



The Homeless and the Incarcerated

- Alike in several ways
 - High degree of overlap
 - Both suffer high incidences of mental disorders
- Services mandated for incarcerated, but not for homeless

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The Homeless

- Four main factors contribute:
 - Deinstitutionalization
 - Loss of casual nonskilled employment opportunities
 - Loss of short-term housing for the very poor
 - Availability of affordable intoxicants

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NIMBY Syndrome

- “Not in my back yard”
- American society wants homeless off streets
 - But does not want homeless services provided in own neighborhoods

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Assessment

- Homeless not homogenous group
- Alcoholism/chemical dependency may be 50 to 70 percent
- Evaluate at point of care
- Include physical and mental assessments

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Nursing Diagnosis

- Ineffective coping
 - Alcoholism or chemical dependency
- Disturbed thought processes
- Disturbed sensory perceptions
 - Hallucinations

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Nursing Diagnosis

- Social isolation
- Hopelessness
- Powerlessness

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Outcomes

- Individualized
- Depends on diagnosis
- Priority may be that individual receive services dealing with primary problem

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Planning/Interventions

- Stabilize mental illness
- Teach living skills
- Maximize client autonomy
- Assist with “system”
- Treat client with respect and dignity

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Evaluation

- Based on stated outcomes

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The Incarcerated

- Between 1980 and 1990:
 - Number of adults on probation or parole more than doubled
 - Federal and state prison population almost tripled

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Mental Health Needs

- Substance abuse
- Psychoses
- Personality disorders
- Organic disorders
- Depression with suicide potential
- Developmental disability

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Mental Health Services

- Individual must be threat to self or others to transfer to mental health facility
- Most mental health services provided in prisons
- City and county jails have fewer resources

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Suicide Risk

- Important mental health concern in prison population
- More common in city and county facilities
- May be admitted under the influence
- Night admissions utilize less staff

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Suicide Risk

- Adolescents in adult jails may be at higher risk
- Major source of legal liability

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Substance Abuse/Addiction

- Withdrawal in jail
 - Significant risk
- Alcohol and opioids most likely substances
- Nurse must be able to recognize impending withdrawal

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Assessment

- Immediate needs
- Physical conditions
- Emotional state

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Nursing Diagnosis

- Ineffective coping
- Hopelessness
- Risk for suicide
- Risk for violence
- Self-esteem disturbance
- Social isolation

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Outcome Identification

- Depends upon:
 - Length of stay
 - Overall safety
 - Knowledge of prior health needs

Planning/Interventions

- Similar to those for clients outside prison system
- Depend upon diagnoses

Evaluation

- Based on stated outcomes
- Revisions in diagnoses and care based on evaluation

Advocacy

- Providing additional services
- Shifting funds from one service to another
- Political action