

Massachusetts Department of Correction
Carol Higgins O'Brien, Commissioner

FY15 1st Quarter *Gap* Analysis Report

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Introduction:

The Massachusetts Department of Correction's (MA DOC) vision is to effect positive behavioral change in order to eliminate violence, victimization, and recidivism. Motivating and recommending offenders to participate and complete evidence based programs is one of the many strategies the MA DOC utilizes to effect positive behavioral change. In order for the MA DOC to make informed decisions and document progress towards this vision, a *gap* analysis was implemented for measuring and reporting offenders' participation in evidence based programs.

The *gap* analysis represents how successful MA DOC is at effecting positive behavioral change for its offender population by means of programming. This analysis is extremely beneficial as it captures our programming gaps, allows the MA DOC to make informed decisions to reduce the gaps, provides programming benchmarks for strategic planning, promotes transparency, and creates a roadmap for efficiently managing resources.

In regards to the MA DOC's programming processes, the MA DOC conducts a risk assessment on male, criminally sentenced offenders that are serving a minimum of one year and are not sentenced to life without parole. Offenders who score moderate-to-high risk to recidivate on their risk assessment are eligible for a needs assessment. An offender's needs assessment scores identify criminogenic need areas that should be addressed with corresponding programming prior to release in order to reduce the likelihood of recidivating.

Therefore, offenders with a substance abuse, anger, or criminal thinking need are recommended for the Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) Program, Violence Reduction Program, Criminal Thinking Program, respectively. This report will illustrate the MA DOC's progress towards promoting positive behavioral change by means of programming prior to an offender's release.

Part One, Post-Release Cohort:

From July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014, a total of 332 male offenders released to the street¹ from MA DOC custody that began their sentence as a new court commitment². Seventy-five percent (n=249) of these releases completed a needs assessment, and were recommended for programming based on their corresponding criminogenic need areas. The following analysis depicts this release cohort’s progress towards addressing their criminogenic needs prior to release back to their communities:

Need Area Breakdown:

Table 1: FY15 First Quarter Male New Court Commitment Releases to the Street Identified Need Areas

FY 15 First Quarter Releases to the Street Need Area Breakdowns								
			Substance Abuse		Criminal Thinking		Anger	
Release Month	# Releases	# Completed Needs Assessment	N	%	N	%	N	%
Jul-14	108	83	62	75%	49	59%	56	67%
Aug-14	115	85	70	82%	45	53%	53	62%
Sep-14	109	81	64	79%	45	56%	52	64%
Total	332	249	196	79%	139	56%	161	65%

**Percentages are based on the number of offenders who completed a Needs Assessment.*

- 79% had a substance abuse need
- 56% had a criminal thinking need
- 65% had an anger need

¹ A release to street occurs when an inmate is released from the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction by way of parole or discharge to the street. Conditions warranting a release to street include: parole, good conduct discharge, and expiration of sentence.

² Individuals committed by the courts to the Massachusetts Department of Correction as a result of a criminal offense. Therefore, this analysis excludes offenders who were re-admitted and subsequently released.

Post-Release Cohort Gap Analysis Methodology:

Offenders may have multiple outcomes for a specific program due to being recommended for a program until it is completed. For example, an offender may initially refuse to participate in a program; however, on a subsequent program recommendation decide to enroll and go on to complete a program. Thus, a hierarchy of program outcomes has been established to measure the highest outcome level of participation an offender has achieved during their incarceration. Each offender’s highest outcome within the hierarchy is reflected in the following tables for each program.

Program Outcome Hierarchy:

- 1) Completed Program
- 2) Enrolled
- 3) Terminated Unsuccessfully
- 4) Refused to Participate
- 5) Accepted
- 6) Ineligible
- 7) Program not Available
- 8) No recommendation/No recommendation outcome/Pending override approval (POA)

The **gap** is the percentage of offenders **who did not complete** corresponding core programming to a need area prior to their release, **gap** = 100% - % Completed Program.

The total sum of eligible offenders is based upon the sum of offenders with a corresponding need (i.e., substance abuse, anger, or criminal thinking) and those with a program override entry³.

