asian, Black and South Asian men had higher completion rates by DPED among enrolled participants relative to White men.

What it means

CSC's offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding differences across various indicators, including those related to in-custody experiences, can identify opportunities for CSC to enhance the support of offenders from different ethnocultural groups.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

As per Table 1, among men, some ethnocultural groups (Arab/West Asian, Black, 'Other' ethnocultural and Indigenous) had

Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody – Community Supervision Indicators among Men

Variations were observed across several community supervision indicators for men from different ethnocultural groups.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 3 of a three-part study examined community supervision indicators among ethnocultural, White, and Indigenous offenders.

What we did

Offenders on their first term releases during fiscal years 2015/16 to 2016/17 with a minimum follow-up period of 8 months were identified (N = 8,858 men). Ethnocultural groups with over 20 individuals were examined, with the remaining groups combined as 'Other'. Offender ethnocultural group is based on self-reported data collected as part of an intake assessment.

What we found

Table 1 presents a summary of the differences of each ethnocultural group in comparison to results for White men. Overall, although relatively few offenders from any group had a maximum-security classification at release, Black and Indigenous men had higher percentages than other groups and lower percentages of discretionary release. Controlling for risk, men rated low risk on the Static Factors Assessment identifying as Chinese (76%), South Asian (69%) and Southeast Asian (76%) were less likely than low risk White men (86%) to be granted discretionary release. In addition, compared to White men, a higher proportion of Indigenous, South Asian, and Black men on statutory release had residency conditions.

Men from most ethnocultural groups, including those identifying as Arab/West Asian, Chinese, Filipino, South Asian, Southeast Asian and 'Other' ethnocultural identities, were more likely than White men to secure community employment within 8 months of release. Black and Latin American men had comparable rates as White men, and Indigenous men were less likely to be employed in the community. Men from all groups were either comparable or more likely to have a positive community employment outcome relative to White men, except for Indigenous men. Men from all ethnocultural groups were less likely than White men to enroll in a community maintenance program within 8 months of release, with the exception of men identifying as 'Other' ethnocultural identities and Indigenous. However, Filipino, South Asian, Southeast Asian and 'Other' ethnocultural men were more likely to complete such programs once enrolled.

Table 1: Community Supervision Trends among Men

	Arab/ West Asian	Black	Chinese	Filipino	Latin Amer- ican	South Asian	South- east Asian	Other	Indig- enous	White (%)
Released from Maximum	○	+	--	--	○	†	-	○	+	7
Discretionary Release	+	--	+++	+++	○	+++	+++	○	---	50
Statutory Re- lease Residency	○	+	†	†	○	++	---	--	++	37
Employment	+++	○	+++	+++	○	+++	+++	++	---	62
Positive Employment	++	○	+++	+++	○	++	○	++	--	36
Enroll Mainte- nance Program	---	--	†	---	---	---	---	+	+++	43
Completion Maintenance Program	--	--	†	++	-	+++	+++	++	--	76

Note. Symbols denote trends in relation to comparison group (White offenders). ○ = +/-2%. - = -2% to -5%. -- = -5% to -10%. --- = -10% or less. + = +2% to +5%. ++ = +5% to +10%. +++ = +10% or more. † = Information suppressed due to n less than 5. Rel. Max. = Released from maximum security. Disc. Release = Discretionary Release. SR = Statutory Release. Emp. = Employment. Maint. = Maintenance program (community). Comp. = Completion.

Finally, rates of revocations within 8 months of discretionary release were lower for Black and 'Other' ethnocultural men (7% and 3%, respectively) than White men (9%). It should be noted that all groups other than White, Indigenous and Black were combined due to low base rates for post-release analyses. Indigenous men had the highest rates of revocations within 8 months of discretionary release (15%). Similar patterns were observed for revocations with an offence and for offenders with non-discretionary releases.

What it means

CSC's offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding differences across various indicators, including those related to community supervision, can identify opportunities for CSC to enhance the support of offenders from different ethnocultural groups.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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OTHER RESEARCH TOPICS

research highlights



Gender Diverse Offenders with a History of Sexual Offending

Gender diverse offenders with a history of sexual offending are a unique subpopulation of gender diverse offenders.

Why we did this study

The current study was undertaken to provide a profile of federal gender diverse offenders in Canada. A subcomponent of this study was to examine the specific characteristics and offence history of gender diverse offenders who had a history of sexual offending.

