

# annual REPORT

October 1, 2013

## Background

This year marks the conclusion of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative's first strategic plan for reducing recidivism. This report looks back at the progress made over those three years.

It also provides a look ahead by summarizing the Jail Collaborative's 2013-2016 strategic plan. This new plan was crafted in the shadow of significant reductions in funding (two large grants end this year). Fortunately, the Jail Collaborative has been able to retain a core set of programs that are making a difference for offenders, their families, and our community, thanks to the additional support from the Department of Human Services, the Jail Oversight Board, and local foundations, as well as streamlining of some services.

The quantitative evidence of the impact of these programs will be available at the end of 2014, when the U.S. Department of Justice releases the study it has commissioned. But interviews and focus groups with clients and families have helped the Jail Collaborative understand that its Reentry Program services, along with the Discharge and Release Center, the information and referral line, and the addition of family visits and family phone calls, are helping individuals leave the jail with housing, employment, and better connections to family.

The Jail Collaborative will continue the Reentry Program in the years ahead, with changes in the approach it uses—changes based upon the preliminary results of an Urban Institute process evaluation and their review of effective service models, as well as research by Allegheny County. The 2013-2016 strategic plan describes this approach, which involves teaming probation officers with service coordinators in the jail and in the community and making family support a responsibility of those service coordinators; reducing the length of time that clients will be in the program, post-release (to allow the staff to provide greater assistance in the months just prior to release and after release); and building the capacity of Adult Probation’s Day Reporting Centers so that, to an even greater extent, they serve as a one-stop-shop for services that ex-offenders need to move forward in their lives.

“ I was able to stop beating myself up, start listening to the people who wanted to help me, and to start doing some work in order to get better. ”

- Reentry Program client

## RESULTS OF THE FIRST STRATEGIC PLAN

The Jail Collaborative's 2010-2013 plan had three strategies for reducing recidivism: build a Reentry Program; improve systems, and develop alternatives to incarceration. The chart that follows outlines the elements of that plan and the results of the 2010-2013 period:

<b>TABLE 1: COLLABORATIVE PLANS VS. RESULTS</b>	
<i>What the Strategic Plan said</i>	<i>What the Collaborative did</i>
<p><b>Reentry Program</b></p> <p>Build a program to reintegrate at least 200 offenders into society each year—beginning in jail and continuing post-release</p>	<p>The Jail Collaborative launched the Reentry Program in the fall of 2010 and this program has assisted over 200 men and women per year in preparing for release and making the transition to the community.</p> <p>In 2011, Adult Probation received a federal grant that allowed it to designate “Reentry Probation Officers” who would come into the jail to plan for releases, beginning several months in advance of the release date. This has allowed the Jail Collaborative to serve an additional 375 individuals per year.</p> <p>See reporter Bill Moushey’s profiles: <a href="#">Stories of Transition: Men and Women in the Jail Collaborative’s Reentry Program</a></p>
<p>Assess inmates in the Reentry Program for risk and need, using a standardized instrument</p>	<p>The Jail Collaborative now uses both the LSI-R and the Montgomery County Assessment to assess risk and need. As part of a federal Justice Reinvestment project, the County and Courts are validating a new “common assessment tool” that will reduce the number of duplicate assessments—saving money and increasing collaboration among County and Court agencies.</p>

<p>Prepare a service plan with each Reentry Program client</p>	<p>The Reentry Program staff now develop a service plan with each client in the jail. This plan guides enrollments in classes in the jail and referrals to services, post-release. Clients and staff, including Reentry Probation Officers, update this plan prior to release.</p>
<p>Design and implement a Reentry Pod (housing unit) in the jail, for clients in the program</p>	<p>The Jail designed and opened a Reentry Pod, providing the opportunity for many of the clients in the Reentry Program to live in a more structured environment, support one another in their classes and recovery, and participate in additional programming on the Pod.</p>
<p>Deliver education, treatment, and other evidence-based services to Reentry Program clients</p>	<p>The Jail Collaborative examined research that showed which programs reduced criminal behaviors and recidivism and then pooled over \$1 million per year in federal, state, county, and foundation funding to invest in these programs. (See Table 2, which lists these services and providers.) These programs and services have more than doubled the number of inmates and ex-offenders receiving services.</p>
<p>Build a Reentry Center to house these services</p>	<p>The Jail designed and built a 6,000 sq. ft. center to accommodate the expanded employment, education, and treatment programs. This Reentry Center is on Level One of the jail—across from educational classes and down the hall from the Reentry Pod, which has made movement among them more straightforward for the Jail’s correctional officers.</p>

