Progress Update on the Evaluation of the Earned Release Program (ERP)

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute was asked by the WI Department of Corrections to provide an evaluation of its Earned Release Program (ERP). The examination of ERP began on March 1, 2006 and will conclude on December 31, 2007. A comprehensive report detailing the findings of the process and outcome evaluation was submitted to the Department in January 2007 and finalized in February 2007. The report also contained numerous recommendations for program improvement. Former Secretary Matthew Frank ordered the creation of an ERP Action Plan to address each recommendation made in the report. The current report summarizes progress toward the development and implementation of the ERP Action Plan since February 2007. Extensive assistance with the evaluation was provided by DOC central office staff, ERP administrative and treatment staff, and Division of Community Corrections (DCC) agents and administrative staff.

Evaluation data on the development and implementation of the ERP Action Plan was collected through attendance at ERP Oversight Committee meetings, on-site meetings with ERP staff, meetings with Division of Community Corrections staff, review of available program materials, examination of available program-level data, and telephone and email communication with staff and administrators.

REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The February 2007 evaluation report included a variety of suggestions for program improvement related to system-level issues, treatment program modifications, reach-in/reentry issues, assessment of post-release outcomes, and continuing evaluation.

System-Level Recommendations

1. **Limit Admission To Those With At Least a Sixth Grade Reading Level Or Develop Separate Programming for Lower Functioning Offenders:** ERP should enforce the sixth grade minimum reading level suitability criteria or develop separate programming for lower functioning offenders.
2. **Reevaluate Program Staffing Pattern:** DOC should provide additional treatment and support staff positions for ERP, particularly for the female program at REECC which has experienced a reduction in staff positions available to operate the program while maintaining the same program capacity. The gender-specific therapeutic community model implemented for females requires a more staff-intensive approach to providing treatment than the standard residential AODA treatment model utilized for the males at DACC.
3. **Further Examine the Impact of Race Upon Treatment Completion:** While ERP provides gender-specific treatment, the cultural appropriateness of ERP for the wide range of program admissions has not been assessed.
4. **Convert the Temporary Hold Beds At DACC to ERP Pre-Program Beds:** Due to the disruptions to treatment caused by non-program inmates at DACC, these beds should be reserved solely for ERP eligible/suitable inmates awaiting admission to the program. Treatment staff suggested that a "pre-program" treatment orientation curriculum be developed for the inmates awaiting program entry.

Treatment Program Recommendations

1. **Develop Consistent Data Collection Procedures For Admissions:** It is recommended that both ERP sites utilize a consistent system to document program admissions.
2. **Improve Participant Assessment at Program Admission:** ERP should utilize a validated assessment tool to gather substance abuse diagnosis and addiction severity for the purposes of treatment planning and documentation of participant characteristics. In addition, the importance of assessing criminogenic risk/needs as well as treatment motivation has been well established and should be considered for this program.
3. **Consider Modifying Curriculum to Further Emphasize Employment:** Many of the agents, graduates, and current participants felt that the pre-release activities that focused on employment were extremely valuable to participants. While ERP must retain its focus on treatment issues, greater support of continuum of care and employment issues that impact success after release could be considered.
4. **Increase Selected Pre-Release Activities at REECC:** To enhance the transitional experience for female participants, REECC should increase consistency with the services at DACC to include graduation celebrations that include food, family picnics and recreational activities, community service outside of the institution, and attendance at support groups in the community during Phase 3. DACC participants reported that these activities helped to "normalize" them in preparation for release.
5. **ERP Staff Should Discuss Participant Satisfaction Results:** ERP staff should read the participant and graduate quotes in their entirety so that they can hear the opinions of participants in their own words and should then meet as a group to discuss suggestions for program improvement.
6. **Increase Consistent Enforcement of Treatment Program Rules:** Participants at DACC reported that some program rules are enforced differently among the units and floors at DACC. With more than 20 social workers operating treatment groups relatively independently this is not unanticipated.
7. **Continue To Address Participant Retention Issues:** ERP should continue to address issues related to participant retention through individual treatment interventions and repeating treatment phases if necessary. Repeating a treatment phase is currently an option utilized for the females at REECC, but ERP should explore potential ways to integrate this option at DACC.
8. **Improve the Speed With Which Participants Are Admitted and Released:** One way to increase the bed savings for ERP graduates would be to release graduates more promptly than the current average of 13 days after graduation.
9. **Explore Options to Enhance the Transition/Aftercare Component:** ERP should consider enhancing the program's effectiveness by providing transition and aftercare services. Based on best practices as well as the intent of ERP to reduce both risk to the public and recidivism, ERP should consider enhancing the effectiveness of the current program by designating a staff position dedicated solely to providing enhanced transition and aftercare coordination. If budgetary constraints prevent the creation of additional staff positions, ERP should consider identifying more creative approaches that would assign responsibility for these transition functions to existing staff without adding significantly to individual workload.

Reach-in/Transition Component Recommendations

1. **Conduct Agent Training Sessions to Increase Compliance With Contact Standards:** While many agents do an excellent job of conducting the required reach-in activities and are in compliance with the contact standards for ERP, it would benefit the program to increase agent knowledge of ERP practices and procedures.
2. **Designate Selected Agents to Supervise ERP Graduates:** As an alternative to training all DCC agents on ERP procedures, DCC could designate selected agents within each unit to supervise ERP releases.
3. **ERP Program Sites Should Document Frequency of Reach-In Contacts:** The number and type of reach-in contacts made for each participant should be systematically documented to increase the possibility of monitoring adherence to the contact standards in the future.

Ongoing Evaluation of Participant Outcomes Recommendations

1. **Develop a Plan for Ongoing Program Evaluation:** ERP should develop a plan for ongoing program evaluation that includes the systematic collection of participant information through a program-level database, and determination of who will summarize and interpret the data, how the results will be reported and to whom, and how the results will be used for program improvement.
2. **Develop System For Agent Reporting of Participant Outcomes:** A system-level effort could be made to allow agent reporting of selected outcome indicators (i.e., employment, substance use, treatment involvement, living stability, and family support) at specified intervals after release via an electronic database. As part of this evaluation, the evaluator developed a preliminary design for a system would allow agents to input information on ERP participant outcomes into a database residing on the DCC network.
3. **Develop a System-Wide Procedure for Reporting of Offender Outcomes:** The above reporting system for ERP participants could also be viewed as a pilot test for potential implementation system-wide to collect post-release outcomes for all DAI releases.
4. **Develop A Matched Comparison Group for ERP:** An additional consideration may be the development of a matched comparison group of offenders who do not participate in ERP. A potential group of inmates that could be used as a comparison group might be those who are timeframe inappropriate but meet other ERP eligibility and suitability criteria.

ACTION PLAN: A RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to these recommendations the ERP Oversight Committee, ERP program staff, DCC Regional Chiefs, DCC agents, central office administrative staff, and the evaluator met on numerous occasions to collaboratively prioritize the recommendations and develop a program improvement plan. Table 1 provides a brief summary of progress toward each improvement activity as of November 30, 2007.