What we did

Thirty-three gender diverse offenders had a history of sexual offending.¹ Sex offence history was indicated if the offender had committed a current sexual offence or had a history of offending that was sex related. Demographic, sentence, and offence information were examined. File coding from the Offender Management System (OMS) was also completed to explore additional information regarding their sexual offending.

What we found

Eighty-two percent of gender diverse offenders with sexual offence histories were trans-women and the remaining 17% were in the “other” group.² On average, these offenders were 42 years at the time of the study. Two-thirds were serving their first federal sentence and about half (46%) were serving indeterminate sentences.

The risk and needs characteristics of these offenders indicates that they had high static risk (91%) and dynamic need (94%) but almost half (42%) were low criminal risk³ based on the Criminal Risk Index (CRI). Although three-quarters (78%) have a moderate to high motivation and two-thirds (64%) have a moderate to high accountability, a little over half (58%) are considered engaged in their correctional plan. Two-thirds (66%) had a low reintegration potential. Finally, responsivity issues were identified for a third (36%) of these offenders.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of these offenders committed a current sexual offence while 88% were convicted for prior sex offences. Almost all (94%) had committed their offences while living as their biological sex. The majority (85%) committed offences that caused death or serious harm to their victim(s) while 70% inflicted psychological harm on their victim(s). Examination of the victimology shows that over half were children (58%) or female (55%). One-third (33%) of the offences committed had multiple victims.

File review indicated that 70% of the offenders with sex offence histories had experienced childhood abuse and 27% were abused in adulthood. Childhood sexual (64%) and physical (52%) abuse were most commonly experienced by these offenders. Two-thirds (64%) had experienced trauma. For offenders with DFIA-R information, 60% had a history of childhood abuse.

What it means

Over 80% of gender diverse offenders with sexual offence histories were trans-women. Sexual offending indicators showed that the majority of these offences were committed while living as their biological sex, and that the highest proportion of victims were children or female. In addition, a majority of this sub-group caused death or serious harm to their victim(s). Most of these offenders also had a history of abuse and trauma. Due to these factors, gender diverse offenders with sex offence histories present unique operational considerations for institutional placement and correctional programming.

For more information

Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., Garrel, S. & Derkzen, D. Examination of gender diverse offenders (Research Report R-442). Ottawa, Ontario: CSC.

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

¹Ninety-nine gender diverse offenders while in-custody between December 17, 2017 and March 13, 2020.

²Gender fluid, gender non-conforming/non-binary, intersex, two-spirited, or unspecified.

³Criminal Risk Index (CRI) cut-offs aligned with CSC's program referral criteria as identified in Commissioners Directive correctional programming guidelines 726-2.

Examination of Gender Diverse Offenders

Gender diverse offenders are a heterogeneous group with high static risk and dynamic need.

Why we did this study

In accordance with Bill C-16, on December 27, 2017, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) implemented its interim policy for gender diverse offenders to identify operational practices that may require accommodation for these offenders, particularly regarding the placement of offenders in a federal correctional institution of their gender preference. In addition, CSC policy established the requirement to develop Individualized Protocols (IPs) for gender diverse offenders in relation to issues such as showers and toilets, frisk and strip searches, urinalysis, decontamination showers, and spiritual ceremonies. This study was undertaken to provide a profile of federal gender diverse offenders in Canada during incarceration and explore how these offenders are accommodated in other correctional jurisdictions. Jurisdictional review findings are available in the full research report.

What we did

A total of 99 gender diverse offenders (47% Indigenous) were identified in the in-custody population between December 27, 2017 and March 13, 2020. Demographic, sentence, and offence information, institutional behaviour, and post-release outcomes were examined. Additional factors examined by file coding from the Offender Management System (OMS) were: operational accommodation preferences for these offenders, abuse and trauma histories, and sex offence characteristics for those in the study population with sex offending histories.

What we found

Trans-women were the largest group (62%) of gender diverse offenders indicated, followed by trans-men (21%) and the "other" group¹ (17%). Two-fifths (40%) of the study group were serving a second or subsequent sentence; these offenders had an established criminal history and the majority (86%) were convicted of violent offences. Overall, gender diverse offenders were identified as high static and dynamic risk, with 60% having a low reintegration potential. IPs were analyzed for all gender diverse offenders in relation to staff interactions,² programming, and spiritual activity participation. Among offenders who indicated a preference related to staff interaction, offenders were more likely to identify preferences for female staff.

