**Iowa Department of Corrections Response**
**Efficiency Review Interview Questions**

Q: Any internal performance review-like efforts in your agency?
Q: Any updates on the status of those efforts and your impressions of their
   effectiveness?

- **A department-wide initiative** has begun to obtain employee input on ways to save money or operate more efficiently. Ideas will be organized and evaluated based on their potential for meaningful impact, feasibility, and other factors. This effort will be coordinated with activities of a focus group on corrections redesign (focus groups are described in a following section). The remainder of this section describes recent cost reduction activities, some of which emerged from prior initiatives such as the DOC Transformation Projects.

- **E-Learning**. Developed and begun implementing computer-based interactive training for institution and community-based corrections employees. In addition to saving on trainers' time, the flexibility afforded by the system allows staff to engage in training while on duty rather than accumulate overtime expense.

- **Centralized offender records.** Institutional offender record keeping, which was formerly conducted at each of the nine institutions, has been centralized at two institutions. The result is less staff time required for offender record keeping.

- **Centralized offender banking.** All money orders, fund transfers between institutions, restitution, child support, and court filing fees are now processed through the centralized offender bank. As with centralized records, less staff time is required for these administrative functions. In addition, bank fees are smaller.

- **Managing vacancies.** To the extent that consideration for life safety and critical needs allow, the Department delegates the duties of a vacant position to existing staff rather than routinely fill the vacant position.

- **Retirement opportunities.** The Department has promoted early retirement incentives offered by state government and in accordance with prescribed guidelines, and will continue to do so if/when new incentives are offered.

- **Centralized pharmacy.** Pharmacy functions are being centralized. When fully implemented, the centralized pharmacy promises to eliminate multiple inventories; provide more efficient control of the formulary (a prescribed list of medications for use by offenders); provide better purchasing control; and standardize dispensing methods leading to increased efficiency and, ultimately, improved patient care.

- **Paperless electronic medical record system.** The Department has made the switch to maintaining offenders' medical records in digital form instead of paper. The savings include less paper and copying costs, less physical record storage space needed, and less staff time required for handling and filing paper documents.

- **Jail credit recovery.** The Department is not always notified of jail days that offender accumulate that could be applied to their sentences and shorten their prison stay. Jail credit now is being recovered by Fort Madison records staff, and in FY 2008 recovered 83,589 jail credit days - a cost avoidance of $1,253,835.

- **Elimination or alignment of programs based on Evidence Bases Practices.** Also discussed in a following section, our evidence-based practices steering committee audited every offender treatment program at each institution and community-based corrections district (CBC). Programs needing improvement are charged with either improving or discontinuing operation. After much hard work to improve overall offender treatment programming, 53.5% of all offenders leaving the corrections system now have a lower assessed risk level during the most recent quarter tracked. That's good news that will translate into lower recidivism rates and fewer victims down the line.

- **Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON).** An offender typically interacts with multiple Corrections' personnel during the different stages while under correctional supervision and custody and in different physical locations as well. At each stage Department personnel spend considerable time and resources collecting necessary information. By storing the information in ICON, the Department's central offender information system, much costly redundancy has been eliminated.

- **Master dietary menu and food service ICON.** During FY2008, the Department of Corrections centralized and standardized many of the food services functions for the nine institutions. This included development of a standard menu, and using computer technology to manage recipes, inventories, and more. As a result, the Department is better able to control escalating food costs, manage offender diet needs, and streamline daily food service activities.

- **New offender custody classification tools.** The Department updated the offender custody classification instruments to be more gender responsive and to take into account improved offender attitudes and behavior over time, so as to place offenders in the least restrictive (and costly) security environment necessary to maintain institutional security and safety. The new instruments promise to help reduce supervision costs while improving offender rehabilitation efforts.

- **Energy management/green government.** An extensive number of green initiatives are in place, such as extensive use of local food

production at institutional gardens, use of alternative fuels, and recycling. The use of renewable energy, as measured by the percent of E85 fuel in the DOC vehicle fleet, is also improving, up to an all-time high of 24.5%.

- **Better use of information technology.**  During FY2008, the Department installed identical computer hardware and software at Central Office and the prison reception center at Oakdale to reduce redundancy; implemented encryption for Department laptop computers to reduce the risk of loss of confidential information; installed a Microsoft SharePoint server to increase the efficiency of document sharing; completed institution conversion of Wide Area Network connectivity to Ethernet circuits resulting in increased capacity at a lower cost; and developed standard operating procedures for many IT functions, resulting in increased efficiencies.

- **Offender reentry.**  District and institution reentry coordinators have collaborated to develop and expedite effective transition plans for offenders being recommended for release to the Board of Parole.  Partly as a result of these efforts, the Department has experienced a reduction in the prison population by 4.1% during FY 2008.  Effective offender reentry efforts have also contributed toward a significant reduction in probation, parole and work release revocations and referrals to violator programs.

