



Introduction

Massachusetts
Department of Correction

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Commissioner

CY17 Gap Analysis Report

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 is 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. Most importantly, 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 (VRP), Criminal Addictive Thinking Program (CAT), 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.



Releases to the Community *2:

From January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017, a total of 1,370 male offenders released to the community from MA DOC custody that began this admission as a new court commitment*3. Seventy-seven percent (n=1,058) 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.

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 charts for each program.

Program Outcome Hierarchy:

- Completed Program
- Participated
- Refused to Participate
- Waitlist
- Ineligible
- Program not Available
- No recommendation *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:

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

Participation Rate= % Completed Program + % 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

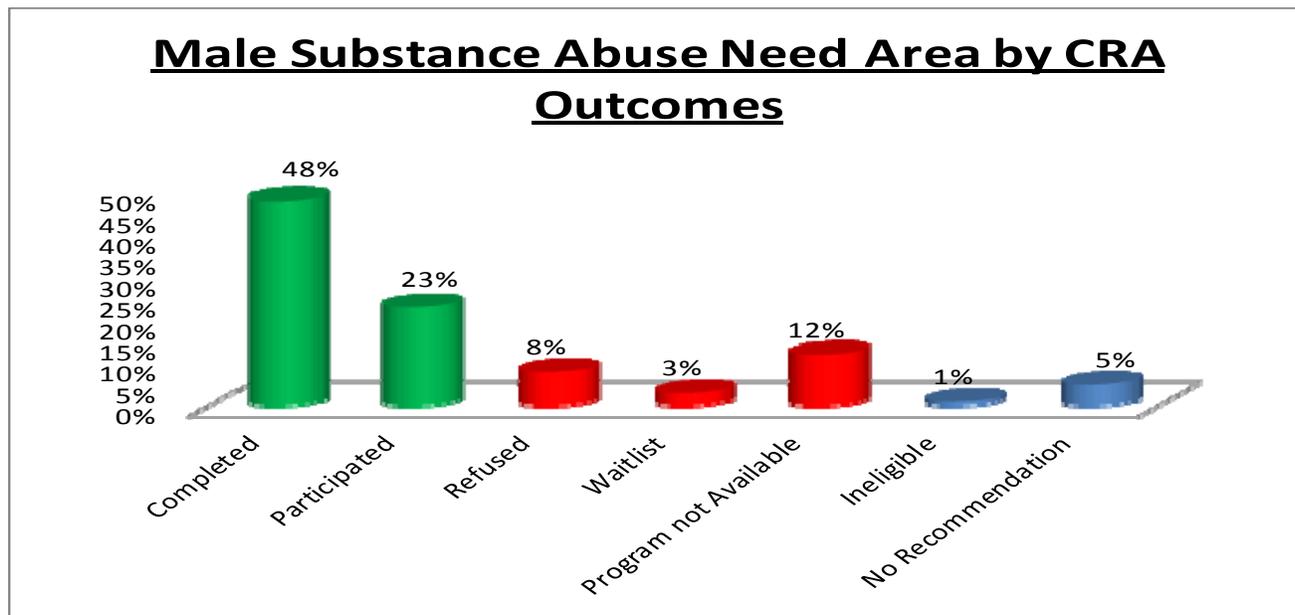
*2- A release to community occurs when an inmate is released from the custody of the Massachusetts Department of Correction by way of parole or discharge to the street. Conditions warranting a release to community include: parole, good conduct discharge, and expiration of sentence.

*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 on a prior commitment 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.

Chart 1: CY17 Release Cohort Male Substance Abuse Need Area by Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) Outcomes

