

Making an

impact



National Commission on
Correctional Health Care

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Making an impact...



Dear Colleague:

When I first joined NCCHC 20 years ago, I never imagined I would stick around for two decades, much less eventually become the chief executive officer. What has kept me here is NCCHC's unique mission, important work and amazing people.

It's a privilege to work for an organization that makes such a significant impact on people's lives and on society, and it's an honor to now serve at the helm of this incredible organization.

The impact we make can be immediate. When we ask our conference attendees, for instance, what they learned at the event that will help them do their jobs better, we hear about new practices, policies, ideas and understandings that they are ready to implement immediately. What's more, they tell us how excited they are to share everything they learned with their coworkers. As that knowledge passes from person to person, our impact grows.

The impact can be long-lasting, such as when correctional facilities improve their health care delivery systems as the result of following our standards and seeking accreditation, or when correctional health professionals find the confidence and competence they need by becoming CCHP-certified. When patients benefit from that quality care, our impact expands.

The impact can save lives. In collaboration with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, we are addressing the too-common problem of inmate suicide. We are continuing to work with national partners to fight the opioid crisis. We are continually seeking new ways to engage our constituents, share our expertise, learn, teach and collaborate with diverse disciplines — medicine, nursing, mental health, substance abuse, research, public health, criminal justice and law.

We could not continue to serve our mission without these vital partnerships. Together, we are creating ripples with important, far-reaching effects. I look forward to continuing our work together. Thank you for your support.

To the future!

Deborah Ross, CCHP
Chief Executive Officer

NCCHC MISSION

The mission of the National Commission on Correctional Health Care is to improve the quality of health care in jails, prisons and juvenile confinement facilities.

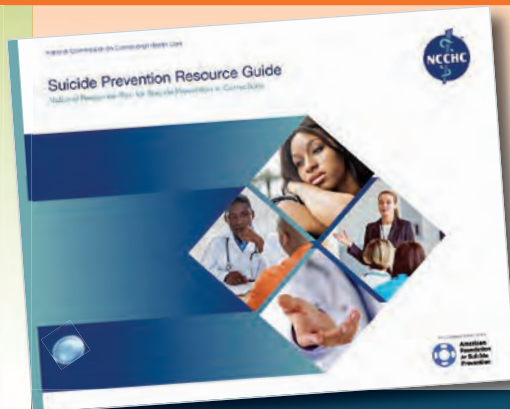
Making an impact...

- on the quality of health care in correctional facilities
- on individuals and families
- on communities and public health
- on the opioid epidemic
- on mental health care
- on the lives of justice-involved youth
- on correctional health professionals
- on the correctional health care field
- on health care operations



Making an impact... on individuals and families

Correctional health care patients are among society's most vulnerable and marginalized populations — a fact that draws many professionals to this field. For some, incarceration represents their first opportunity to receive desperately needed health, dental and mental health care.



NCCHC and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention teamed up to save lives by creating an authoritative resource on the prevention and management of suicide in correctional facilities. Drawing from both organizations' expertise, with input from national experts in the fields of correctional mental health and suicide prevention, the resource provides a road map for navigating the complexities of suicide prevention behind bars — and is now in use across the country.

Suicide is the leading cause of death in jail, accounting for more than one-third of inmate deaths.

— Bureau of Justice Statistics

Nearly 500,000 people are served in NCCHC-accredited facilities every day.



NCCHC is working with the National Sheriffs' Association and the National Association of Counties to repeal the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy and deepen understanding of its negative effects on low-income people. The policy prohibits Medicaid recipients from accessing their federal health benefits while incarcerated, even those who are awaiting trial and have not been convicted — which includes nearly two-thirds of people held in county jails. The process to renew coverage once a detainee is released can take months, causing a dangerous disruption in medical care or, in the case of opioid use disorder, a potentially deadly relapse.

As part of a task force brought together by NSA and NACo, NCCHC staff members worked closely with congressional offices to develop legislation, participated in an advocacy day on Capitol Hill and met with members of Congress to urge support.



Making an impact... on communities and public health



Every year, more than 7 million people are released from jail and 600,000 from prison. The positive effects of having their chronic conditions, infectious diseases, mental health issues and substance use disorders properly diagnosed and treated reach far into the community, impacting employment rates, crime rates, recidivism, the spread of communicable diseases and other public health issues.

Nearly 20,000 people

leave jail and return to their communities every day.