In terms of institutional adjustment, almost half of the study group had a guilty disciplinary charge while two-thirds had committed an institutional incident during the study period. Behavioural-related incidents³ were most common, regardless of the study subgroup. Three-quarters (74%) of the study group completed correctional programs, with two-thirds (67%) completing moderate intensity programming. Two-thirds (62%) of offenders participated in educational interventions while almost half (42%) participated in institutional employment opportunities. Sixteen percent of offenders applied for a transfer to an institution that matched their gender identity; 64% were approved. The majority (88%) were for trans-women.

For all offenders conditionally released during the study period (n = 27), 37% were suspended. Trans-men had a higher proportion of suspensions (45%) compared to trans-women (16%) and the "other" group (17%).

What it means

This study provides an initial descriptive profile of federal gender diverse offenders, who accounted for 0.4% of the general offender population. With enhanced data capacity for the identification of these offenders, future research will be able to expand on this work and enhance our knowledge concerning gender diverse offenders.

For more information

Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., Garrel, S. & Derkzen, D. Examination of gender diverse offenders (Research Report R-442). Ottawa, Ontario: CSC.

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

¹Gender fluid, gender non-conforming/non-binary, intersex, two-spirited, or unspecified.

²Staff interactions include mental health monitoring, security search interactions (e.g., strip or frisk searches), medical escorts, or staff response to nudity.

³Behaviour-related incidents include disruptive behaviour, disciplinary problems (fail to follow orders or disrespectful behaviour), minor disturbances (offender behaviour that impacts the routine of a unit), and major disturbances (offender behaviour that impacts the routine of the overall institution).

The Adverse Childhood Experiences of Canadian Federal Offenders: Available information and Correctional Outcomes

The majority of men and women offenders have had exposure to adverse childhood experiences, and these experiences are associated with a number of negative institutional and community outcomes.

Why we did this study

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) refer to instances of abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction that are linked to a number of negative outcomes relevant to the offender population, including substance use, engagement in violent behavior, offending and incarceration, among others. Ten ACEs have been identified in the literature: emotional abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, violent treatment towards mother, household mental illness, household substance use, parental separation or divorce, and having an incarcerated household member (CDC, 2019).

Research suggests that offenders were exposed to ACEs at a much higher rate than the general population. Knowledge of offenders' exposure to ACE factors can aid in the development and implementation of case management strategies and interventions that are responsive to the needs of the offender population.

What we did

This study aimed to identify the prevalence of ACEs in the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) administrative data and to explore their association with both institutional and community outcomes. The sample included a release cohort of offenders released onto community supervision between September 28, 2009 to October 9, 2015 with at least 30 days of supervision. This resulted in a final sample of 22,096 men and 1,264 women.

In total, four ACE categories were identified through administrative data, including: (1) abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional) or neglect (emotional or physical); (2) witness to intimate partner violence in childhood or mother treated violently; (3) substance misuse in household; and (4) incarcerated household member.

What we found

The findings of this study suggest that the majority of offenders (80% men; 86% women) experienced at least one ACE. The most common ACE among men and Indigenous women was the childhood experience of substance misuse in the household.

The most common ACE among Non-Indigenous women was abuse or neglect in childhood. Notably, Indigenous men and women had the highest rates of exposure to ACEs across all categories, and were more likely to have exposure to multiple ACEs than other ethnocultural groups.

Increased exposure to ACEs was associated with a number of negative institutional and community outcomes, such as substance use, institutional charges, institutional incidents (both as an instigator/associate or victim), self-injurious behaviour, correctional program dropout, and revocations with and without an offence. In some cases, the association between institutional and community outcomes varied across gender and ethnocultural group.

What it means

This research shows that ACEs are prevalent in the federal offender population, and these experiences are associated with a number of negative outcomes. CSC has the ability to provide interventions to offenders to mitigate further adverse outcomes associated with ACE, such as utilizing trauma-informed interventions. Although CSC already utilizes trauma-informed interventions, a broader trauma-informed correctional program model may be beneficial to the majority of offenders.

For more information

Sheahan, C., & Wardrop, K. (2022). The adverse childhood experiences of Canadian federal offenders: Available information and correctional outcomes (Research Report R-445). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Indigenous Gender Diverse Offenders

Almost half of all gender diverse offenders were Indigenous; 59% of these offenders were Trans-Women, while over one-quarter (26%) were Trans-Men, and the remainder (15%) were in other gender diversity groups.

