



Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee

January 25, 2018

Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

Community Operations and Supervision

Good morning Chairman Marsico, Chairman Petrarca and members of the House Judiciary Committee.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Community Operations and Supervision welcomes the opportunity to share our efforts to make Pennsylvania community reentry facilities safer and more conducive to reentrants returning to our communities as productive citizens. We face challenges given the clientele we serve, the limited number of opportunities available to them and the hurdles reentrants must overcome, chief among them the growing drug problem, particularly opioids, in our communities and in our centers. It should be kept in mind that the reentrants in our centers are citizens with many of the same rights as anyone else. Those rights that are circumscribed are specific to their terms of supervision, for example curfews, not being able to possess firearms, or consume alcohol. The chief function of our centers is to facilitate the effective return of reentrants to the community. Therefore reasonable access by reentrants to the community to look for work or find a home is essential to our mission. To this end we are stressing the placement on home plans direct to the community whenever possible for all parolees and state intermediate punishment reentrants. By avoiding unnecessary center stays the reentrants generally achieve better outcomes and the centers can target resources on those individuals with higher needs who require residential services.

Safety is paramount in our centers all across the commonwealth, including our 12 state operated centers and the 28 contract treatment and transitional living centers. All facility staff are trained in security procedures and techniques in effective reentrant management. All facilities search reentrants to screen out possible contraband. All utilize technology in the form of cameras and metal detectors to screen for contraband and to prevent incidents, including drug usage and overdoses.

The presence of illegal drugs in our facilities continues to represent a clear and present threat to the safety and well-being of our reentrants and staff alike. We test all our reentrants for possible drug use on a frequent basis. Some are tested weekly and all may be tested on a probable cause

basis. Positive tests result in some sort of immediate intervention, including restriction of privileges, outpatient or in-patient treatment as needed. Facility searches are conducted frequently by local staff at all facilities to eliminate contraband. These are supplemented by random searches involving Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC) and/or Parole Field Services staff. Frequently Institutional K-9 drug detection units are deployed as part of the searches. And for certain major searches, other law enforcement agencies have participated as well. These combined efforts have been occurring more frequently as BCC and Field Services have been working more closely together.

In the event of an overdose by a reentrant, or an accidental exposure to a staff member, all staff are trained on and equipped with NARCAN. This deployment has significantly reduced the number of fatal overdoses in our centers. Calendar year 2017 started on a challenging note, compared to 2016. However the number of overdoses inside our centers has trended down especially during the last quarter (October through December, 2017). Over time, the frequency, locations and severity of drug overdose events have varied much as it has in the community. As new and more powerful opioid compounds are introduced we shift our resources to meet the threats. K2, or synthetic marijuana, presents another threat. This has proven to be difficult to detect in drug tests. However the Bureau of Community Corrections has entered into a partnership with a drug testing company to develop effective tools to determine when reentrants have used these substances. I have attached a spreadsheet and charts pertaining to overdoses in our centers.

The Department recognizes that effective treatment interventions enhance public safety and facility security. One additional tool that we have implemented is the use of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). While this is not a security tool as such, the use of MATs reduces the propensity of reentrants to introduce opioids into our facilities. All reentrants are educated on the benefits and availability of MATs. If a reentrant is referred for drug and alcohol treatment, including detox after an overdose, they are encouraged to participate in our Vivitrol program. Though it is still early the results suggest that the program will lead to better outcomes including more successful community placements.

We recognize that these broad strategies may not fully address issues in all settings. Therefore we have adopted practices to meet specific needs which are responsive to communities like those in Berks County. For example:

- **Foot patrols on Penn Street.** This was done in the Summer\Early Fall of 2017. The foot patrols may resume in mid-March 2018. Plan will be to conduct the patrols once per week with two agents from the WCCC and two agents from ADAPPT walking Penn Street. When a parolee is encountered, supervision staff will interact with the parolee to ensure his visit to the community is of a productive nature. If reasonable suspicion presents itself, the parolee will be patted down and further appropriate action would be taken.
- **Individual Searches of the Parolee's cluster, living area & property after Administrative Conferences (CON I)** are held for drugs/drug paraphernalia related parole violations.

- Increased random foot traffic of Parole Agents throughout the living areas of both facilities.
- Increased utilization of outpatient\detoxification services through TASC (Treatment Access & Service Center). TASC has a “Warm Handoff Program” that allows parolees who come to the hospital for an overdose to be referred to this program for detoxification services on the street and potential in-patient placement.
- GPS utilization: tool used to address violations of short term delinquency at both centers. Director will meet with staff at both centers and instruct supervisors to use this tool for drug users who are sanctioned at the facility into outpatient D & A counseling and not placed in-patient. This will hopefully be a deterrent into entering areas known for drug activity.
- Increased efficiency in Home Plan processing. This allows parolees to return to their respective homes quicker to access services and encourages family\community support to aid in positive re-integration and recovery efforts. Home plan status is posted at both centers.
- Recent collaboration with BCC to address positive urinalysis results quicker. Parolees who test positive for opiate based substances will be seen prior to the next scheduled Administrative Conferencce date and moved to detox\in-patient quickly to prevent a potential overdose. Past practice was to wait to address the violation until the next CON I day and this could result in a delay of necessary treatment for up to 6 days. This just started at the WCCC and ADAPPT supervisors were instructed to initiate the same process at ADAPPT.
- Universal Set of Rules restructuring. This was done in conjunction with PBPP\DOC staff to improve the ability of both agencies to address rule violations at the centers. In particular, it allows both agencies to address violations surrounding synthetic drugs and expanded the definition of same so the problem could be more effectively addressed.