The *Standards for Health Services* produced and published by NCCHC are the foundation upon which quality correctional health systems — as well as NCCHC accreditation and CCHP certification — are built. The standards ensure that people receive medical, dental and mental health care services throughout their confinement, from admission through discharge.

To address the challenges people face postrelease, the standards also require discharge planning for those with serious health needs whose release is imminent. It is especially crucial that those with alcohol and other drug problems are linked to evidence-based care upon release. People with opioid use disorders who are released following



long-term confinement are at high risk for death from overdose. That risk can be reduced by continuing treatment (e.g., methadone, buprenorphine or naltrexone) when appropriate or by initiating treatment prior to release — an important public health message that NCCHC is working to amplify.

Job prospects are often scarce for people who have spent time in jail or prison. Chicago restaurateur Chef Bruno Abate, who delivered the keynote address at the 2019 National Conference on Correctional Health Care, brings job training, culinary skills, nutrition information and hope to men at Cook County Jail. Through his program, called Recipe for Change, participants gain marketable skills and confidence.

Making an impact... on the opioid epidemic

Nowhere is the reality of the opioid crisis more apparent than in the country's correctional facilities, where more medication-assisted treatment programs are needed to stem the cycle of addiction, incarceration, release, relapse and recidivism.

An estimated **17 percent** of **state prisoners** and **19 percent** of **jail inmates** reported regular use of heroin and opioids.

— Bureau of Justice Statistics



Heidi de Marco/KHN

With the help of NCCHC's endorsement, the number of jails offering MAT to detainees with opioid use disorder is growing steadily. "Jail-Based Medication-Assisted Treatment: Promising Practices, Guidelines and Resources for the Field," published by the National Sheriffs' Association in partnership with NCCHC, is a comprehensive guide to implementing an MAT program. Widely distributed throughout 2019, the resource provides practical recommendations, support and real-life advice from the field.



Coming soon! Revised and updated *Standards for Opioid Treatment Programs*, including a new option that will allow more corrections-based programs to become accredited, including those that transport patients to community centers for treatment.



NCCHC is the **only authorized OTP accrediting** body that specializes in corrections.

Federal agencies call on NCCHC — long an advocate of MAT — to share insight and expertise on the subject. NCCHC specialists presented a plenary address and half-day seminar on expanding access to MAT in correctional settings at the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence conference, consulted with a Department of Health and Human Services Reentry/Criminal Justice Working Group, and sat on an MAT panel with other national authorities at the NSA conference.



American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence

Making an impact... on the lives of justice-involved youth

NCCHC has been creating standards for health services in juvenile facilities since 1979 and accrediting juvenile facilities that comply with those standards since 1984. Although many things have changed in the world of juvenile justice since then, children and adolescents are what they have always been: unique populations with unique developmental and health needs. In 2019, the Board of Directors approved two new position statements and revised two others — all concerning the needs of those young people who find themselves enmeshed in the criminal justice system.



For a variety of reasons, young people in confinement facilities often do not get adequate amounts of healthy sleep, which is essential to optimal mental and physical health as well as to rehabilitation. The new **Adolescent Sleep Hygiene** position statement stresses the importance of maintaining a comprehensive approach to the assessment and treatment of sleep disorders.

“If we treat the children in our care with respect, they will respond positively. If we help them, we can **make a permanent difference** in their lives and the lives of their entire families.”

— Robert Morris, MD, CCHP-P, NCCHC Board chair, 2019-2020

NCCHC does not support the detention of any child due to immigration status. The new statement on **Detention of Immigrant Children** encourages full compliance with the Flores Settlement Agreement, which, among other things, establishes standards and limits the amount of time that migrant and asylum-seeking children can be detained, and recommends that all people who are detained receive developmentally appropriate physical and mental health care that also incorporates their social and life skill needs.



Suicide Prevention and Management in Juvenile Correctional Settings

was updated to reflect the most current understanding of trauma and adverse childhood events, suicide risk and the relationship therein. NCCHC's guidance has not changed: All juvenile facilities should develop and implement a comprehensive suicide prevention program that takes into account the unique characteristics of adolescent suicide.

To facilitate quick reactivation and ensure continuity of care upon release, **Health Care Funding for Incarcerated Youth** recommends that young people in public and private confinement and detention facilities remain eligible for all public (e.g., Medicaid) and private health care coverage and that states suspend rather than terminate Medicaid insurance following detention.

