

Title: A Strategic Approach to Correctional Nursing Across the Life Span in Correctional Health: How Nursing Practice Should Influence Better Health Outcomes

Format: 20 minutes – Practitioner Example

Abstract: Health care in US jails and prisons is inadequate and insufficient; we are failing the population we serve. Justice populations enter the carcel setting with complex health needs across every stage of life. Incarceration has a negative impact on individuals and adds to health disparities and exacerbates health conditions. Healthcare is an afterthought and unfortunately litigation has become the main mechanism for improvement in health delivery. Custody staffing is the priority with limited attention to health care. This approach fails to consider the health needs of the population and omits the unique health needs of individuals representing juvenile, women, and an aging population. As a result, people frequently overlook age and the progression of life of the justice individual. People entering the justice system often face poor health and chronic diseases due to social factors. The health inequities present in corrections further contribute to poor patient outcomes. Attempts to enhance correctional health care systems have not made noteworthy progress. The National Commission on Correctional Health Care published health care standards but there is no mandate for correctional system to adhere to these standards. Professionals practicing in correctional settings are frequently not the drivers of health care, and where nurses and physicians advocate, their voices are not always heard, leading to role confusion and blurring or minimizing of the important role the health professional plays in ensuring adequate health care delivery.

Health care delivery in correctional settings must improve the research and literature highlights a link between adequate health care and healthy populations. Health professionals should function as leaders, clinicians, and advocates to improve patient care and develop effective health delivery systems. The correctional nurse is in a unique position to improve correctional health system and improve patient health outcomes. This presentation will address the challenges and barriers health professional faces in corrections and discuss how moral correction and communication can overcome those challenges. The presenter will discuss the unique role professional nurses play in improving patient outcomes. She will discuss how and why correctional nurses must be leaders in improving health care access for correctional patients across the life span. This presenter will discuss Muses Framework for Correctional Nursing and how it serves as a guide for correctional nursing practice, elevates nursing practice, and promotes a focus on patient-centered care.