

Effective Substance Abuse Programming for Offenders: Outcomes from a Caribbean workshop



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Antecedents

Movements towards criminal justice reform in the Caribbean:

- Rising incarceration rates and limited prison capacity
- Increasing crimes related to drug use and drug involvement
- High recidivism of released offenders
- Alternative sentencing policies to address the health and social development needs of young and first-time offenders
- Recognizing the rehabilitative role that the correctional institution must assume

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CICAD Focus

CICAD activities addressing substance abuse among offenders:

- CICAD treatment trainings have made a point of including corrections and law enforcement officers
- Support for alternative sentencing in Belize
- MEM Assistance projects to establish treatment programs for offenders: St. Vincent & Grenadines, Peru, Guatemala
- Repeated requests for assistance in this area
- Canadian interest to respond to this need à Offer made by Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) at CICAD XXXV to sponsor workshop

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Participant Profile

- 35 High-level corrections/prison administrators, treatment specialists, and drug policy officials from 8 OAS member states and 2 U.K. Overseas Territories

Barbados	Jamaica
Belize	St. Kitts and Nevis
Bermuda (U.K.)	St. Lucia
Cayman Islands (U.K.)	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Grenada	Trinidad and Tobago

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Workshop sessions:

- Evidence-based offender treatment from CSC
- Caribbean research on substance abuse and offenders
- Existing program models in Canada, Barbados, St. Vincent, and other participating countries
- Mobilizing existing human and community resources to provide a continuum of services
- Group work to identify common challenges

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Regional Recommendations: Corrections Administrators

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1. Outdated National Legislation and Prison Policy

Update national framework to mandate:

- Substance abuse programs
- Public health services
- Mental health services
- Education and Job skills development
- Therapeutic jurisprudence and restorative justice philosophies
- Drug court, Alternative sentencing

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2. Dedicate Resources and Infrastructure

Set aside:

- Physical space - intake, residential units
- Human resources - designate personnel and train them

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3. Re-integration/ Aftercare

Strengthen support services to ex-inmates:

- Existing community providers are under-utilized
à improve referral process post-release
- Coordinate assistance with housing, employment, counseling
- Weakened by insufficient family involvement and support
à Community must accept the inmates
- Monitor progress of released offenders – Probation/Parole structure important

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Regional Recommendations: Treatment Providers

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1. Training

- Identify existing providers and relevant personnel
- Supporting officers → Train to administer substance abuse programs
- Bilateral exchange

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2. Public Awareness

Pervasive stigmatization:

Public education and sensitization campaigns needed to increase acceptance of ex-offenders and drug treatment clients into jobs, families, social networks.

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Regional Recommendations: Researchers

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1. Research as Policy Tool

- Establish evidence base of impact of incarceration on criminal careers of drug offenders
- Research evidence informs à Policy à Legislation à Programs
- Identify obstacles to alternative forms of disposing of drug offenders
- Post-release monitoring helps measure program effectiveness

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2. Standardized Regional Assessment

Needs Assessment of offender substance abuse trends:

- Is the first step in informing program design
- Must develop standard regional indicators for these local needs assessments
- Requires dialogue within the discipline, cross-agency, and with civil society

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Regional Recommendations: Drug Policy Officials

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1. Political Sensitization

Educate policymakers and relevant corrections and health ministries about the need for therapeutic services

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2. Formal Mechanism for Community & Gov't. Partnerships

National policies for collaboration between expert service providers & key ministries:

- Health
- Nat'l. Security
- Education
- NGOs/CBOs
- Businesses
- Social Dev.
- Housing
- Family Services
- Faith-based
- Private sector

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3. Balanced Supply-Demand Approach

Corrections policies should address both:

- drug supply within the facility
- substance abuse needs of offenders

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Results on the National Level

Each country team:

- Determined Priority Areas for improving offender services
- Elaborated Action Plan and Next steps

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Priority Action Areas:

COUNTRY	PRIORITY ACTION AREA
Barbados	Continuation of the Inmate Drug Rehabilitation and Counseling Programme, an outpatient program with initial attendance twice weekly for individual, group, family and case management sessions. Next steps: Establishment of an After-care Secretariat.
Belize	Use Cognitive-Behavioral model to make services available for the central correctional facility. Next step: Initial assessment through stakeholders meeting.
Bermuda	Develop a collaborative approach linking residential treatment services to the Westgate Maximum Security facility and the minimum-security farm facility.
Cayman Islands	Development of a Therapeutic Community at HMP Northward. Next steps: Develop criteria for comprehensive assessment; research instruments and delegate responsibility.
Grenada	Expand Carlton House treatment program to the prison to cover male and female offenders. Next steps: Stakeholders meeting to decide what steps can be taken towards screening/assessment to identify substance abusers among offenders, both adult and youth. Set up a committee to oversee the process of initiating the provision of treatment services to offenders.

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Priority Action Areas (cont'd):

COUNTRY	PRIORITY ACTION AREA
Jamaica	Target adult male offenders in for Minor Offences at the Tower Street Adult Correctional Centre (largest group of incarcerated drug abusers) for 6-month program. Next steps: To conduct a Situational Needs Analysis Survey by March 2005 and develop protocol and assessment tools.
St. Kitts and Nevis	Target clients at the Prisons and the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre, for outpatient and residential treatment using bio-psycho-social and cognitive-behavioral models. Next steps: Update mental health legislation and prison policies.
St. Lucia	Utilize Turning Point, Probation and Parole, social workers, and Community Development Officers to establish programs in Bordelais Correctional Facility, Upton Girls, and Boys training center. Next steps: Needs assessment and develop SA policy for correctional facilities.
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Continuation of project already piloted with male inmates ages 16-25 with daily educational, cognitive behavioral, and relapse prevention components on a 9-month cycle. Next steps: Review existing forms/assessment tools, with a view to ensure that they are being used effectively.
Trinidad and Tobago	Will focus on Maximum Security Prison (MSP) & Youth Training Centre (YTC), using (1) Cognitive behavioral, (2) the spiritual-based on healing the gap of the masculine soul, and (3) 12 step – Character first models. Next steps: Using needs assessment to validate the choice of programs in-house or outsourced.

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Next steps:

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CICAD/OAS

- Disseminate workshop findings in English and Spanish to counterparts in all CICAD member states
- Maintain resource website and e-mail group
- Receive Caribbean proposals for multilateral projects in 2005
- Monitor progress in Caribbean member states
- Assess need in other Latin American member states

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Workshop Participants

- Carry out first steps in Priority Action Plan
- Send update of country progress on Jan. 31 to be shared with other participants as periodic check-in
- Develop regional projects to assist country teams to achieve planned advances

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Proposed future activities:

NEEDS:	RECOMMENDATIONS:
Increased use of alternative sentencing and community-based treatment	Model legislation and corrections policies which is updated to included mandates regarding substance abuse, personal development, rehabilitation, reinsertion, and health services provision
Affordable high-level training for treatment and counseling providers	Specific manuals or guides for training in treatment techniques for offenders, or training courses.
Training materials and sensitization courses at the national level for corrections administration, prison staff, and Probation and Parole.	Develop training curriculum and manual to sensitize corrections officers, and implement training workshops in participating states. Higher-level policy document to sensitize corrections and security policymakers.
Greater information on offender drug use and treatment outcome research	Periodic follow-up to monitor progress of workshop participants Establish resource website and e-mail group.
Standardized intake assessment.	Create model intake process and forms for the Caribbean.
Standard needs assessment.	Develop offender-specific needs assessment research model and guide that could serve as a how-to for participating member states.

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For more information:

Contact the CICAD
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