

## CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

## Evolution of Correctional Programming in Canadian Federal Corrections

## Historical Background - Pre-2000

Since the mid-1970s, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has delivered both institution and community-based reintegration programs to federally sentenced offenders. A series of internal task forces (e.g., *Reduction of Substance Abuse-1990; Reintegration-1997, etc.*) and Office of the Auditor General of Canada reports (e.g., *Rehabilitation Programs for Offenders-1996; Reintegration of Offenders-1999*) had set the stage for the delivery of a core set of correctional programs such as Cognitive Living Skills, Anger and Emotions Management, Living without Violence, Offender Substance Abuse Program and Sex Offender Treatment at Regional Treatment/Psychiatric Centres throughout the 1990s (and future development).

In 1998, and prior to the turn of new millennium, CSC had been requested by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Heads of Corrections to develop a framework for a compendium on “what works” in offender programming. Subsequently, the Research Branch of CSC convened a group of international experts and undertook a comprehensive review of the literature on effective correctional programming and evaluation methods. Consequently, a two-volume five-part *Compendium 2000 on Effective Correctional Programming* was published<sup>1</sup> and made available via the CSC Website. *Volume 1* provided a comprehensive and critical appraisal of the empirical literature in the field of corrections and behaviour change as well as evaluation. *Volume 2* presented an overview of existing programs in Canadian correctional jurisdictions, gathering information on location, intensity/type, target groups, commencement date, theoretical orientation, program components, program targets, service delivery mode, and program facilitators. This massive research effort laid the evidence-based groundwork for moving forward with the next generation of national reintegration programs at CSC.

## 2000-2010

With the arrival of the new millennium, a set of nationally recognized correctional programs with descriptions (target population, program format, program modules, results, accreditation status, implementation status and program at a glance) had emerged across CSC<sup>2</sup> - Alternatives, Associates & Attitudes (AAA); Basic Healing Program (for Aboriginal offenders) ; Circles of Change Program (for Aboriginal women); **Violence Prevention Programs** - *Violence Prevention Program-High Intensity (VPP-HI); Violence Prevention Program-Moderate Intensity (VPP-MI); Violence Prevention Program-Maintenance; Women’s Violence Prevention Program (WVPP); New Spirit of a Warrior Program; In Search of Your Warrior Program (ISOYW); Family Violence Prevention Programs - *Treatment Primer (Roadways to Change), High Intensity Family Violence Prevention Program, Moderate Intensity Family Violence Prevention Program, National Family Violence Maintenance Program, High Intensity Aboriginal Family Violence Program; Substance Abuse Programs – *National Substance Abuse Program-High Intensity (NSAP-High), National Substance Abuse Program-Moderate Intensity (NSAP-Moderate), National Substance Abuse Program-Pre-Release Booster, National Substance Abuse Program-Maintenance, Women Offender Substance Abuse program, Aboriginal Offender Substance Abuse Program; Sex Offender Programs – *National Sex Offender Program – High Intensity (NaSOP-HI), National Sex Offender Program –Moderate Intensity (NaSOP-MI), National Sex Offender Program – Low Intensity (NaSOP-LI), Women’s Sex Offender program, Tupiq program (Inuit specific); Community-based Correctional Programs – *Community Maintenance program, Community Relapse Prevention/Maintenance Program for Women, Aboriginal Women’s Maintenance Program, Inuit Community Maintenance Program*. The Violence Prevention Programs were fully accredited by an international panel of experts in 2000, and re-accredited in 2005. HI-FVPP, MI-FVPP and Maintenance were fully accredited in 2001. The NSAP-High, -Moderate, Pre-Release Booster, and Maintenance programs were fully accredited in 2004. Both NaSOP-MI and -LI were accredited in 2002.****

In 2009, a major evaluation was conducted of CSC’s Violent Offender Programs; Family Violence Programs; Substance Abuse Interventions; Sex Offender Program; and Community Maintenance Programs.<sup>3</sup> While the findings reported here are summative in nature, “*federal offenders who participated in CSC correctional programs that targeted an identified treatment need exhibited treatment-related change and were more likely to be granted a discretionary release*”.



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Importantly, however, “for community outcomes, program participation was associated with reductions in readmissions, including technical revocations and re-offending (with a non-violent, a violent and/or a sex offence in either federal or provincial jurisdictions)”. Moreover, “the vast majority of correctional programs evaluated were cost effective as, on average, every dollar spent on programming resulted in a return ranging from 1 to 8 dollars.” The aforementioned return on investment reflects cost savings of fewer days of incarceration attributed to earlier release and extended stays in the community.

## 2010+

The latest generation of national recognized correctional programs, the **Integrated Correctional Program Model (ICPM)** is a comprehensive correctional program strategy that extends from the intake stage of the correctional process to the community. It provides consistent and systematic intervention from start to finish of an offender’s sentence. Individual needs are identified at intake and then those needs are targeted and addressed as the offender proceeds through their sentence, from reception, to institution, to the community.

ICPM has four streams: 1) **Multi-Target moderate or high intensity**; 2) **Indigenous – Multi-Target moderate or high intensity**; 3) **Sex Offender**; 4) **Indigenous – Sex Offender**. Each stream has its own version of a Primer, the Main Program and Maintenance. The multi-target nature of ICPM allows CSC to address the individual needs and risks of offenders, more holistically.