Table 1: Overview of ERP Action Plan Progress	
Issue/Recommendation	**Target Date/Status**
Administrative	
A. Develop a program improvement Action Plan based on the 2007 evaluation recommendations with input from the program staff	Completed
B. Examine composition of Oversight Committee and reissue charge	Completed
System-Level	
A. Update program suitability criteria	Completed
B. Reevaluate program staffing pattern	Completed
C. Explore the feasibility of providing enhanced transition and treatment aftercare coordination	Not yet addressed
D. Eliminate temporary hold beds at DACC	Completed
E. Revise ERP goals and objectives (i.e., completion rate goal) to be consistent with expectations in proposed State budget	Not yet addressed
F. Address barrier of delays in getting JOC paperwork back from judges to increase speed of graduate release from institution	Completed
Potential Program Expansion Issues	
A. Assess the system-wide need for a lower literacy AODA treatment program	Not yet addressed
B. Consider option of inviting representatives from potential expansion sites to Oversight Committee meetings	TBD
DCC/Reach-In Issues	
A. Address compliance with the administrative directive, increase knowledge of ERP, and improve overall continuum of transition planning. Develop plans for agent training.	In progress Coordinators Group formed
B. Improve reach-in procedures by implementing staff/agent ideas	Completed
C. Develop materials to better educate judges about ERP	Planning in progress
D. Obtain access to appropriate data systems for ERP staff	Completed
Program-Level	
A. Revise Form 2271 to reflect eligibility/suitability criteria changes	Completed
B. Implement systematic data collection at both ERP sites	Completed
1. Implement data collection procedures	Completed
2. Improve participant assessment	Completed
3. Further emphasize employment services	In progress
4. Staff discussion of participant satisfaction survey results	Completed
5. Continue to address participant retention issues	Completed
6. Investigate feasibility of pre-program component at DACC	Completed
Evaluation	
A. Include program information on Oversight Committee agenda	Completed/Ongoing
B. Develop a plan for ongoing program evaluation	In progress
C. Assess the feasibility of agent reporting of post-release outcomes	In progress
D. Presentation of evaluation results to the DCC regional chiefs	Completed
E. Facilitate meeting of ERP staff to gather input on Action Plan	Completed

A detailed Action Plan was developed that included each issue to be addressed, the task or action necessary to complete the activity, the person(s) responsible for completing the activity, and a target date for completion. This Action Plan was reviewed at each Oversight Committee meeting during 2007 and updated to track progress. The following section details the activity that occurred during 2007 as a result of the Action Plan.

Administrative Issues

A. *Collaboratively develop a program improvement Action Plan based on the recommendations of the evaluation and input from the program staff. Plan to include tasks, roles, and timelines.*

Activity: Assign person(s) responsible for developing, monitoring, and implementing the Action Plan.

Response: At the request of the Oversight Committee, the Secretary's office assigned Art Thurmer, Sheri Graeber, and Suzanne Schmitt as the persons responsible for implementation of the Action Plan. The Action Plan was drafted by the evaluator, discussed and revised by the Oversight Committee, and updated monthly to reflect progress on each planned activity.

Status: Completed

B. *Examine composition of Oversight Committee to assure appropriate membership.*

Activity: Identify appropriate members and how to facilitate attendance at meetings. Ask Secretary to reissue committee charge, including membership and responsibilities.

Response: Committee agrees on need for representation from legal and BOCM to replace members who have left the committee, as well as representation from the Office of Program Services and the Reentry Initiative. Oversight Committee submitted committee charge and recommended representatives to the Secretary (Attachment 1), and new committee chairpersons were selected and notified of their responsibilities in November 2007.

Status: Completed October 2007

System-Level Issues

A. *Update program suitability criteria for consideration by the Oversight Committee.*

Activity: Discuss how to inform inmates and judges of program criteria which includes allowing inmates sentenced prior to 7-23-03 the ability to petition the courts for consideration into the program.

Response: After Oversight Committee discussion and input, Sheri Graeber updated the program suitability criteria document and obtained the necessary approvals to finalize it. This was posted on DOC-NET for implementation.

Status: Completed

B. Reevaluate program staffing pattern to consider additional treatment and support staff positions, particularly for REECC.

Activity: The staffing patterns at DACC and REECC were examined as part of the proposed expansion of ERP (as detailed in proposed budget request).

Response: Approval was received prior to the development of the Action Plan for the hiring of two additional social workers at DACC to increase the capacity of the male program by 40 men annually (up to a maximum of 440 per year). While these positions were filled in Spring 2007, DACC lost several other staff members during Fall 2007 due to resignation, maternity leave, and medical leave and will be operating 20 treatment groups rather than the 22 groups planned. According to the DACC Superintendent, DACC's goal will be to maintain 20 active groups of 10 men each.

REECC filled a social worker position during 2007 that replaced the vacant treatment specialist position, but has remained at the same staffing level. As no additional positions were authorized, REECC tried to make the program less staff-intensive by modifying the model and simplifying program services. This staffing pattern will change in 2008 with the expansion of ERP at REECC from a capacity of 30 beds to 50 beds by adding one treatment specialist and increasing the program supervisor position from half-time to full-time.

In addition, the expansion plan for ERP includes (as of this date) 13 staff positions at Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility and 13 staff positions at Racine Correctional Institution to implement ERP treatment services at these sites. Each of the new sites is anticipated to have a capacity of 200 inmates.

Status: Completed

C. Explore the feasibility of providing enhanced transition and treatment aftercare coordination.

Activity: The Oversight Committee should discuss enhancing the effectiveness of the current program by designating a staff position dedicated solely to providing enhanced transition and aftercare coordination.

Response: While the substance of the recommendation has not yet been addressed (assigning transition responsibilities to specific ERP institutional staff), two related activities do represent steps in the direction of enhancing transition services. First, the Department's Reentry Coordinator has been added to the Oversight Committee so that transition and reentry issues can be represented at these meetings and communication can be improved. Second, the DAI Pre-Release Curriculum (summary in Attachment 2) is going to be integrated into existing ERP services at both DACC and REECC to enhance transition preparation of program participants.

Status: Not yet addressed

D. *Eliminate temporary hold beds at DACC.*

> **Activity:** Of the 300 beds at DACC, 220 are used to provide ERP treatment. The remaining 80 beds include approximately 32 men waiting to enter treatment and 30 men waiting to be released after program completion. The remaining 18 beds should not be used as temporary hold beds for non-ERP inmates, but rather should be utilized exclusively for inmates awaiting admission to ERP.

> **Response:** The Secretary and BOCM have agreed not to send temporary holds to DACC (unless there is an extreme emergency bed situation) so that these beds can be used for those awaiting admission to ERP. This change has had a positive impact on the program, eliminating the often disruptive actions of inmates on temporary holds not involved in productive treatment or institutional roles.

> **Status:** Completed

E. *Revise ERP goals and objectives (i.e., completion rate goal) to be consistent with expectations in proposed budget*

> **Activity:** The Oversight Committee should examine and revise stated ERP goals and objectives after a review of the criteria used in the state budget proposal (60% vs. 65% completion designation).