Making an **impact**... on mental health care

The steady rise in the number of mentally ill people in prisons and jails has characterized the past 30 to 40 years in correctional health practice. In response to the numbers of incarcerated individuals with mental illness, interest in NCCHC's mental health resources rose to an all-time high in 2019. More and more correctional leaders, administrators, clinicians and mental health professionals are turning to NCCHC for help and guidance.

Applications for mental health-specific accreditation rose sharply, with a five-fold increase year over year. Likewise, as the need for mental health professionals with experience working with incarcerated populations became more acute, an influx of Certified Correctional Health Professionals sought out CCHP-MH specialty certification in 2019.

"In correctional care, we have an amazing opportunity to **reverse ripples**."

— Sharen Barboza, PhD, CCHP-MH, vice president, mental health, Centurion

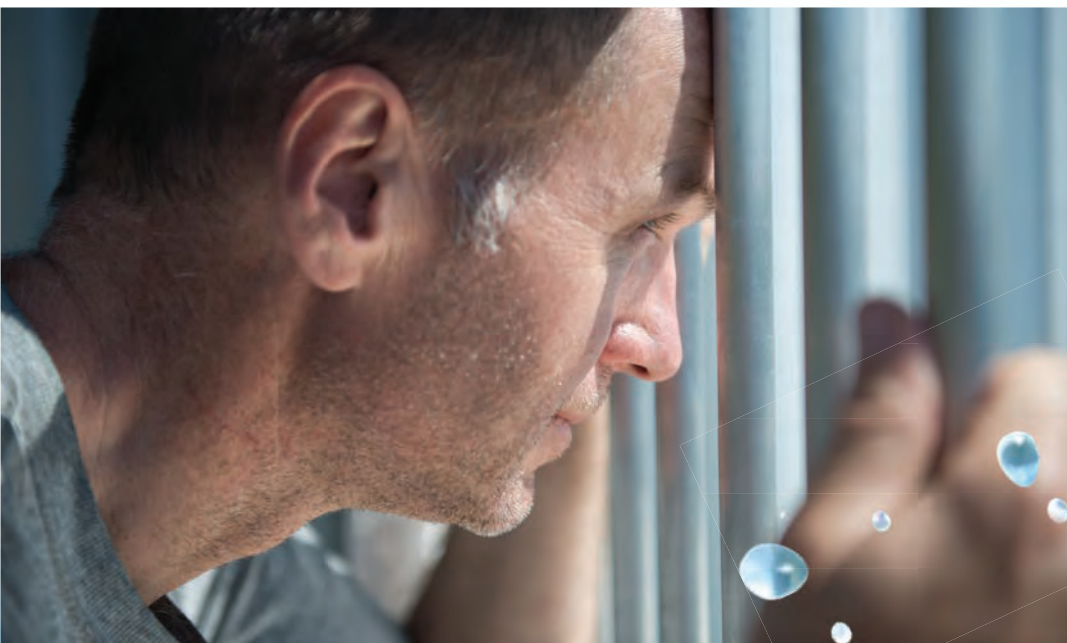


NCCHC's annual Correctional Mental Health Care Conference is the only event of its kind, bringing together hundreds of professionals for two days of focused education and problem-solving about the unique challenges of caring for patients with mental illness in the correctional environment. Mental health issues also are front and center at the National and Spring conferences, which include a full-day preconference seminar on the *Standards for Mental Health Services* and a mental-health focused educational session during each time slot.

"To help people identify what's going on, to find the right treatment strategy... those are rewarding things. And you see people's **lives change** dramatically as a result."

— Thomas Fagan, PhD, CCHP-MH, NCCHC Board chair, 2018-2019

Mental health topics are especially popular webinars. During 2019, hundreds of participants tuned in to learn about suicide risk and prevention, trauma-informed care, treating and managing psychopathy and more.



Making an impact... on correctional health professionals

Doctors, nurses and mental health professionals who work within jail or prison walls can sometimes feel alone and misunderstood. People outside of the field don't quite "get it." That's one reason NCCHC plays such an important role in many correctional health professionals' lives. The people who attend conferences, read NCCHC publications, become certified as CCHPs, participate in the NCCHC Connect online community and live by the standards rely on the organization to educate, inform, validate, uplift and connect them.

"I love coming to the conferences and seeing that everyone has similar problems, struggles and issues. **It makes me excited to come back to work** and improves my outlook on the job."

