

Informing public policy development through research;
Investigating who should be in charge of mental health
services in prisons?

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Research Exchange Network - Mental Health
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- Research needed to inform a policy direction
- Summary of my research and methods
- Findings and recommendations
- Informing policy analysis and development

Background

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- Why pursue this study?
- How was it conducted?
- Why is it of significance?

Background

- Literature Review
- Human rights lens - Equivalence

Research approach

- Revelatory case study
- Design, implementation, and results

Results and Recommendations

- Key findings
- Implications

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Literature review

Prisons are our new asylums

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Rising prison
populations
worldwide

Increase of
inmates with
mental illnesses

Prison
administrators are
responsible, but
lack resources

Alternatives?

Changing profile of prison populations

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- Increase of prisoners with mental illnesses and other mental disorders
- Attributed, in part, to impact of policy changes, i.e., deinstitutionalization
- Result: criminalization of persons with mental illnesses

Delivery of prison mental health services

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- Prison administrators employed, or have Ks with, health care providers
- New types of regimes introduced in some countries
- Varying models in four of ten Canadian provinces (not NL)

Research focus

Meeting the needs of inmates with mental illnesses

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- How should mental health services be organized and delivered to meet inmates' needs? (Livingston, 2009)
- Viewed through a human rights lens
- The principle of equivalence (Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, 1990)
- How does one measure equivalence? (Exworthy, Samele, Urquia, & Forrester, 2012)
- Equivalence = Right to health (Commission on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, 2000)

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Conceptual framework

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`` Equivalence = the right to health

Available

Accessible

Acceptable

Good quality

Population sample

- Prison administrators and staff
- Prison mental health providers
- Community-based organizations
- Mental health care system

- Participants relatively evenly distributed across groups

Data collection

- Document review
- Observations
 - medical clinic
 - committee in APP
- Interviews n = 31
 - one on one (n = 24)
 - focus groups (n = 2)

Understanding the setting

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Prison system

Focus on security

Paramilitary

High school with training

Mental health care system

Focus on patient care

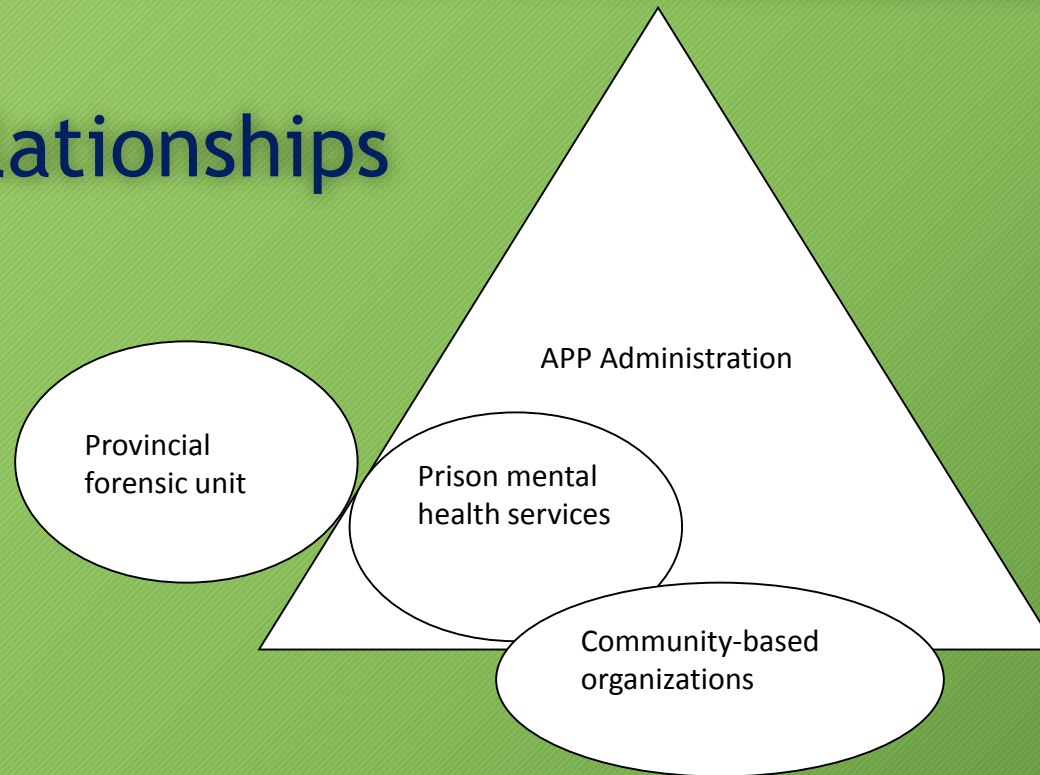
Multi-disciplinary team work

Licensed professionals

Mental health services in APP

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- Inter-relationships



Organization and delivery of prison mental health services to best meet the needs of inmates with mental illnesses