> **Response:** Oversight Committee has not yet addressed this task due to the late passage of the state budget containing the criteria.

> **Status:** Not yet addressed.

F. *Track and consider increasing speed of graduate release from institution – address barrier of delays in getting JOC paperwork back from judges*

> **Activity:** Identify appropriate ERP staff to use CCAP to confirm that packet was received by court and contact court clerk

> **Response:** Program staff utilize the CCAP database to track graduate judgment of conviction paperwork.

> **Status:** Completed

Potential Program Expansion Issues

A. Assess the system-wide need for a lower literacy AODA treatment program.

    Activity: Enforce the 6th grade minimum reading level suitability criteria or develop programming for lower functioning offenders either with separate treatment within ERP or at a separate ERP site.

    Response: Not addressed due to focus on other program improvements as well as the delays in the passage of the state budget.

    Status: Not yet addressed

B. Consider option of inviting representatives from potential expansion sites to Oversight Committee meetings.

    Activity: The Oversight Committee should explore the benefits of involving representatives of these sites prior to official passing of budget.

    Response: Decision made to wait until passage of state budget and decision regarding expansion of program.

    Status: TBD

DCC/Reach-In Issues

1. A. The ERP Oversight Committee recommends utilizing a combination of agent training and specialized agents within regions/units to address compliance with the administrative directive, increase knowledge of ERP, and improve overall continuum of transition planning. In addition, draft a plan for agent training.

    Activity: Ask DCC Regional Chiefs to identify one or two persons to serve as regional representatives on ERP Coordinators Group. Schedule meeting of group, develop agenda, and facilitate meeting. Explore feasibility of:
1. Developing materials for agent basic training (ABT)
2. Developing Internet training module specific to ERP
3. Developing presentation for ERP staff to give at DCC regional meetings
4. Developing power point and send to unit supervisors for them to show at unit meetings (train-the-trainer)
5. Developing training content for specific agents selected by regional chiefs
6. Developing and disseminating list of experienced ERP agents to agents in less-populous counties

    Response: Art Thurmer facilitated the formation of the ERP Coordinators Group and the first meeting was held on 9/13/07, with the next meeting planned for January 2008. The group is comprised primarily of ERP institutional staff and DCC agents (see Attachment 3 for a complete listing of group members). Significant progress was made on several issues during the September 2007 meeting, including:

1. Clarification of ERP suitability criteria.
2. Agents should include <u>separate</u> paragraphs on ERP eligibility and ERP suitability in the presentence investigation.
3. Clarification of DCC AD 5-12 pertaining to requirement to complete both the 2266 and the 2267, plan for housing for ten days after graduation (when released).
4. Developed goals for the group to: improve communication among DCC and DAI staff, improve continuity of services, provide progress updates to oversight committee, help with training of expansion sites, and disseminate information about ERP to the field.
5. DACC ERP will provide a folder to each graduate with materials to give to agent after release so that the agent is aware of the aftercare plan.
6. Possibility of preventing assignment of ERP cases to new agents – ask administrator; discussion of designated agents for ERP cases.
7. Discussion of transfer of cases after or upon release to different agent than the one that performed the pre-release contact(s): possibly try to transfer to agent in county of residence prior to release; discussion of whether the agent/participant relationship developed prior to release is important to offender transition and outcomes.
8. Art Thurmer will talk to the Training Center about offering training related to ERP two times per year for <u>existing</u> staff.
9. In addition, cross-training of staff was discussed: Agents should talk to unit supervisors at meetings, DACC/REECC staff should attend unit meetings periodically, and DCC staff should visit the ERP sites in the institutions.
10. The ERP Coordinators Group also recommended that DAI develop an internal management procedure (IMP) similar to the DCC AD 5-12 to clarify roles and responsibilities for institutional staff. DAI does have an IMP dated 6/15/2004 that focuses on the Challenge Incarceration Program, but does not specify ERP policies and procedures.

Draft materials for Agent Basic Training were developed, and Suzanne Schmitt and DCC Unit Supervisor Lois Wood have agreed to present the information at ABT sessions throughout the year. These materials will now need to be updated with information on the expansion sites. Agent Brent Boehlke prepared a checklist of field supervision requirements for ERP graduates to be included in the presentation. However, the Training Center indicated in October 2007 that there is no room on the ABT agenda for ERP information in addition to that already included.

Attachment 4 contains a summary of DCC AD 5-12 created by the evaluator that details the roles and responsibilities of agents and ERP institutional staff. Required meetings, forms, and deadlines are outlined to assist staff in improving coordination in release planning.

Art Thurmer's absence due to medical leave has delayed further progress on these activities.

Status: In Progress

B. Improve reach-in procedures through implementation of ERP staff and agent ideas developed during February 2007 meeting

Activity: Ideas To Improve Reach-in Procedures:
1. If an agent is non-responsive the ERP staff will contact the superintendent, and the superintendent will contact the regional chief
2. Regional chiefs should be notified that they can send field staff to DACC and REECC for training (alternate sites semi-annually)
3. Agents will tell staff *why* a residence has not been approved so that it can be addressed as a treatment issue
4. Agents should visit REECC program site – informational and for pre-release contacts
5. Agents attend trainings provided

Response: ERP staff and agents have developed procedure for making contact with agents who are not responsive to communication related to ERP admissions. Other issues have been incorporated into the ABT materials on ERP procedures.

Status: Completed

C. Develop materials to better educate judges about ERP

Activity: Art Thurmer and Tony Streveler will outline the information to be emphasized. Material will be developed for use by judicial education staff who will disseminate to judges at training sessions. Tony Streveler will give these materials to appropriate judicial staff.

Response: While the updated ERP criteria have been posted on the Department website and presentations have been scheduled for judicial education seminars, no template of talking points to provide information for judges have been developed. A plan is being discussed to post the ERP evaluation results and Action Plan progress update on the Department website, to present information at area conferences, and answer questions posed by judges, public defenders, and district attorneys. This plan will be further developed as ERP expansion progresses.

Status: Planning in progress

D. Get DACC and REECC staff access to appropriate DOC data systems so they can identify correct agent for ERP admissions.

Activity: Identify which REECC and DACC staff will require access to PING.

Response: Tony Streveler authorized electronic PING access for appropriate staff.

Status: Completed

Program-Level Issues

A. Revise DOC Form 2271 Memo of Agreement (program participant consent form) to reflect changes in program eligibility and suitability criteria

Activity: Update the document and obtain necessary approvals for changes.

Response: The form was revised by Sheri Graeber with Oversight Committee input. The revised form was approved by the oversight committee on 8/29/07 for review by John Bett. This form was further revised in early November to include language related to the expansion sites and sent to the Oversight Committee for comment. Current ERP participants will be asked to sign the revised form.

Status: Completed

B. Improve Data Collection on ERP Admissions

Activity: Develop participant-level database, pilot, and revise based on staff recommendations to improve quality and consistency of data on ERP admissions. Develop data collection and entry procedures at ERP sites. Prepare for potential expansion.

