

Reentry Intensive Case Management Services (RICMS) Cohort 2 Evaluation

The Los Angeles County Reentry Integrated Services Project (LA CRISP)

LARRP General Meeting
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Goals of this presentation

- Summarize what we did to conduct the evaluation
- Share what we learned about
 - Program implementation
 - Participant experiences
 - Participant outcomes
- Implications

A Promising Approach to Coordinated Community-Based Reentry Services

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SEPTEMBER 2023

WE'LL GET IT DONE TOGETHER

NIKO LEIVA
OSVALDO AVILA


How Community Health Workers Support RICMS Clients with Reentry

Los Angeles (LA) County has the largest jail system in the United States.¹ Over the past decade, the county's average daily inmate population has hovered between 15,000 and 18,700 individuals.² In an effort to divert people from incarceration, LA County launched several reentry programs that were intended to improve the well-being of justice-involved populations and to reduce recidivism. One of these programs, the Reentry Intensive Case Management Services (RICMS) program, was established in 2018. The RICMS program coordinates the services of multiple community-based service providers throughout LA County. It links people who have been involved with the criminal legal system to community health workers, many of whom have personal experience with incarceration, substance use disorders and addiction, and other issues RICMS clients face. These community health workers provide case management services and mentorship, and help clients navigate the many services and other forms of support available to them.

MDRC evaluated the implementation of the RICMS program in LA County and found that the program offers a promising approach to improving the lives of its clients, particularly by reducing their future contact with the criminal legal system. During the first two years of RICMS clients' interaction with the program, they experienced fewer convictions, arrests, and incarcerations than a comparison group that enrolled in RICMS but did not participate in the program. They also experienced fewer days in jail, both one and two years after program enrollment.³

As part of the evaluation of the RICMS program, in 2021 and 2022 an MDRC research team conducted semistructured interviews with RICMS community health workers, program managers, and clients to learn more about how services are delivered and about the experiences of RICMS clients.⁴ This brief presents the stories and experiences shared by the 26 RICMS clients and 27 community health workers that the team interviewed.⁵ While the sample of interviewees was not intended to be representative of all RICMS clients and staff members in LA County, it represents a range of geographic service areas, referral sources, and types of services offered. Interviews with clients lasted approximately 30 minutes, and interviews with community health workers lasted approximately 1 hour. Interviews primarily took place in person at an RICMS provider's office or another location that was convenient to the interviewee.

This brief provides valuable insight into how programs such as RICMS may affect the lives of people navigating an often complicated reentry process by combining what RICMS clients said about their incarceration, reentry, and involvement with the program with information from community health workers and program managers. Strong and meaningful relationships between community health workers and clients were critical to the RICMS model.



SEPTEMBER 2023

Preview of Study Findings

- The CHW-client relationship is vital
- Analysis shows RICMS participants had reduced...
 - ...future contact with the criminal legal system
 - ...emergency medical services



RICMS Study

- **Data Sources & Timeline**

- Interviews with program staff and program participants between June 2019 and August 2022
 - 27 CHWs and 14 program managers from 15 providers
 - 26 program participants from 10 providers
- Administrative data for individuals enrolled between April 2018 and March 2021
 - CHAMP
 - InfoHub, a repository that pulls data together from multiple county information systems (Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, Department of Health Services, LA County Sheriff's Department, LA Superior Court, LA Probation Department)
- Survey of program managers and CHWs was administered April 2022
 - 94 responses from 27 providers

What we learned about program implementation

- Barriers to program implementation
 - Geography
 - Housing
 - Supporting individuals as they prepared for jail release was challenging
 - COVID-19 required some adjustments to service delivery approaches
- 30% of clients who enrolled after release from jail participated in the program
- CHWs took holistic approaches to supporting clients

What we learned about participant experiences

- CHWs past experiences with incarceration and addiction were important tool for establishing trust
- CHWs filled a void for people without social networks or social capital
- 84% of participants were referred to services
 - Housing and food were common referral categories

“You guys have done more than my family’ . . . it’s something I’m never going to forget” -Participant

“Damn, like, she did a lot more for me than my own family did for my child.” - Participant

“For somebody like me, this is one of the only connections I have, without having family out here and things of that nature.” -Participant

Summary of Participant Outcomes

For individuals enrolling in RICMS after their release from jail

RICMS participants are ...

Criminal Legal System Contact

...less likely to experience an arrest, be incarcerated in jail, have a new conviction, or have a probation revocation...

Primary Care and Hospital Service Use

...less likely to visit an emergency room...

Mental Healthcare Service Use

...more likely to receive services from LA County Department of Mental Health providers...

... than comparison group members in years 1 and 2 after enrollment.

Implications & Next Steps

- CHW model is not a traditional reentry approach
- CHWs seem to be the key to help participants reduce future involvement in the criminal legal system
- Question: How can the RICMS program experience inform development of pre-trial systems and approaches?
- Cost analysis coming out in 2024

For More Information

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<https://www.mdrc.org/project/los-angeles-county-reentry-integrated-services-project#overview>

Overview

Los Angeles County has the country's largest jail and probation system, resulting in the need for a robust system for individuals reintegrating into the community following a period of incarceration or probation. In response, and with funding from the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act (Proposition 47) and the Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009 (Senate Bill 678), the LA County Justice and Opportunities Department (JCOD) offers a diverse set of programs designed to improve well-being and prevent future legal system involvement. These programs cover various needs, including employment services, skills training, and connections to community organizations that support people in reaching their goals without contact with the legal system.

For the Los Angeles County Reentry Integrated Services Project (LA CRISP), MDRC is collaborating with JCOD and the Council on State Governments. The purpose of the project is to understand the implementation and effects of JCOD programming on its participants and to make recommendations that will strengthen reentry services for people involved in the criminal legal system, including those on adult felony probation and those with mild or moderate mental health or substance use disorders.

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STATUS: CURRENT

Basics

Issue: Criminal and Juvenile Justice

Focus Area: Corrections and Reentry

Population: Populations with Barriers to Employment

Focus Population: People Who Have Been Incarcerated, People Involved in the Criminal Justice System

Locations: California

Intervention: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Case Management, Behavioral Interventions, Employment Services

FEATURED CONTENT

REPORT

A Promising Approach to Coordinated Community-Based Reentry Services

The Reentry Intensive Case Management Services program in Los Angeles County connects people who have been involved in the criminal legal system to community health workers who help them navigate services. This report presents encouraging findings from process and outcomes studies of the program and provides recommendations for providers.



[Full PDF »](#)

BRIEF

Supporting the Employment Goals of Individuals on Probation

Supportive Services in the Los Angeles County Innovative Employment Solutions Program

Individuals on probation face many challenges in reentering the community. This brief describes the Los Angeles County Innovative Employment Solutions Program's creative approach to providing workforce and supportive services to this underserved population. The program's unique training and funding model allows staff to respond flexibly to their clients' complex needs.



REPORT

Not Just a Job: A Career

Implementation of a Sectoral Training Program for People Impacted by the Criminal Legal System

Individuals with criminal legal system involvement have many disadvantages when seeking high-wage employment. The SECTOR program aims to connect such individuals with training opportunities in high-growth sectors. This evaluation finds that SECTOR offers a promising approach to help participants find jobs that offer livable wages, career advancement opportunities, and benefits.



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