Challenges and best practices in interagency cooperation

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Content

➢ Why is interagency cooperation necessary in the social reintegration process?

➢ Roles and challenges in interagency cooperation

➢ Good practices on interagency cooperation: Reducing the Risk of Reoffending

➢ Questions
Why is interagency cooperation necessary in the social reintegration process?

Conclusions of the NSSRI 2015-2019:

- the importance of inter-institutional collaboration and the responsibilities of the institutions involved
- the active involvement of public structures, with duties related to the social reintegration of criminally sanctioned persons
- the need for collaboration in terms of information exchange and case referral
- the involvement of NGOs or other civil society representatives with a role or vocation to activate in post-prison assistance
- the difficulties faced by people released from detention
Why is interagency cooperation necessary in the social reintegration process?

The main difficulties faced by people released from detention:
- difficulties in returning to the family and community
- lack of housing/shelter
- lack of valid identity documents
- lack of the minimum necessary financials after release
- difficulties in finding a job, in the context of the existence of a criminal record
- difficulties in accessing post-release social & health services
- difficulties regarding the resumption/continuation of studies
- lack of community support.

The need to expand collaborations between public institutions / authorities and private entities involved in the social reintegration process
Roles and challenges in interagency cooperation

National strategy for social reintegration of persons deprived of liberty 2020-2024

- continuation of the measures implemented in the period 2015-2019: the development and specialization of social support services, available locally, intended for people returned to the community and who are in risk of social marginalization
  - new measures must be taken during the reference period
  - changing the regulatory framework in order to improve the continuum of services in the social reintegration field
  - promoting interagency cooperation.
Roles and challenges in interagency cooperation

The role of the probation counselor in relation to persons deprived of liberty*

✓ Participation in the preparation for the release of persons deprived of liberty, together with the specialized staff from penitentiaries / educational or detention centres,

✓ The probation counselor runs specific programs and other support activities in relations with the community (no later than 6 months before the moment when the person deprived of liberty can be proposed for release)

✓ Participation in the commission for conditional release of persons deprived of liberty

The activity of the probation counselor in relation to minors deprived of liberty

✓ Participation in the works of the educational council organized at the level of the educational centre/commission in the detention centre:

✓ The probation counselor presents an evaluation report, which includes:

  - data regarding compliance with the conditions for the execution of the measure and the obligations imposed
  
  - proposals regarding the suitable conditions for the execution of the educational measure and increasing the chances of correcting the supervised person
  
  - proposals regarding the obligations that the court may impose, depending on the particularities of the case

*according to Law no. 253/2013 on the organization and functioning of probation system.
Good practices on interagency cooperation:
Good practices on interagency cooperation:

Reducing the Risk of Reoffending after Imprisonment (RRR)

The program RRR was developed by a team of national and international experts, in collaboration with representatives of the probation and prison services: Durnescu, I., Lewis, S., McNeill, F., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. (2009)*

The authors have considered a series of researches and studies with significant relevance to the staff of probation and prison services:

- The continuity principle (Robinson 2005; Clancy et al. 2006)
- The recidivism process (Zamble & Quinsey, 1997)
- Desistance from Crime (Maruna & Farrall, 2004)

Good practices on interagency cooperation:

The program itself has three main parts:

1. The core module,
2. 7 needs-based modules and
3. The follow-up part.
1. THE CORE MODULE

- a short group program -
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1. Introduction and assessment</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• pointing out the values, attitudes and the link between them and the behaviour of the participants; • analysing pro offense and against offense motivation; • drawing out a list of values, prioritized for each participant; • identifying the needs and problems of each participant.</td>
<td>Labels</td>
<td>Force-Field Analysis</td>
<td>Problem checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• at the end of the session the participants become aware of their values, attitudes and problems; • personal motivation of the participants is taken into discussion; the motivational balance is drawn (pro-offense and against-offense motivation) and the motivational level of each participant can be identified.</td>
<td>Priorities</td>
<td>Problem checklist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2. Assessment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sentence completion</strong></td>
<td><em>each participant will be able to identify his biggest problem he will have to face after release;</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identifying the problems of each participant;</td>
<td><strong>Good things and bad things</strong></td>
<td>*each participant identifies his personal resources;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• highlighting the link between problems and offense;</td>
<td><strong>Offence assessment</strong></td>
<td>*the criminal behaviour is understood in an objective manner;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• increasing confidence in the personal capacity to change;</td>
<td><strong>Reasons for offending</strong></td>
<td>*the criminal motivation is analyzed;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• analyzing the criminal motivation.</td>
<td><strong>Individual excuses</strong></td>
<td><em>the distinction is made between motivation and excuses to commit a crime.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Identifying the problems of each participant;
- Highlighting the link between problems and offense;
- Increasing confidence in the personal capacity to change;
- Analyzing the criminal motivation.

**Exercises:**
- Sentence completion
- Good things and bad things
- Offence assessment
- Reasons for offending
- Individual excuses