Response: In Spring 2007 the evaluator and ERP staff revised the database, developed data collection and entry procedures, implemented it at REECC, transferred the current DACC data to the evaluator for conversion to new database, and populated the database and implemented it at DACC. The evaluator performed data quality checks on database content at both sites in Fall 2007, including correction of errors and identification of missing data. The evaluator developed customized versions of the ERP database for the two expansion sites in November 2007 and provided the Office of Program Services with copies.

Status: Completed

C. Improve Quality and Consistency of Participant Assessment

Activity: Select and implement standardized participant assessment at both ERP sites, including substance abuse assessment resulting in a DSM-IV diagnosis code to develop ability to describe population served and assist in treatment planning.

Response: Both ERP sites are utilizing the Substance Use Diagnosis Disorder Screening (SUDDS) to determine substance use diagnosis, the Personality Research Form (PRF) to assess behavioral characteristics, and SOCRATES to document treatment motivation.

Obtaining ERP staff access to an indicator of criminogenic risk/need (the DOC-502) is dependent upon the progress made on the electronic Risk Management System (RMS) by the Department. When the RMS is operational, appropriate REECC and DACC staff will be identified and trained to use it. The Oversight Committee will need to determine how ERP staff will communicate the RMS information to assigned agents of ERP admissions.

Status: Completed, with exception of criminogenic risk/need which is waiting on BTM

D. Further Emphasize Employment in ERP Curriculum

Activity: Identify employment needs, options, and feasibility at each site. Identify what each site is currently doing, and explore feasibility of additional services such as more employability skills sessions, use of JobNet, opportunities to earn money for release, and job placement assistance. Staff from sites should communicate to learn from each other. Both sites make recommendations to Oversight Committee by the end of May 2007.

Response: DACC staff prepared a summary of the employment curriculum in place in March 2007 that included input from current participants on improving services related to employment (Attachment 5). REECC has not made any changes to their employment services to date. DACC has modified their focus/emphasis on employment so that they are currently assessing and identifying employment needs earlier in treatment (during Phase 1) to assist in treatment planning. DACC also provides each graduate with a computer diskette that contains their resume and aftercare plan to take with them upon release.

Status: In progress

E. Staff Discussion of Participant Satisfaction Results

Activity: Schedule one hour for staff at each site to meet as a group to discuss the participant satisfaction results contained in the ERP evaluation report. Develop a list of at least three improvements based on participant input and make changes.

Response: ERP staff at each site met as a group to discuss the suggestions for program improvement of current and former ERP participants. This included a review of quotes of participants, as well as discussion of how these suggestions could be used to improve program services. REECC staff considered four participant suggestions for improvement and developed possible plans to address the issues. DACC staff also considered several responses to participant suggestions and as a result implemented an additional family gathering (for a total of four annually) so that all participants would have an opportunity to take part in at least one.

Status: Completed

F. Continue to Address Participant Retention Issues

Activity: Discuss current procedures used in retention and termination at each site, and identify options to increase consistency between sites.

Response: Repeating a treatment phase (or "rephasing") was implemented as an option at each site to increase participant retention in treatment, allowing for differences in the treatment models. In addition, the REECC Superintendent signs off on all terminations and either the DACC Superintendent or treatment supervisors sign off on terminations.

REECC made additional changes to the treatment model to improve participant retention in the program. In August 2007, REECC eliminated peer-to-peer accountabilities, implemented motivational interviewing techniques, and inmates now record their own behavior to help them take ownership of their behavior and become more invested in treatment. While these changes were made to increase graduation rates through the use of a strengths-based treatment model, this has resulted in increased conduct reports that require up to 21 days to resolve, with the security staff (rather than treatment staff) making decisions about any resulting penalties. In addition, REECC has developed a five-stage process for handling inappropriate participant behavior rather than terminating the participant. The process includes addressing the behavior during individual counseling, in community group, the assignment of learning experiences, implementing a staffing intervention, and the use of behavioral contracts.

Status: Completed/Ongoing

G. *Consider Development of Pre-Program Component at DACC*

Activity: Identify program and participant needs, options for action, and feasibility of potential improvements.

Response: DACC and evaluation staff met in April 2007 to discuss options for the development of a pre-program component to provide services to inmates housed at DACC awaiting entry into the program. Staff discussed the purpose of offering the pre-program services, identified possible services, and discussed barriers to implementing those ideas. While an extensive list of ideas was developed, a shorter list of activities that would be conducted without additional staff or resources included:
1. Involve pre-programmers in unit meetings twice per month as observers.
2. Have senior programmers do some mentoring or orientation with pre-programmers.
3. Have the graduates present their legacy projects to the pre-programmers.
4. Invite pre-programmers to attend graduation ceremonies if there is room for them.

As many of the difficulties associated with the presence of the temporary holds have been eliminated (see System Level Issue "D" above) and all staff positions have been filled, none of these changes have yet been implemented. However, it is anticipated that the new program assistant will help identify pre-programmers who need a GED/HSED and will help them prepare if they volunteer to do so. In addition, DACC graduates will begin to conduct some of the program orientation activities with pre-programmers in late Fall 2007 because graduates continue to get treatment pay between graduation and release.

Status: Completed

Evaluation Issues

A. Incorporate ongoing information tracking into all Oversight Committee meetings

Activity: Send admission, completion, dropout, etc. information to members prior to meeting; Discuss at every meeting as a standard agenda item to monitor program progress and to identify any possible issues that may need to be addressed.

Response: The report was created and discussed by the committee in September. Numerous suggestions for improvement to content and format were made and submitted to Tony Streveler for incorporation into the finalized document. The report has not yet been presented as the committee has not met since September.

Status: Completed revision of report/Ongoing presentation at committee meetings

B. Develop a plan for ongoing evaluation that includes a program-level database, determine who will interpret/summarize the data, and how the results will be reported and used.

Activity: Evaluator and Oversight Committee members collaborate to develop a specific plan for continued evaluation of ERP. The plan should address the need for ongoing internal evaluation of ERP through summary and analysis of participant-level program data.

Response: The participant-level database has been developed and is operational at both ERP sites. The database captures information related to participant characteristics, services provided/received, and the number and timing of agent reach-in contacts. Data quality monitoring of the databases was conducted in September and October 2007 to correct errors and flag missing data.

An ERP Ongoing Evaluation Plan will need to assign roles and responsibilities related to (a) data quality monitoring, (b) summary and analysis of the program data, (c) reporting of results, and (d) dissemination of results. Collaboration between the evaluator and the Director of the Office of Program Services (Julie Worl-Koth) resulted in a strategy to include management of the participant-level ERP data as part of a position revision for a staff member in that office. As part of the preliminary plan the staff position would potentially be responsible for:

- Obtaining copies of the ERP database from the sites on a semi-annual basis;
- Performing data quality monitoring of the ERP databases;
- Summary of the numbers served, characteristics of ERP admissions (demographic, diagnostic, etc.), services received while in residential treatment, reason for discharge, and intermediate outcomes at the time of discharge.

The Oversight committee has not yet discussed who will take responsibility for the reporting of these results (what to report, format, etc.) or for the dissemination of the results (frequency, timing, who, how, etc.).

