



Transition from Jail to Community Initiative

TO: Bill Brown, Sheriff; Guadalupe Rabago, Chief Probation Officer; James Herman, Presiding Judge, Santa Barbara County Superior Court; Joyce E. Dudley, District Attorney; Raimundo Montes De Oca, Public Defender; Alice Glegorn, Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services; Pat Walsh, City of Lompoc Police Department

CC: Mark Mahurin, Timothy McWilliams, Tom Jenkins, Kristy Glisson, Kimberly Shean, Tanja Heitman, Dean Farrah, Darrel Parker, Gordon Auchincloss, Mag Nicola, Michael Craft, Andrew Vesper

FROM: Kevin Warwick, Gary Christensen, Cybele Kotonias, and Jeremy Levy

DATE: July 16, 2015

RE: Santa Barbara County TJC Accomplishments and Next Steps

The Transition from Jail to Community (TJC) Initiative seeks to improve public safety and enhance the success of individuals returning to the community from local jails through effective jail-community partnerships that utilize an innovative, evidence-based transition model developed by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and the Urban Institute (Urban). Santa Barbara County was selected in December 2012 as one of fourteen TJC learning site communities. TJC learning sites receive multi-year technical assistance to implement the TJC model, thereby developing a jail transition strategy responsive to local circumstances, resources, and priorities. The Urban/NIC TJC team has prepared this memorandum to provide a summary of accomplishments by Santa Barbara County in implementing its version of the TJC jail-to-community transition model since being selected as a TJC learning site. This memorandum also presents key next steps that Santa Barbara County should undertake in order to solidify the progress made to date and to continue to address remaining gaps in the jail transition process beyond the conclusion of the technical assistance period on June 30, 2015.

When Santa Barbara applied to be a TJC learning site, its intended outcomes included: 1.) Implementing risk and need tools and integrating them for use throughout the criminal justice continuum, in order to match inmates to available programming as well as guide alternative interventions, release planning, and alternative release determinations. Santa Barbara expressed particular interest in differentiating offender characteristics in the AB-109 population, which was largely at high risk of committing violence in the jail; 2.) Defining roles of new staff positions provided under AB-109 funding to minimize duplication of reentry efforts; 3.) Developing and utilizing an integrated common case plan to be used for all inmates prior to inmate release; and 4.) Building upon preexisting partnerships between criminal justice agencies in the County as well as developing new partnerships in the community.

Santa Barbara County has made significant progress in addressing these goals, as well as related challenges that arose over the course of the project. Early on in the project, Santa Barbara adopted a reentry framework based on an offender's risk to recidivate upon release, and intended to address criminogenic needs. The core team implemented this framework to identify inmate needs, direct them to services in the jail accordingly, and create an appropriate discharge plan. Notably, the Sheriff's Office also overhauled its Sheriff's Treatment Program (STP). Collaboration fostered by the TJC process helped to clarify staff roles, especially those staff who were responsible for specific target populations in the discharge planning process (as noted in the application, multiple agencies received funding for new reentry staff through AB-109). The TJC framework also identified areas to prioritize new resources, such as funding for new staff positions in the STP, or investing in upgrades to the Jail Management System (JMS). Finally, through TJC, the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department have collaborated with a number



of justice-system partners on overlapping issues of interest (e.g., reentry of mental health clients), and, through trainings, have engaged new community-based partners in order to identify opportunities for further collaboration.

TJC Accomplishments

The details of Santa Barbara's progress and the recommended next steps are outlined below, categorized by pieces of the TJC model.

Leadership, Vision, and Organizational Culture

Development of an effective jail transition strategy requires the active involvement of key decision makers to set expectations, identify important issues, articulate a clear vision of success, and engage staff and other stakeholders in the effort. Leaders from both the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department, as well as other system stakeholders, and the community must be actively engaged.

