

Background

SISCO's Multiple Pathways to Recovery programme was set up to offer a road to substance use recovery for prisoners in Scotland. Initially working with the Scottish Prison Service, SISCO identified gaps in service provision by listening to the experiences of prisoners. The programme aimed to ensure that prisoners could access care and support during their stay in prison. They took a whole person and trauma informed approach to ensure the model's impact was effective and sustainable.

Since 2017, the service has evolved and now supports people in prison, at liberation and within the community. They achieve this through person-centred and responsive interventions which focus on the immediate needs of the person.

Impact

The aim of the programme is to offer a meaningful support package for men in Scottish prisons and after liberation. Over the past two years, 83% of the men supported by the service have not returned to prison. The 17% that have returned have predominantly been younger prisoners between the ages of 23 to 29. The people they support often have complex needs and have experienced trauma. Meaningful engagement and consistent support from SISCO has produced positive outcomes. Feedback from people shows the importance of asking what they need during their stay in prison and what would help when they leave.

Learning

SISCO have provided the building blocks of support people in prison need when working towards recovery from substance use. Collaborative working with over 30 partners is a significant factor in their success. Their focus on harm reduction means they can refer people onto onward services and meaningful recovery.

The biggest barrier faced by the service is helping people after liberation. Information on outcomes shows that people often lose access to the support they need after leaving prison. A number of factors need to be addressed including continuing trauma informed care, safe housing, and support networks.

Top Tips

- Listen to people to understand what matters to them.
- Build trust with the community you serve – service staff and volunteers make a difference.
- Work with partner organisations to help connect people to the right support they need.

Next Steps

SISCO is securing funding to continue their work and obtain new, more central premises. The service is working towards expanding to a more robust and sustainable community care model.