Table 2: Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes

Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes																		
Month	Number of Male Releases	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA*	
Total	332	231	100	43%	11	5%	26	11%	30	13%	1	0%	7	3%	52	23%	4	2%
Jul-14	108	77	30	39%	2	3%	13	17%	11	14%	1	1%	3	4%	16	21%	1	1%
Aug-14	115	79	32	41%	3	4%	9	11%	12	15%	0	0%	3	4%	19	24%	1	1%
Sep-14	109	75	38	51%	6	8%	4	5%	7	9%	0	0%	1	1%	17	23%	2	3%

* Reference Gap Analysis Report Definitions.

- CRA Program Outcomes:
 - 57% **gap**, decrease of 3% compared to the 60% **gap** for FY14 releases
 - 23% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered CRA programming
 - 13% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming, which is a 13% decrease in refusals compared to FY14 in which refusals averaged 15%

³ Reference Gap Analysis Report Definitions.

Table 3: Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcome

Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcome																		
Month	Number of Male Releases	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA	
Total	332	154	33	21%	1	1%	16	10%	12	8%	48	31%	7	5%	24	16%	13	8%
Jul-14	108	53	12	23%	0	0%	5	9%	5	9%	19	36%	5	9%	7	13%	0	0%
Aug-14	115	50	10	20%	1	2%	8	16%	3	6%	11	22%	1	2%	9	18%	7	14%
Sep-14	109	51	11	22%	0	0%	3	6%	4	8%	18	35%	1	2%	8	16%	6	12%

- Criminal Thinking Outcomes:
 - 79% **gap**, increase of 7% compared to the 72% **gap** for FY14 releases
 - 16% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered Criminal Thinking
 - 8% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Table 4: Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcome

Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcome																		
Month	Number of Male Releases	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA	
TOTALS	332	185	51	28%	1	1%	18	10%	16	9%	76	41%	8	4%	14	8%	1	1%
Jul-14	108	62	17	27%	1	2%	5	8%	6	10%	25	40%	2	3%	6	10%	0	0%
Aug-14	115	60	16	27%	0	0%	6	10%	7	12%	24	40%	3	5%	3	5%	1	2%
Sep-14	109	63	18	29%	0	0%	7	11%	3	5%	27	43%	3	5%	5	8%	0	0%

- Violence Reduction Program Outcomes:
 - 72% **gap**, increase of 7% compared to the 65% **gap** for FY14 releases
 - 8% of eligible offenders released without ever being housed in a facility that offered Violence Reduction
 - 9% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

The Criminal Thinking and Violence Reduction Program both have a significant number of offenders who release to the street while on the waitlist to engage in the program. This large gap can be attributed to a lack of resources; resources which are a necessity when trying to meet the specific programming needs of the MADOC offender population.

Part Two, Active Cohort:

The active cohort gap analysis was conducted to identify offenders in need of programming in attempt to reduce the post release programming gap. As of October 1, 2014, 2,528 criminally sentenced males have a maximum release date within two years. Seventy-two percent (1,817) of these offenders completed a needs assessment, and were recommended for programming based on their criminogenic need areas. The following analysis illustrates this cohort’s progress towards addressing their criminogenic needs prior to release.

Active Cohort Gap Analysis Methodology:

Similar to the post-release gap analysis, offenders may have multiple outcomes for a specific program. In contrast to the post release gap analysis, the active cohort’s program outcomes are based on whether or not an offender completed a program. If an offender did not complete a program then their most recent outcome is reported. This methodology illustrates an offender’s current progress towards completing a program prior to release. The following data breakdowns represent the MA DOC’s progress towards addressing the criminogenic needs of its offender population prior to release.

The total sum of eligible offenders is based upon the sum of offenders with a corresponding need (i.e., substance abuse, anger, or criminal thinking) and those with a program override entry⁴.

Table 5: Two Years until Release Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes

Male Substance Abuse Need Area by CRA Outcomes																			
Date	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Transferred/ Prior Release Engagement		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA	
10/1/2014	1,591	520	33%	195	12%	83	5%	208	13%	39	2%	46	3%	8	1%	442	28%	50	3%

- CRA program outcomes for offenders within two years of release:
 - 67% *gap*, decrease of 1% compared to the 68% *gap* as of July 1, 2014
 - 13% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Table 6: Two Years until Release Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcomes

Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Outcome																			
Date	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Transferred/ Prior Release Engagement		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA	
10/1/2014	1,129	188	17%	32	3%	27	2%	77	7%	410	36%	22	2%	5	0%	218	19%	150	13%

- Criminal Thinking program outcomes for offenders within two years of release:
 - 83% *gap*, same *gap* as of July 1, 2014
 - 7% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

⁴ Reference Gap Analysis Report Definitions.