Program Accomplishments

- The TJC initiative has maintained support from local leadership throughout the TJC process. Sheriff Bill Brown has demonstrated a significant commitment to the TJC project by allocating the resources necessary to hire in-jail programming staff and expand the jail's data management system. Two recently appointed Commanders are supportive of reentry as part of the Sheriff's overall mission, and the new STP program supervisor is very experienced in best-practice models. Leadership at the Probation Department has similarly allocated significant staff time to support the County's reentry work under TJC, committing information technology staff and resources to enhance data-sharing across partner agencies. These resource commitments indicate that local leaders are actively engaged in the effort. In addition, the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP), the local criminal justice coordinating committee, is regularly apprised of TJC activities at its quarterly meetings.
- Key decision makers at the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department represent the most actively engaged partners, with consistent attendance at core team calls and active leadership on all TJC work. At the outset of its TJC work, Santa Barbara assigned two site coordinators to manage TJC operations. Kimberly Shean, a Probation Manager, shares TJC site coordinator responsibilities with Mark Mahurin, a lieutenant (ret.) with the Sheriff's Office.
- Representatives from Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS), Santa Barbara County Superior Court, the Public Defender's Office, and the District Attorney's Office also participate on the core team. Together, this broader set of decision-makers identifies important issues in local reentry and articulate a vision for success.
- Management staff at the participating justice agencies have developed a collaborative relationship working towards the common goal of enhancing reentry in the County. While cross-agency working relationships existed prior to TJC, multiple justice stakeholders noted in interviews that their collaboration increased greatly as a result of their participation in the TJC core team.
- Line staff from the participating agencies are also collaborating regularly as a result of the County's reentry efforts over the past two years. The details of this collaboration are described in later sections of this memo, but include data-sharing at the individual client and aggregate level, coordinating program structures and discharge planning among line staff, and engaging in strategic discussions regarding the County's approach to reentry.



- The core team has worked to create a system culture conducive to reentry by engaging partners at all levels of the criminal justice system in TJC work. Staff from community-based providers and organizations, Pretrial Services (Santa Barbara County Superior Court), ADMHS, the District Attorney's Office, and the Public Defender's Office have all received training in evidence-based practice in reentry, the TJC model, and/or Thinking For a Change (T4C) – an integrated, cognitive behavioral change program provided to offenders in the jail.
- The Sheriff's Office has committed to promoting organizational culture change within the jail in order to support reentry efforts. Classification and custody deputies are attending trainings to promote jail-wide awareness of the reentry strategy.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- As a systems approach, TJC requires a high level of consistent communication between partner agencies. Following the technical assistance period, we recommend that core team members continue to collaborate and meet regularly in order to realize common goals of implementing, formalizing, and improving comprehensive transition efforts from the jail to the community.
- In addition to working with participants on the core team, TJC members from the Sheriff's Office and Probation should also continue outreach efforts to engage stakeholders from the Santa Barbara Superior Court, District Attorney's Office, and Public Defender's Office regarding the TJC process. Court stakeholders must be apprised of jail-based programming in order to ensure a common understanding of the reentry strategy, align practices across agencies, and address stakeholder concerns promptly.
- Based on the success and progress to date, leadership at the Sheriff's Office and Probation should continue to resource reentry efforts and provide the necessary leadership and vision to push the reentry process further. Given funding streams associated with AB-109 offenders, it is also recommended that periodic briefings continue to occur for the CCP. Recommendations on specific process changes for furthering the effort are addressed throughout this memo.

Collaborative Structure and Joint Ownership

Establishing joint ownership of the jail transition issue between the jail and the community is a bedrock principle of TJC. This is a functional necessity for successful jail transition, as no one agency or organization has the resources, expertise, and authority to address the many criminogenic issues present in the jail population both pre- and post-release.

Program Accomplishments

- Tom Jenkins has served as an active core team member, representing the larger Santa Barbara community and liaising with community partners regarding trainings. His consistent presence at core team meetings provides an important community perspective in strategic reentry planning.
- Santa Barbara also developed a Quality Assurance committee, and the design of this group as a public-private collaboration powerfully reflects joint ownership of the jail transition issue. This group is working to develop and implement a process to ensure that jail correctional counselors, probation officers, and community providers contracting with Probation are all adhering to evidence-based practices and maintaining program fidelity.
- Core team members developed a localized reentry glossary of terms for reentry partners in order to ensure that core terms and concepts are communicated with clarity and consistency across different



partners. By formalizing a common language of reentry through this glossary, partners indicate a commitment to ongoing collaboration and joint ownership of the jail transition.