Why we did this study

A recent research study¹ that examined the profile and behaviour of federal gender diverse offenders indicated that almost half (47%) were Indigenous. Therefore, an examination of the characteristics and behaviour of Indigenous gender diverse offenders was undertaken.

What we did

Forty-six Indigenous gender diverse offenders during incarceration between December 27, 2017 and March 13, 2020 were identified. Over three-quarters (76%, n = 35) were First Nations while 24% were Métis (n = 11). Data extracted and coded from the Offender Management System (OMS) included demographic, sentence, and offence information, institutional behaviour, and post-release outcomes, as well as operational accommodation preferences and abuse and trauma histories.

What we found

Over half (59%) of the Indigenous offenders in the study were trans-women, followed by trans-men (26%) and the “other” group² (15%). On average, Indigenous gender diverse offenders were 37 years of age during the study period and almost three-quarters (74%) were single. Almost all offenders in the study were in the Ontario (24%), Prairies (30%), or Pacific (33%) regions. Half of the offenders in the study were housed at women’s facilities.

Forty-two percent of Indigenous gender diverse offenders were serving a second or subsequent sentence, with 87% having committed violent offences – over one-quarter (28%) had a history of sexual offending.³ Comparable proportions were serving sentences of six years or less or indeterminate sentences (41% each).

Indigenous gender diverse offenders were identified as high static risk (73%) and dynamic need (91%), with 69% having a low reintegration potential. History of trauma (83%), childhood abuse (78%), and abuse during adulthood (24%) was prevalent. Personal/emotional orientation, substance abuse, and attitudes were the three main criminogenic need areas for offenders in this study.

Individualized protocols (IPs) were available for 80% of Indigenous gender diverse offenders. Among offenders who indicated a preference related to staff interaction,⁴ offenders were more likely to identify preferences for female staff. Over half (54%) of offenders indicated spiritual activity participation; of these, 76% requested accommodations.

Two-thirds (65%) of the study group had a guilty disciplinary charge while 78% had committed an institutional incident after the identification of their gender diversity. Assault related incidents were most common, regardless of gender diversity subgroup. Almost all (92%) of the study group completed correctional programs, with 84% completing moderate intensity programming. Seventy-two percent of the study group participated in educational interventions while almost half (48%) participated in institutional employment. One-quarter (24%) were released during the study period; almost half (46%) had a release suspension.

What it means

Indigenous gender diverse offenders comprised almost half of all offenders included in the study. Characteristics and behaviour of Indigenous offenders were similar to those in the study population. Future research could explore the intersectionality between Indigenous identity and gender diversity.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Prepared by: Shanna Farrell MacDonald, Angela Smeth, Sarah Cram, Sophia Garrel, & Dena Derkzen

¹Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., Garrel, S. & Derkzen, D. Examination of gender diverse offenders (R-442). Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.

²Gender fluid, gender non-conforming/non-binary, intersex, two-spirited, or unspecified.

³Eighty-five percent of those who had a sex offence history were Trans-women.

⁴Staff interactions include mental health monitoring, security search interactions (e.g., strip or frisk searches), medical escorts, or staff response to nudity.

Sexual Coercion and Violence in Federal Custody: 2021-2022

Reported SCV incidents most often occurred in men's medium security settings and involved a single instigator.

What we did

Incidents of Sexual Coercion and Violence (SCV) are a pressing issue within correctional environments. To examine reported SCV incidents in Canadian federal custody in 2021-2022, an incident-based search of CSC's computerized database, the Offender Management System (OMS), was conducted. There was a total of 63 incidents identified, including offender-on-offender, offender-on-staff, and staff-on-offender cases. Thematic analysis was undertaken of offender-on-offender SCV incidents (n = 39). Details were drawn from incident reports, Warden Situation Reports, and case documents in OMS. Information was coded pertaining to the nature of the assaultive incidents, the circumstances surrounding the SCV, the profile of victims and instigators, and strategies of incident management.

As SCV incidents are generally underreported, official incident numbers may not be reflective of actual prevalence. In addition, analysis was limited by discrepancies in incident categorization and inconsistencies in the nature of documented information. Due to delays in reporting, not all incidents occurred within this timeframe, and current numbers are subject to change.

