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Cruel and Unusual: A Look Into Prisoner Mental Health Care

Adonia Delgado Hipp
Dominican University of California

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Cruel and Unusual: A Look Into Prisoner Reentry

Scholarly Works Conference
Coraima Delgado Hipp
Dominican University of California
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Background




The term “**re-entry,**” is defined as, “Programs and services designed to help former prisoners **successfully reintegrate** into communities following their release from jails and prisons and to address the numerous problems they experience” (Wheeler & Patterson, 2008).


Methods




Results



*“Matt Cate, who had been the head of the CDCR came to talk to a group of us, and said, you know, ‘I want my inmates to have **access to education**. I want my inmates to have **access to healthcare**. But when people look at me and say ‘Well I’ve never broken the law and here I am. I can’t afford an education. I can’t afford healthcare, and I haven’t done anything wrong.’ He’s like, **how am I going to argue that inmates deserve it more?’”** (Interview, 1).*



*“I didn’t have any tools. I didn’t have the knowledge that I have now going through my rehabilitative process because those higher levels, they just didn’t have programs to dig at your **childhood traumas**, to understand your thoughts about masculinity and how they impact your ways of thinking” (Interview, 2).*



*“As years go by and the research comes out, I have seen that the department is growing. It didn't always use to be this way. Yes, the health was not always there because **when I first started it was really a lot about just locking people up.** We would lock people up if you were always on the run, or you have a drug issue and you would just come in all the time you know high or whatever. **That was how we would deal with detox** because you can't be a danger on the streets...the community is involved now. **We are involved with the community so it's getting there**” (Interview, 4).*

Conclusions



While various organizations are working to remove economical and societal obstacles, ***revisions in policy*** must occur before former parolees can have real opportunities that ***promote success*** and help to ***reduce recidivism.***



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Research Assistants

Study Participants





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