

**California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation  
Division of Adult Parole Operations**

**Review of the June 30, 2006 Annual Report of the  
Mental Health Services Continuum Program**

**PREFACE:**

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDRC), Division of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO), has contracted with the University of California, Los Angeles' (UCLA) to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the DAPO's Mental Health Services Continuum Program (MHSCP). The contract has recently completed its final of a four year evaluation of the MHSCP and, per contractual scope of work requirements, has submitted its report findings in the form of an annual report, due on or before June 30 of each fiscal year.

**GENERAL SUMMARY:**

The UCLA evaluation, as noted in previous reports, identified both positive and negative factors in its final report. The following factors have been identified as the key points of interest in the report and are presented here for DAPO Administrative consideration:

*Positive factors:* The positive factors listed in the UCLA evaluation are broken down into three main categories – Impact Evaluation; i.e., Pre-Release Assessments and Overall Parole Outpatient Clinic (POC) attendance, Outcome Evaluation; i.e., Time in Program measures and Cost Analysis. They are as follows:

**Impact Evaluation:**

- Pre-Release Assessments: For parolees who had appeared on the Offender Information Services (OIS) list at least 45 days prior to release, assessment rates increased from 55.2% from July 1, 2001 to December 31, 2001 to 65.9% for those released January 1, 2004 to June 30, 2004. However, the percentage of eligible inmates who were assessed prior to release has declined since that time.
- POC Attendance: Inmates who were assessed prior to release were significantly more likely to attend a POC at least once than those who did not receive a pre-release assessment (63.8% versus 42.8%, respectively).
- The likelihood of being admitted to a POC did not differ between EOP (55.4%) and CCCMS (54.9%) parolees.
- According to our analysis of EOP parolees' supervision records, the decision to reduce the size of EOP caseloads to 40:1 (effective July 1, 2001) appears to have had a positive impact on the immediacy and frequency of parole agent contacts.
- Controlling for the effects of other background variables, receiving a pre-release assessment by a TCMP-MI social worker was associated with more than a two-fold increase in the odds of attending a POC at least once following release from prison.

**Outcome Evaluation:**

- Receiving a pre-release assessment by a Transitional Case Management Program social worker was associated with a 13 percent reduction in the likelihood of being returned to custody within 12 months; having one or more POC contacts following release was associated with a 34 percent reduction in recidivism risk.
- The UCLA analysis revealed a strong relationship between the number of POC sessions attended and recidivism risk. Specifically, the greater number of POC contacts a Correctional Clinical Case Management System (CCCMS)/Enhanced Outpatient Program (EOP) parolee has, the less likely he or she is to be returned to prison. For example, 36.2 percent of parolees with 9 or more POC contacts were returned to custody within 12 months, compared to 65.8 percent of parolees with no POC contacts.
- EOP parolees who had received a pre-release assessment had an average of 10.5 additional days on parole and EOP parolees who had one or more POC contacts had an additional 58.7 days on parole than did EOP parolees with no POC contact.
- CCCMS parolees who had received a pre-release assessment had an average of 8.9 additional days on parole and CCCMS parolees who had one or more POC contacts had an additional 74.3 days on parole than did CCCMS parolees with no POC contact.

**Cost Analysis:**

- The cost savings associated with POC attendance: The UCLA analysis calculated that having one or more POC contacts following release was associated with an annual savings of \$4,890 per EOP parolee and \$2,876 for each CCCMS parolee, relative to those with no POC contact.

One final area worth noting in regard to Data Quality and use of the Parole Automated Tracking System (PATS) is the following:

- The rates of inconsistencies in the PATS database have dropped substantially since 2001. During calendar year 2003, none of the eight items listed in the UCLA data quality list had an error rate exceeding 3 percent.

*Negative Factors:* The primary negative factors identified by the UCLA evaluation are associated with appropriately identifying and adding CCCMS/EOP inmates to the OIS List used by the program and doing so in an efficient, timely manner. For instance:

- Overall 57 percent (which is the total number of offenders both identified and not identified on the OIS list) in the study sample had received a face to face assessment prior to release, and the percentage of inmates who are assessed has increased since tracking this data began in July of 2001; however;
- Only 19.2 percent (an increase above the 14.3 percent cited in the previous year study) of the current study sampling of the MHSCP eligible inmates appeared on the OIS list within 45 days of release, which led to;

- TCMP social workers inability to conduct face-to-face assessments prior to the inmates release – only 23.4 percent (an increase above the 17.8 percent in the previous year study) of those inmates appearing on the OIS list with less than 45 days were actually seen face-to-face, however,
- When inmates appear on the OIS list with at least 45 days before their actual release date, they are approximately 2.4 times more likely to be assessed (58.7 percent).

## **CONCLUSION:**

The overall effectiveness of the MHSCP depends on the ability of CDCR to further increase the percentage of eligible inmates who appear on the OIS list prior to being released on parole.

Among eligible offenders who were identified on the OIS list prior to release, the TCMP process continues to show promising results, both with regard to increasing the likelihood of attending POC upon release as well as reducing the likelihood of being returned to custody. Specifically, the study found that receiving a pre-release assessment by a TCMP-MI social worker doubled the odds that a parolee would attend POC at least once following release from prison. In turn, parolees who attended POC following release from prison showed a 34% reduction in the odds of being returned to prison within 12 months, relative to parolees who did not attend POC. Similar trends were found when predicting how long parolees remained out of prison.

## **NEXT YEAR EXPECTATIONS:**

The UCLA evaluation has been extended for 2 additional years. In an attempt to further reduce recidivism among mentally ill offenders, CDCR has implemented increased frequency of POC clinical service. The UCLA study will focus on the impact, outcome and cost analysis of the increased POC services.