What we have found

In 2021-2022, 39 offender-on-offender SCV incidents were reported in federal custody. Incidents varied in terms of the circumstances surrounding and nature of assaultive actions; most commonly, however, incidents involved some type of unwanted touching. In some cases, the SCV was not an isolated incident, but rather, occurred over an extended period of time (e.g., in the context of an intimate relationship or ongoing contentious dynamic).

Reported SCV incidents most often occurred in men's medium security institutions and involved a single instigator. SCV incidents were reported in all regions, but were most common in the Prairie region (i.e., where 39% of such incidents were reported). Most incidents involved a single instigator (though in seven cases, more than one instigator was identified) and all involved a single victim. In eight cases, it was noted that the allegation of SCV was unfounded or had inconclusive reliability.

Victims did not always report incidents immediately following the incident; in some cases, weeks or months had passed. Several victims did not wish to involve police, although police were contacted in all cases. At women's institutions in particular, some victims reported fear of backlash or forms of retaliation in response to SCV disclosure.

Victims and instigators in SCV incidents were most often men, with smaller subgroups of women and gender diverse persons. Indigenous representation was pronounced among instigators (i.e., 69%) and victims (57%). Instigators often had histories of sexual aggression against other inmates, while victims often demonstrated previous vulnerability in the inmate population. Histories of sexual victimization and/or offending were relatively common among both instigators and victims.

What it means

The institutional social environment shapes the context of SCV, both in terms of the nature of incidents and practices of reporting. SCV incidents appear to be tied to underlying dynamics marked by vulnerability and aggression within the inmate population. Ongoing coercive relationships, combined with victim hesitancy in disclosure, can mean that the duration and scope of victimization are broadened. Prior histories of sexual victimization and/or offending also appear to shape SCV within custodial settings.

Given the challenges presented by gaps in available information and the underreporting of incidents, further research is needed in correctional settings to discern the larger scope of SCV, as well as risk factors and impediments to reporting.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Abigail Curlew and Laura McKendy

Basic Needs for Safe Reintegration: Financial and Housing Stability

Federal offenders, especially Indigenous women, frequently self-report having experienced monetary and housing needs.

Why we are doing this study

At time of admission to Correctional Service Canada (CSC), a substantial number of offenders present histories of financial instability and unstable accommodation in the community. Understanding the basic needs experienced by federal offenders can help in formulating effective approaches for assisting them with a successful return to the community.

What we did

CSC routinely collects information on offenders under federal jurisdiction (those serving sentences of two years or longer). Data were extracted from the Offender Management System in relation to financial instability (no bank account, no credit) or unstable accommodation (frequent address changes), as reported in the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis – Revised component of the Offender Intake Assessment (OIA) process. These year-end 2021 in-custody and 2020-21 admission figures reflect the prevalence of these characteristics.

What we have found

In Table 1, statistics show that the number and percentage in-custody and admitted who have experienced financial instability. Overall, women were more likely than men to have experienced monetary problems. Also noteworthy, Indigenous men and women in federal custody display higher percentages of financial instability than their Non-Indigenous counterparts do. The data indicate that the flow into federal corrections with this identified monetary need is continuing.

Table 1: Financial Instability (%)

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
Custody	2,407 / 3,163 (76.1%)	3,698 / 6,218 (59.5%)	5,756 / 9,381 (64.6%)
Men	2,228 / 2,946 (75.6%)	3,528 / 5,960 (59.2%)	5,756 / 8,906 (64.6%)
Women	179 / 217 (82.5%)	170 / 258 (65.9%)	349 / 475 (73.5%)
Admissions	699 / 936 (74.7%)	1,067 / 1,850 (57.7%)	1,766 / 2,786 (63.4%)
Men	616 / 839 (73.4%)	989 / 1,742 (56.8%)	1,605 / 2,581 (62.2%)
Women	83 / 97 (85.6%)	78 / 108 (72.2%)	161 / 205 (78.5%)

Table 2 shows that the number and percentage of federal men and women in-custody and upon admission who have experienced unstable accommodation. One striking observation is that women are much more likely than men in-custody to note issues with precarious accommodation. However, the relatively higher percentage of Indigenous women than Non-Indigenous women in federal custody who have experienced housing needs is profound. Again, the data indicate that there is a steady flow into federal corrections of women with this lived experience.