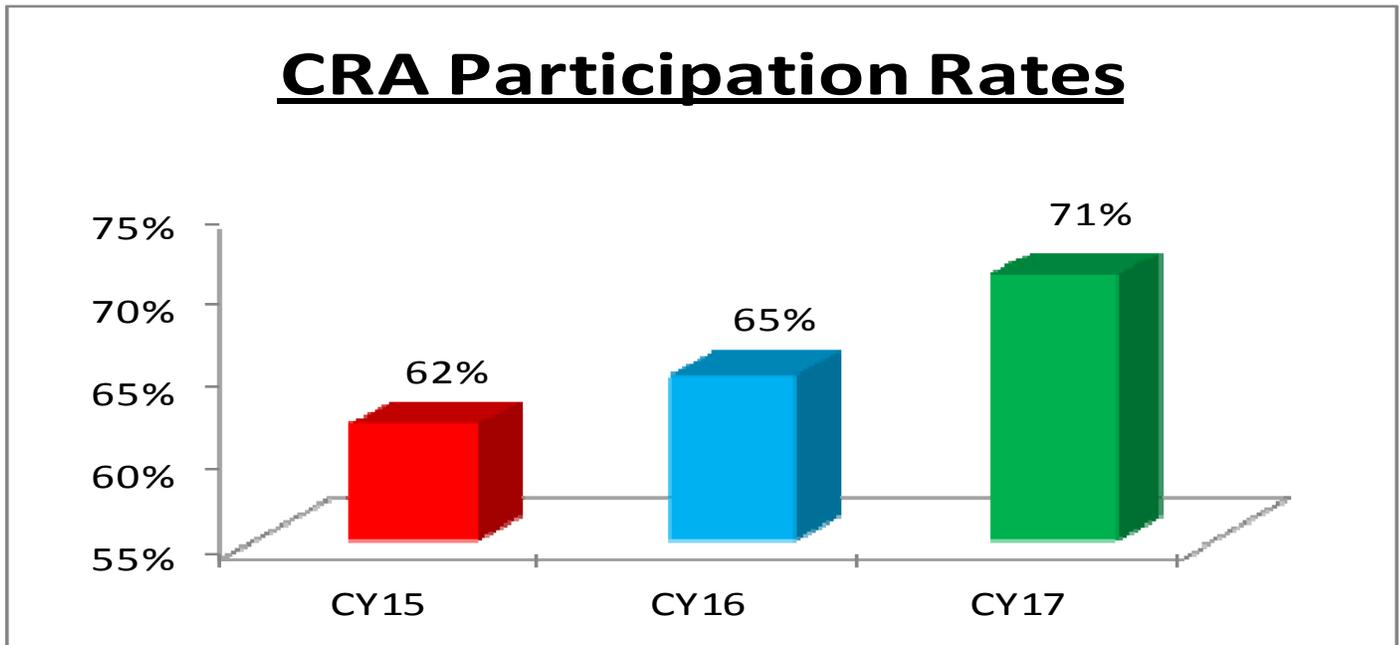


CRA Program Outcomes:

- **29% gap**
- **71%** Participation Rate (sum of Completed and Participated)
- **12%** released without being housed in a facility that offered CRA programming
- **3%** released on the waitlist
- **8%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming
- **Performance Based Goal= 55%** completion rate

*Due to rounding percentages listed above may not equal 100%.

Chart 2: CRA Participation Rates (CY15-CY17)



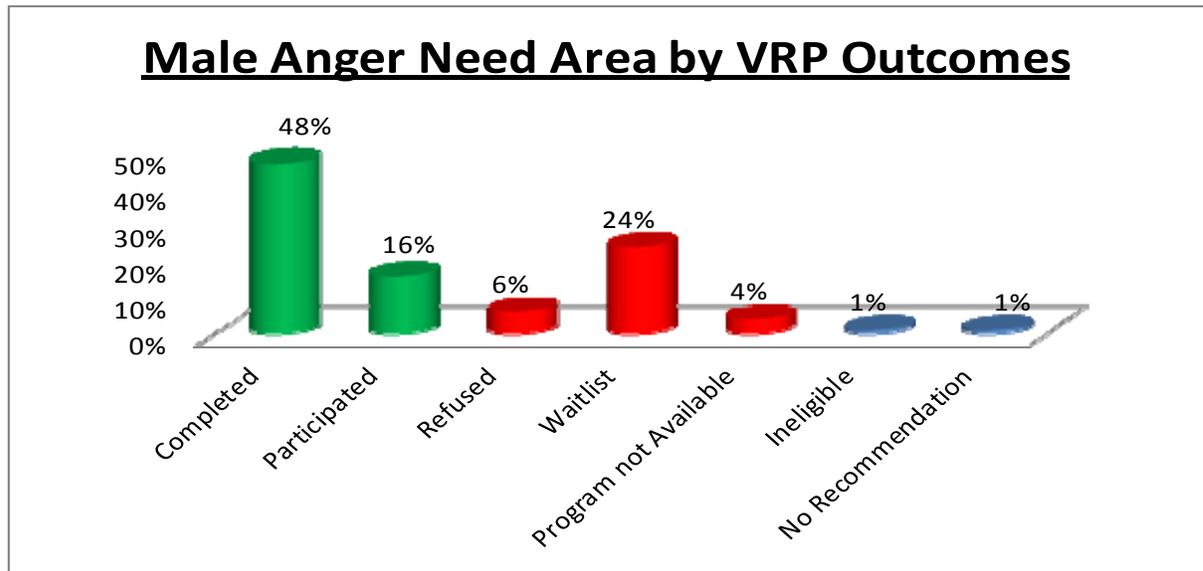
CRA Participation Rates:

