



Introduction

Massachusetts
Department of Correction

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CY15 Gap Analysis Report

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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 following analysis captures our programming gaps, provides benchmarks for strategic planning, promotes transparency, and creates a roadmap for efficiently managing resources. This leads to the development of numerous strategies to improve programming outcomes and reduce programming gaps, such as re-allocating resources, maximizing program capacity, and creating a culture of program compliance via the Program Engagement Strategy*1. Additionally, programming outcomes within this report document progress towards the goals outlined in the MA DOC Classification, Programs, and Reentry Performance Based Plan.

In regards to the MA DOC's programming processes, the department 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 evidence based 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.

*1- Program Engagement Strategy is a tool piloted at MCI-Concord, MCI- Norfolk, and NCCI-Gardner that employs a balanced approach of incentives and consequences to increase program participation and decrease refusals and terminations. For example, offenders that refuse to participate in recommended programming may lose privileges, such as preferred housing, employment, preferred program placement, and seniority date.

Section 1: Release Cohort

Releases to the Street *2:

From January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, a total of 1,544 male offenders released to the street from MA DOC custody that began this admission as a new court commitment*3. Seventy-six percent (n=1,173) of 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.

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. Therefore, a hierarchy of program outcomes has been established to measure the highest level of participation an offender has achieved during their incarceration. Each offender's highest program outcome within the hierarchy below is reflected in the following tables for each program.

- Completed Program
- Participated
- Refused to Participate
- Accepted
- Ineligible
- Program not Available
- No recommendation/No recommendation outcome/
Pending override approval
(POA)*4

The **gap** is the percentage of offenders **who did not complete or participate** corresponding core programming to a need area prior to their release:

$$\text{gap} = 100\% - (\% \text{ Completed Program} + \% \text{ Participated in Program})$$

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 entry. *5

*2- 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.

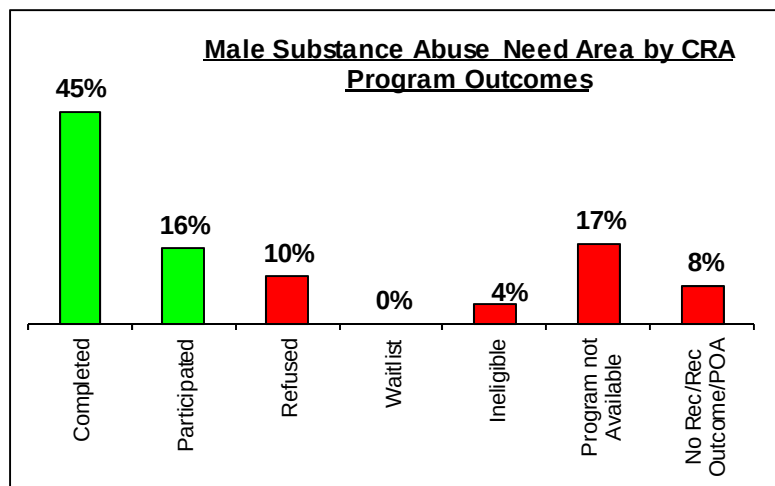
*3- Individuals committed by the courts to the Massachusetts Department of Correction as a result of a criminal offense. Therefore, this analysis excludes offenders who were re-admitted and subsequently released.

*4- Incomplete program recommendations due to an offender obtaining an early release via parole, or being transferred before a recommendation can be completed at their prior facility.

*5- As part of the MA DOC case management model, when an offender does not score moderate to high risk for a criminogenic need area based on their needs assessment, a program recommendation is formulated by their Correctional Program Officer (CPO) due to documented evidence that the offender can benefit from participating in such a program.