‘Primer’ programs are preparatory programs with the goals of: 1) assisting offenders to identify the factors that led to their involvement in criminal activity; 2) motivating offenders to see the benefits of participating in a correctional program; 3) teaching offenders basic self-management skills to cope with the institutional high risk situations they will face while awaiting entry into the correctional program (i.e., managing cravings, dealing with conflict, etc.). During the primer, offenders identify personal targets which will assist them in managing the risk factors that led to their involvement in crime.

The ‘Main’ program ICPM Multi-Target stream addresses substance misuse, crime for gain, general violence, and spousal / family violence. The ICPM Sex Offender stream addresses all of the aforementioned and sexual offences. ICPM Indigenous (Multi-Target and Sex Offender) stream offers culture-specific programming that addresses both the Indigenous offender’s criminogenic factors and issues related to Indigenous social history. All main program streams teach the same or similar types of skills (e.g., self-monitoring, problem solving, goal setting, emotion management, challenging cognitive distortions, social skills, etc.). Some program streams (Indigenous and sexual offending) teach additional program specific skills.

ICPM also includes an institutional and a community ‘Maintenance’ program, which provides offenders opportunities to gain, rehearse, and maintain skills throughout their sentences. Key activities include providing support and feedback as offenders apply self-management skills to monitor and cope with daily challenges.

The introduction and implementation of ICPM in 2010 across the Canadian federal corrections system represented a delivery shift from multi-program sequencing or stacking to four distinct program streams of varying intensity. ICPM includes high, moderate versions and the moderate intensity adapted program. The **High Intensity-Multi-Target Program** is for offenders with a high risk to reoffend. There are 87 group sessions and five individual sessions for a total of 92 sessions. Normally co-facilitated by two Correctional Program Officers (CPOs), it is delivered over a five month period. The **Moderate Intensity - Multi-Target Program** is for offenders with a moderate risk to reoffend. There are 46 group sessions and five individual sessions for a total of 51 sessions delivered by a single CPO, it is delivered over a three month period. The **Adapted Moderate Intensity - Multi-Target Program** is for offenders with a moderate risk to reoffend, but who have deficits in functioning which could include cognitive impairments, mental health problems, and/or learning disabilities. There are 62 group sessions and five individual sessions for a total of 67 sessions also delivered by a single CPO.



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In 2019, a CSC evaluation<sup>4</sup> found when compared with 784 eligible men ICPM nonparticipants, 1,608 men who completed ICPM were substantially less likely to have their conditional release revoked for any reason (41% vs. 23% or 44% less likely) or be revoked with an offense (6% vs. 3% or 50% less likely). Also, those offenders who completed the ICPM were more likely to be granted early release (Chadwick et al., 2019).

In 2021, another CSC evaluation<sup>5</sup> found that those who completed the ICPM-Community Maintenance Program (CMP) experienced significantly lower incidence of a revocation for any reason relative to both CMP completers and those with no participation in CMP. Specifically, CMP completers experienced a 91% decrease in the likelihood of a revocation for any reason compared to CMP non-completers. Similarly, CMP completers experienced an 86% decrease in the likelihood of a revocation for any reason compared to those with no exposure to CMP.

While ICPM and its various subcategories (e.g., hybrid, motivational modules) are directed to men, there is a suite of **Women Offender Correctional Programs (WOCP)** such as Women Offender Engagement, High-Intensity, Moderate-Intensity, Self-Management, an Indigenous women stream and a Women's Sex Offender Program (WSOP). As well, there is a set of **Inuit-specific Offender Programs** with primers, varying intensity levels (moderate or high), for sex offenders and institutional/community maintenance.

## Epilogue

Faced with the correctional challenges of the 2020s, it now appears that in 2023 newly streamlined assessment/referral techniques (i.e., Criminal Risk Index for program intensity, etc.) when combined with the delivery of ICPM, Women Offender and Inuit-specific programming has considerably improved the way CSC effectively manages both the highly individualized needs and multifactorial risks of adjudicated offenders.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Motiuk, L. & Serin, R. (2001). *Compendium 2000 on Effective Correctional Programming*. Correctional Service Canada: Ottawa.

<sup>2</sup> Bettman, M. (2009). *Correctional Program Descriptions. Reintegration Programs Division, Correctional Operation Programs Sector*. Correctional Service Canada: Ottawa.

<sup>3</sup> Nafekh, M. et al. (2009). *Evaluation Report: Correctional Service Canada's Correctional Programs*. Evaluation Branch, Performance Assurance Sector. Correctional Service Canada: Ottawa.

<sup>4</sup> Chadwick, N. et al. (2019). *Evaluation of Correctional Reintegration Programs. Correctional Service Canada's Correctional Programs*. Evaluation Division, Policy Sector. Correctional Service Canada: Ottawa.

<sup>5</sup> Chadwick, N. et al. (2021). *Supplementary Evaluation of the ICPM: Community Program. Correctional Service Canada's Correctional Programs*. Evaluation Division, Policy Sector. Correctional Service Canada: Ottawa.

## For more information

For questions and/or more information, please email [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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