- The core team has also organized multiple community trainings that have been well attended by Probation providers and other community-based organizations. These trainings served as a critical opportunity to educate community partners on evidence-based practices and the TJC model, and build relationships between justice agency staff and community representatives.
- Through work with the Inside/Outside group, the core team has collaborated with ADMHS and its crisis service provider, CARES, to strategize around reentry for inmates requiring mental health services. This work has resulted in improvements to the jail's medication procedures on inmate release, and improved communication between jail staff and CARES staff to avoid medication lapses.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- The national team recommends that additional community partners be invited to engage in strategic discussions surrounding reentry. This is a critical step to increase joint ownership of reentry locally. Representatives from the community agencies providing support to individuals on release should be engaged in strategic discussions to lend their insight to the reentry vision and support to its implementation. Partners involved in the process should also represent the diversity of communities to which offenders will return.
- While trainings have introduced community-based organizations to evidence-based practices in the context of jail reentry, there is more work needed to educate and integrate community partners into the jail transition process. The Sheriff's Office should continue to cultivate direct relationships with its local community partners in order to facilitate a successful handoff of its reentry clients, particularly for individuals returning to the community without probation supervision.

Data-driven Understanding of Local Reentry

A data-driven approach to reentry involves the collection of objective, empirical data and the use of regular analysis of those data to inform and drive decision-making and policy formation. Regular data analysis and review of findings are critical both to formulate an accurate understanding of the local reentry landscape and to inform decision-making around jail transition.

Program Accomplishments

- The Santa Barbara core team has made significant strides to ensure that risk and need data are available to inform reentry programming and practice. The implementation of a shared risk assessment planning database was instrumental to Santa Barbara's jail reentry strategy, in particular for the implementation of jail programming guided by risk to recidivate and criminogenic need. Probation's IT department committed significant resources to expand the risk assessment database for use in the jail, and granted database access to jail staff. As a result, jail staff are now able to use these data to determine inmate eligibility for the STP program.
- An early priority of the TJC core team was to evaluate the Jail Management System (JMS) and provide the data that would be necessary for program implementation, self-evaluation, and sustainability within the TJC initiative. The Sheriff's Office has worked closely with a jail data systems consultant manager to improve its capability to generate needed reports. The data consultant conducted an evaluation of the JMS capacity and is now working to develop automated data reports for the Sheriff's Office. These



reports will provide data necessary to meet AB-109 reporting requirements, as well as data on critical measures to inform reentry planning.

- The TJC core team developed a data collection template for tracking participation in the STP, and programming staff are currently tracking these measures in Excel spreadsheets.
- The technical assistance team worked with the core team to develop a template of core measures to regularly track the County's reentry processes and ensure that practices and policies are shaped by local data. The core team has been able to provide some portions of these data during the technical assistance process.
- Initial conversations between the TJC team and ADMHS have led to a consensus that data-sharing between the jail and CARES should be a reentry priority in order to better track the number of released jail inmates who, based upon a mental health diagnosis, are acting on the referrals from jail discharge planners and receiving medication upon release.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- Due to limitations in the jail data management system, the County's capacity to measure its core reentry processes and operations is relatively restricted. However, process measures serve as intermediate reentry outcomes, and are an important tool for the County to capture its reentry strategy implementation progress. Because the STP model has only recently been solidified and fully staffed, reporting core performance measures regularly and in a consistent manner moving forward will be critical to monitor the progress of reentry practices. Robust data collection will also enable the County to consider reentry outcomes in the future, including recidivism rates and reintegration outcomes for program participants.
- The jail's data consultant is currently preparing data reports for both AB 109 and reentry measures, and the Sheriff's Office expects that pulled data reports will be available by summer 2015. The national team recommends that the core team regularly review data reports together, and continue to have strategic conversations around the use of data to inform reentry practice.
- As the County moves towards a fully collaborative approach to jail transition, it is also important that all justice agency partners are engaged in future discussions surrounding data management and data-sharing. The national team recommends that reentry data collection efforts be planned by a collaborative team with representatives from both criminal justice agencies and community partners.
- The Sheriff's data management system must provide aggregate risk information on its own population in order to facilitate timely reentry planning and programming. While Probation's risk assessment database offers a step in that direction, the Sheriff's Office at present cannot independently analyze the risk levels of its population. This will be all the more important as the Sheriff's Office looks to further expand its reentry services for its population.