Table 7: Two Years until Release Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcomes

Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Outcome																			
Date	Total # Eligible	Completed Program		Enrolled		Terminated Unsuccessfully		Refused to Participate		Accepted to Waitlist		Ineligible		Transferred/Prior Release Engagement		Program Not Available		No Rec/Rec Outcome/POA	
10/1/2014	1,318	276	21%	41	3%	30	2%	108	8%	611	46%	26	2%	4	0%	180	14%	42	3%

- Violence Reduction program outcomes for offenders within two years of release:
 - 79% **gap**, decrease of 1% compared to the 80% **gap** as of July 1, 2014
 - 8% of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Conclusion:

The MA DOC strives to reduce the gap by continuously implementing multiple strategies that will aid in this endeavor. For example, the Reentry and Program Services Strategic Plan highlights program outcome projections.

- i Increase the percentage of new court commitment releases to the street that were:
 - Eligible for substance abuse programming that completed CRA prior to release to 70% by July 2017.
 - Eligible for criminal thinking programming that completed criminal thinking prior to release to 33% by July 2017.
 - Eligible for anger programming that completed violence reduction prior to release to 40% by July 2017.

The following objectives will have a significant impact on reducing the gap and assisting the MA DOC in embracing a performance-based culture that is working towards meeting our vision.

Objectives to Reduce the Gap:

- Reduce the percentage of offenders that release without ever being housed in a facility that offers programming for a corresponding need area.
- Reduce the percentage of refusals to participate.
- Reduce the percentage of unsuccessful terminations without effecting program fidelity.
- Improve program recommendation processes to ensure all necessary program recommendations are entered into the Department’s information system.

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Copies of publications from the Office of Strategic Planning & Research can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/doc>.

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GAP ANALYSIS REPORT DEFINITIONS

Risk Assessment- Tool utilized by the MA DOC to identify offenders who are moderate to high risk to reoffend and prioritize them for programming.

Need Assessment- Tool utilized by the MA DOC to place offenders in the appropriate programs that will aid in their reentry to society, and will most likely reduce the offender's chance of reoffending.

Program Override Entry- Occurs when an offender does not score moderate to high risk for a criminogenic need area based on their needs assessment, and a program recommendation is formulated by their Correctional Program Officer (CPO) due to evidence that the offender can benefit from participating in such a program.

Substance Abuse Need- Offenders with a score from 3 to 10 on their needs assessment for substance abuse need area.

Substance Abuse Total Number Eligible- The sum of offenders with a substance abuse need, and those with a program recommendation override.

Criminal Thinking Need- Offenders with a score from 6 to 10 on their needs assessment for criminal thinking need area.

Criminal Thinking Total Number Eligible- The sum of offenders with a criminal thinking need, and those with a program recommendation override.

Anger Need- Offenders with a score from 5 to 10 on their needs assessment for anger need area.

Anger Total Number Eligible- The sum of offenders with an anger need, and those with a program recommendation override.

Completed Program- Outcome issued when an offender satisfactorily completed the program.

Enrolled- Outcome issued when an offender participates in a program, but does not complete the program. The offender was either enrolled in the program upon transfer to another facility or released.

Terminated Unsuccessfully- Outcome issued when an offender participates in a program, but does not complete the program due to various circumstances.

Refused to Participate- Outcome issued when an offender refuses to participate in programming.

Accepted- Outcome issued when an offender accepts a program recommendation and is on the waitlist for programming.

Ineligible- Outcome issued when an offender has the need for corresponding programming, but is unable to participate in programming due to various reasons, such as length of time left to serve, and housing unit.

Transferred/Prior Release Engagement- Outcome issued when an offender transfers to another facility or releases while enrolled in a program.

Program not Available- Outcome issued when an offender has the criminogenic need for programming; however, the program is not available at their facility.

Pending Override Approval (POA)/no recommendation outcome/no recommendation- These are incomplete recommendations, due to an offender obtaining an early release via parole, or being transferred before a recommendation can be completed at one's prior facility.