

TESTIMONY  
WILLIAM LOVE  
DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR SPECIALIZED FACILITIES & Programs  
SUB-COMMITTEE on CRIME and CORRECTIONS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES  
SCI-CHESTER  
APRIL 5, 2000

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, members of the sub-committee, and staff. My name is Bill Love. I am the Deputy Secretary for Specialized Facilities and Programs for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. I'll be presenting an overview of the drug and alcohol treatment programs the Department provides for men and women - with addictions - who are incarcerated in our 24 state prisons and boot camp.

Following my presentation, Thom Rogosky, the Director of Community Corrections will discuss several of our drug and alcohol pre-release centers. Later this afternoon you will hear from a panel of our private

vendors who work with the 137 drug and alcohol specialists to provide drug and alcohol (D & A) services for the Department. We recognize that good services mean that these men and women have a better chance of succeeding when they return to the community.

We have made a concerted effort to promote sobriety and eliminate drugs within our prisons. Our drug interdiction efforts have resulted in a 99.8% drug-free system. By eliminating the drug culture inside the prisons, we have greatly enhanced the success of our drug and alcohol treatment programs. In fact, we have figures in our brochure that show a marked decline in the recidivism rates, that we believe, in large part, is due to our commitment to sobriety, education, and work.

For the past four years, we have been using a validated drug and alcohol screening tool called the Pennsylvania Corrections Screening Instrument - P A C S I.

This tool is used to determine not only an inmate's level of D & A dependence and treatment need, but also to track the percentage of drug and alcohol abuse coming into the system. We use PACSI to evaluate every new inmate coming into the diagnostic center as well as parole violators who re-enter our system. From 1996 to 1999, 91% of the inmates who were screened with this tool scored needing some form of drug and alcohol treatment.

As a result of our commitment to increase drug and alcohol services to inmates, we have added six additional therapeutic communities (TC) since 1995, bringing the total to eleven communities within eight facilities. Eight of the eleven TC are run for general population and the remaining three are for RSAT (TC). Participation in the RSAT program consists of six months in a therapeutic community while inside a state correctional institution, six months in a community corrections setting, and six months of intensive parole supervision.

These communities serve approximately 1068 inmates per year. Overall, we've increased the number of inmates receiving treatment by 59% since 1995. Additional staffing resources and programming have been provided by contracting with outside vendors, including several of the foremost providers of D & A treatment in the state.

Over the past four years, we have increased our budget for this treatment by 300% (from \$3.8 to \$11.4 million). I want to briefly describe the Department's drug and alcohol treatment initiatives.

We currently have more than 15,000 inmates in drug and alcohol programs. Our programs are minimum sentence driven. That means that every inmate who is identified as having a drug and alcohol treatment need in his or her individual prescriptive program plan, will

have the opportunity to participate in a treatment program before they see the parole board for release consideration. Because participation in the D & A program is driven primarily by an inmate's sentence, this often causes a waiting list for services. However, every inmate is given the opportunity to participate and complete this program prior to their release.

We currently have drug and alcohol treatment programs in all of our facilities. These include education, outpatient, and self-help support groups, such as Relapse Prevention, Criminogenic Thinking, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Narcotics Anonymous. There are therapeutic communities in eight institutions for more intensive treatment.

SCI-Chester is dedicated to drug and alcohol treatment with a mandatory aftercare component. This is a unique program, unlike any other in the country. SCI Chester is one of the few places in the country where a

total institution is dedicated to the treatment and rehabilitation of addicted and substance abusing inmates. The holistic treatment approach has, as its primary commitment, abstinence, education, and sobriety. It focuses on the success of the individual and the group.

The Department recognizes that to respond effectively to female inmates with drug and alcohol problems, our approach must be different than with male inmates. Literature and experience tell us that women respond better to treatment programs when they perceive their environment to be safe and supportive. Part of the treatment approach takes into consideration that many female inmates have a history of abuse and dependency, as well as parenting issues. Many of the women who come into our system are mothers. As of March 1999, 82.1% of the Department's new receptions were mothers.

On April 1, 2000, the Department opened an entire housing unit at the State Correctional Institution at Cambridge Springs, to respond to the needs of women with drug and alcohol problems. This therapeutic community will provide housing and programming to 177 women. This is in addition to the Wings of Life program that has been operating at SCI-Muncy for several years. We have utilized specialized training and outside consultation to assist us in understanding the uniqueness of addressing this population's needs.

We believe that the key to any drug and alcohol treatment is continued aftercare. No matter how much treatment we provide inside, if the inmate returns to the same environment with no follow-up treatment, he or she will relapse and become more likely to violate parole or commit another crime. We have made significant strides in providing our aftercare programs through our

community corrections centers and our private providers, Civigenics, Gateway, Eagleville, Gaudenzia, and Gateway. They are all represented here today and will describe their programs to you.

We have established six therapeutic communities for technical parole violators using Federal Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) funding, three are currently operational and another three will be on-line by June 1, 2000. The Department worked in conjunction with the Board of Probation and Parole to develop this program.

The VERA Institute of Criminal Justice, through a federal grant, is evaluating our program. We have received high marks from both the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the federal monitors on our success.



Additionally, we have partnered with Temple University to conduct process evaluation and outcome evaluation studies on our therapeutic community approach.

We also have a very successful half-way back program, Substance Abuse Violators Effort – SAVE -, which permits parole officers to send inmates who have relapsed into an intensive treatment program rather than sending them back to a state correctional institution. Again, our drug and alcohol vendors at the table will describe the programs in more detail.

We are proud of our partnerships with the drug and alcohol vendors involved with the provision of drug and alcohol services. They help keep the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections on the cutting edge of drug and alcohol treatment and help promote public safety for the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which we see as our ultimate responsibility.