

# **A Comprehensive and Ongoing Approach to Offender Assessment and Case Management**

**Reentry in the State of Connecticut:**

**Partners in Progress**

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# **Offender Assessment and Case Management: Making Reentry Work**

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## **National and Statewide Perspectives**

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## **Enormous Change and Progress in the Field...**

- Clear goals around recidivism reduction
- Understanding of the importance of collaboration
- Principles of evidence-based practice
- Programs guided by research evidence
- Continuous, seamless process of planning and managing
- Bringing non-correctional partners to the table
- National initiatives of various kinds

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## **The Challenge!**



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## **Many Ways...**

- State level policy and implementation teams
- New assessment protocols
- Refocusing programming within institutions
- New partnerships at the county level
- New program resources

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## **Many Ways...**

One of them is to.....

**Reshape how we  
supervise and manage  
at the  
CASE LEVEL**

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## **In the Past (Nationally), These Efforts...**

- Have focused more on monitoring that engaging the offender...
- Have not looked to the evidence to guide practice...
- Have happened in “silos”...
- Have not been well-supported with the necessary interventions, resources, skills needed.

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## **Assessments in the Past...**

- Single points in time, unrelated
- Geared to targeting custody/control/supervision
- Largely static, unchanging factors
- “Put in the file”

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## **Now, the Field Understands the Importance of...**

- Periodic assessments shared across time and across boundaries
- Empirically-based, validated assessments of risk and need
- Dynamic factors
- Used to target BOTH security/custody/supervision AND programmatic interventions to reduce risk

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## **Case Management and Supervision**

- In the past, strategies focused on:
  - “levels”—how much attention?
  - Compliance with standard conditions
  - Compliance with special conditions
  - Identifying non-compliance
  - Returning offenders not in compliance to the court

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## **Now, We Are Seeing...**

- Not just how much attention, but what kind?
- Focus upon specific, assessed criminogenic need
- Attention to equipping the offender to be successful
- Using the lessons of evidence-based practice to shape our responses
- Using conditions to target risk/needs and be part of a case plan

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## **Correctional Staff**

- Working in collaboration with other case management team members
- Modeling and reinforcement of pro-social behavior as a way to encourage change
- Using “effective use of authority—firm but fair”
- Receiving skill-based training

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## **The Offender**

- Past approaches
  - Directed to comply with conditions
  - Object of surveillance
- Now...
  - Offenders as active participants in risk reduction efforts
  - Internal motivation is key
  - Engaged in “self-assessment”
  - Engaged with correctional staff in a “process of change”

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## **New Approach Integrates...**

Community Safety	AND Offender Success
Assessment	AND Interventions
Criminal Justice	AND Community Stakeholders
Supervision/Control	AND Support for Change
PO/Case Manager	AND Others on Team
System Team Members	AND Offender
Formal Programs	AND Informal Support

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## **WHY?**

### **Community Safety and Crime Prevention.**

It seeks this goal through enhancing the ability of offenders to successfully complete supervision without re-offending.

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## **Core Principles of New Approaches**

- *Evidence-based practice*
- *Single plan targeted by risk and criminogenic needs*
- *Engages and enhances motivation of the offender*
- *Multi-disciplinary, collaborative, supervision and case management teams*
  - Offender
  - Corrections staff
  - Community partners/service providers
  - Informal networks of support

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## **What So We Do?**

- Assess the offender's risk, needs, strengths, environment periodically and share
- Engage the offender and enhance motivation
- Model and reinforce pro-social behavior
- Develop and implement a case management plan
- Provide programmatic interventions to address highest areas of risk and criminogenic need
- Review progress periodically

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## **One Size Doesn't Fit All**

- Target by risk and need
- Do less with low risk offenders
- Do more with mid-to high risk offenders
- Focus on needs that are driving the risk
- Pay attention to learning styles of offenders
- Do “enough”—dosage

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## **Do It Together—Collaborate!**

- Phase I: Institutional Phase
- Phase II: Pre-Release/  
Release Phase
- Phase III: Community

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## **Required Supports and Tools**

- Assessment protocols
- Case plan format(s)
- Interagency agreements/partnerships that provide access to case team partners and resources
- Clear position descriptions
- Performance appraisal system
- Policies and procedures
- Access to interventions
- Skill sets—interpersonal communication, assessment and case planning, motivational interviewing
- Case management tools that enable collaboration at the case level across traditional boundaries

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## **Looking Ahead...**

- We are in a time of great change...building on our experience and emerging new knowledge
- Opportunities for successful reentry and community safety are greater than ever before
  - Tools, knowledge, and consensus
- It is a “work in progress” nationally
- Connecticut has taken key steps in moving in this direction...

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