<p>Develop opportunities for inmates to connect and strengthen relationships with their families</p>	<p>Men and women in the Reentry Program can enroll in parenting classes, and a team of family support specialists have worked with them and their children to strengthen positive connections, including through family activities in the community, and to support the children and caregivers in the family. (This service has been modified in the new plan.)</p> <p>The Jail now more fully addresses the needs of children and family: clients in parenting classes have weekly telephone calls with family; the number of monthly contact visits with family has more than doubled; and over 1,000 children and families have received family support.</p>
<p>Coordinate releases with probation</p>	<p>Adult Probation’s team of Reentry Probation Officers are coordinating releases with clients in the Reentry Program as well as other clients who have probation as part of their sentence. (This service has been modified in the new plan.)</p>
<p>Before release, coordinate the services and supports needed for successful reentry</p>	<p>Reentry Program staff (either service coordinators or Reentry Probation Officers) facilitate connections with family and help to arrange for services, according to the service plan.</p>
<p>At release and in the months thereafter, provide service coordination and support</p>	<p>Reentry Program service coordinators provide support and connections to needed services—intensively, during the first weeks after release. (This service has been modified in the new plan.)</p>

**Systems Change**

Change the rules and processes that lead to unpredictable release times

Courts and Jail have improved the process of discharge and release from the jail. Unlike three years ago, the majority of people leaving the jail are released before 8 p.m., with the chance to make a free call to notify family, and a bus ticket and clothing, when needed.

See Bruce Barron's report on the Discharge Center: I Hope I See You Somewhere Else: Allegheny County Jail's Discharge Center Helps Ex-Offenders Leave on the Right Foot

Set standards for providers who are serving clients in the jail and monitor the quality of their services

The Jail Collaborative designed a new computer system that providers are using to make referrals and document client participation and outcomes. This "Jail Collaborative Application," which was funded by state, federal, and foundation grants and led by DHS, won a Digital Government Achievement Award from the Center for Digital Government, a research and advisory institute that recognizes best practices in local and state government.

Allegheny County DHS also provides program monitoring of all Jail Collaborative programs, visiting classes, gathering feedback and making recommendations.

Change the approaches and policies about family involvement and visits

The Jail has changed two key policies: 1) The Jail now counts the children coming into the jail for visits; and 2) It has initiated the "Family Visit," which take place in several one-hour time periods one Saturday each month.

<p>Improve the responsiveness of the jail to calls during non-business hours</p>	<p>People who call the jail after 3 p.m. and on weekends now will talk with a trained information and referral specialist. Over the course of the past three years, these specialists answered more than 60,000 calls that would likely not have been picked up at all. And more than just “answering the phone,” the information and referral specialist gives people guidance on where to get assistance.</p>
<p>Change the booking and arraignment procedures to allow calls to notify family</p>	<p>Not accomplished. While the Jail Collaborative worked to modify these procedures, physical constraints in the area of the jail where booking and arraignment take place made it impossible to do so.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives</b> Develop alternatives to incarceration</p>	<p>The Jail Collaborative designed a new Request for Proposals for therapeutic alternatives to incarceration for probation violators and sentenced men and women. The jail selected service providers that would provide safe and secure housing with a structured living environment and visits with family as well as work release and job placement, substance abuse treatment and aftercare; and support and reentry planning for successful transition to life in the community.</p> <p>Through a federal Justice Reinvestment initiative, the Courts and County also have expanded the diversion to treatment for individuals with substance use disorders. This initiative, which is being piloted, promises to save money from reductions in jail bed days and court costs.</p>