- **Improved safety measures.**  Through the establishment of a statewide Safety Coordinator position, the Department has implemented safety programs and provided enhanced oversight resulting in fewer injuries, workers' compensation claims, and OHSA fines.

- **Federal and other grants.**  The Department has stepped up efforts to access funding though Federal and other grants.  So far for FY 2010, the Department has been awarded $843,000 in federal grant funds to offset reductions in other sources.  Additional applications are awaiting funding decisions, and others will be submitted when they are made available.  In addition, Congress is in the process of appropriating a $250,000 earmark requested by the Department.

- **Offender correspondence system.**  Also discussed in a following section, the DOC has begun instituting – at no cost to the Department – an offender electronic O-Mail system.  The advantages:  saves staff time from examining letters otherwise received by the offender; and improves institutional safety and security by reducing the opportunities for contraband and dangerous chemicals to be received inside the institutions.

- **Housing all women inmates at one institution.**  Currently female offenders are housed at three institutions.  When the remodeling at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women is completed, all female offenders will be housed there, resulting in reduced duplication and lower

transportation costs.  The remodeling will also allow scarce gender-specific resources to be concentrated in one location.

Q: Important audit and performance reports from the last few years?
1) Identify worthwhile recommendations that have yet to be implemented, but could be with current policies?  DOC acts on what it knows.
2) New legislation or other administrative or rules changes?  Electronic monitoring of sex offenders.

- **A performance measures scorecard** is available via the SharePoint DOC portal. Measures are provided quarterly and then computed for the fiscal year.  Measures trending in the desired direction are color-coded green; areas needing improvement are color-coded yellow or red.  Detail is available to permit districts and institutions to "drill down" and observe their own trends. Results are published in the DOC annual report.

- **Substance abuse treatment performance audits** were conducted in 2007. The Iowa Department of Management developed the audit methodology and evaluated licensed substance abuse treatment programs in the prison system. DOC replicated the methodology and conducted an evaluation of substance abuse treatment in community-based corrections. As a result of the audits, some programs were discontinued; others were improved.  A small portion of all results generated from the audits appear below.

*Percent of Offenders with Substance Abuse Need Exiting Supervision/Custody Without Substance Abuse Treatment (red portion of pie charts)*