Gap Analysis:

Chart 1: Release Cohort Male Substance Abuse Need Area by Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) Outcomes

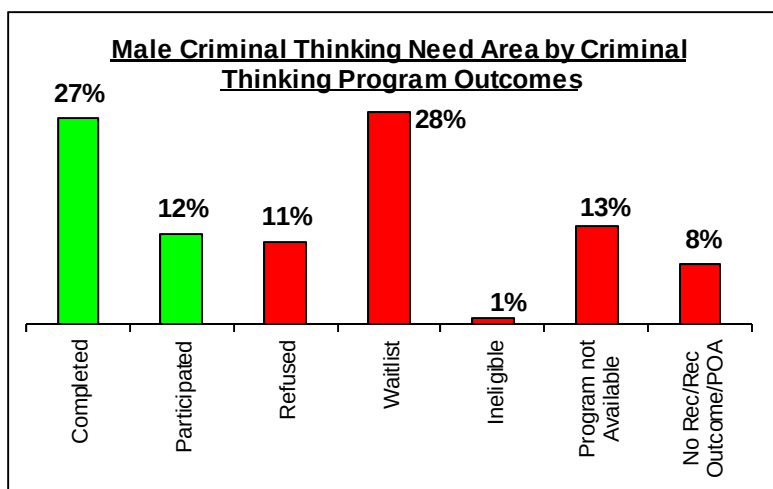


CRA Program

Outcomes:

- **39% gap**
- **61%** completed or participated in programming
- **17%** released without being housed in a facility that offered CRA programming
- **10%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Chart 2: Release Cohort Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Program Outcomes

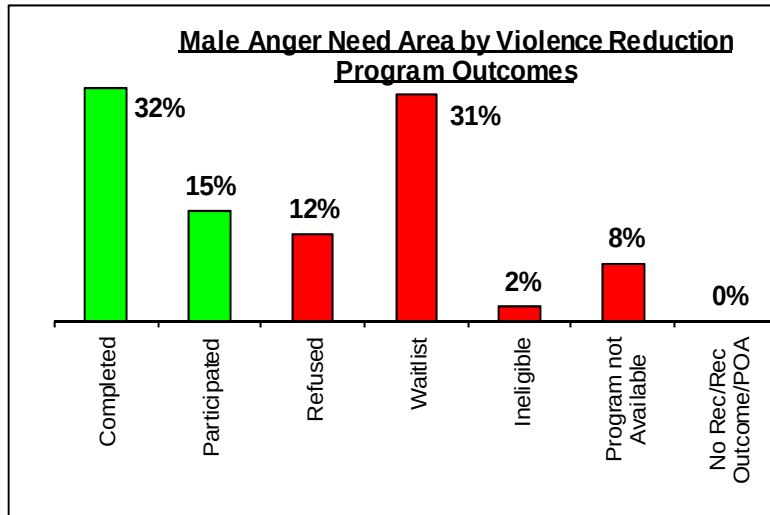


Criminal Thinking Program

Outcomes:

- **61% gap**
- **39%** completed or participated in programming
- **13%** released without being housed in a facility that offered Criminal Thinking Program, and an additional **28%** released on the waitlist
- **11%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

**Chart 3: Release Cohort: Male Anger Need Area by
Violence Reduction Program Outcomes**



Violence Reduction Program

Outcomes:

- **53% gap**
- **47%** completed or participated in programming
- **8%** released without being housed in a facility that offered Violence Reduction Program, and an additional **31%** released on the waitlist
- **12%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Section 2: Active Cohort

Methodology:

Similar to the Release Cohort Gap Analysis, offenders may have multiple outcomes for a specific program due to being recommended for a program until it is completed. In contrast to the Release Cohort Gap Analysis, this section reflects the current progress of the active population toward program completion. The most recent outcome is reported for those offenders who have yet to complete.

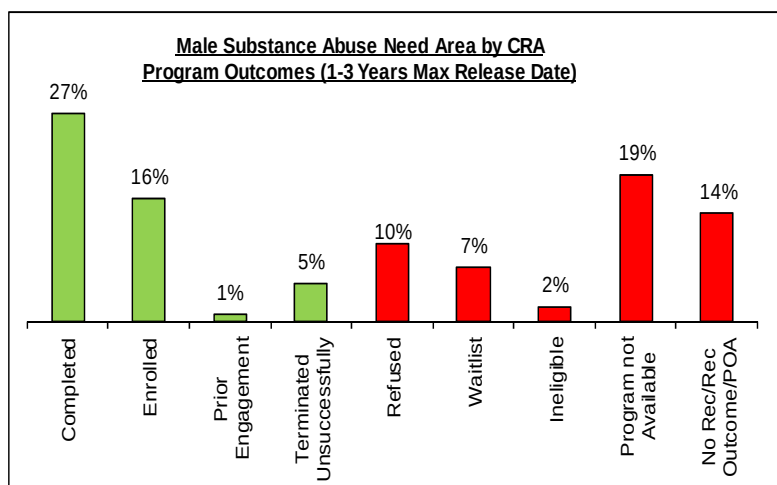
Gap= 100% - (% Completed Program + % Enrolled + % Terminated Unsuccessfully + % Prior Engagement)