Targeted Intervention Strategy

Targeted intervention strategies comprise the basic building blocks of jail transition. Improving transition at the individual level involves introducing specific interventions at critical points along the jail-to-community continuum. The underlying premise is that interventions at these key points can improve reintegration and reduce reoffending, thereby increasing public safety. Screening and assessment, transition planning, and program interventions are key elements of this strategy.



Program Accomplishments

- In 2013, the Sheriff's Office implemented the Initial Screening Tool (IST) to measure risk of recidivism for individuals booked into the jail. Understanding the risk level of the jail population is critical to inform program delivery and identify appropriate candidates for STP (discussed below). A data pull conducted on January 6, 2015 demonstrated that 91.2% of inmates in the jail had a risk to reoffend score on file at the jail. This is a major accomplishment in ensuring a consistent screening and assessment process for the County.
- The core team has significantly modified STP (originally established in 1996 as a drug and alcohol treatment program) in order to provide cognitive-behavioral programming aimed at recidivism reduction. STP now targets inmates at a high risk to recidivate, and provides them with additional targeted programming and treatment informed by assessment of their criminogenic needs. As of early 2015, the program was fully staffed with counselors and a full-time program manager.
- The Sheriff's Office is working to ensure that STP serves a high volume of individuals at a high risk for recidivism. Moving forward, line staff involved in the STP process will convene a regular meeting in which they discuss which inmates are eligible for the program, based on the criteria established by the TJC core team. Additionally, the program will have open enrollment, meaning that inmates do not have to wait for the beginning of the T4C curriculum to enter the program. A revised program schedule will be implemented by the middle of June 2015.
- The T4C curriculum, an integrated, cognitive behavioral change program for individuals at a high risk to recidivate, is now the core program within STP. Jail programs staff, probation staff, and community groups received training on the T4C curriculum in September 2013. Subsequent trainings have helped familiarize community partners and security staff with the curriculum, as well as expand knowledge of the curriculum among programming staff. In April 2015, the TJC team coordinated a training on the T4C curriculum and the role of community providers in successful reentry. Sergeants working in jail classification also attended the T4C training, and are familiar with the logic motivating the programming structure.
- The core team has modified its discharge planning process to minimize duplication of efforts of multiple agencies involved, including staff from the jail, Probation, and the Public Defender's Office. The process is coordinated so that all STP clients receive a comprehensive discharge plan to address the need areas identified in the COMPAS assessment, while lower risk inmates receive a Community Resources Guide upon release. STP counselors coordinate discharge plans for STP inmates released without supervision, while Probation discharge planners coordinate plans for STP inmates that are also Probation clients.
- In addition to T4C trainings, the core team has organized two trainings for providers and other community-based organizations regarding evidence-based practices and treatment for individuals returning from the jail to the community.
- Through work with the Inside/Outside Group convened by ADMHS, the core team has identified a number of opportunities for collaboration with mental health partners to ensure a more robust transition effort. One success occurred when the jail psychiatrist agreed to write medication prescriptions for transitioning inmates with a mental health diagnosis for two weeks of medication plus a refill, which is available for pick up at a local CARES service office. This was an improvement on the previous process, in which prescriptions provided only one week of medication following release.
- The TJC national team and members of the core team have been working with Pretrial Services to implement a pretrial risk assessment tool, which would identify inmates who are good candidates for pretrial release. Pretrial Services piloted the Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (VPRAI),