Higher Risk Community Corrections Offenders: 53.4%, 26.6%, 13.5%, 6.6%

Prison Releasees: 59.6%, 35.1%, 3.3%, 2.0%



Chart 7:  Total Recidivism Rate - Difference Between Successful Treatment and Substance Abuse Need/No Treatment by Location
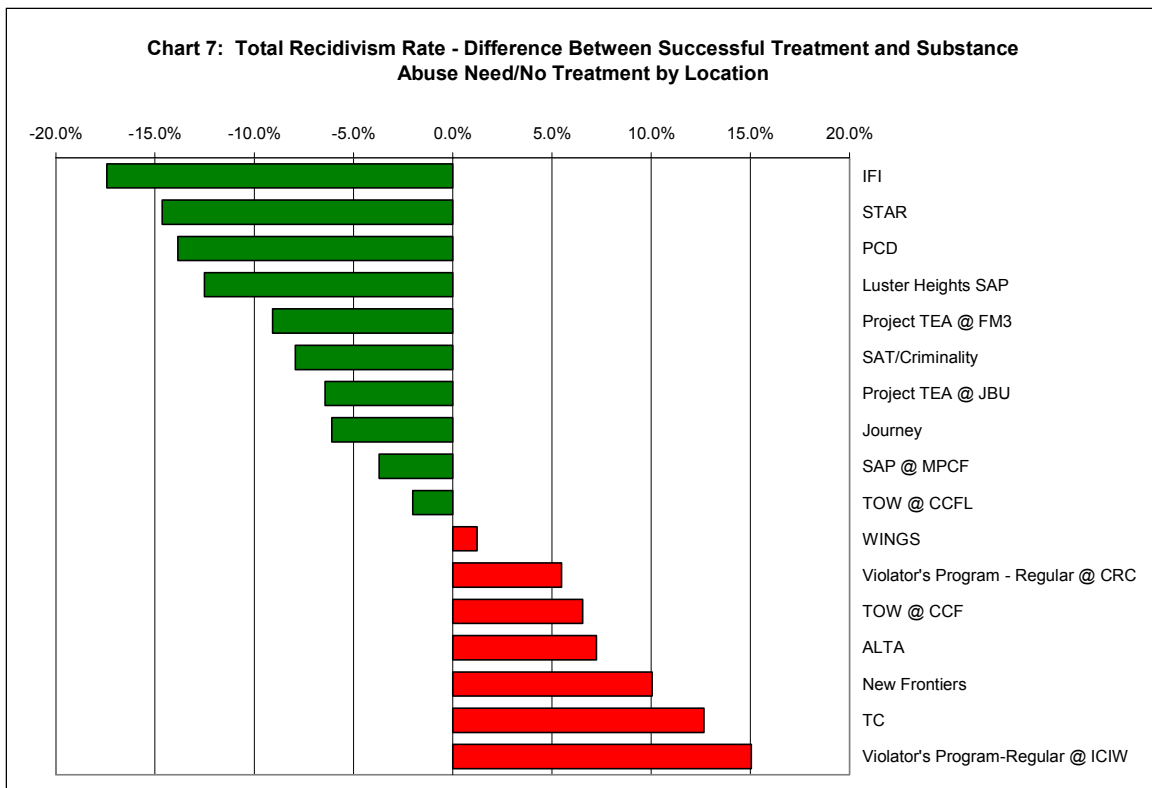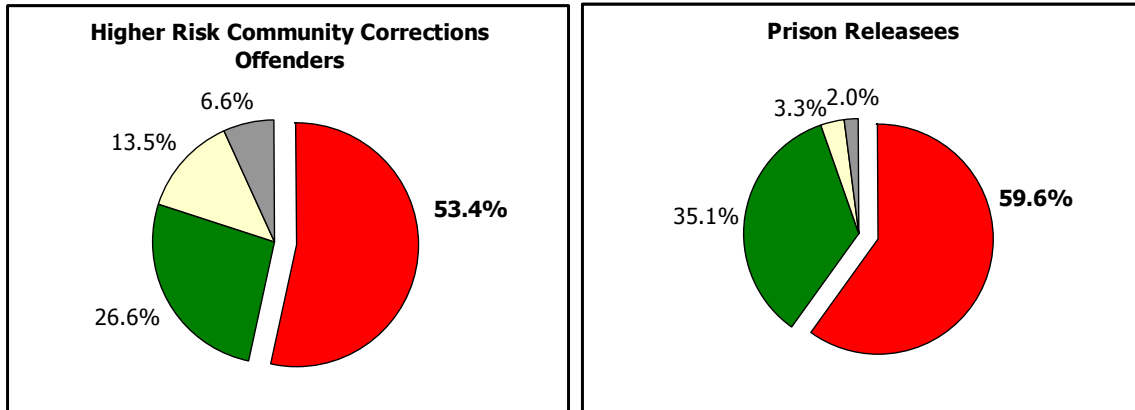
*Prison treatment effectiveness (green bars show programs that reduce recidivism)*

**Total Recidivism Rate - Difference Between Successful Treatment and
Substance Abuse Need/No Treatment by District
(Higher Risk Offenders Only)**



Extent of Recidivism Reduction
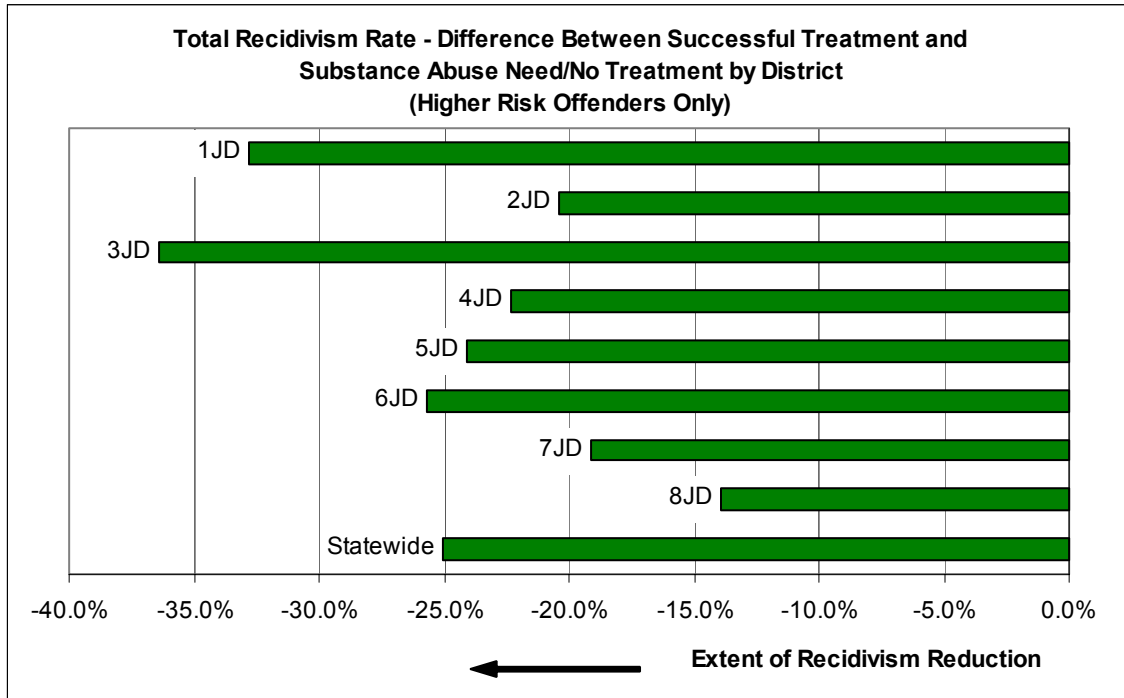
*Community-based corrections treatment effectiveness*