In addition, the Jail Collaborative has begun to gain recognition:

- U.S. Attorney General General Eric Holder cited the Jail Collaborative in his NaCO speech, March 2013
- Pittsburgh Quarterly article, March 2013
- Series about Jail Collaborative's Reentry Program by WESA radio (90.5), February 2013
- Best Practices, Reentry Council, Council of State Governments
- Post-Gazette: Allegheny County Jail Improves Prison Release Measures
- City Paper, 2012

The sole goal of this three-year plan was to reduce recidivism. The county's review of the rate of returns to jail by participants in the Jail Collaborative's Reentry Program before and after participation in the program shows that recidivism has dropped. But the definitive answer—the results of a randomized control study—will not be available until the end of 2014, when the research firm, MDRC, publishes the results of its national study. This research, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, includes several sites, including Allegheny County, that are funded by the federal Second Chance Act. The data from Allegheny County will be combined with those of several other sites to answer the question: Did the Justice Department's Second Chance Act programs for adult offenders reduce recidivism?

In the meantime, the Jail Collaborative has retained the nationally recognized research firm, the Urban Institute, to conduct a process evaluation—which has provided information important in developing the new strategic plan. Later this year, the Urban Institute report also will provide a comparison group analysis that will shed light on recidivism, in advance of the MDRC report.

## TABLE 2: JAIL COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM SERVICES

Number Served per year (Average of 3 years)

RELEASE COORDINATION	AVG. PER YR
Information and referral (Mental Health America)	21,450
Discharge center (Allegheny County Jail) <sup>1</sup>	4,479

RE-ENTRY PROGRAM	AVG. PER YR
Employment & training (Urban League, Goodwill, Springboard Kitchens)	422
Education Classes (Allegheny Intermediate Unit)	462
Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (Mercy Behavioral Health)	227
Drug and Alcohol Education (Allegheny Correctional Health Services)	216
Aftercare (Mercy Behavioral Health)	167
Family Support (Family Services of Western PA, Amachi Pittsburgh, Lydia's Place, Justice Related Services)	204
Mentoring (Foundation of H.O.P.E.)	188
Harbor Housing (Goodwill)	24
Service Coordination (Re-entry Service Coordination Pre & Post release)	205
Reentry Probation Officers (Probation Service Coordination Pre & Post release)	377

NEW SERVICES	YEAR 3
Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Treatment (Renewal, Inc.)	61
Re-entry Pod (Allegheny County Jail)	210

<sup>1</sup>Discharge and Release data are not available Jan. 1 through Feb 14, 2013.

## PLAN FOR 2013-2016

# Background

To plan the next three years of Jail Collaborative strategies for reducing recidivism, the Operations Committee began to look at the services and programs that were most important to sustain, in light of the issues that continue to contribute to recidivism and the end of the federal Second Chance Act grants and a major foundation grant.

This committee, which reports to the leaders of the Jail, Courts, DHS, and the Health Department (the Jail Collaborative's Cabinet), also looked at new opportunities and ways of using existing resources more effectively. They reviewed the following information:

- *Programming on the Allegheny County Jail's Housing Units*, by Ty Gourley, Consultant
- *Behavioral Health Service Delivery Mapping report*, by Open Minds, LLC (Susie Chase)
- Monitoring reports (current contracted programs) collected by John Litz, DHS
- Rebooking Analysis, by Chengyuan Zhou and Emily Kulick (DHS)
- Analysis of data on participants who were rebooked in the Jail, including interviews by LaToya Warren and Carolina Almarante-Terrero (Jail)
- *I Hope I See You Somewhere Else: Allegheny County Jail's Discharge Center Helps Ex-Offenders Leave on the Right Foot* (DHS Publication)
- Focus group interviews, by the Urban Institute. The team also met with Urban Institute researchers to review national models and research.