— 2019 conference attendee

4

conferences



3,500

conference
and webinar
attendees

5

specialty
CE accrediting
bodies

99.75

CE hours available

8

webinars



Making an impact... on the correctional health care field

“It is always **good to see friends** and learn at the same time.”

— 2019 conference attendee

NCCHC Connect, the only online community specifically for correctional health professionals, continues to host a wide variety of lively conversations. In 2019, topics ranged from deep vein thrombosis prophylaxis to electronic health records to face-to-face triage for mental health concerns. The new American Correctional Nurses Association, formed by a group of NCCHC loyalists, is using the online forum to share news with interested colleagues and boost membership.

“It’s great to have discussions and get new ideas from my peers in other states. I love the attention and importance that we’re putting on correctional nursing. **We are changing the world for the better** and we need to be proud of what we do!”

— 2019 conference attendee



During 2019, which marked the 25th anniversary of the Certified Correctional Health Professional — Advanced certification, 10 people took the CCHP-A exam, the largest number in one year. They joined the ranks of fellow high achievers who demonstrated in-depth understanding of how the NCCHC standards apply to real-life scenarios. Not only can they add the CCHP-A credential after their names, they also enjoyed exclusive perks and special recognition at the National Conference.

“I am proud to have **my CCHP** and be a part of such a wonderful community.”

— 2019 conference attendee

Making an impact... on correctional health care quality

NCCHC's singular focus for more than 40 years has been to improve the quality of health care in jails, prisons and juvenile confinement facilities. The work being done in those facilities is key to strengthening that mission. In 2019 several new initiatives were introduced to help facilities meet NCCHC standards and gain NCCHC accreditation in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.



Federal agencies and national organizations look to NCCHC for guidance and expertise on correctional health care issues. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for instance, sought consultation on its newest STD guidelines, and the Government Accountability Office called upon NCCHC for input in evaluating standards for pregnant women detained by the Department of Homeland Security.

“Sharing a common goal of **achieving accreditation unifies everyone**. Learning and understanding the standards helps create a ‘culture of accreditation’ and a sense of pride.”

— Jeffrey Alvarez, MD, CCHP-P, CCHP-A, chief medical officer, NaphCare

NCCHC's new accreditation portal gives facilities easy, streamlined access to all their information, documents and results. Focused surveys to evaluate corrective action create a stress-free learning environment and speed up the process. A new format for survey results makes compliance indicators easier to interpret and track. Webinars and educational sessions on preparing for the survey, commonly missed standards, and a review of the jail and prison standards keep clients informed of what they need to know. This focus on the customer makes it easier for facilities to live the “accreditation lifestyle” and improve health care quality.



The Accreditation program unveiled a prestigious new honor in 2019: The Pinnacle Recognition is awarded to any facility that holds NCCHC accreditation in three areas — health services, mental health services and opioid treatment.

Making an impact... on health care operations

With community partners working together for a common goal and NCCHC Resources providing training and consulting, one rural county is doing everything it can to reduce opioid-related deaths. This is just one of the many projects that NCCHC Resources, Inc., the consulting arm of NCCHC, engaged in during 2019.



The national opioid epidemic is particularly devastating in remote, rural areas, where geographical isolation, too few health care professionals and a shortage of resources can exacerbate the situation. One such area, a county in northeastern California, is taking aggressive steps to address the problem in the community. Having received a grant to develop a county-wide program with all the county's hospitals, the behavioral health department and the jail, the county called on NCCHC Resources to assist. Experts in medication-assisted treatment, NCCHC Resources consultants created and conducted a series of training sessions about setting up a coordinated MAT program and are now working with the jail and community partners to develop comprehensive policies and procedures for the program.



Sarah Crosby/Daily Hampshire Gazette

The CHORDS program secured a grant from the Dental Trade Alliance Foundation to study and analyze the link between oral health and diabetes in incarcerated populations. CHORDS — Correctional Health Outcomes & Resource Data Set — is a program of NCCHC Resources.



- Expert consulting
- Technical assistance
- Health systems assessments
- RFP/RFQ support
- Vendor transition support
- Performance improvement
- Clinical and fiscal management
- Training and education
- Accreditation readiness
- Subject matter expertise

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American College of Physicians

“The diversity of viewpoints represented creates a strong and dynamic Board with a common goal of **improving inmate health.**”

— Barbara Wakeen, MA, RDN, CCHP, immediate past Board chair



National Commission
on Correctional Health Care

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