*Example: Analysis by program and offender risk category*

**Dual Diagnosis Program
Total Recidivism Rate - Difference Between Successful Treatment and
Substance Abuse Need/No Treatment by  LSI-R Risk Category
(Higher Risk Offenders Only)**



Extent of Recidivism Reduction
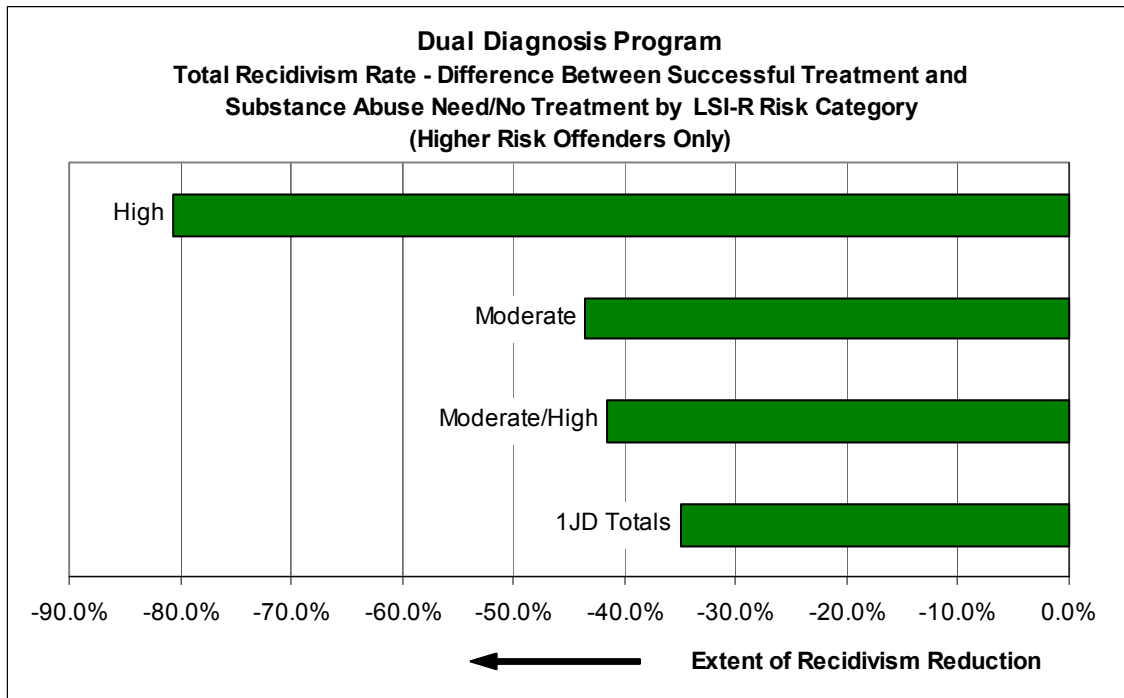
- **An evidence-based practices (EBP) rating system** was implemented in 2007 whereby all DOC-funded interventions in institutions and community-based corrections are rated according to the extent to which are evidence-based: Excellent, Promising or Needs Improvement. Programs identified as needing improvement are implementing improvement plans. **To date, 20 interventions or intervention programs scoring Needs Improvement have been eliminated.**
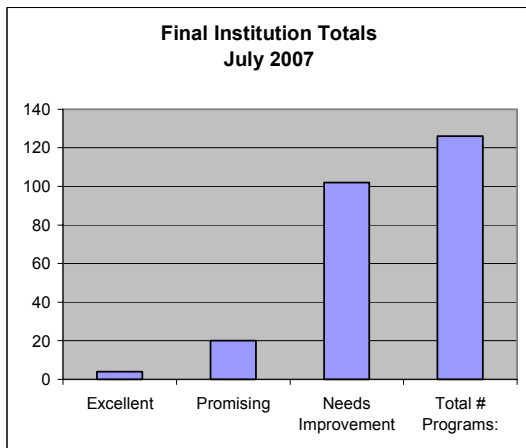
*Example: Program rating system*