Based upon this information, the committee recommended to the Cabinet a plan for addressing several issues while introducing efficiencies. The Cabinet approved this plan, which is outlined in the pages that follow.

“

**I didn't want my granddaughter to know it's jail,** so I told her, 'Mommy's sick, she's getting better.' I was very leery of taking her there, but the kid's room was great. She could sit and talk and play with her. It's a great program—I wish we could have visits more than once a month.

- Mother of Reentry Program client

”

# Issues

- **Housing:** Although a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has provided temporary apartments for homeless ex-offenders (through the Harbor Housing program, administered through Goodwill of Southwestern PA), there continues to be a need for housing for the first months after release for offenders, particularly those with serious mental health and/or substance use disorders.
- **Transportation:** Getting to appointments is crucial but often very difficult during the initial months after release, when ex-offenders are finding work. The Urban Institute's focus group interviews with Reentry Program clients showed that those who received bus passes found them to be significant in their getting to treatment, reporting to probation, and getting to interviews and work.
- **Employment:** National research shows that the best use of limited resources is to build job skills and experience, which argues for a shift of Jail Collaborative investments from job placement, alone to career-oriented training and career pathways.
- **Behavioral health:** The report by Open Minds found that clients who receive mental health or drug and alcohol treatment in the jail may not always connect to treatment or aftercare, outside of the jail. This points to the need for addressing issues of continuity of care.

## 2013-2016 STRATEGIES

1. New form of transitional housing
2. Reentry Program that integrates case management, family support, and probation
3. Programs on jail housing units
4. Behavioral health care in the jail connects with care post-release
5. Judges receive status of inmate participation in programs to inform decisions
6. Additional human services in the Day Reporting Centers

In addition to these issues, the Jail Collaborative has determined that the work of staff in the Reentry Program can be better integrated and focused on the months just before and after release.

# Plan

To address these issues, the Jail Collaborative has selected six strategies for the 2013-2016 period:

1. **Transitional Housing.** The Jail Collaborative will research and determine the feasibility of a plan for stepping-down from the county jail into secure housing where individuals continue in programming while looking for work and permanent housing, also providing them with greater flexibility in reconnecting with their families.

There may be no more sustainable way of ensuring that clients who leave the jail have the opportunity to establish employment, housing, and re-engage their families than through alternative housing. The current philosophy of alternative housing targets a particular subset of individuals in the jail, but it is not viewed as a point of reentry for most of the individuals who have served time. With the support of local leaders and advisors, the Collaborative will examine effective models of providing

alternative housing that meets these goals and will develop a set of options for County and Court leaders to review for potential implementation.

2. **Reentry Program.** The Collaborative will continue to reduce recidivism through a Reentry Program that prepares men, women, and their families for successful reintegration into society. Many of the elements of the current program will continue, but it will be through a streamlined approach that applies lessons learned and reduces the number of individuals who receive case management:

### TABLE 3: REENTRY PROGRAM MODEL

#### *Target group*

The Reentry Program's target group continues to be those individuals with a county sentence whose risk and needs assessment indicates that they are at med-high risk of reoffending, with probation as part of their sentence. The target number to be served is 400 people per year, with a subset of these individuals receiving service coordination.

#### *Service coordination*

In Jail: Two Jail Reentry Coordinators will assess, plan, and support Reentry Program participants, coordinating their in-jail services and enrollment in the Reentry Pod (with program service and treatment providers, probation, and jail correctional officers and captains) and the Community Service Coordinators at transition and post-release. The jail-based Reentry Coordinators will ensure that clients receive the services in their service plan while they are in jail. Clients in Reentry will continue to live on the Reentry Pod, receive programming on the pod, and take classes in the Reentry Center.

Post-release: Four Community Service Coordinators (CSCs) and five Reentry Probation Officers will coordinate clients' plans for release and transition to home, with the CSCs providing coordination and family support for up to 7 months post-release. These case managers will be experienced in family support and work with probation to ensure that clients receive the services they need.