following a webinar presented by the Pretrial Justice Institute and coordinated by the TJC national team. Pretrial Services is currently working to calibrate the instrument to Santa Barbara County, and will implement the tool in the near future.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- The TJC core team must continually work in the future to ensure that the STP program does not drift from these established processes and criteria.
- Other changes to STP are intended to ensure that eligible inmates are promptly identified amidst changes in the jail population due to Proposition 47. STP will now be a sixty day program instead of ninety days. The program will also admit unsentenced inmates. This will require coordination between jail staff and probation officers, who are familiar with inmates' plea agreements, to identify unsentenced inmates who will be in custody long enough to complete the program.
- Sheriff's Office staff at all levels are working to develop an incentive structure that will encourage program participation among the STP target population, and corresponding sanctions that will not bar this population from programming for minor violations. Conversations on sanctions should also serve as a starting point to create broader awareness among staff of the relationship between jail-system culture and reentry.
- The Sheriff's Office should take steps to ensure that its entire programming model, not only STP, is guided by inmate risk and need. The population of individuals participating in STP is relatively small compared to the population of the jail, and there has been little discussion among the core team regarding what other programming resources are currently in the jail and how placement in those programs should be guided. While it was crucial that the core team prioritized STP during the TJC initiative, ensuring a more comprehensive programming case flow based on risk and need throughout the jail should be a goal moving forward.
- It is still unknown how the passage of Proposition 47 will impact the long-term composition of the jail population in Santa Barbara. The core team should continually monitor the impact of the law and make needed adjustments to ensure that the program model meets the needs of the jail and County at any given time.
- The core team should expand on the work already completed to ensure the County's discharge planning system is comprehensive. It will be important for the core team to track data to ensure high and medium risk inmates are receiving proper planning when the data systems have the capacity for such an analysis. In the interim, the core team can also discuss potential gaps in the process. An additional area for further work will be discussing what programs in the community are available to STP and other higher risk inmates who are released without probation supervision.
- A key long-term challenge identified by the Quality Assurance Committee is ensuring that inmates are referred to community housing that is appropriate to their level of risk and need. This challenge arises because there are limited beds available at programs deemed evidence-based, and because released inmates in immediate need of housing are often referred to any home with available space, regardless of program type. The TJC national team has recommended that a first step toward addressing this challenge would be for the Quality Assurance Committee to pull data on housing availability by program type. Moving forward, it will also be important to note that agencies differ in the levels of service they can provide to the target population, and the Committee may designate specific providers as core providers to hold to higher standards of quality assurance.



- The core team should continue to collaborate with the Inside/Outside group, working long-term to create a co-occurring jail and mental health program. This model would address issues identified through previous discussions, such as ensuring that released inmates with mental health needs are acting on referrals to treatment, that they are picking up their medications, that there are no lapses in medication provision, and that treatment provided within the jail has continuity with treatment provided within the community.
- The core team should continue working with Pretrial Services to assist in the implementation of the VPRAI for its use with various lower risk incarcerated populations, inclusive of those afflicted with mental illness.

Sustainability and Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation involves the use of objective, observable information and data to guide operations, monitor progress, and inform decision-making about changes or improvements that may need to be made to the initiative. Sustainability involves the use of strategies and mechanisms to ensure that the gains or progress of the initiative are sustained over time despite changes in leadership, policy, funding, and staffing.