Need for health leadership and administration, and

- Health standards
- Integration with health system
- Collaboration with prison administrators

Weak to limited evidence if meeting the needs of inmates

- Absence of health data base at APP
- Absence of individual health care plans
- Absence of aggregated data re health status of inmates

Findings

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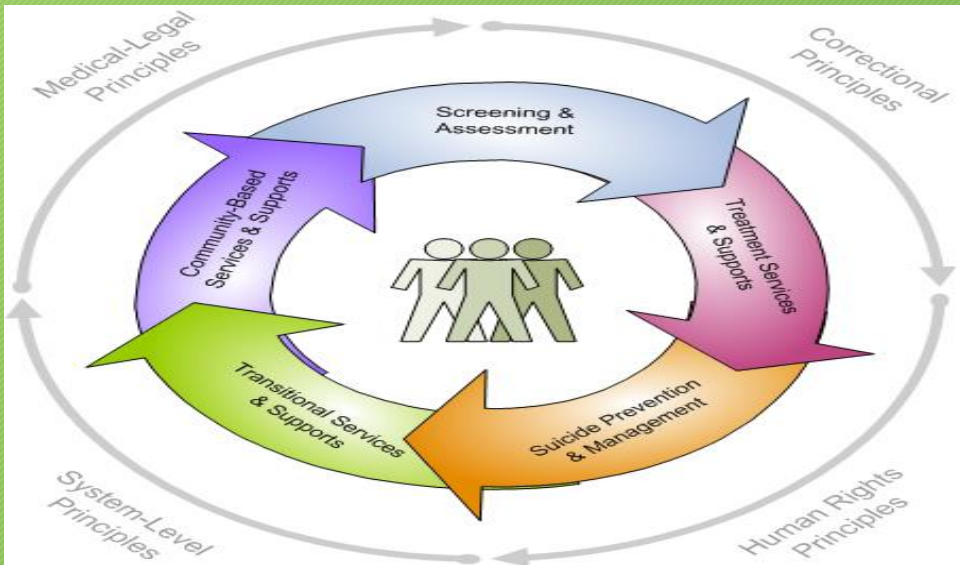
Need to invest in correctional officers

- Role in mental health services
- Not prepared for this role
- Need ongoing education

Comparison of practices

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Best practices (Livingston, 2009)



