

Abstract:

Background: With the development of addiction treatment services in prisons, the issue of post-penitentiary care also arises, which seeks the social reintegration of an individual leaving prison. In many cases, it is difficult for these clients to be successful in everyday life. Society is not able to respond effectively to the complex needs of these people; clients often fail due to unmet needs, they return to substance abuse and crime. In this context, it is necessary to pay more attention to the needs of clients after leaving prison.

Aims: The aim of the work was to describe the needs of clients who use post-release addiction treatment services, from the perspective of providers of these services. The work tries to draw attention to the issue of reintegration of persons returning from prison in the context of addiction treatment. The following research questions were defined: What are the needs of clients after leaving prison? To what extent do the provided services meet the needs of clients? What factors limit the possibilities of meeting the needs of clients after leaving prison?

Methods: The research sample consisted of 6 representatives of outpatient post-release addiction treatment services. Service managers or employees with long-term experience with this target group were purposely selected. Data collection took place using qualitative methods, specifically semi-structured interviews. The obtained data were transcribed into a text editor and subsequently analyzed using the method of coding and clustering. The research was based on the principle of anonymity and voluntariness.

Results: A total of 11 categories of client needs were identified (basic living needs, housing, work, financial security, health, relationships, mental health, addiction, life skills development, meaningful leisure time and abandonment of criminal lifestyle). The contract towards post-penitentiary care services is typically to address social issues, relapse prevention or to provide residential addiction treatment. The services respond flexibly to the needs of clients and place a high emphasis on an individual approach. Reasons for not looking for the services include impaired insight in drug addiction, low number of services, limited capacity, or lack of information about the existence of the service. Meeting the needs of clients is limited by the absence of affordable housing, achievable social benefits or the fragmentation of services in the post-penitentiary care system. There is a lack of expanded opportunities for cooperation with the prison in the field of penitentiary care, which is a key prerequisite for effective post-penitentiary care.

Conclusion and recommendation: Despite the efforts of non-profit organizations, there is a group of clients who fail to integrate into society, return to substance use and go back to prison. Addressing failed reintegration requires the cooperation and coordinated action of all stakeholders, both public and non-profit. Systemic changes in affordable housing and immediate financial support are needed, which is a key prerequisite for a successful return. The network of services needs to be further expanded, in relation to both penitentiary and post-penitentiary care, in order to create more possibilities for comprehensive client work with an emphasis on an individual approach arising from the client's needs.

Keywords: post-release addiction treatment services, post-penitentiary care, imprisonment, needs