#### *Services*

The evidence-based services for clients pre and post-release are:

- Drug and alcohol treatment, provided by behavioral health providers in the jail.
- Thinking for a Change. This will expand so that every client receives CBT in the jail and post-release at either a provider site or a Day Reporting Center.
- Employment services. These will focus increasingly on providing training/work experience, starting during incarceration. If resources become available, all clients will receive a career assessment and the opportunity for further education and job training.
- Educational services. These will continue to include pre-GED, GED, and pre-apprenticeship classes. If resources become available, an additional pre-apprenticeship class will be added.

- Family support. Although the grants that have supported this service are ending, the Jail Collaborative has committed to making most of this service a part of the jail and service coordination. Instead of having four staff working with families and four others working with inmates, the Community Service Coordinators will now work with both, but through a more restricted “caseload.” In addition to coordinating release and transition for inmates, these staff will be responsible for working to reconnect clients with their families, and arrange family phone calls and contact visits. Parenting and relationship classes will continue and serve as a prerequisite for participation in family visits (which will include family activities in the Activity Center in the Jail lobby).
- Transportation will be added as a new service. This will be available to Reentry Program clients through their CSCs and Reentry Probation Officers.

*Computer systems to support referrals, track outcomes*

Staff and providers will use the Jail Collaborative Application to enhance coordination and track progress and outcomes.

3. **Programming on the pods.** Despite the increase in reentry programming, most men and women still do not receive education, treatment, or other services—partly because there is no space on the housing pods. The Jail will modify an unused area of the pods that was originally designed to be for food service, changing these into small meeting rooms that can be used for NA/AA groups, treatment, and classes. With community support, the Jail also will build a library system within the Jail, something that does not now exist.

“

If I can do it, anyone can do it.

I’m a miracle.

I should’ve been dead.

”

- Reentry Program client

4. **Continuity of care.** The Jail Collaborative will address the issue of continuity of treatment by working with community providers and the treatment provider recently selected by the Jail (Corizon Health, Inc.), making necessary changes in processes and communication to ensure that clients leaving the Jail or alternative housing continue to receive their medications, have their relevant information relayed with their approval, and are enrolled in services post-release.

5. **Parole decisions.** To better support judges in their decisions about parole, the Jail Collaborative will develop reports to judges and probation on inmates' activities in programming and other behaviors in the jail and alternative housing, conveying this through the Jail Collaborative Application.

6. **Day Reporting Centers.** The Jail Collaborative will work to integrate human services with the other services of Adult Probation's DRCs. A recent report shows that Adult Probation's DRCs (with their reporting requirements and strong array of services) have reduced the number of new crimes committed, which makes them a key strategy for reducing recidivism. To sustain the DRC's services with the human services network managed by the Department of Human Services, the Jail Collaborative will develop and implement a plan for service integration.

## About the Jail Collaborative

The Jail Collaborative is a large and broad group of people, all working to improve public safety by building a better system of reentry for people coming out of the Allegheny County. Its members include judges and community leaders, service providers and volunteers, grantmakers and elected officials.

The Cabinet that leads the Jail Collaborative is composed of the Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive, Allegheny County; the President Judge, Court of Common Pleas; the Administrative Judge for Criminal Division, Court of Common Pleas; the Warden of the Allegheny County Jail; the Director of the Allegheny County Health Department; and the Director of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. The Collaborative also has a Civic Advisory Committee, led by the president of a local foundation, that provides guidance and support from leaders in academia, business, philanthropy, and government.

## Jail Collaborative Supporters

The Jail Collaborative's progress would not have been possible without the grants and support of:

- Allegheny County Department of Human Services
- Allegheny County Health Department
- Allegheny County Jail
- Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board
- Buhl Foundation
- FISA Foundation
- Grable Foundation
- Hillman Foundation
- Massey Charitable Trust
- McAuley Ministries
- McCune Foundation
- PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- Pittsburgh Child Guidance Foundation
- POISE Foundation
- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Staunton Farm Foundation
- The Heinz Endowments
- The Pittsburgh Foundation
- U.S. Department of Justice