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). The following analysis excludes offenders with a program override entry and is based solely on assessed need due to override processes varying from facility to facility.

The Active Cohort Gap Analysis is conducted to forecast future release cohort programming gaps, which in-turn identifies areas in need of improvement to reach the goals outlined in the MA DOC Classification, Programs, and Reentry Performance Based Plan.

Gap Analysis:

Chart 4: Active Cohort (1-3 Years Max Release Date)
Male Substance Abuse Need Area by Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) Outcomes



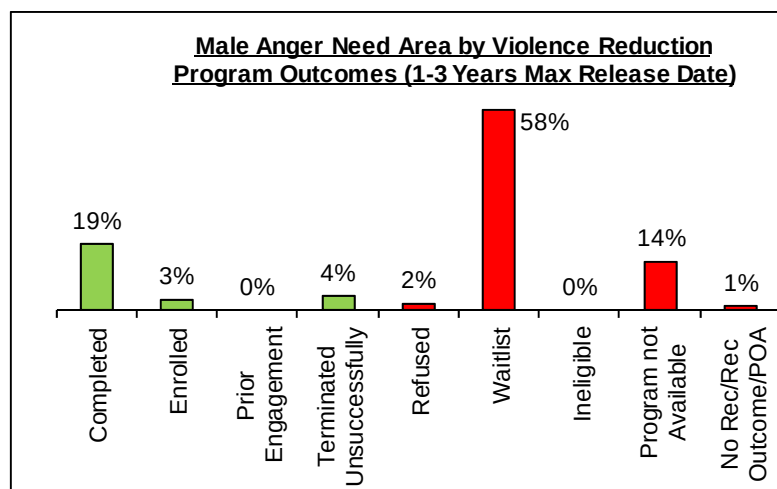
CRA Program

Outcomes

(1-3 Years Max Release Date):

- **51% gap**
- **49%** completed or participated in programming
- **19%** housed in a facility that does not offer program
- **10%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming

Chart 5: Active Cohort (1-3 Years Max Release Date)
Male Anger Need Area by Violence Reduction Program Outcomes



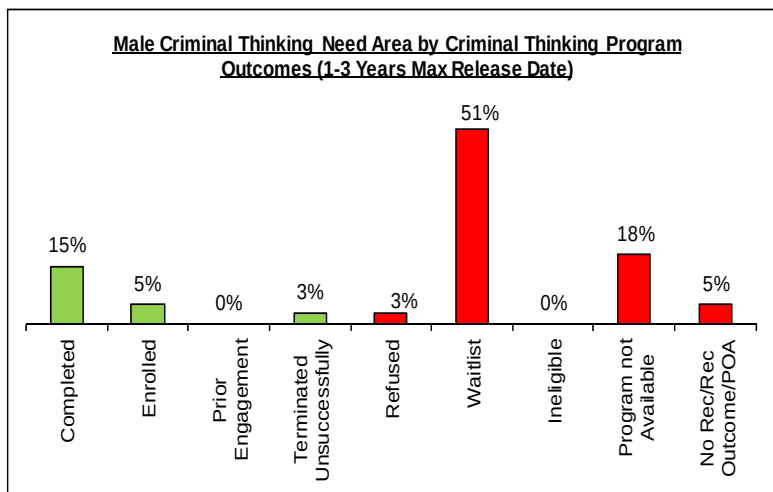
Violence Reduction Program

Outcomes

(1-3 Years Max Release Date):