- **Participation Rate** increased from 62% in CY15 to 71% in CY17, which amounts to a **15%** increase
- **Participation Rate** increased from 65% in CY16 to 71% in CY17, which amounts to a **9%** increase

Strategies to Increase CRA Participation Rates:

- Expand the Program Engagement Strategy (PES) to MCI-Shirley Medium.
- Explore an increase in Earned Good Time (EGT) in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Reform Legislation.
- Continue to review enrollment to ensure maximum utilization of existing capacity.
- Add utilization as a standing agenda item at the monthly Continuous Quality Improvement Meetings.

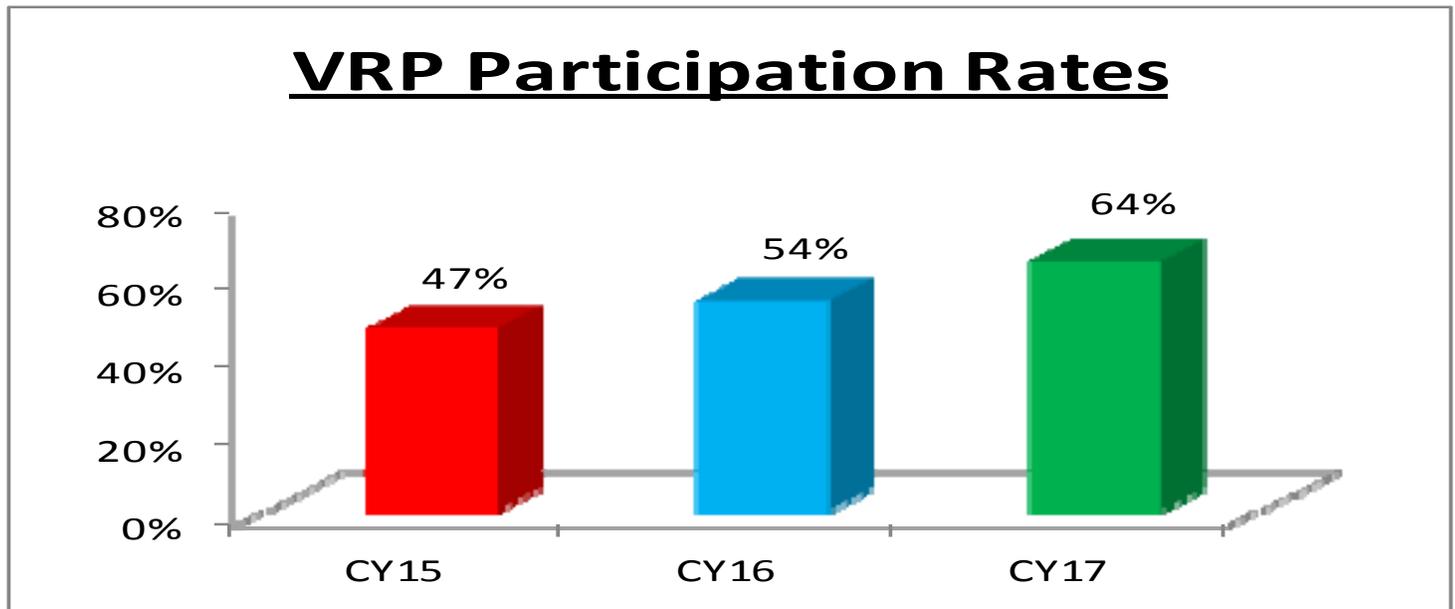
**Chart 3: CY17 Release Cohort Male Anger Need Area by
Violence Reduction Program (VRP) Outcomes**