| | | Survey Standards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Loc | Intervention | 1) Validated risk assessment that identifies criminogenic needs | 2) Prog/Interv that address's LSI-R criminogenic needs | 3) Documented EBP criteria for interv placement | 4) Documented specific motivational techniques utilized | 5) IQ, Jesnes, behavior, stages of chg, MH, risk level, to match Off to trmt | 6) Flexibility in staff assigned Trtmt types in relation to personality, skill leve, interest | 7) Specific examples of how thinking patterns, feelings & behavior are connected & skill training model utilized to demonstrate use of cognitive behavioral intereventions | 8) Examples of how community support and connections that last are established | 9) Documentation of an external Eval | 10) Documentation of internal performance review or collection of Eval data | 11) Documentation of EBP, motivational interviewing or program specific skills where program/intervention supervisor has been trained | 12) Documentation of clinical supervision skill training of program/intervention supervisor | EBP Program Score E=Excellent P=Promising N=Needs Improve- ment |
| 5th | SMART Day Program-Des Moines | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Excellent |
| 5th | Batterers Ed Enhanced by DCS- Des Moines | Y | Y | N | Y | N | Y | Y | N | N | Y | Y | N | Needs Improve. |

*First-Round EBP Results*

**Final Institution Totals
July 2007**

Categories: Excellent, Promising, Needs Improvement, Total # Programs:
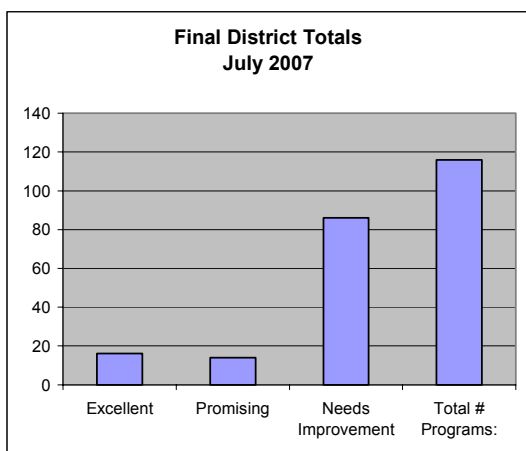
## Institutions

**Top 3 Strengths**
1) Validated risk assessment that identifies criminogenic needs
2) Prog/Interv that address's LSI-R criminogenic needs
11) Documentation of EBP, motivational interviewing or program specific skills where program/intervention supervisor has been trained

**Top 3 Deficits**
9) Documentation of an external Eval
12) Doc. of clinical supervision skill training of program/intervention supervisor
8) Examples of how community support and connections that last are established

**Final District Totals
July 2007**

Categories: Excellent, Promising, Needs Improvement, Total # Programs:

## Districts

**Top 3 Strengths**
2) Prog/Interv that address's LSI-R criminogenic needs
6) Flexibility in staff assigned Trtmt types in relation to personality, skill level, interest
1) Validated risk assessment that identifies criminogenic needs

**Top 3 Deficits**
9) Documentation of an external Eval
8) Examples of how community support and connections that last are established
10) Doc. of internal performance review or collection of Eval data

- **A critical incident reporting (CIR) module** has standardized and streamlined reporting of incidents, which allows the DOC to capture incident information faster, yet more accurately, and to send critical staff notifications. In today's corrections environment it has become increasingly important to analyze this information in order to identify trends, review the effectiveness of existing policies and practices, better train staff and prevent similar incidents from reoccurring. The CIR system collects a vast array of information regarding the incident, offenders and staff involved, use of force, medical attention, after action reviews and more. To ease the burden of data entry, the system is integrated with the case management and medical systems to pull in existing offender and staff information.
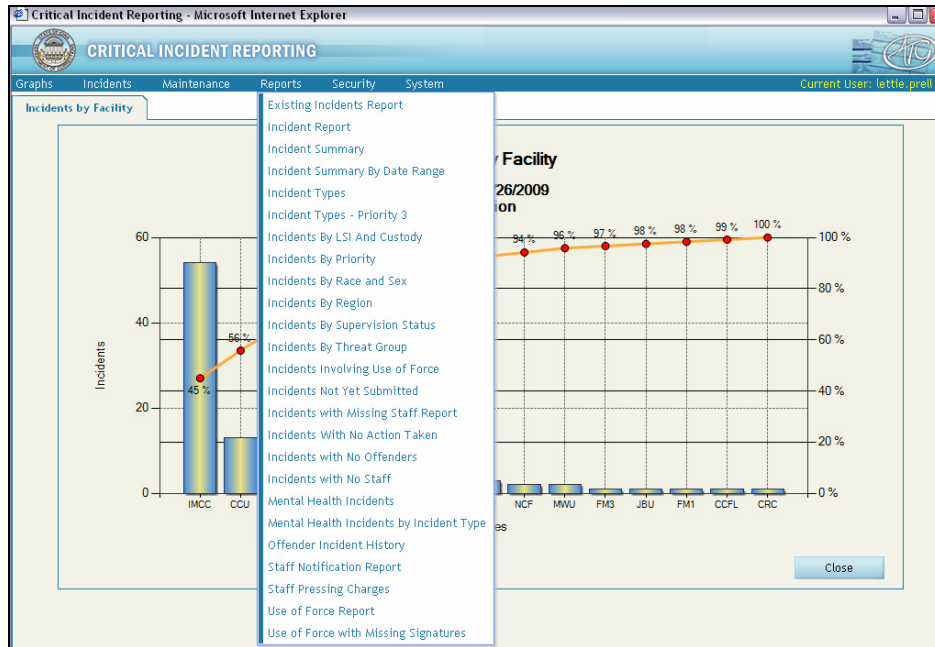
- **Other evaluations** and studies in recent years:

