

SUPPORTING PRISONERS LIVING WITH A BLOOD BORNE VIRUS

Authors:

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Background/Approach:

MOSAIC Services is funded by SA Health and is unique with respect to Relationships Australia nationally. Reaching out to prisoners living with Hepatitis C was essential to ensure that this demographic had the same right to support services as those living in the community. MOSAIC commenced services at Adelaide Women's Prison (AWP) in April 2012 and followed this with commencement of services at Mobilong Prison in March 2016, to coincide with release of new Hepatitis C treatments. With South Australian Prison Health Service as its main collaborative partner, MOSAIC has developed strategies to reach out to all those, at these two prisons, living with a blood borne virus. (HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.)

Analysis/Argument:

Developing an outreach service within the prison does not happen without its challenges and setbacks. However, determination and goodwill of all parties involved led to collective problem solving to keep the service going and improve BBV related health outcomes for prisoners. This 6 year old work arrangement meant that Mosaic contributions are now formally acknowledged through the newly developed South Australian Prisoner Blood Borne Virus Prevention Action Plan 2017-2020.

Outcome/Results:

As a result of access to MOSAIC services, prisoners living with a blood borne virus can gain preventative, therapeutic support for a multitude of issues including health, grief / loss, trauma, domestic violence, alcohol and other drugs, stigma, discrimination and much more. So far 196 incarcerated prisoners of diverse background have better health outcomes.

Conclusions/Applications:

This presentation will articulate the challenges of developing a therapeutic service within the prison, the problem solving methodologies and the achievements gained so far.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

MOSAIC Services has no conflict of interest to declare