

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Scott Semple
Commissioner

October 2, 2015

Ms. Deborah Blanchard
Senior Committee Administrator
Judiciary Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 2500
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Ms. Amanda Zabel
Appropriations Committee Clerk
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

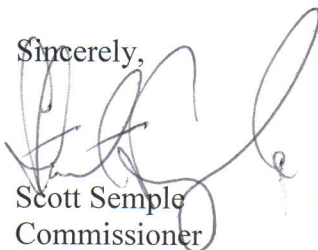
Mr. Andrew Clark
Director of the Institute for Municipal & Regional Policy
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, Connecticut 06050

Dear Ms. Blanchard, Ms. Zabel and Mr. Clark:

In accordance with Public Act 14-217, Sections 80 – 82, attached please find reports related to the Results First Evaluations established by the Results First Policy Oversight Committee.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Scott Semple
Commissioner

SS/jab
Attachment

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Reports Related to Results First Evaluations Patrick Hynes, Ph.D.

Pursuant to Sections 80-82 of Public Act 14-217, the Department of Correction is reporting on two evaluations required by the Act to “assess the effectiveness of DOC’s (1) vocation education programs and (2) Medication Assisted Therapy project for people in DOC custody.”

Vocational Assessment

There are many vocational programs operated by the DOC. A determination was made that conducting a global assessment was not consistent with fundamental evaluation principles. Instead, DOC decided to identify a particular program, Culinary Arts, which contains all of the components that should lead to a positive effect. This program will be compared to other vocational programs.

In order to conduct this evaluation, the DOC contracted with the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy to collaborate with DOC staff.

The first part of the study, which is underway, is designed to assess the extent to which the Culinary Arts program is actually functioning in a way that is consistent with its description. If the evaluator and DOC staff determine that there are issues that need to be addressed, steps will be taken to rectify this situation.

The first step also includes a description of all the necessary data to conduct an “Impact Analysis,” that is, an analysis which will shed light on the extent to which the program is achieving desired outcomes.

The study has had to be extended to FY16 with funds rolled over from FY15. Whether the Impact Analysis will be completed in FY16 is contingent on whether changes need to be made. If changes are made, then we will have to wait some time to study

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outcomes such as recidivism. By the end of calendar year 2015 we will produce an interim report.

Medication Assisted Therapy Assessment

Medication Assisted Therapy or MAT refers to the use of medication as an adjunct to cognitive behavioral therapy and other counseling to treat substance use disorders. In the community, opioid use disorders are treated with medication, including methadone, buprenorphine-naloxone, and extended-release naltrexone. Although research has shown MAT using methadone to be an effective treatment in the setting of opioid addiction, few correctional systems have chosen to implement this evidence-based treatment modality.

In October, 2013, the CT DOC, in conjunction with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Public Health, began a pilot MAT program at the New Haven Correctional Center (the New Haven Jail). The program has run continuously since that time, almost two years, and is the subject of this assessment. This program provides methadone maintenance to offenders entering the New Haven jail for as long as they are incarcerated at the jail and remain unsentenced, or for up to two years if sentenced.

Under the direction of Dr. Sherry McKee, Researchers from the joint Yale Law and Psychiatry/DMHAS Program and the ForDD (Forensic Drug Diversion) Clinic are conducting an evaluation of the NHCC MAT program. These researchers are trained in substance use disorder treatment, and have day-to-day clinical experience in substance use disorder treatment as well as being active researchers. The assessment began in the early spring 2015 and is designed to evaluate the impact of the first 18 months of the NHCC MAT program on a variety of variables that are known to bear on criminogenic behavior and outcomes such as: days to post-release entry into community MAT programs; length of stay in community treatment; number of re-incarcerations and number of re-arrests.

The study design utilizes a control group made up of inmate patients who have comparable demographic and criminal justice-related charges who also have opioid use disorders and entered the NHCC jail but did not enter the MAT program. The control group (similar to the experimental group) was engaged in methadone treatment prior to incarceration. Gathering data for both the study and control groups has required complex and creative multi-agency data sharing agreements with DOC, DMHAS, and the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch. This task has taken more than 6 months to complete.

The study is scheduled to be completed by December 30, 2015, and it will result in a formal report to the legislature and contributions to the published literature.