  - ✓ Inmate classification (resulted in new classification system)
  - ✓ Mentally ill offenders in community-based corrections (prevalence estimates to assist in determining need for services)
  - ✓ Private sector prison employment (favorable)
  - ✓ Violator Program (favorable if community aftercare is provided)
  - ✓ Drug Courts (favorable)
  - ✓ Victim Impact for OWI offenders (little impact on recidivism; being eliminated in two districts)

Q: Critical stakeholder groups with whom the Public Works Team should communicate- provide contact information for each.

- Corrections provides sanctions, custody and supervision imposed by judges, based on laws enacted by the legislature. We are suggesting no particular stakeholder contacts at this time.

**Q: List of the operations on which you think the Performance Review should focus:**
1) Where are the greatest opportunities for improved customer service?

- **Offender reentry efforts** based on a wrap-around model to provide comprehensive and coordinated services to offenders reentering Iowa's communities.  As shown in the graph below, a substantial reduction in offender recidivism

**Return Rate to Prison:**
**Reentry Group vs. Non-Reentry (18-Mo. Follow-Up)**

White — Reentry Group: 43.6%, Control Group: 59.6%
Race
Black — Reentry Group: 52.7%, Control Group: 69.7%

Legend: ■ Reentry Group  ■ Control Group

X-axis: % Returned to Prison (0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%)
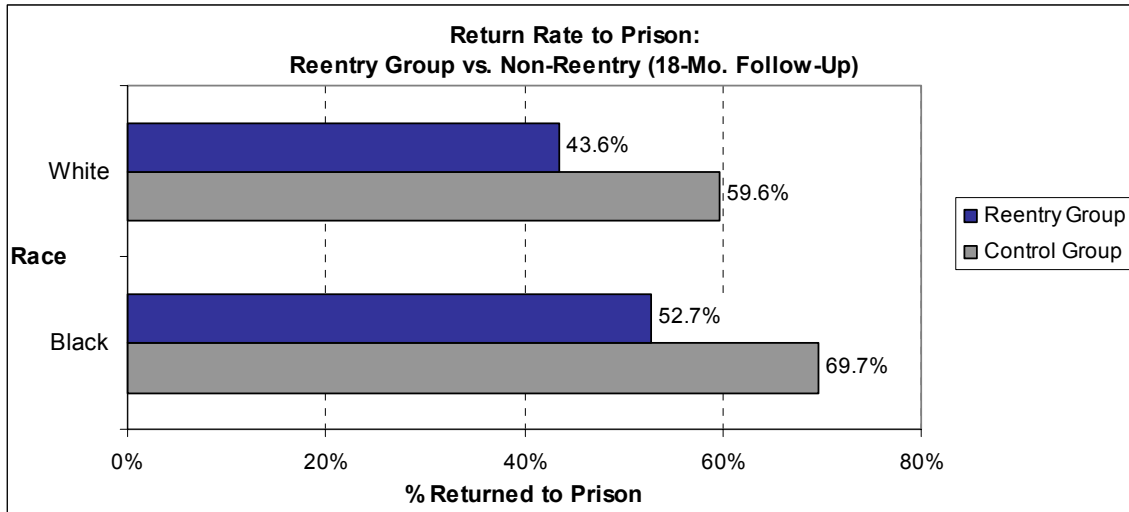
Source: Iowa Division of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning's evaluation of
Going Home: KEYS reentry program for serious and violent offenders

