

P4H PROJECT BRIEF

HEALTH PRIORITIES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH INCARCERATION EXPERIENCE: WHAT LIES BENEATH

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The Collaborating Centre for Prison Health and Education (CCPHE) entered into a partnership in 2011 with Long-term Inmates Now in the Community (L.I.N.C.) and Women in2 Healing (Wi2H), both networks of individuals with incarceration experience. Members from these organizations participated in discussions to identify priorities for a preventive health project. The Participatory Prison Preventive Health Project (P4H) arose out of these discussions.

PROJECT MISSION STATEMENT

“Promoting holistic health and preventive practices for individuals with incarceration experience in mental health and addiction, cancer, and blood-borne infectious diseases by sharing knowledge, supporting self-advocacy, and strengthening relationships.”



Figure 1: Iceberg Analogy of Health Priorities with Underlying Causes as Identified by IIE¹

WHAT IS THE P4H PROJECT?

Funded by the Vancouver Foundation, the P4H project invites academic researchers, community organizations, and health care providers to collaborate with individuals with incarceration experience (IIE) to:

1. Plan and implement interactive health workshops;
2. Pilot health tools;
3. Collect participant feedback; and
4. Build community and relationships.

WHAT IS THE ICEBERG?

The iceberg image resulted from focus group discussions with twelve men with federal corrections experience (L.I.N.C.) and six women with provincial corrections experience (Wi2H). Similar to an iceberg (Figure 1) they identified visible and/or measurable health challenges for IIE as well as deeper issues that underpin these health disparities. Although the focus group discussions centred on diseases and barriers to health, participants also suggested ways to deliver health promotion programs to IIE: share knowledge, support self-advocacy, and strengthen relationships (Figure 2, next page). Findings from the focus group discussions led to the formation of the project's mission statement.

¹O'Gorman CM, Martin MS, Oliffe JL, Leggo C, Korchinski M, Martin RE. Community Voices in Program Development: The Wisdom of Individuals with Incarceration Experience. *Can J Public Health*. 2012; Sep/Oct: 379-383

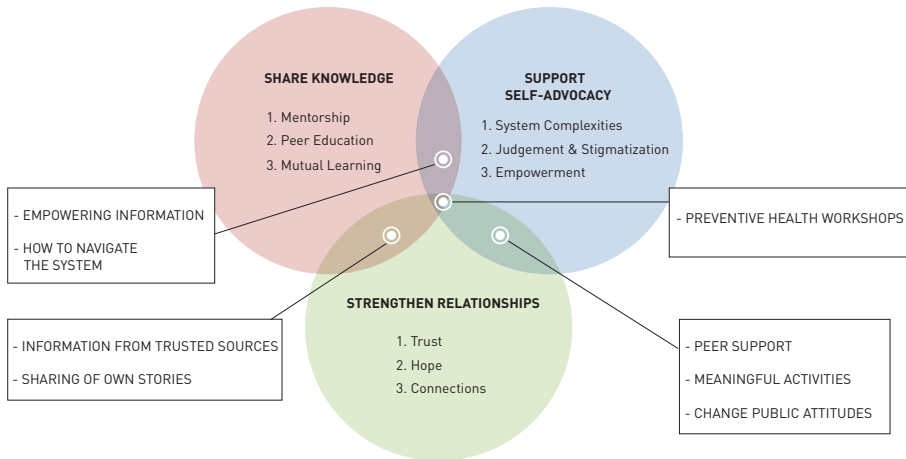


Figure 2: Ways to deliver effective health promotion programs to IIE, as suggested by focus group participants.

WHO ARE THE P4H PARTICIPANTS?

Women and men with previous incarceration experience are involved in piloting and evaluating P4H workshops and tools on priority health areas as identified in the iceberg (Figure 1). Participants enroll for 12 months.

WHAT DATA ARE WE COLLECTING?

SURVEYS

Fifty participants completed baseline demographic and health surveys when they enrolled in the project. At the end of the project, exit surveys will allow pre- and post- comparisons of participants' health behaviours and beliefs.

FOCUS GROUPS

Participants give feedback about the workshop content, presentation style, and suggest improvements to the design of subsequent P4H workshops. In addition, participants describe how useful the workshops would be within a prison setting.

LIKERT SCALES

Participants complete an anonymous survey regarding their workshop satisfaction.

HOW ARE WE BUILDING COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS?

COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECT ASSISTANTS

Three project assistants with incarceration experience enrolled project participants. They continue to engage participants and take an active role in the project planning.

FACEBOOK

A closed Facebook group allows participants to discuss workshop material as well as general health information and questions.

ONLINE FORUM

An online project forum is available for participants to pose health questions, which are then answered by peers, health care professionals, or members of the academic team.

WHAT ARE THE P4H HEALTH TOOLS?

Based on participants feedback from the first workshop, two tools were designed and piloted: the Preventive Health Workbook and the Memo-to-Myself (a commitment to change instrument). Please see Project Brief, Issue 2, for more information.

P4H WORKSHOPS

Finding Our Voices: Self-Advocacy & Peer Support

Presentation and experiential learning activity from PeerNet BC, a provincial peer-support organization.

// AUG 22, 2012

Navigating the Healthcare System*

Presentation on finding a family doctor & a participatory theatre activity with IIE and healthcare professionals, facilitated by Theatre for Living.

// OCT 21, 2012

Hepatitis C

Peer presentation by a previously incarcerated project assistant & presentation by Dr. Gail Butt, an expert in Hep C research.

// NOV 24, 2012

HIV/AIDS

Presentations from Positive Living BC, a local HIV/AIDS service organization, personal reflection by a P4H participant & a short video screening.

// FEB 2, 2013

Mental Health

Peer presentation by a previously incarcerated project assistant & presentation from Canadian Mental Health Association representative.

// MAR 9, 2013

Addiction

Peer-led discussion of a video lecture on the topic of addiction, and a physician-led lecture on the science of addiction.

// APR 14, 2013

Cancer Prevention*

Presentation and experiential learning activity from the BC Cancer Agency & peer presentation by a previously incarcerated project assistant.

// MAY 25 & JUL 24, 2013

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