
National TASC Supports the Second Chance Act

Opportunities for Rehabilitation - This bill provides opportunities for states and localities to develop clinical responses across a variety of systems to both sanction and provide incentives for more effective offender release procedures. It encourages application of the best practices from corrections, parole, substance abuse treatment and clinical case management. Experience with the TASC clinical case management model indicates that the complex systems of housing, employment, substance abuse and mental health, and child welfare must be integrated into offender reentry management. This legislation allows each of these systems to retain their primary missions while building their services to consider the goals of community safety, offender reentry and client rehabilitation. It also encourages these sectors to understand the need for offender accountability to the court and to the community while maintaining focus on the clinical needs of the individual.

Coordinated Systems - HR 4676 would address known barriers to offender reentry through employing coordinated systems, provide new ways to build effective services and resources in places where there are no TASC programs, and encourage development of stronger clinical reentry case management in communities already engaged in this effort. In many areas TASC programs provide communities with independent assessment, clinical case management and system integration techniques designed to intervene in the lives of persons with addictions or behavioral health needs of those who are arrested, incarcerated and released. Among them will be coordinated individual assessments, appropriate services delivery and resources targeted to follow offenders in need from prison to their home communities.

Strategic Use of Scarce Justice Resources - TASC programs operate within the parameters of the larger justice and treatment systems. For over thirty years TASC programs have served as a catalyst to develop more effective strategies for delivering services to persons involved in the justice system and their families. Although TASC programs have served to educate communities about their clients, local and state executive agencies are often responsible for funding, oversight and management of offender services, treatment and resources. Consequently there is a complex political and cultural climate in many communities that makes it difficult to achieve comprehensive, adequate and effective client services for reentering offenders. By using independent case management, TASC programs help overcome inadequate or inconsistent services.

Stabilizing Housing, Behavioral Health, Employment and Families - By providing for clinical reentry case management, reentry agency partners and TASC agencies can accomplish the following steps:

Screen and assess for housing needs and develop a short and long term plan for residential housing.

Evaluate the complex problems and diagnoses related to substance abuse and mental health disorders in individuals and their families and refer and place clients in appropriate treatment.

Assess for employment readiness, job placement needs and refer to workforce development specialists or education to meet client needs and abilities.

Follow-up progress with case management that provides incremental steps in the domains of housing, treatment, employment and family stability.

Monitor and report progress to ensure compliance with expectations of justice system, including courts, parole, and compensation of victims. Routine reporting will prompt sanctions if offenders fail to make progress.

Advocate and provide linkages to the community.

Improving Quality of Life in our Communities - In order to absorb the impact of more than 600,000 reentering persons each year, communities must develop and coordinate effective transitional partnerships that assist individuals in meeting justice system requirements while successfully negotiating the necessary transition to communities, families and employment. The development of these transitional partnerships and systems between government and private and local agencies is one of the most difficult aspects of reentry management. Despite this challenge, there is evidence that TASC programs and other proven justice system innovations can result in more effective outcomes for this population.

For more information, please visit our web site at www.NationalTASC.org
or contact our office at 703-836-8272.

Reentry Briefing

AUGUST 11, 2004

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National TASC

National TASC (Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities) is a nonprofit association representing more than 225 programs across the United States. TASC members are dedicated to professional delivery of screening, assessment and case management services to justice-involved persons with substance abuse or behavioral health problems.

A Groundbreaking Bi-Partisan Effort

- The Second Chances Act of 2004 (HR 4676) is the first comprehensive legislation to address multiple challenges related to the return of incarcerated persons from prisons to their communities. A majority of those returning are young, lack a job, have two or more minor children and have a lower educational attainment and housing stability history than those who have never been incarcerated. More than two out of three returning from prison have a substance abuse or mental health history that will require treatment and support. Many also need medications to treat HIV and other communicable diseases. A growing number of releasees do not have housing and become homeless after discharge from criminal justice custody. Without services, this population will continue to drive up costs to our communities; combining targeted clinical case management with services and resources that prevent new crime, however, can avert much of this.

Reentry: Committed Stakeholders -

The TASC model has evolved since the early 1970's. TASC is a flexible approach to managing and integrating offender services between agencies and systems (justice, health, education, housing, employment, family services and community-based networks). TASC elements have been incorporated in many local pretrial, probation, parole and community corrections and substance abuse programs as well as drug courts, juvenile and family services interventions.

This bill encourages reentry partnerships among many federal, state and local agencies. A central focus will be the development of capable professionals to serve released persons and their families. The legislation will encourage stakeholders to convene regular meetings and participate in working partnerships between groups and organizations that serve individuals in the justice system.

PROMOTING EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT FOR JUSTICE POPULATIONS

Tough and effective methods, not "soft on crime" rhetoric - HR 4676 is designed to build reentry management methods and models that will reduce the likelihood of recidivism and save taxpayers' money. The Second Chances Act draws upon a number of proven and successful public and private collaboration and communication models such as TASC programs that focus on clinical reentry management to improve services and resources that enhance public safety and restore offenders to full participation.



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