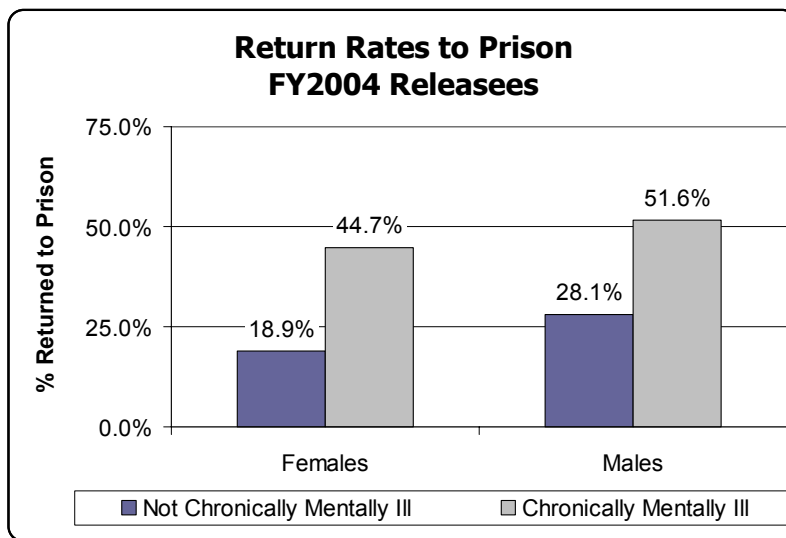- **Reentry for mentally ill offenders** is another area with great potential for reducing the return rate to prison. About 41% of Iowa's prison population is mentally ill, and 26.5% are considered seriously mentally ill. Mentally ill offenders have much higher rates of return to prison than other inmates. The director has recently created a focus group to study this issue and make recommendations (focus groups are described in a following section).

**Return Rates to Prison**
**FY2004 Releasees**

Y-axis: % Returned to Prison (0.0%, 25.0%, 50.0%, 75.0%)

Females — Not Chronically Mentally Ill: 18.9%, Chronically Mentally Ill: 44.7%
Males — Not Chronically Mentally Ill: 28.1%, Chronically Mentally Ill: 51.6%

Legend: ■ Not Chronically Mentally Ill  ■ Chronically Mentally Ill

2) Increased revenues?

- The DOC does not generate revenue.
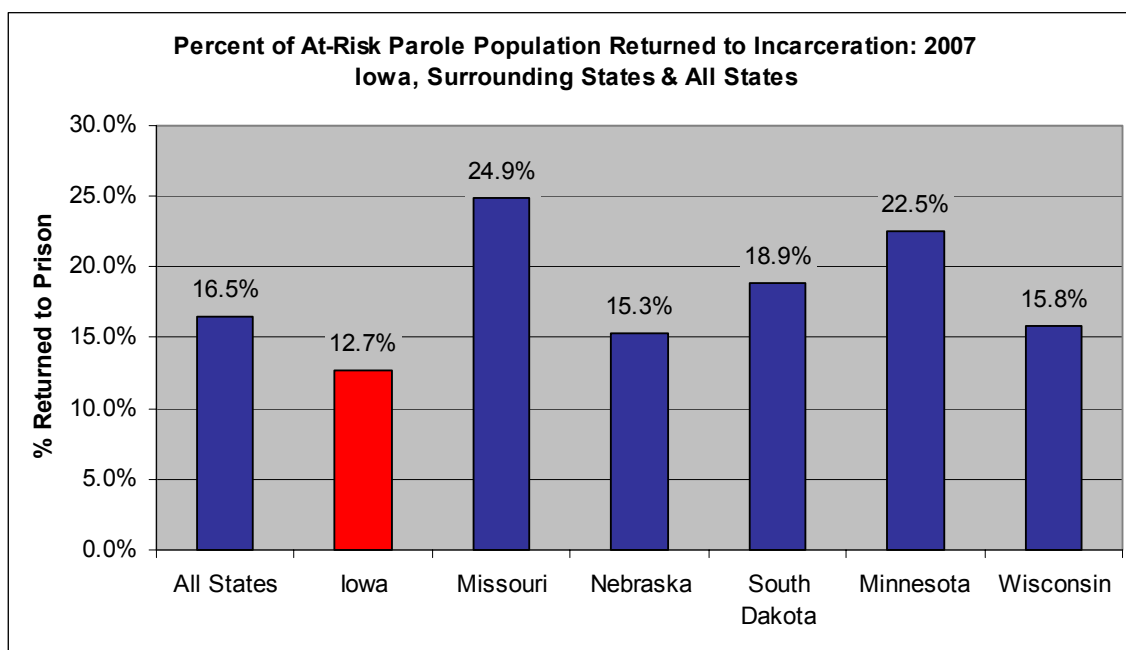
3) Better efficiency?