- **57% gap**
- **43%** completed or participated in programming
- **58%** of eligible offenders are on the program waitlist
- **14%** housed in a facility that does not offer program

Chart 6 Active Cohort (1-3 Years Max Release Date) Male Criminal Thinking Need Area by Criminal Thinking Program Outcomes



Criminal Thinking Program

Outcomes

(1-3 Years Max Release Date):

- **77% gap**
- **23%** completed or participated in programming
- **51%** of eligible offenders are on the program waitlist
- **18%** housed in a facility that does not offer program

Conclusion:

Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA)

In response to the public health opioid crisis, the department has evolved to include a dual substance abuse assessment model to ensure all inmates are screened and appropriately recommended to treatment. The substance abuse assessment model now considers both the substance abuse need scale and the Texas Christian University Drug Screening, or TCUD, as eligibility criteria. The MA DOC Classification, Programs, and Reentry Performance Based Plan indicated 46% of eligible offenders completed the CRA program prior to release. As referenced within this report, completions decreased to 45%. This is due to the eligibility criteria evolving as discussed above. As the MA DOC administered the TCUD to the standing population, offenders who were close to release and/or in lower security were found to be eligible for substance abuse treatment. Thus, those offenders did not have the opportunity to enroll due to proximity to release or in a lower security facility that does not offer the CRA. However, with the exclusion of the cohort eligible due to the administration of the TCUD, the completion rate for the CRA Program increased to 48%, which amounts to a 4% increase in completions.

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Old Colony Correctional Center opened a CRA Program in October 2015, which adds another site with the program, this will reduce the number of offenders that release with the program not available
- Expanding the Program Engagement Strategy to additional sites, this will reduce the number of program declines and encourage offenders to enroll in the program
- Recommending offenders with a substance abuse need on the TCUD for the CRA Program, which will reduce the number of releases that do not have a recommendation

Criminal Thinking and Violence Reduction

The MA DOC Classification, Programs, and Reentry Performance Based Plan reflected a 27% completion rate for Criminal Thinking and 33% for Violence Reduction. The CY15 outcomes, indicate completion rates of 27% and 31%, respectively for each program. The Criminal Thinking Program remained stagnant and the Violence Reduction program decreased slightly. Due to these programming gaps, significant changes have been implemented over the course of the last six months, which will lead to improved results going forward.

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Doubled the number of tracks, which increases capacity
- Implemented rolling admission to increase utilization
- Expanding the Program Engagement Strategy to additional sites, this will reduce the number of program declines and encourage offenders to enroll in the program
- Working towards expanding resources to sites that currently do not offer these programs, this will reduce the number of offenders that release with the program not available



GAP ANALYSIS REPORT INFORMATION

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.

Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) - is an intensive skill-based residential substance abuse treatment program located at four institutions with a capacity of 528 beds. The CRA targets substance abuse and relapse prevention. The program utilizes rolling admissions and combines the elements of a therapeutic community's social learning approach with an advanced cognitive behavioral curriculum.

Criminal Thinking Program- is designed to focus on altering the pro-criminal thinking patterns that have been identified as separating those who are serious repeat offenders from those who are not. The program focuses specifically on criminal sentiments and how to develop pro-social alternatives for them. The program assists the offender in developing pro-social alternatives to past activities and associates.

Violence Reduction Program- targets cognitions that contribute to violent behavior. The goals of the program are to decrease violent behavior and the likelihood of institutional disturbances. During the program inmates identify the specific cognitions which have led to their violent behavior. Once identified, they are taught pro-social strategies and skills to diminish the likelihood of continued violence.

Substance Abuse Need- Offenders with a score from 3 to 10 on their needs assessment for substance abuse need area, or score High on the Texas Christian University Drug Screen (TCUD).

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.

Participated- Outcome issued when an offender participates in a program, but does not complete the program. The offender was terminated from the program, or 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.

Waitlist- 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, or housing unit.

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

Prior Engagement- Outcome issued in the active cohort gap analysis, indicates participation in programming in which an offender either released or transferred to another site while enrolled in the program.

Pending Override Approval (POA)/no recommendation outcome/no recommendation- Incomplete program 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.



This brief was written and
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