VRP Outcomes:

- **36% gap**
- **64%** Participation Rate
- **4%** released without being housed in a facility that offered Violence Reduction Program
- **24%** released on the waitlist
- **6%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming
- **Performance Based Goal= 55%** completion rate

Chart 4: VRP Participation Rates (CY15-CY17)



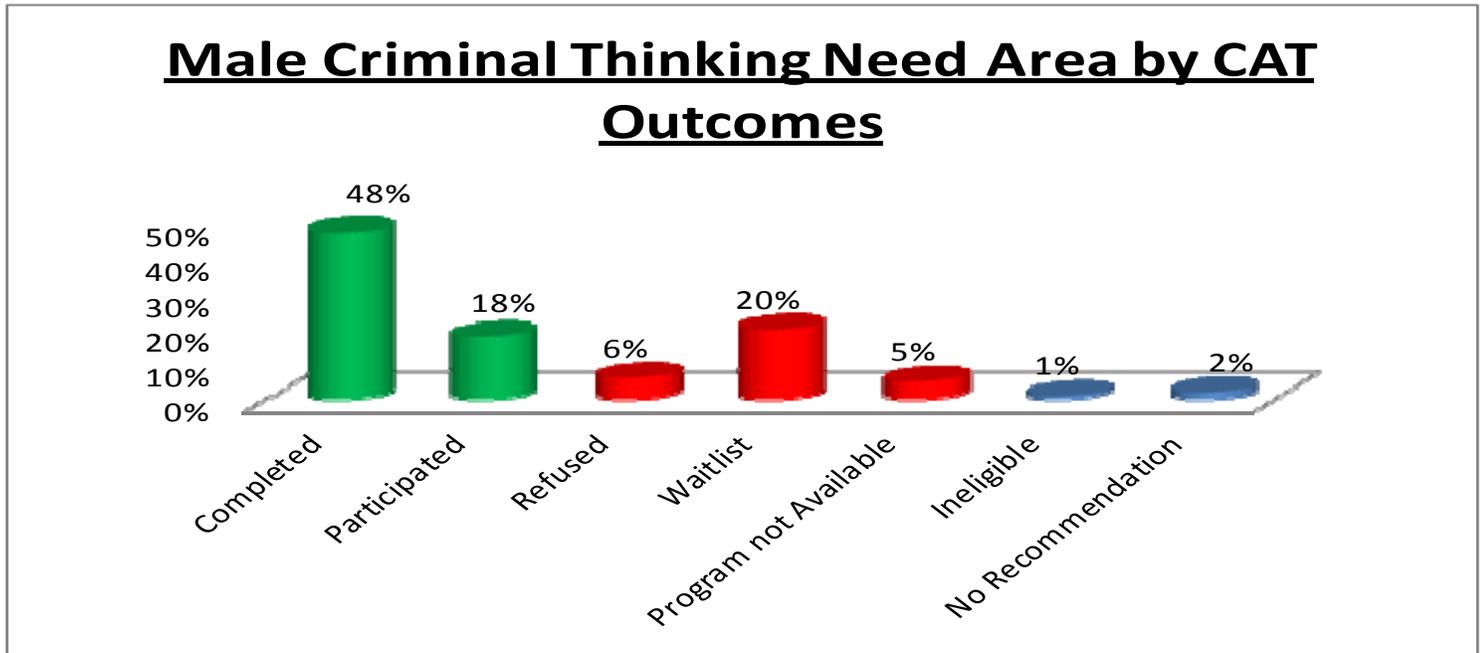
VRP Participation Rates:

- **Participation Rate** increased from 47% in CY15 to 64% in CY17, which amounts to a **36%** increase
- **Participation Rate** increased from 54% in CY16 to 64% in CY17, which amounts to a **19%** increase

Strategies to Increase VRP Participation Rates:

- Increase number of FTEs facilitating VRP through the Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the trial court that provides the department with \$637,500 to increase programming.
- Explore an increase in EGT in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Reform legislation.
- Continue to review enrollment to ensure maximum utilization of existing capacity.
- Add utilization as a standing agenda item at the monthly Continuous Quality Improvement Meetings.