- **A new round of focus groups** has been named by the director to develop leadership around the issues listed below. The focus group model was developed a few years ago, and proved valuable for identifying improved processes or other recommendations for change.
  - ✓ Build Security Basics.
  - ✓ Disproportionate Representation
  - ✓ Mental Health (focusing initially on offender reentry from institution to community).
  - ✓ Sex Offender (focusing initially on ensuring that each district/institution is consistently implementing new sex offender administrative rules).
  - ✓ Women Offenders.
  - ✓ Redesigning Corrections (or the "WHY?" focus group – identifying and eliminating needless tasks).

- **Inmate eMail** represents a newly implemented efficiency that significantly reduces the amount of DOC personnel time required to manage mail and simultaneously enhances DOC's mail monitoring capabilities. Its built-in keyword search capability automatically marks all emails for review that meet DOC's security criteria, thus eliminating time wasted reviewing benign messages. Inmate eMail reduces the amount of regular inmate mail that is handled by the institution, which in turn reduces the time spent reviewing contents and distributing mail.

Q: State rankings relevant to your department (why) and identify opportunities for improvement?

- Understanding **DOC budget basics** is important background to comparisons. About 77% of the DOC budget is personnel; 23% is operating costs. Preliminary information for FY2009 shows the following was expended on basic care for offenders, which is part of operating costs:
  - ✓ Pharmacy costs: over $9.1 million.
  - ✓ Utilities: over $9.9 million.
  - ✓ Food: over $11.4 million.
  - ✓ Clothing, etc.: over $3.4 million.

- **Prescriptions/Pharmacy.** About 56% of offenders are on prescription medication, and 46% are on psychiatric medication.

- **Medical care of inmates** goes well beyond medication costs, to include health services both within and outside the institutions. Key facts from the FY2008 annual report include:
  - ✓ In-prison nurse encounters: about 122,000.
  - ✓ In-prison physician encounters: about 45,450.
  - ✓ Telemedicine usage with UIHC: 398 times.

✓ Off-site referrals to UIHC: over 6,500 appointments.

- **Iowa ranks 49th in corrections spending.**  In 2006 Iowans spent $121 per capita on corrections.  Compared with other states, only North Dakotans spent less ($116 per capita).  – *US Bureau of Justice Statistics.*

- **Yet Iowa ranks 42nd in imprisonment rates.**  Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Minnesota and Nebraska had lower prison incarceration rates than Iowa in 2007, yet spent between $5 and $62 <u>more</u> on corrections per capita than Iowa.  Perhaps the most comparable of these states, Nebraska, spent $45 more per capita on corrections than Iowa.  However, the incarceration rate in Nebraska is 243 per 100,000 residents versus 291 in Iowa.  – *US Bureau of Justice Statistics.*

- **Iowa has a strong commitment to community corrections.**  Iowa ranks 41st in offenders on community supervision per 100,000 adult residents, and ranks 27th in the ratio of probationers to prisoners (*BJS 2007*), indicating judges' trust in the quality of supervision and services provided by Iowa's eight district departments of correctional services.

- **Iowa has lower parolee return rates to prison.** See graph below.

**Percent of At-Risk Parole Population Returned to Incarceration: 2007
Iowa, Surrounding States & All States**

| State | % Returned to Prison |
| --- | --- |
| All States | 16.5% |
| Iowa | 12.7% |
| Missouri | 24.9% |
| Nebraska | 15.3% |
| South Dakota | 18.9% |
| Minnesota | 22.5% |
| Wisconsin | 15.8% |

*Source: US Bureau of Justice Statistics. Illinois did not report.*

**Q: Your own benchmarking sources:**
1) To whom do you compare yourself?
2) To which organizations do you pay attention?
- As demonstrated in the previous section, the DOC uses state-by-state information available from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics.  This is a

trusted source. We compare ourselves among all states, and with surrounding states. We normally focus on rates and percentages in order to overcome difficulties with comparing ourselves to states of differing size. We are aware that some states operate systems quite different from Iowa (among these are Minnesota, Rhode Island and Delaware), and we take that into consideration.

3) How do you measure the success of your programs?

- The DOC is committed to lowering offender risk by identifying the factors that led an offender to commit crime(s); targeting interventions to address those factors, and evaluating outcomes by reassessing for risk as well as conducting studies to measure recidivism reduction.


Q: Identify other people in your agency with whom your Public Works team member should interview. Provide contact information.

- Jerry Burt, Deputy Director of Eastern Operations - 515/725-5730 or Jerry.Burt@iowa.gov.

- Diann Wilder-Tomlinson, Acting Deputy Director of Western Operations – 515/725-5726 or Diann.Wilder@iowa.gov.

- Brad Hier, Deputy Director of Administration – 515/725-5703 or Brad.Hier@iowa.gov.

- Jerry Bartruff, Acting Deputy Director of Offender Services – 515/725-5713 or Jerry.Bartruff@iowa.gov.