INITIATIVES SPECIFIC TO ADAPPT

- Searches:
 - 7/6/2017 – PBPP Search of all buildings.
 - 8/31/2017 – PBPP search in conjunction with Berks County Sheriff’s Canine Unit – Male Group Home
 - 11/17/2017 - DOC\PBPP search. All buildings hit simultaneously in conjunction with DOC Canine Units from across the state.
 - Late January 2018-Proposed PBPP search in conjunction with Berks County Sheriff’s Canine Unit-The In-patient D & A program will be targeted due to reduced Group Home beds.
 - In addition, DOC conducted searches with K-9 units in July, August, September October, December and January (2018).
 - December, ADAPPT staff conducted searches of 152 rooms in the facility

- ADAPPT In-Patient program:
 - 1) Consolidated under one agent for increased efficiency\communication.
 - 2) All parolees who successfully complete the in-patient program at ADAPPT and have a home plan to the Reading area will be transferred to the Intensive AOD Agent in Reading. This same practice could follow in other districts when their Intensive AOD agents are hired.
 - 3) A meeting was coordinated with Dan Milloy, Executive Director TASC, ADAPPT staff and PBPP supervision staff at ADAPPT to start an automatic referral to TASC's Recovery Support Services (RSS) program. This is a program that assists addicts in numerous ways to maintain sobriety. All Parolee's remaining in Berks County will be referred to this program upon their successful discharge from the ADAPPT In-patient D & A Program.

INITIATIVES SPECIFIC TO WERNERSVILLE CCC

- Currently trying to coordinate with TASC (Karen Ferguson, Client Services Supervisor and Dan Milloy, Executive Director) the ability to conduct D & A Evaluations onsite at the WCCC on a bi weekly basis. The main stumbling block to this is that TASC only provides services to Berks County residents of 90 days or longer or previously established Berks County residents. Many parolees at the WCCC do not fall into this category. Dan Milloy is approaching COCA (Council On Chemical Abuse) to have this restriction waived for CCC\CCF placements in Berks County.
The Wernersville Sub Office should be completed within the next 60 days and this will improve operational efficiency of the WCCC Agents and allow them to be in closer proximity to the new parolee entrance\body scanner at the WCCC.
- Closed Building #27 to reentrants for housing and repurposing for training, Admin, meetings and programming
- Increased Staffing at the Management Operations Center (MOC) and assumed additional responsibilities for statewide scheduling which has saved the Commonwealth over \$500,000 in overtime costs in 2017.
- Wernersville CCC employs over 100 staff in full time positions 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
- Feeding ALL reentrants on-site to reduce foot traffic in area
- Food is no longer permitted to be brought into facility, thereby reducing opportunity for contraband to be introduced into the facility
- Increased transportation of reentrants to off-site locations and purchased another van to assist
- Combining staff from Building 27 into Building 18 to enhance security, increase searches and rounds
- Reduced reentrant population
- Changing the entrance to Building 18 so it is separate from the exit and staff/visitor entrance

- Installed a new Body Scanner system into Building 18 to reduce the introduction of contraband (this is similar to an airport scanner); this as part of Gov. Wolf's recent opioid disaster declaration.
- Purchased a new state of the art Cellsense contraband detection system (Metal Detector)
- K-9 teams were placed on site for 30 straight days having a positive impact on the facility, review for additional K-9 operations and activity is in our POA and increased searches and K9 presence will be occurring
- BCC Regional Director Christy Ulrich has assumed direct oversight of these facilities (RD Ulrich was the District Director for Parole for this area and is very familiar with Wernersville)
- Increased trainings on drug recognition and effects for security and other staff
- Increased searches and decreased instances of overdose within the facilities
- Removed and relocated the Violence Prevention Booster Program
- Removed the Parole Violator Center where parolees were held on detainer
- Added additional cameras throughout the facility
- Added another Lieutenant to the Wernersville facility
- Consolidation of DOC and Parole has been accomplished by Governor Wolf through MOU which has improved communication and direction
- Improved home plan approval process
- Changed SIP Furlough Process to allow reentrants to return to their homes sooner

In closing, we want to thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning and share our efforts to improve safety in our Community Correction Centers. With your support we can, and will, make our Centers better for our communities and our Commonwealth.