Meeting: Community Corrections Advisory Group

Date: October 10, 2019

Meeting Location: Carla Madison Recreation Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 1st Level at 2401 E. Colfax Ave. Denver, CO 80206

Facilitator: Johanna Leal


Guest Speakers: Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Community Corrections
   Katie Ruske, Manager
   Valarie Schamper, Deputy Manager


- Recap of 9/26 meeting
  - Minutes approved.
- Proposed Community Input process (Advisory Group feedback and discussion)
  - Proposed Process Approved.
- Future State – Continuation of visionary work, small group work with report out.
  - Topic: Approach
    - Elements included from prior discussion:
      - Employment/training; tailored; humanity; safety, empathy, understanding, client centered; culture shift; reframe “Inmate Status”; driven by individual needs; people with lived experience as Community Corrections clients leading solutions
    - Why is this important?
      - Community of Safety
      - Doing what works
      - Values
      - RFP’s, Standards, PACE review, Culturally specific.
      - Thoughtful transition
- What specifically does this look like? Short Term
  - Short term is 6-12 Months
  - Consequences while working toward long term
  - Develop mechanism to get them to long term outcomes
  - Will potentially have to stop referrals to CoreCivic in November/Dec
  - Release agencies need to be part of the process.
- What specifically does this look like? Long Term
  - [blank-no notes on form]
- What would it require?
  - Zoning, acquiring property
  - Procurement changes
  - Reframing the problem

- Topic: Structure
  - Elements included from prior discussion:
    - Not privatized, location-geography, shared responsibility, cooperative leadership, consortium, connected to community neighborhoods; smaller sized facilities, permanent solutions, community accessibility
  - Why is this important?
    - Need places to put people now instead of prison
  - What specifically does this look like? Short Term
    - Purchase facilities from GEO-Civic
    - Partnerships with providers-ISp
    - Moving things/programs into prisons would get same things would get in comm corr
  - What specifically does this look like? Long Term
    - Independent auditor place for clients to voice concerns
    - Separate sentence from u transition
    - Program s specialized-“slice & dice needs”
      - Bootcamp
      - Lifetime offenders
      - Sex offender
      - Women
    - Decentralized structure
    - Not warehousing
    - Outside imbedded
    - Group home concept
  - What would it require?
    - Approval by DCJ
    - Need Zoning
    - Cost-funding
- Neighborhood organization resistance-changing mentality and culture
- Who does it
- Financial backing
- Permanent housing
- Discretionary

Topic: Process
- Elements included from prior discussion:
  - Rethink placement process; participant choice; not dependent on capacity based outcomes; fewer barriers; step toward advancement; graduated services
- Why is this important?
  - Seems arbitrary. State only requires a connection to the city. Only program or board can accept or deny.
  - Rethink placement process
  - Participant choice
  - Not dependent on capacity
  - Fewer barriers
  - Graduated services
  - Step toward advancement
- What specifically does this look like? Short Term
  - Understanding how Denver Decides
  - Is there a tool-Decision Grid
    - Grid includes more than risk factors
    - What options or continuum could be more useful
  - Understand why halfway houses aren’t working
  - Understanding if it intervenes at the right time
  - Shared housing AFTER comm corr
- What specifically does this look like? Long Term
  - More options!
  - “Houses” based on need types, therapeutic interests
  - Permanent affordable housing! Group housing
  - Articulated job pipelines to self sufficiency
  - Shifting from 6-9 months, maybe disconnecting from sentencing.
  - Disconnect services from provider/house
  - Frontload services and direct cash assist & case management
  - Peer mentoring like AA
- What would it require?
  - Assess profit model of rent collection
  - Reassess financing structure-debt shouldn’t follow resident or affect release
  - Zoning Changes
  - Assessment of interested providers and what they want to provide, needs barriers
Topic: Program Services

- Elements included from prior discussion:
  - More treatment providers; utilize broader community support; healing environment; mentorship; restorative programs; address therapeutic systems; more community involvement
- Why is this important?
  - Life Skills-Value
  - Healing Environment-Relationship
  - Training Staff not abuse of power
  - Working with community allows individuals to give back
- What specifically does this look like? Short Term
  - Task intensive
  - Meet more often
  - Evaluate the standards
  - Not enough time
  - Alternative healing-different treatment
  - Look at different facility
- What specifically does this look like? Long Term
  - Task intensive
- What would it require?
  - [blank-no notes on form]

Foundation for change- Colorado Division of Criminal Justice - Office of Community Corrections
- Presentations of slides (attached)
  - State Statutes and Funding: Role of the State in Community Corrections
    - C.R.S 17-27-101
      - Establishes community corrections and its purpose
      - Establishes referral agencies
      - Gives local unit of government authority to designate programs, boards, and networks to address local criminal justice needs.
      - Talks about the purpose of community corrections which is to provide a continuum of sentencing options
    - C.R.S 17-27-108 DCJ Responsibilities
      - Administer Funding
      - Establish State Standards for Program Performance
      - Audit with Compliance with Standards
      - Measure and Report Program Performance
      - Training and Technical Assistance
- See Slide 5 for diagram of funding streams and referral sources
- State Level Regulation: Community Corrections Standards and Audit and Evaluation Processes
  - Colorado Community Corrections Standards
94 standards in areas of
- Client Supervision
- Environment/Facility
- Communication/Coordination/Collaboration
- Client Development
- Organizational Management/Accountability
- Program Development
- Staff Development

Audit and Evaluation
- Core Security Audit
- PACE Evaluation
- Specialized Scope of Work Review

Future of Community Corrections: Performance Based Contracting
- Wildly Important Goal: Establish a statewide baseline and framework for implementing performance-based contracting in community corrections.
- What is Performance: Public Safety is central
  - General Definition of Overall Performance
    - Program Quality
      - Adherence to Principles of Effective Intervention
        - Direct control of the provider
    - Program Compliance
      - Core Security Functions
        - Direct control of the provider
    - Program Efficacy
      - Risk Informed Outcomes
        - Indirect control of provider and objective.