Program Accomplishments

- As noted previously, Sheriff Brown has demonstrated a clear commitment to the TJC initiative by allocating additional resources to the project when necessary during the technical assistance period to support meaningful reentry work. The construction of the new reentry facility is also a major undertaking, and demonstrates broad support for the TJC model goals. Leadership at the Probation Department has similarly allocated significant staff time to support the County's reentry work under TJC, committing information technology staff and resources to enhance data-sharing across partner agencies.
- Core team staff have started the process of documenting their procedures, a critical step to ensure that the gains made in reentry practices sustain through changes in staff. For example, the core team has documented the discharge planning process and reviewed it collaboratively.
- The Quality Assurance Committee has been the primary body through which the TJC core team has worked to improve service delivery for released inmates entering the community and encourage the use of evidence-based practices by community providers. The Committee has been working with providers in the community contracting with Probation to conduct self-evaluations with regards to their fidelity to evidence-based practices, in order for the Committee to create an inventory of providers with strong evidence-based program fidelity.
- As noted previously, the core team has also developed a glossary of reentry terms to inform collaborative jail transition work in the County. This was a critical step to sustain the gains made through collaboration and joint training; by creating a universal guide to reentry terms, the core team ensures that the shared language they have developed through TJC collaboration can be easily shared with new leadership and staff.
- While Santa Barbara has struggled with data challenges throughout the technical assistance process, the team has worked to derive and analyze necessary data to inform strategy at critical decision points. Most recently, the team considered the impact of Proposition 47 on the County's reentry strategy. This information is critical to discussions about possible changes to the STP population inside the jail, as Proposition 47 will impact the population currently targeted for enrollment.



Recommendations and Next Steps

- The core team should determine how meetings will continue following the end of technical assistance. It is expected that the core team will continue to meet regularly, but the team should determine if TJC will be a subcommittee of another local entity, how frequently to hold meetings, who will be responsible for attending and moving the strategy forward, and how progress will be reported to and monitored by leadership.
- The Sheriff's Office funds its entire programming staff through the Inmate Welfare Fund, for which funds may be reduced in the future. The Sheriff's Office should consider programming staff as an essential component of the jail's daily operation, and provide the necessary programming resources based on best practice models.
- The Sheriff's Office will need to expand its programming staff in the long term in order to run three programming units in the new reentry facility when it opens. The Sheriff's Office should explore whether staffing its programming units in part through a private vendor would be cost-effective for the County. Private vendors can provide staff that have the skillsets necessary to deliver jail-based programming.
- As noted above, process measures data should be collected regularly and inform decision-making. Based on the current status of the programming model, important areas for continuous monitoring are the risk composition of the jail population and, accordingly, the jail's capacity to recruit into STP based on existing entry criteria. The core team should also monitor that programming is being allocated based on risk and need, including STP enrollment, other programs, discharge planning, and services referred to in the community.
- Quality assurance efforts should be expanded to monitor internal processes within the justice system, such as program delivery and assessment fidelity, in addition to the current quality assurance efforts being coordinated with outside providers. Quality assurance efforts should eventually include evaluation of all identified processes and outcomes associated with jail reentry and transition practices to assist in decision making, resource allocation, and cost/benefit analyses.
- All reentry processes need to be thoroughly documented, both as an exercise in identifying gaps in the processes as well as sustaining them when staff turnover in the future. Although there is currently a detailed documentation of discharge planning, no other processes are currently documented.
- The Santa Barbara County TJC collaborative should prioritize areas for enhancing resources through seeking grants or other means, and ensure that some of those resources can be dispersed to community partners. This will help the collaborative be strategic rather than reactive in its grant-writing activity and develop further understanding among community partners as to why Santa Barbara is seeking funding for some purposes over others and why specific partners are or are not involved.
- NIC has approved a proposal from the Sheriff's Office for an NIC training module to be held in 2016 that will provide an overview of evidence based practice, the TJC model, and jail programming to all jail staff. This training, should improve staff communication and supervision skills, and in turn the overall jail culture, in preparation for the opening of the new reentry facility in late 2017.



Summary

Santa Barbara County has made tremendous strides working as a collaborative body to implement a reentry framework based on inmates' risk to recidivate and criminogenic needs, overhauling and investing resources in the Sheriff's Treatment Program, creating a coordinated discharge planning process, and working with other government agencies, community providers, and community partners to address the challenges faced by inmates being released into the community. Amongst the changes brought on by AB-109 and Proposition 47, this is very challenging work. We believe Santa Barbara County jail reentry stakeholders will continue to work together and make their impressive programming model and community-based resources as effective as possible in enhancing reintegration outcomes and protecting the public. Although much has been accomplished, there is still much to be done, as noted above. We are confident that Santa Barbara County has the commitment and the capacity to tackle the work that remains. It has been both an honor and a pleasure to work with Santa Barbara County during the last two years.