



BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS OFFICE OF JUSTICE SERVICES

DIVISION OF DIVERSION AND RE-ENTRY

To explore, develop and implement all options for alternatives to incarceration in partnership with Tribal Nations.

Tribal Leaders have long-stated that, “there is a crisis situation on Indian Reservations, where substance abuse and violent crime continues to devastate communities at rates much higher than the national average.” A group of elders stated the needs even more clearly when they said:

Our children are taking their lives, our families are being torn apart, our cultural values are being challenged more than ever before, all because of alcohol, and drug abuse, violence and suicide, and we need to act now to stop this destruction.

In response to these identified concerns that have been raised by tribes, as well as law enforcement and tribal courts who are encountering unusually high rates of alcohol and/drug related repeat offenders that are dominating the resources of the justice system, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services has created the Diversion and Re-entry Division (DRD) within the Tribal Justice Support Directorate. The purpose of creating the DRD is to work toward transforming current institutional practices and approaches specific to the *Recidivism Reduction and Solution-focused Sentencing Initiatives*, by providing access to long-term *detention-based treatment* for all direct-service tribes. These initiatives are intended to strengthen the efforts being made by tribes and the BIA to expand treatment options and ensure that justice, safety, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery issues remain the topic of consistent focus in our efforts to effectively serve the needs of Tribal Nations.

BIA/OJS launches a Staged Approach & Strategy to addressing Substance Abuse concerns in tribal communities:

• Planning and Program Development

In conjunction with federal partners and tribes, DRD will offer technical assistance services intended to assist tribes in the task of developing comprehensive alternatives to incarceration strategies and action plans that more effectively address Alcohol Planning and Program Development

• Interconnectivity

DRD is in the process of developing a resource base for helping to guide tribes toward building technology capacity and tools that link to a common data platform.

• Development of an Integrated Service Delivery System of Care that includes Community Safety, Justice, Intervention, Treatment and Recovery Re-entry

DRD will work to assist tribal justice and service delivery systems serving adults, youth and families to design improved systems of care that encourage individuals to work toward making healthier lifestyle choices.

• Tribal Justice System Innovations

The Office of Justice Services, Tribal Justice Support Directorate and Diversion and Re-entry Division have begun the planning process for establishing an improved approach to sentencing of individuals, referred to as *Solution-focused Sentencing*.

• Recidivism Reduction Initiative

The Office of Justice Services believes that by implementing a comprehensive strategy that involves better screening, alternative courts, increased treatment opportunities, probation programs, and critical interagency and intergovernmental partnerships between tribal, state and federal stakeholders, we and our tribal partners will succeed in substantially reducing recidivism in Indian Country.

Contact Us

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RECIDIVISM REDUCTION INITIATIVE

Overview

Recidivism creates a huge drain on already overtaxed tribal economies. Individuals who are repeat offenders drive over half the arrests, fill the court dockets, and are more likely to end up incarcerated and negatively impact family well-being when removed from the home. In response, the Office of Justice Services (OJS) has implemented an agency priority goal around reducing recidivism in Indian country, particularly among repeat offenders. OJS created the Diversion and Re-entry Division (DRD) within the Tribal Justice Support Directorate. The primary focus of the DRD is to focus on recidivism reduction. The **Recidivism Reduction Initiative** (RRI) was funded to identify groups of individuals incarcerated at adult and juvenile detention facilities in Indian Country who are at high risk for relapse into criminal behavior. Once identified, OJS would intervene and follow-up with them post intervention for one year. Three reservations were selected to participate in this initiative: Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota; Ute Mountain Reservation in Colorado; and Shoshone-Paiute Duck Valley Reservation in Nevada. RRI activities include the development of a work plan that starts with envisioning the continuum of need in three tribal communities, as follows:

- Determine primary contributing factors to community concerns (Planning)
- Build partnerships within the community (Connecting)
- Develop a comprehensive set of services (Intervening)
- Plan for how to fund these services (Financing)
- Standardize information gathering and establish protocols for information sharing (Screening)
- Create a common data platform and evaluate the initiative (Evaluating)

Partnership with Chestnut Health Systems

To achieve the goal of reducing recidivism in these three reservations Chestnut Health Systems' GAIN Coordinating Center (GCC) will support a strategy to implement a standard screening tool (GAIN-SS) and outcome evaluation among tribal alternative courts, intervention, treatment, and probation programs. For the RRI the GCC is has added three service utilization items to the GAIN-SS instrument and constructed risk of recidivism statements now included in the GAIN-SS Report. The GAIN-SS along combined with arrest record data will serve to better predict risk of recidivism before it happen allowing tribes to intervene sooner. In addition, the GCC will work closely with Tribal Leadership to develop a culturally relevant supplement to make GAIN-SS information more relevant to Indian Country.

The **Global Appraisal of Individual Needs Short Screener (GAIN-SS)** is designed for use with general or targeted populations to quickly and accurately identify people who would meet criteria for substance use or mental disorders. It contains a total scale and four sub-scales (internalizing disorders, externalizing disorders, substance use disorders, and crime and violence). Its HIPAA-compliant web-based software supports administration, immediate report generation, and integration with other electronic records systems. For more information please visit www.gaincc.org or contact gaininfo@chestnut.org.

Each tribe is also working toward the adoption of electronic case management systems that can track recidivism, interact with other local systems and the GAIN software. The goal of this effort is both to improve communication and management of individuals and to support evaluation and program planning at the tribal level.