ERP staff also had suggestions for ongoing evaluation of the program(s). They felt that:
1. The treatment supervisors should be responsible for coordination of evaluation and that they should continue to utilize the participant-level database to document the characteristics of program admissions. One staff member suggested that staff should meet to discuss their program-level reporting needs and have an automatic report designed within the database to summarize the information they regularly need to report.
2. "The program can be continuously improved by enhancing resources, ordering videos, books, or other resources."
3. Participants should complete satisfaction surveys periodically and ERP should use the feedback to improve the program.
4. ERP should send staff to training for updated information on AODA treatment and resources.
5. ERP should coordinate with the Office of Program Services and they should periodically summarize and report on program data.

Status: In progress

C. Assess the feasibility of a system-level effort to allow agent reporting of post-release outcomes after release.

Activity: Oversight Committee will discuss options for gathering post-release outcomes of ERP participants, including an examination of the draft data elements developed as part of the full 2007 evaluation report.

Response: The Oversight Committee discussed the feasibility of gathering relevant post-release outcomes from the agents of ERP graduates, and considered the development of a pilot effort with selected P/P units supervising ERP graduates. The Committee also discussed the option of incorporating these elements into the RMS.

Based on the comments of Former Secretary Frank in August 2006, the primary purpose of ERP is to reduce risk and increase public safety. To accomplish this purpose, he felt that ERP should also provide a continuum of care during transition and after release to sustain the gains made in treatment. Similarly, the Director of the Office of Program Services indicated that using a harm reduction philosophy would suggest examination of a reduction in criminal risk as one of the post-release outcomes.

ERP staff were asked to suggest measures and methods for obtaining post-release data on outcomes. Staff suggested that the measures include:

- Substance use – how long they abstain
- Aftercare treatment involvement
- Support group attendance
- Employment – days to job and type
- Residence
- P/P violations
- Education involvement
- Status of support system

- UA results
- Revocation
- Arrest
- Reincarceration (P/P violation resulting in reincarceration, arrest for new crime, violation with no reincarceration)
- Graduate suggestions for program improvement.

ERP staff also suggested that these data should be collected by agents of ERP graduates at regularly scheduled supervision appointments, but were less than optimistic about the response of agents to such an effort: "How can we get agents to provide outcome data when we can't even get them involved during reach-in?" They indicated that agents would likely want to enter this information into a database rather than completing hardcopy forms, and also felt that both ERP staff and agents should have access to a single database for ERP participants (i.e., OATS). One person suggested the possibility of conducting another timestudy with ERP agents to determine the appropriate number of points to be given agents for the supervision effort required if reporting of outcomes is considered.

Status: In progress/under discussion

D. *Presentation of evaluation results to the DCC regional chiefs on 1/23/07.*

Activity: Evaluator presents evaluation recommendations to the DCC Regional Chiefs at one of their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

Response: Evaluator attended the monthly meeting on January 23, 2007 and presented the evaluation findings related to program strengths and recommendations for program improvement. The regional chiefs provided input on the recommendations and ideas for implementation. Some of their recommendations included (a) continuing to emphasize the continuity of the agent/offender relationship during release and transition period, (b) requiring agent documentation of reach-in contacts using the OATS system, and (c) training of DCC staff on ERP value, content, and requirements in AD 5-12, as well as emphasizing the continuum of care for ERP participants. Art Thurmer was asked to review and possibly update AD 5-12 to reflect these suggestions.

Status: Completed

E. *Facilitate meeting in February for DACC and REECC staff to review the program-level recommendations and develop Action Plan.*

Activity: Schedule, plan, and conduct a one-day training that includes DACC, REECC, and DCC staff in Madison. Facilitate discussion of evaluation recommendations and develop draft Action Plan for program improvement.

Response: The evaluator facilitated a discussion of the program improvement recommendations on February 14, 2007 at the DOC Training Center. This meeting was attended by 25 people that included treatment program staff from DACC and REECC, facility superintendents, the DCC Region 1 Chief, and DCC agents representing regions 1, 3, and 4. A draft program-level Action Plan was developed by the evaluator, tasks and target dates were assigned to specific persons, and it was disseminated to the ERP Oversight Committee members.

Status: Completed

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO EXPANSION

Several issues remain to be addressed by the Secretary and Executive Committee as ERP is poised for expansion. These issues are related to (1) assuring agent compliance with reach-in requirements and assignment of agents to ERP participants, (2) clarifying required ERP treatment program components, (3) revision of ERP goals and objectives, (4) treatment services for lower functioning offenders, (5) enhanced transition services, (6) rejuvenation of the ERP Oversight Committee, and (7) continued program evaluation.

1. The Department should formalize their commitment to providing a continuum of services to enhance transition of ERP graduates. One of the primary features of ERP is the reach-in component that provides the opportunity for the participant and DCC agent to develop a relationship prior to release. The Department should decide if the three reach-in contacts and associated transition planning are essential to the overall ERP model. Participant feedback indicates that these contacts are viewed as extremely valuable in helping them transition from the institution to the community. However, the reach-in contacts could be eliminated if the Department does not feel that they positively impact offender outcomes. If the Department feels that this relationship benefits the offender, reduces risk to the community, and impacts positive post-release outcomes then a concentrated effort should be made to:
   a. Assure that agents perform the three required reach-in contacts prior to release and develop mechanisms to assure compliance with DCC AD 5-12;
   b. Assure that the agent who performs the pre-release contacts is the agent who will supervise the offender in the community;
   c. Clarify the roles/responsibilities of ERP institutional staff and DCC agents regarding initiation of contact, paperwork completion, housing plans, continuing treatment, etc.;
   d. Revise the DAI IMP (dated 6/15/2004) pertaining to ERP and CIP to specify procedures related to ERP participants; and
   e. Assure that the ERP Coordinators Group meets frequently, and that one member is given lead responsibility for the implementation of the goals of this group.
2. During planning for expansion the Department should clearly delineate the program elements that should be consistent across all of the ERP programs, as well as those that can vary by gender or special condition. Numerous changes were made to the programs at DACC and REECC to increase the consistency of services offered. The recent efforts at REECC to modify the female program to increase consistency with the male program at DACC have eliminated some of the therapeutic community model elements. As the expansion for both male and female programs progresses, the Department should define the specific program models and elements required for ERP, as well as the program elements that make each program gender specific.
3. The Oversight Committee should revise the ERP goals and objectives to be consistent with the criteria set forth in the recently passed State budget.
4. ERP sites have tried to independently handle lower functioning participants by clustering them within treatment groups (when possible) or providing mentors and special services on an individualized basis. However, the Department should develop a policy for ERP on whether to (a) prohibit lower functioning offenders from entering, (b) to provide specialized services within the programs as determined by a comprehensive plan, or (c) to develop a separate treatment program for these offenders.
5. The Oversight Committee, Reentry Coordinator, and facility wardens and/or superintendents should discuss enhancing the effectiveness of the current program by designating an ERP

treatment staff position to be responsible for coordinating pre-release transition and aftercare services, acting as a liaison between the program, DCC, and the community.