Table 2: Housing - Unstable Accommodation (%)

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Overall
Custody	1,759 / 3,157 (55.7%)	2,174 / 6,228 (34.9%)	3,933 / 9,385 (41.9%)
Men	1,607 / 2,938 (54.7%)	2,059 / 5,969 (34.5%)	3,666 / 8,907 (41.2%)
Women	152 / 219 (69.4%)	115 / 259 (44.4%)	267 / 478 (55.6%)
Admissions	495 / 940 (52.7%)	640 / 1,856 (34.5%)	1,135 / 2,796 (40.6%)
Men	427 / 841 (50.8%)	580 / 1,746 (33.2%)	1,007 / 2,587 (38.9%)
Women	68 / 99 (68.7%)	60 / 110 (54.6%)	128 / 209 (61.2%)

What it means

Noticeably, some important differences emerge in both the numbers and percentages of men and women offenders with respect to their lived experience prior to admission with financial instability and unstable accommodation. It is reasonable to anticipate that they will have these same issues upon release from custody and that this will impact their attempts at reintegration. The extent of these basic needs being faced by offenders in general, and particularly by Indigenous women is noteworthy. This result supports the provision of services to offenders in relation to budgetary management and assistance with obtaining suitable living arrangements.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Leslie-Anne Keown

Indigenous Intervention Centres: Profile of Participants

Eligible Indigenous offenders higher in risk and need are less likely to participate in IICs, limiting their full potential.

Why we are doing this study

In an effort to maximize Indigenous resources, Indigenous Intervention Centres (IICs) were designed to meet the needs of individual Indigenous offenders through an integrated and culturally responsive approach to case management. Located at all women's multi-level institutions¹ and a number of men's medium-security institutions across the country, IICs are characterized by a concentration of Indigenous resources including Elder support, specialized case management staff, and Pathways Initiatives. In collaboration with the Indigenous Initiatives Directorate, this study represents the first phase of research examining the impacts of IICs on the progress and outcomes of Indigenous offenders.

What we are doing

To examine the profile of offenders participating in IICs and compare to those that were not, data was extracted for all Indigenous offenders admitted between April 1, 2018 and March 15, 2020. In order to participate in IICs, offenders must meet certain eligibility criteria related to shorter sentence length, non-sexual offence types,² program eligibility (i.e., none or moderate program needs), and a willingness to work with an Elder/Spiritual Advisor and participate in the Indigenous continuum of care.

Of the 2,262 Indigenous men and 267 Indigenous women admitted during the study timeframe, 477 men and 172 women were identified as IIC participants.³ Representing the comparison group, a further 297 men and 32 women were eligible but did not participate for various reasons (e.g., not interested in pursuing the Indigenous continuum of care, not penitentiary placed at an IIC site).

What we have found so far

Compared to the control group, IIC participants were more likely to be admitted to an IIC site at admission. Geographical characteristics to note include that the majority of IIC participants were admitted in the Prairie region. Further, both men and women that were eligible for IICs in Ontario were less likely to choose to participate.

In terms of demographic characteristics, men who chose to participate in IICs were slightly older than those who did not. The women's sample of IIC participants had a greater proportion of First Nation peoples (relative to Métis and Inuit) compared to those not participating. Men who participated in IICs were less likely to be serving a sentence for a violent offence (Schedule 1 or homicide) and have a Security Threat Group (STG) affiliation. The IIC participants and non-participants were otherwise comparable in offence and sentence characteristics for both men and women.

Lastly, the criminogenic risk and needs profile was compared between groups. Men IIC participants were rated higher in engagement, accountability, and motivation. Non-participants were higher in both dynamic and static risk and lower in reintegration potential at intake than IIC participants. The differences in criminogenic risk and needs between groups did not reach statistical significance for women for the most part, likely due to smaller sample sizes. Of note, women that participated in IICs were less likely to have identified responsibility concerns.

What it means

IIC eligible non-participants were younger, higher in risk and need, and more likely to be affiliated with an STG. The large number of eligible offenders who did not participate in IICs suggest an area for improvement (e.g., motivational interviewing to engage eligible offenders in the Indigenous continuum of care, ensure placement at IIC sites where possible).

Ongoing research will examine the impact of IIC involvement on the institutional adjustment and behaviour of participants, while future research will address longer term impacts on release outcomes in the community.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#).

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Laura Hanby & Tara Beauchamp

¹All women's institutions have the IIC model, with the exception of Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge.

²Eligibility criteria was modified in January 2021 to include offenders requiring moderate sex offender programming.

³Of the admission cohort, 1,488 men and 63 women did not meet the eligibility criteria for participation.