

*Evidence-based treatment and supervision practices for co-occurring mental and substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.*

Take Aways:

~Rates of serious mental illness are much higher in the criminal justice system than in the general population.

~Most persons with severe mental illness who were once hospitalized in state institutions have been released to the community, with no appreciable transfer of resources for treatment or support services, particularly for persons who have mental and/or substance use disorders, and who are often homeless and living in poverty. Half of persons released from state hospitals are homeless, and from 20% to 40% of homeless persons have a severe mental illness.

~Between 26% and 32% of offenders report that their criminal activities were committed while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

~Comprehensive studies have not yet been conducted to determine the extent of COD treatment programs in jails or prisons and much of the existing research examines either substance use treatment or mental health treatment in these settings. For example, one study indicates that approximately 65% of correctional settings offer substance use services, although only 10% of inmates receive necessary treatment to address their needs.

Questions

1. Why do you believe there is a disconnect from the justice system connecting inmates to community based services?
2. Do you feel the lack of programs for COD is due to the criminal justice system wanting to keep the recidivism high? If so, why?
3. What is your perspective of judges, lawyers, and law enforcement systems of care getting trained on COD and mental health as a requirement to their degree and/or training.