6. The work of the ERP Oversight Committee to increase collaboration, coordination, and communication among relevant DOC units has been pivotal to improving ERP structure and services. The committee has recently received a new charge and new members, and this committee should once again meet monthly to continue this important function.

7. Ongoing program evaluation for ERP should be assigned to staff from the Office of Program Services. An evaluation plan should be developed to include both ongoing program improvement activities as well as collection of post-release outcome data for ERP participants. While the implementation of the participant-level database will facilitate the collection of some of the information, a formal plan should be developed detailing overall roles and responsibilities for evaluation activities. Finally, the Department should consider developing a process to allow the four ERP sites and DCC agents to enter participant-level data into a <u>centralized</u> database, rather than having four separate databases for the treatment sites and a separate data collection effort to gather post-release outcome and service data from agents. The current database could be used as a model, with additional modules added for post-release data from agents.

CONCLUSIONS

The Oversight Committee has devoted a great deal of time to the development and implementation of the program improvement Action Plan during the past year. This effort has created the impetus for significant improvement to ERP operation and services. The Oversight Committee itself has been restructured, ERP suitability criteria have been addressed, and the program services have been refined and enhanced.

ERP institutional staff put extensive time and effort into increasing the consistency of the services offered for males and females. During the past year, ERP has made the program length, assessment tools, and collection of participant data consistent for the two sites. In addition, staff at both sites agreed to develop a consistent set of definitions to use when assigning reason for discharge, and REECC will continue to investigate opportunities to allow more activity outside the institution for the women (i.e., AA, community service, family activities).

In addition to increasing consistency between the ERP sites, the programs have also improved services by making changes to the female treatment model, enhancing the employment services offered, and implementing practices to increase participant retention. The planned integration of the DAI Pre-Release Curriculum into services at both sites will also enhance transition planning for ERP participants.

Perhaps the most significant effort has been put forth in regard to improving the reach-in component of ERP. While many of the reach-in improvement plan activities have not yet been implemented, numerous meetings involving both DCC and DAI institutional staff have already increased the level of contact and generated productive discussions. The creation of the ERP Coordinators Group has the potential to improve coordination and communication among agents and ERP institutional staff. The agent training materials developed have the potential to improve agent knowledge of ERP procedures and requirements. Further action needs to be taken to implement the remaining reach-in component program improvement tasks.

ATTACHMENT 1:
ERP OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CHARGE
Earned Release Program (ERP)
Department Oversight Committee

Purpose: To provide a cross-divisional forum to oversee the ongoing implementation and evaluation of the Earned Release Program, including:

- address and resolve procedural, case-specific or systems issues and barriers related to cross-divisional implementation;

- monitor implementation to ensure established policies, procedures, standards and program components are being followed;

- collect, review and analyze program tracking and evaluation information to monitor program impact issues and to make recommendations for policy, practice or other changes;

- provide recommendations to administration for cross-divisional or division-specific policy, procedure or program changes that are designed to improve or enhance program delivery and outcomes;

- provide semi-annual program status and evaluation reports to department administration for approval and distribution to the judiciary and other stakeholders;

- serve as the focal point for any planned program expansion across the correctional system.

Membership:

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and be chaired by a representative of the Division of Community Corrections and Adult Institutions. Changes to the Committee membership will be approved by the respective division Administrator and the Secretary or Deputy Secretary. The following is a listing of division and office representation that, at a minimum, will constitute the core membership of the committee:

- Division of Community Corrections – Regional Chief
- Division of Community Corrections – Region 3 Field Supervisor
- Division of Adult Institutions – ERP Facility Superintendents/Wardens
- Division of Adult Institutions – Classification and Movement
- Division of Adult Institutions – Director of Program Services
- Office of the Secretary – Policy Initiatives Advisor
- Office of the Secretary – Reentry Director
- Office of the Secretary – Legal Council
- Division of Management Services – Budget Analyst

ATTACHMENT 2:
SUMMARY OF DAI PRE-RELEASE CURRICULUM (10/31/2007)

Curriculum Module	Activity/Emphasis
Wellness	Leisure activities Sexual education First aid Healthy lifestyles
Education	GED/HSED Post-secondary education Financial aid
Employment	Employment capability Career plan Job seeking Portfolio (resume, references, etc.) Interview skills Maintaining a job
Family Support	Parenting Family reunification Child support
Financial Literacy	Banking and bank accounts Borrowing/Credit Budgeting Insurance Income taxes
Health	Maintaining mental and physical health Determine individual health care needs Eligibility for SSI/SSDI and resources for the uninsured Suicide prevention Accessing health care HIPPA
Housing	Identify housing options Skills for independent living
Personal Development Skills	Personal goal setting Conflict resolution Stress management Victim impact

Transition Preparation	Verify/Obtain copies of:
	  a. Social Security Card
	  b. Driver's License/Renewal
	  c. State ID Card
	  d. Birth Certificate
	Community Reintegration Offender Questionnaire (DOC-2266)
	Community Reintegration Case Plan
	Release funds
	Warrant
	Check
	Medical needs
	Food and clothing needs

Transportation	Methods, costs, and availability of transportation Identify how to get a driver's license/reinstatement of license

ATTACHMENT 3:
ERP COORDINATOR GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Earned Release Program Coordinators Group Members		
Region or Facility	**Name**	**Title**
DCC Region 1	Brent Boehlke	Agent
DCC Region 2	Jennifer Hvorka	Agent
DCC Region 3	Alacia Smith	Agent
	Sandy Janis	Agent
DCC Region 4	Lori Richgels	Agent
DCC Region 5	Stephanie Schmidt	Agent
DCC Region 6	Connie Elbe	Agent
	Lonny Calhoun	Agent
DCC Region 7	Kris Wood	Agent
	Jenny Randall	Agent
DCC Region 8	Jay Klemann	Agent
REECC	Sandy Kruczek or representative	Program supervisor
DACC	Ken Snart	Program supervisor
	Tammy Lowe	Social worker
	Stacey Plachetka	Social worker

ATTACHMENT 4:
SUMMARY OF DCC AD 5-12 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Summary of DCC AD 5-12 Roles and Responsibilities			
Activity	**When**	**Institution Social Worker/Staff**	**Agent**
Assessment and Initial Planning Upon Placement in ERP	Begins 6 months prior to anticipated release**.**	The institutional social worker will review and assist the inmate to complete the "Community Reintegration Questionnaire" DOC-2266. Fax/mail a copy of the DOC-2266 to the agent.	Upon receipt of the 2266 Questionnaire, the agent reviews the 2266 and the case information, and begins the chronological recording of case activity.
			Agent completes warrant checks including the local/municipal jurisdictions.
			Agent does an assessment of the needs and risk factors to be considered in the release planning. (Use DOC 502 to identify risk and needs, but <u>do not enter</u> into OATS.)
			Agent telephones institution Social Worker to discuss the information in the 2266 and schedule an Initial Planning Conference with the inmate by telephone. (Face to face is optional and with Supervisor approval or videoconference)
			Consider any potential victim issues that may need to be addressed in the release planning and contact Office of Victim Services for assistance.
		Initial Planning Conference with Agent, Social Worker, and offender jointly begin planning by reviewing the 2266 information. A tentative release plan is developed.	**Initial Planning Conference** with Agent, Social Worker, and offender jointly begin planning by reviewing the 2266 information. A tentative release plan is developed.
			The Agent completes a Community Reintegration Case Plan DOC 2267. In the investigation of the residence, a home visit is required unless placement may be at a TLP /Halfway House.
			If placement plan is a TLP/HWH, the agent is to immediately make a bed reservation date for placement 7 work days after the anticipated program graduation date.
			Agent emails the Case Plan to the Social Worker to review with offender and for offender to sign.
Structured Reintegration Release Planning	Begins about 3 months before anticipated release.	Social Worker will ensure that the offender has proper I.D. Birth Certificate, Driver's License, Social Security Card, and completes applications for any Social Security/Medical Assistance/ Veterans Benefits	Agent attempts to arrange for a family member or person with whom residence is planned, potential community mentoring/support person, treatment providers, etc. to participate in the Final Release Planning Conference with the Social Worker and offender. Agent contacts the Social Worker with a date and time for the conference. The