**Conclusions:**
- Each participant will be able to identify his biggest problem he will have to face after release;
- Each participant identifies his personal resources;
- The criminal behaviour is understood in an objective manner;
- The criminal motivation is analyzed;
- The distinction is made between motivation and excuses to commit a crime.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 3. Goal Setting</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identifying obstacles in the process of desistance;</td>
<td>Sentence completion exercise</td>
<td>• Each member becomes aware of the obstacles that may interfere in the process of desistance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Estimating the level of impulsivity for each participant;</td>
<td>Assessing impulsiveness</td>
<td>• The group members understand that achieving an objective implies covering intermediate phases;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Making up a list of personal objectives,</td>
<td>Personal goals</td>
<td>• The participants will have S.M.A.R.T. objectives, relevant in the integration process, in concordance with their needs, respecting the principle of self determination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understanding the step-by-step approach in achieving objectives;</td>
<td>Ladder scale</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Converting the objectives into S.M.A.R.T ones;</td>
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</table>
RRR session - Timisoara Penitentiary, November 2022
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 4. Individual action plans</strong></td>
<td>• Reviewing all the assessment material from sessions 1 and 2; • making up a list of prioritized S.M.A.R.T. objectives of each participant; • identifying Action Systems for each goal; • creating Individual action plans; • preparing the group members regarding Session 6 Market Place.</td>
<td><strong>Without exercises</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5. Relapse prevention</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Exercises</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>• recognizing warning signs and the risk situations that may lead to further offence;</td>
<td>• Warning Signs</td>
<td>• each group member will have a personal list of warning signs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• becoming aware that asking for help when needed is very important;</td>
<td>• The Change Matrix</td>
<td>• acquiring a technique to avoid relapse, using the change matrix;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preparing group members for possible failure;</td>
<td></td>
<td>• understanding the consequences when they refuse to ask for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• assuming the change matrix.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 6 Market Place</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• filling the Action System for each objective from the Individual action plan.</td>
<td>Without exercises</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Market – Timișoara Penitentiary, November 2019
2. THE NEEDS-BASED FOLLOW-UP MODULES
Characteristics:

- They continue the core modules. They should be voluntary and individualised according to the objectives established in the resettlement plans;
- They may be delivered partly in a group format or individually;
- The follow-up modules should not be thought of as having a standardised form;
- They may also be delivered mainly in prison with individual post-release follow-up, either partly in prison and partly in the community, or wholly in the community (probation service);
- The main role in delivering the needs-based follow-up modules belongs to the probation counselor due to the fact that he will also be the case manager after releasing;
- It is important that an agreement is signed between the probation counselor, the offender and the resettlement workers according to the needs and requests of the beneficiary.
### Objectives

| Employment | - assisting the beneficiaries in preparing and planning as detailed as possible the activities that have as a goal their employment (writing a CV, employer’s rights and responsibilities, preparing for the interview); | - Regional/National Labor Agency  
- Other relevant organisations that develop projects in this field. |
The need-based follow-up modules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Partner Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finance/Debts</strong></td>
<td>- experienced workers in the field of finance and consumer debts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- giving input about relevant legal processes and procedures and about</td>
<td>- Public Social Services of the local municipalities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organising one’s finances;</td>
<td>- NGOs that can provide financial support;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- informing the beneficiaries about the social and financial aid forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>(family allowances, welfare benefits and facilities, social services);</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- developing the ability to fill in the forms necessary for the submitting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>of social documentation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug misuse</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>- to inform on the available types of services specialized in drug addiction problems in the community; to motivate the beneficiaries who had drug related problems to seek help from competent institutions.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### The need-based follow-up modules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Partner Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- to inform beneficiaries about finding accommodation, the various options available in their community (night shelters, housing, social dwellings); -motivating the beneficiaries to make demarches in order to obtain social housing;</td>
<td>-Public Social Services of the local municipalities; -NGOs that can provide shelters for people in need.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>- to motivate beneficiaries in order to get in contact with mental health workers who are able to provide a professional assessment of mental health needs and access to treatment where necessary;</td>
<td>- Mental Health Center</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- to inform beneficiaries about available services (programes of the Mental Health Center).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The need-based follow-up modules

<p>| Identity papers and handling bureaucracy | - informing beneficiaries about the steps to follow after release from prison in order to get identity documents and how to make applications for various needed documents or assistance. | -Public Service of Population Records. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family life</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Partner Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-preparing the beneficiaries for potential changes in their family during their absence; -developing the ability to communicate efficiently.</td>
<td>-Department of Social Assistance and Child Protection, if the beneficiaries have children that are in state custody.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. POST RELEASE ASSISTANCE

The role of the Probation Service

- active assessment of beneficiaries’ needs
- planning services
- networking, resources finding
- providing access to services (social, legal, health)
- monitoring the cases
- closing the cases.
Good practices on interagency cooperation

• The probation counselor contacts partner institutions in order to establish the exact date, place and time when the released prisoner should go for support.

• The probation counselor will have a specific concern with the overall resettlement process and may also have a role to play in ensuring that the ex-prisoner maintains contact with other agencies as planned, by keeping a close contact with them and reviewing the progress.

• The use of volunteers can be particularly helpful in resettlement because of their availability to offer support at difficult times;

• The period of post release assistance can last for as long as the beneficiary is in need, but not longer than 1 year.
Good practices on interagency cooperation

Results

• The basic idea of this program is the inter-institutional collaboration as well as increasing responsibility of the released person, who becomes its own expert and not just an assisted person.

• Meetings with representatives of institutions have facilitated the access of the beneficiaries to services. Their opening towards resolving the problems faced by ex-prisoners is to be remarked.
Good practices on interagency cooperation

Challenges

• Only a few ex-prisoners have accessed the follow-up part because: most of them lived at a great distance from the probation service and had a modest financial situation, so that they preferred to use family or community resources or move abroad immediately after release, in order to find a job.

• The participants in the program faced difficulties in achieving their goals because of limited resources from the community.
Good practices on interagency cooperation

Impact of the program:

• Contact sharing, networking
• Developing skills to communicate, mediate, negotiate
• Social empowerment, increasing self-esteem
• Offering a toolkit (abilities and skills) for transition to a normal life
• Promoting interaction
• Updating and enlarging the social support network
• Variety of needs require a variety of resources
• Challenge to finding common, innovative solutions
• Involving new resources, developing new partnerships
• Ensuring follow-up
• Increasing the visibility and positive perception of interagency cooperation
Questions?

Thank you very much!

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