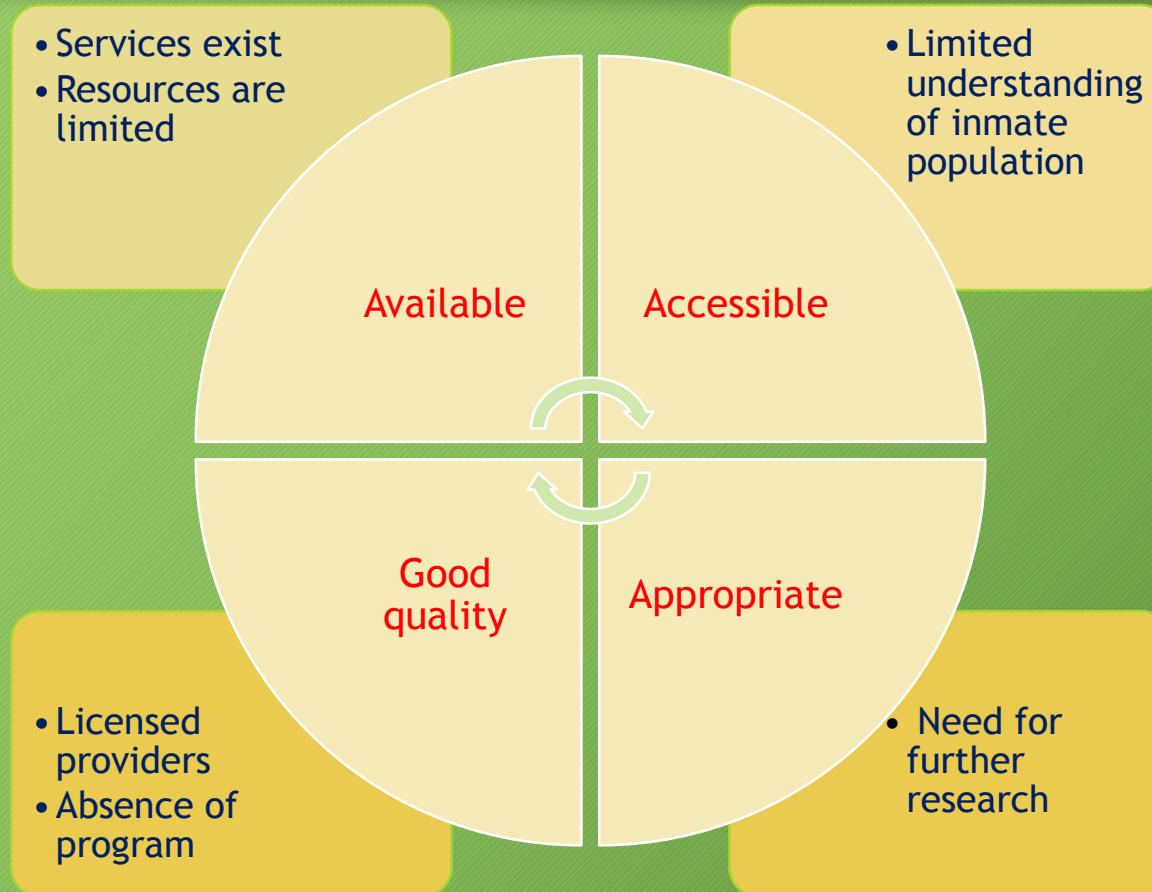
Practices at APP

- Multiple assessments
- Limited mental health care services
- Reliance on facilities not designed for care
- Link APP and community-based organizations
- Limited community involvement

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Comparison with the right to health framework

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Limitations/Significance of study

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Limitations

- Observation of interdisciplinary committee at APP - no security personnel in attendance
- Focus group at forensic unit - relatively small attendance

Significance

- Unique application of Right to Health framework in a prison mental health service setting
- Affirms that access to services alone is not enough/Right to Health framework is relevant
- Inmates are Canadian residents
- Inmates should be included under the universal health care system

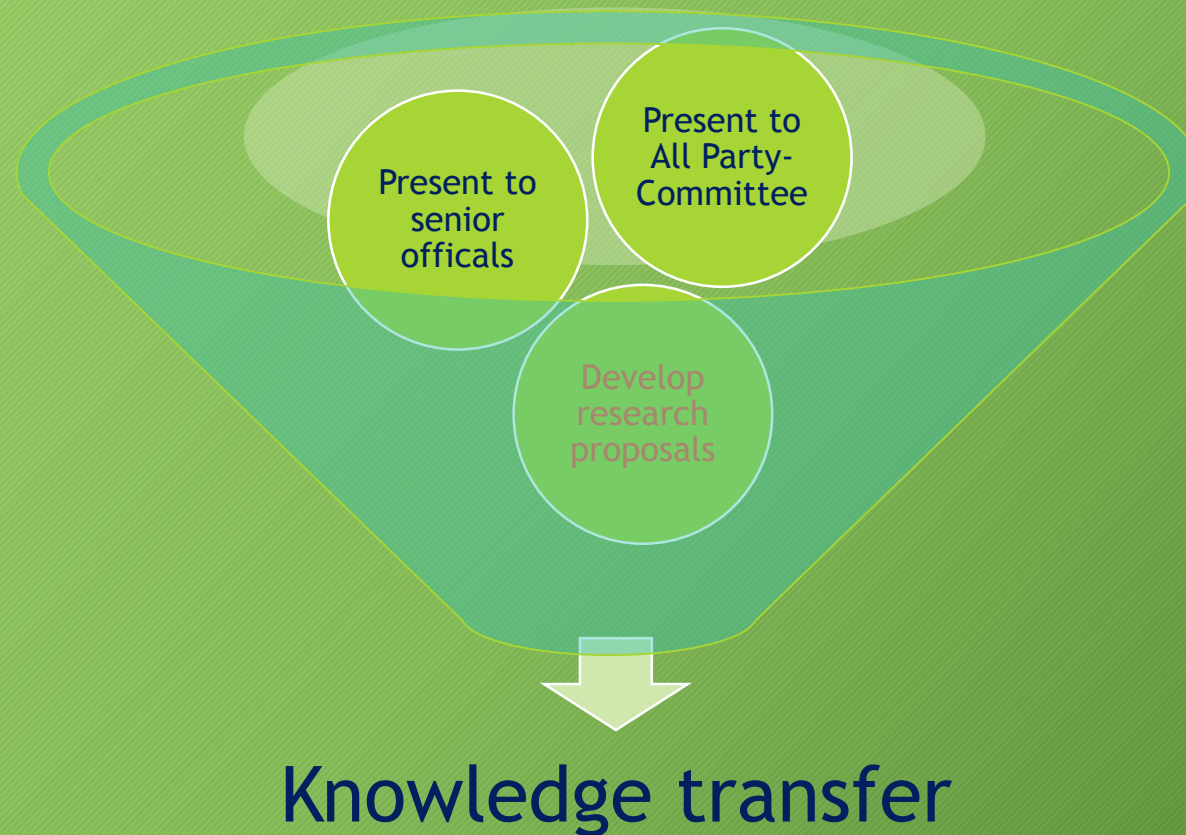
How equivalence can be achieved

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- Prison mental health care services must be part of the universal health care system to satisfy the right to health
- Prison mental health services need to be integrated with our mental health care system
- Prison system and the mental health care system must work in collaboration with one another

Dissemination of research results

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Discussion

Thank-you for attending my presentation!