Summary of DCC AD 5-12 Roles and Responsibilities			
Activity	**When**	**Institution Social Worker/Staff**	**Agent**
			conference will be by telephone. (Face to face is optional and with Supervisor approval, or videoconference).
			Agent completes the DOC 10 with any special rules and emails to Social Worker for review during the conference.
. .		**Final Release Planning Conference** with Agent, Social Worker, and offender and if possible, any of the above persons is to finalize the Case Plan for release i.e. residence, employment, and treatment services. Also to review the DOC 10, Offender Handbook, distribution of funds, appointments for community services, etc.	**Final Release Planning Conference** with Agent, Social Worker, and offender and if possible, any of the above persons is to finalize the Case Plan for release i.e. residence, employment, and treatment services. Also to review the DOC 10, Offender Handbook, distribution of funds, appointments for community services, etc.
			Agent reviews and addresses any victim issues
Community Reintegration	Begins 30 days before anticipated release.	DOC-15 authorizing release is submitted.	Agent sets up telephone conference with Social Worker and offender to verify release plan is in place. Agents should generally plan for release within 10 work days after date of program graduation.
		ERP will request modification of sentence from the court, and notify agent of release date.	Ensure that specific transportation arrangements are completed
			Ensure the distribution of funds in arranging the plan for the handling/cashing of the release check
			Ensure that appointment within 24 hours with the agent is scheduled. Also, schedule appointments with community service providers, mentors, etc.
			If appropriate, victim notification.
			Offenders will be supervised at the High-Risk level of supervision as set forth in DCC Manual 6.43. In accordance with Case Plan progress, the offender may be reclassed to a lower level after 90 days.

ATTACHMENT 5:
SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDED – PREPARED BY
DACC TREATMENT STAFF

Summary of ERP Employment Curriculum
[Prepared by DACC Staff]

1. Identify ERP employment needs, options, and feasibility of enhancements:

Offenders needs include:
- Having a substantial amount of release funds
- Increased education for employability
- Increased understanding of employability and job readiness
- Practice with interviewing skills

One option to increase offenders release funds would be to house ERP offenders at facilities that offer work release prior to their entry into program at an Earned Release facility. For DACC ERP offenders, specifically, it would be advantageous to house them at WCC first, as it would begin a continuity of health care, as the same doctor and nurse practitioner see patients at DACC and WCC. When choosing to house inmates at WCC, the Center's self-sufficiency requires utility and kitchen workers prior to placement on Work Release.

When offenders arrive at DACC they have the ability to be placed on project crews which helps to establish work ethic; however, there is not enough staff to expand this option. The offenders placed on these project crews need to be minimum community custody. A barrier to placing offenders on project crews is that not all offenders have this custody level. If offender is minimum custody DACC staff does not have the ability to conduct an early recall to change the custody level to minimum community to place them on a community project crew.

A recommendation is to develop a Reintegration Specialist position at DACC and REECC to assist coordinating the Employment skills program. This position would also coordinate services and reintegration of offenders prior to release. This position could help the offender to locate employment prior. The position can follow up with the offender when released and provide assistance in secure job placement in the community.

A survey of current ERP participants was developed and conducted by DACC staff in March 2007 to gather feedback related to the employment services offered. The participants were in a variety of treatment program phases so not all offenders had yet completed the Employment Curriculum offered primarily during Phase 3. The following presents quotes of ERP participants:

A. What suggestions do you have that you could have done prior to ERP program (while at DACC or Prior Institution) that would prepare you for employment when released?

- Get into the training kitchen at JCI to learn culinary arts.
- Offer us work release at least for the last two months of program
- Career interests, area of effectiveness offered in employment training course.

- Better interview skills
- To connect with a job in my county before I get out, so if I want to work there it can show me how to become a good worker at whatever business I would like to work at.
- Job Skills program in phase three we should get jobs in the community to get us ready for the real world.
- Employment classes, Job Seminars, Vocational Training and being in Contact with Job Placement Services. DOC could go further in educating offenders. There is not much in the way of vocational training.
- Get on work type schedule. Begin to focus on what type of employment is available to pay the expenses the individual has. Figure out what employment skills the person has.
- Computer Skills. Having Access to the DOC Intranet would be wonderful. Having access to Word, Excel programs.
- I have a trade but wish I could have been given a job in maintenance so I could be doing some of the things I do on the streets that way I can keep practicing my skills. Maybe a building Maintenance course.
- Vocational Programs and used the libraries and looked up books on subjects that may help in learning things that will help me in the job market.
- Fill out job applications. Take advantage of jobs in the community.
- Work release is important so an inmate holds himself responsible and shows that he has values that can be rewarded.
- Allow to get on computers and check out the job markets in our fields.
- Make people in ERP eligible to be able to be in other programs: Continuing Education.
- More resources to Education when released like for Tech Schools or Financial Aid and grants to further education for better jobs and a better lifestyle. More focus on GED completion, or job skills training for specific trades.
- Have some division of vocational rehab or training give an aptitude test and provide job education.
- Contact my last employer to see if I still have my job. Take employability skills test and review the results to see what career interests I have.
- A lot of these guys don't know how to work. They never did or have very little experience. Give them a real job to learn what is expected of them and maybe learn some minor skills to help them.
- Work towards getting a GED, get vocational schooling for welding, building maintenance, forklift operation, janitorial skills, culinary arts, semi-drivers
- As a carpenter, more books on carpentry or more books on codes. Some form of schooling on construction. I was at Stanley and they didn't have much to offer there. They said at Dodge that I would go to Fox Lake, they had construction classes there, but they bumped me to Stanley.
- To be registered at local job centers, to have received GED and/or HSED, to have been registered with employment agencies, to have more spiritual affiliations, to have obtained reference letters from previous employers, to have social security #, driver's license, done assessment college correspondence courses.
- Work at institution job, take a vocation trade, and take an employability class.

B.   What information and/or skills need to be presented in the ERP program to assist you in obtaining employment when released?

