

Outline for Personnel & Finance Committee [Alison Owens]

Diminishing mental health/ physical health

- Residents are at a higher risk of self-harm, SA, violence, victimization
- Medication barriers (due to minimal nurses?) – not receiving their medications (punishment?)
 - o Assess medication continuity since admission to jail (and their status)
 - o Medical screenings
 - o “Were you taking medication prescribed by a doctor for a mental or emotional problem at the time of the [admission to current facility]?”
 - o How can we best accommodate each resident w/ best resident focused care?
- More likely to be reincarcerated with mental health dx – than those without
- Psychopharmacology, individual therapy, self-help groups = best efficacy
- Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Mood Disorders, Chronic brain disorder (schizophrenia, schizoaffective, Brain Physiology, Crisis or Death
 - o Trauma response, reacting due to trauma
- Autistic or on the spectrum - sensory sensitivities
 - o Prone to anxiety, inflexible thoughts, outbursts, can’t understand social cues

Dehumanizing basic human rights

- Limited rights while in DCJ and need to be respected
- Each individual should be treated with grace, **dignity, respect** (KB interview) and as a human being – **values that reflect our society** (KB interview)

Mental health beds/ unit (focus on justice and health - find common ground)

- Process Review; Staffing (trained social workers etc. ex: instead of pressure on deputies to provide care if a resident is in psychosis, having trained MH professionals); and the Physical Environment should not be overlooked as a way of therapeutic measures
- How many nurses are on duty – how many residents per nurse?
- There is a lack of available secure mental health beds nationally, which prevents effective and timely transfer of residents (and limited staff within the jail)
- Enhancing MH services in DCJ to minimize risk and improve care
- ITP – getting individuals out of their cell, offer ways for them to participate in their own recovery/ mental health journey
- Solitary confinement: depression, can cause permanent or semi-permanent changes to brain physiology in a short time span, an existential crisis

Our main intention has always been to rehabilitate but from my experience and others shared with me, the jails have taken an unethical, inhumane, and punitive punishment on its residents. Although, society and its governments find it necessary to punish individuals for violating the law, the practice that happens inside of those walls is found to be unnecessary. There are penalties to pay, I fully understand that... but the way we punish instead of rehabilitate should be abandoned. We should never punish someone out of anger or frustration but take a kind and considerate view on how we can be of maximum service to them as that is our only aim – to keep them safe and for those individuals to

become productive members of society. We don't want to diminish the usefulness we could actually have on society.

Personal Story – WCJ

- Someone who was struggling with MDD, PTSD, Anxiety, Trauma, Rape etc.
- Heroin user at the age of 14, IV-H user at the age of 15, OD at 15 – multiple OD's
- Been in jail in Cook County, Waukesha, Milwaukee etc.
- My time in Waukesha County was nothing short of traumatic. I can hear and envision every moment. I can hear the CO's yelling at a lady - laying on her boat on the floor after asking when she would be release as bugs crawled at her feet. I hear women crying, saw sadness and anxiousness.
- Triggered an emotional reaction within me as I was w/d from heroin in jail wanting to die every minute I was alive in there. Fearful to speak up as I didn't want to endure anymore emotional pain.
- I was charged with possession, paraphernalia etc – 18m sober – charges were dropped
- I was too fearful to go back to jail or potentially go to prison – I was going to drop dirty at WCS – Pretrial for drug treatment court – I decided to go into residential treatment for the 2nd time in 2014. Sober from heroin since 2014 – sobriety date of 04-10-2017 (almost 5 yr)
- Since engaging in therapy, treatment etc. I have been able to become a productive member of society, positive engagement with law enforcement through working at Tellurian Detox, Serve as the treatment chair of Area 75 for Alcoholics Anonymous, Successful manage a TMS Center at Connections Counseling, serve on the Overdose Fatality Review Board for Dane County - and give back to my community - striving for a change.
- That person behind the bars, in the back of the squad car may very well be an individual that becomes an extremely beneficial member of society and to the community.