Q&A
- What supplements the funding of the general line items in the state budget?
  - Correctional Treatment Board monies which supports Intensive Residential Treatment (IRT) and provides additional monies to cover the cost of substance abuse treatment and some of the associated costs.
  - Some general fund money to support sex offender treatment.
- What is the total funding provided for Community Corrections
  - 83.4 Million Statewide
  - 18 Million for Denver
    - 600,000 for the cost of board functions, Denver Community Corrections Board Staff for the following functions: referral processing, program auditing and oversight, technical assistance that aligns with DCJ vision, RFPs. Remaining monies support other functions.
What will happen with the monies that were allocated to Williams Street Center?
- These monies will either be reallocated to other community corrections programs over which DCJ has oversight or will revert back to the state. Typically there is no money remaining once these allocations are complete, most recent year was overspent. Denver will not have access to that money.

Are there things other than statutes that community corrections facilities have to follow?
- Division of Criminal Justice Standards must be followed.
- Facilities may have other regulation and oversight from national, state and local governments which can include: compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Building Codes, Fire safety, structural, insurance, malpractice insurance, liability insurance, and/or licensing via the Office of Behavioral Health for treatment services.

Is it possible the standards will change or can be modified?
- DCJ is/will be reviewing data being collected via PACE and Core Security Audits. Data driven decision making will occur, which would be the catalyst for any changes to the standards. Local boards do not have the ability to change the standards.
- If an individual provider wants to be exempt from a particular standard or wishes a modification of a standard due to some reason, it is more likely that the program will need to utilize the existing waiver process (program submits to local board, if local board approves then it is sent to DCJ for review).

What is risk?
- When the term risk is used it is defined as the risk of a client to reoffend.

What is Performance Based Contracting?
- Performance Based Contracting is in development at the state level for community corrections programs. The goal is to identify which practices enhance outcomes (adherence to evidence-based practices & reduction in recidivism) by monetarily incenting those programs which are successful.

How much consistency is in outcome measures?
- Outcome measures between Community Corrections Programs in Colorado are very consistent. Data is gathered regarding the termination type from the facility, new filings at 1 year, and new filings at two year. This information is collected and processed by the Division of Criminal Justice Office of Community Corrections and Office of Research and Statistics.
- There is not a consistent definition of recidivism that is used across all stakeholders. DOC, Community Corrections, community providers and other stakeholders all use different metrics to which they apply the term recidivism.

What are the challenges of running smaller programs
- Fiscally harder to run facilities due to economies of scale relative to operational cost.
• May be more difficult to run a smaller program when meeting Standards based on staffing. There must be a 1:20 case manager to client ratio. There must be at least two milieu (security) staff on at all times.

- What is the timeline for the WIG?
  • Establishing a baseline. In this FY19-20 DCJ is set to complete a baseline Core Security Audit and PACE in each facility in the state.

- What occurs when a specialized program (IRT, Sex Offender Treatment) is lost?
  • These contracts are awarded through a RFP process. These run on 5 year cycles. We are in the middle of one of these cycles now. No new contracts are awarded mid-cycle, however a provider who is approved to run one of these programs could run a program at another site.

- Can providers of one service type (such as Therapeutic Community) run another service type (such as IRT).
  • This is not possible if they do not run another program.

- Additional Comments
  • There is interest in Performance Based contracting. Suggestion was made to use Denver as a test site for PBC.
  • Culture in facilities is important.
  • Need to remain focused on the work of the group in order to develop a plan to replace the capacity reductions in the system presented on a short time period.

• Time Reserved to review and discuss public input received. Note cards were collected from participants. Public comments were read.
  • Card 1
    ▪ How effective is Community Corrections re: reduction of re-offense compared to prison or parole
    ▪ How does CO Community Corrections compare to that of other states
    ▪ Why are we suggesting “fixing” this system before knowing the answers to theses Qs?
  • Card 2
    ▪ When will citizens be given visibility to negotiations with current providers for purchase of facilities/operations by mayor’s office.
  • Card 3
    ▪ Where is the independent oversight that shows comcor is taking in truly high-risk clients?
    ▪ Where is the oversight that defines tech-violations?
    ▪ (List of items on side 2)
      • Committee Structure
      • Signup & Time limits
      • Resident Access
      • Post online
      • Resident media
  • Card 4 (Above Waters Project)
    ▪ We advocate for an independent auditor/monitor in statewide comcor facilities, to process inmate grievances, concerns and oversights of facilities programs, etc.
Also can ensure policy recommendations

- Card 5
  - Who are the members of the local boards and how much do they make?
  - Who hires them?

- Card 6
  - What are the barriers to bringing community members who are currently or previously incarcerated by GeoGroup
  - Their voices are desperately needed at the table.