**Chart 5: CY17 Release Cohort Criminal Thinking Need Area by
Criminal Addictive Thinking (CAT) Program Outcomes**

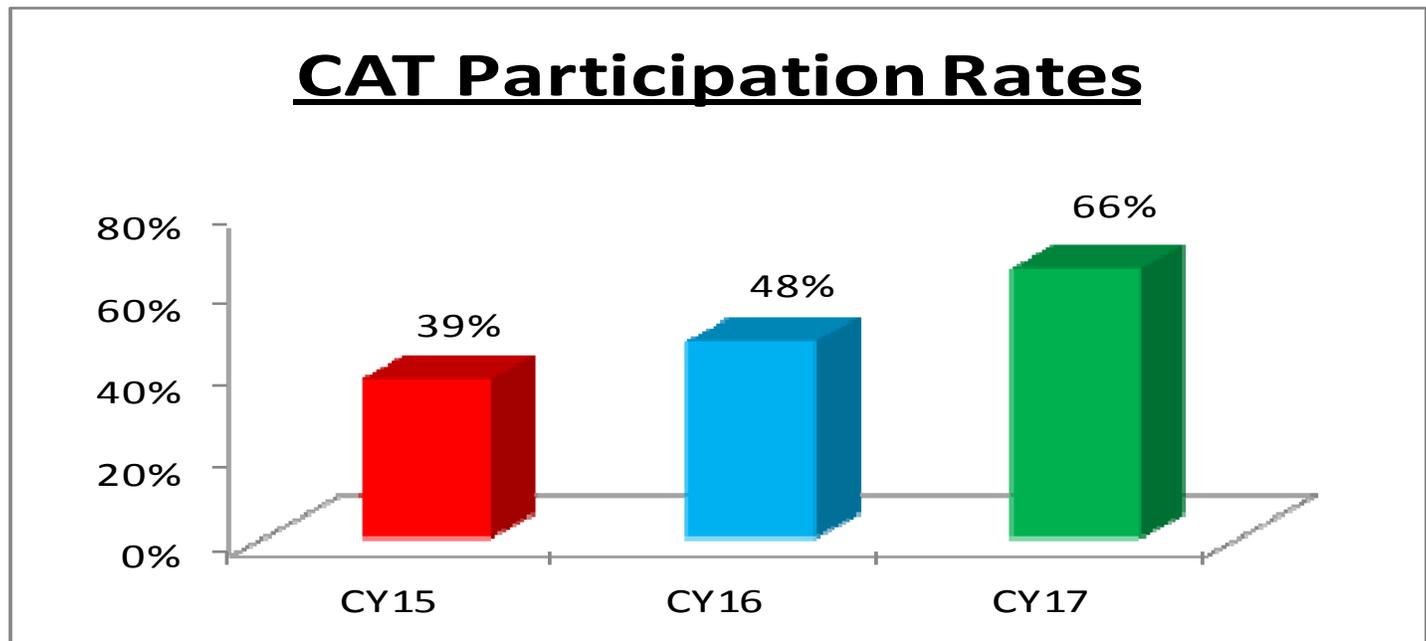


Criminal Thinking Program Outcomes:

- **34% gap**
- **66%** Participation Rate
- **5%** released without being housed in a facility that offered Criminal Thinking Program
- **20%** released on the waitlist
- **6%** of eligible offenders refused to participate in programming
- **Performance Based Goal= 55%** completion rate



Chart 6: CAT Participation Rates (CY15-CY17)



CAT Participation Rates:

- **Participation Rate** increased from 39% in CY15 to 66% in CY17, which amounts to a **69%** increase
- **Participation Rate** increased from 48% in CY16 to 66% in CY17, which amounts to a **38%** increase

Strategies to Increase VRP Participation Rates:

- Increase number of FTEs facilitating CAT through the Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the trial court that provides the department with \$637,500 to increase programming.
- Explore an increase in EGT in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Reform legislation.
- Continue to review enrollment to ensure maximum utilization of existing capacity.
- Add utilization as a standing agenda item at the monthly Continuous Quality Improvement Meetings.

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

Criminal Addictive 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 -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.

Refused - 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.

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.

Participation Rate— is the sum of the Completed and Participated .



This brief was written and prepared by Reentry and Program Services Division.

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