

Everybody matters

Sentence planning and treatment of high risk offenders

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Presentation outline

1. CoE Recommendations

- Recommendation (2006) 2 on the European Prison Rules,
- Recommendation CM/Rec (2014)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning dangerous offenders,
- Recommendation No. R (82) 17 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning Custody and Treatment of Dangerous Prisoners

Key elements in the recommendations:

- risk assessment (involvement of the offender),
- risk management (rehabilitative and restrictive measures, protection of others, support of the individual, contingency measures, responsivity),
- conditions of imprisonment (European Prison Rules, minimum necessary security measures),
- treatment (risk assessment as soon as possible, medical, psychological and/or social care, medical care according to Rec (98) 7),
- purpose (sustain health and self-respect, develop the sense of responsibility and encourage those attitudes that will help them to lead law-abiding and self-supporting lives),

Another key factor: staff members

- regular government inspection and independent monitoring,
- selection,
- training (in multi-agency co-operation).

2. **The paradox of high risk offenders**

First it is the paradox of high risk offenders – we have successful programmes with motivated inmates, inmates are motivated if they have something to gain/lose, inmates have something to gain/lose who can enter into conditional release schemes, consequently they are motivated enough without any specialized (expensive) programmes. At the other hand those inmates who are categorized dangerous or high risk, often because of the danger that they impose, excluded from the different programmes – although they are the ones who really need the specialized programmes, they are the ones who need motivation and support.

Put it simply we are wasting money and other resources on those, whose motivation is strong enough, while do not do anything with the ones who are the most under motivated and whose chances for recidivism is the highest!

So something has to be done, but how to get the general public (and sometimes even staff members) to understand the importance and necessity of the reintegration of dangerous/high risk offenders, not just locking them away for a long period?

How to link prison with society and get the necessary support?

What can be done during the sentence?

Who should be doing it?

3. What have we achieved on a national level...

- introduced a new legislation that provides us with more flexibility during the planning and treatment phase (sub-categories within the low-, medium-, and high security prisons) with continuous feedback
- introduction of the central admission and observation institute,
- introduction of reintegration plan,
- special regimes for high risk offenders with higher staff/inmate ratio,
- inclusion of the probation services into the prison system.

But on the other hand we should be focusing much more on the social inclusion, the social support of the inmates and the social support of our work.

4. What can be done on a local level...

- Get the public to understand

Open the gates – As a governor in a medium size prison in Hungary we have hundreds of visitors to our prison every year (in some years over 500 people). We get people from the police, prosecution, jurisdictions, schools, working in the different levels of the justice system, civic organisations, family members, anyone,...

Result: greater understanding for our aims, more willingness for participation

- Get the inmates/programmes outside the prisons

Prison for the City – good for the public/inmates/prison/staff members
(include high risk offenders in the group whenever possible)

Result: improving self-respect, positive attitude towards work, feeling of restoration, building-up of mutual trust

- **Get the staff members involved**

Individual mentoring programme

Result: better understanding, more commitment

- **Show the public the humane aspects of inmates/imprisonment**

Story telling for disabled children

Community programmes

Raising money for children in need

Working in pensioner's homes

Hospice

Result: feeling of self-importance

- **Get the public involved**

Get the families involved... Storybook Dads/Mums

Get the public involved – Family decisions making conferences

Result: rebuilding family contacts, decrease in the number of recidivists among the participants, multi-agency approach

Who else could be approached? Local municipalities, employers, NGOs, police, probation, families, schools, ... because everybody matters!