- They need to have a little more community service work to prepare people for certain type of jobs and get them more ready for society.
- Helping me get my GED.
- Programs that get state tax cuts for hiring felon. Help enrolling in heating and cooling training center, hands on training classes, financial aid, library with daily newspaper, and more library time.
- Interview skills.
- Work skills, because some inmates don't have any (like working with people or being responsible to come at a certain time to work.)
- Job placement program. Job leads/job search computer literacy course.
- A class in job skill will teach us how to keep a job.
- Communication skills, localized job opportunities, job readiness class, computer literacy class
- What opportunities are available in the area I will be released in.
- Talking to people on the phone about a job interview.
- I think there should be info on what is available to ex-convicts when they are released detailing what kind of help is out there for us.
- I think learning how to stay sober should be the number one point of this program. At the end of program, resume writing and job searches in area of release need to be done.
- Hands on job skills
- I hear there is a computer room here somewhere- I personally have never seen it. Maybe you could allow inmates to get some experience with it and at least let some people that have no prior experience get over their fear of them.
- Better community service with someone like Habitat for Humanity or some kind of trade service.
- Work toward getting occupational license.
- List of job opportunities out there- help with getting educated in the skills that are required for jobs of your liking.
- Help with furthering our education.
- More computer literacy to speed things up while in computer room.
- I think what is being done now for employment is good. I think if it could be brought up earlier in the program to give people more chances to send out applications and resumes and to have more access to the computers or jobnet to find jobs before being released.
- The info and skills that have been covered were accurate and complete. Perhaps more job listings targeted on specific areas and locations.
- Computer knowledge, knowing how to operate computers, knowing different programs, etc. Some sort of access to job listings in the area a person is being released to- internet, newspaper, job listings.
- ERP with their limited resources does a fair job at pointing out where to look and how to apply for a job. It is unfortunate some people have little or no skills when it comes to gainful employment.

- Aptitude tests access to on-line employment agencies or resources.
- Be able to look at a newspaper and make more phone calls for appointments when released.
- More access to jobnet or temp agencies in county of origin.
- I think they do pretty well in getting people ready to look for a job. Give us a reference, good or bad, and let us choose to use it or not.
- Resume detailing. How to properly filling out a resume to fit the job and emphasize your strong points. Obtain occupational or regular drivers license.
- Show more videos that would show a person how to take up trades.
- Some sort of time available to be able to search the jobnet on your own before you are released to find any jobs available with your qualifications.
- Knowing if you know how to read a tape measure. Testing math, reading and spelling skills every two months to see if there is improvement. Test for real life jobs, like warehouse, and see if they could take inventory of a bunch of products in a timely manner. Learning how to use power tools properly.
- A library at DACC where you can go to more often then every 2 weeks. Once in program, you don't have very much time to read books, so maybe more of a hands on training on the weekends with power tools, or Habitat for Humanity more often. Learn to build your own home when you get out.
- To learn resume writing, cover letter writing, and interview skills. Use job center computers and register with job center and employment agencies. Have supervised internet access (job related use).
- Newspaper from different city classifieds and drivers education.
- Offer work release the last couple of phases of program.

C. Suggestions for improvement in the DACC current Employment Skills Section

- DACC doesn't really offer much on employment skills. That's why it's important that each social worker gets community service work they can keep their case load at until release.
- Work release so when we're released we'll have some work skills for the ones who never had a job.
- To request temporary employment agencies (i.e. Manpower) from all areas of WI to come to DACC so when an inmate leaves, they would be on file with an agency. To send the agency a copy of ID because upon release jobs are important.
- If they had some type of employment work service to get us used to working when DACC inmates get released.
- Office skills training, personal finance training.
- We should have hands on teaching to a real job in the community.
- Computer training, office skills training, personal finance training, access to a telephone to contact potential employers, offer refresher classes (basic school skills)
- Mandatory GED/HSED diploma. Take group to MATC School for information.
- You need to give the inmates access to the computer room more. College courses and job info could be found on those.
- I am not even aware there is an "employment skills section" at DACC!
- Maybe some better jobs for pre-programmers to do outsides of the institution.

- More work release or even more on/near grounds jobs and projects.
- Devise a state-wide directory of employers that would be interested in taking a chance on the success of convicted felons.
- Being able to get on the internet to look for openings in the release area for each individual. (Give more time in this area.)
- For some people the job isn't all that needs to be addressed. When people go out in the community and can only get a job for minimum wage, they will become discouraged working at a dead end job and go back to the old ways. There needs to be a place where there is work, rewarding work, and when a person blows a fuse, the emphasis is on the person, not the job. I feel some people need training in coping with life's problems first before they are introduced back into society.
- We didn't have much time to do our resume and I know very little about operating a computer. Update the resume building software (word) to include the "resume building wizard". The version we used was 1997 and didn't even have spell check.
- More interview skills, more resume writing, work skills presentation.
- Work with each offender and see where their strong points are and try to help them with job training and placement.
- There is always room for improvement in all areas…social skills and positive attitudes.
- Well, I haven't done community service yet, so I'm not sure what they teach on construction. Teach communication skills to the class. It's hard to be a leader sometimes. Maybe teach that. We need more leadership roles.
- Have a personality profile to meet employment desired (cross testing). Have info on educational opportunities.
- Contact information for all temporary agencies in every major city in WI.
- Speakers such as CCEP need to keep their appointments or have a backup speaker
- Access to classified ads from area being released to, or at least have the ability to get approval to have family send in the classified ads.
- Access to contacts at temp. Employment agencies, or have their applications on hand to be able to send in while still at DACC.
- Contacts with the local unions for union jobs to be able to get started on job hunting in that field, or have the contact information available.

D. What could DACC do to assist you in securing employment when released?

- Help us prepare resumes and get them on the internet. Allowing us to do interviews over the phone to help us have a possible job offer when released.
- Teach me the skills and further my education.
- Having me work at a job that's located here, but in my community as well so when I'm released, I could transfer to the company in my community.
- Have employers that are hiring come to DACC prior to releases. (Almost like a motivation seminar.)
- DACC could make sure that everyone had a good resume or to make sure that one is set up.
- Give us information so we can tell our employer what we have done while at DACC.
- Having a contract with a job placement service, have a job fair for us to attend, allow more contact with potential employers, and provide interview-worthy clothing

- You could offer a tax break for companies that hire convicts out of prison.
- Allow me to access the jobnet and /or newspaper classifieds in my release area.
- Nothing for me personally, but I'm sure some could use help with resumes and cover letters. Also, computer experience would be, I'm sure, helpful.
- Being able to mail resumes without prison stamped on the back
- Have a list of employment choices with the social worker.
- Having a phone where you can charge calls to your account without correctional recordings- same with sending resumes- no prison stamp. Maybe a group computer / fax number.
- Host a job fair 2 times a year for some of the programs the state could offer. Also host a job fair that state employers could attend to find out why it is to their benefit to hire felons.
- Being able to email or fax our resume and do interviews or get them set up before being released. Help with obtaining occupational license sooner for transportation for work and meetings.
- I feel that the employment opportunities could be enhanced through church and business involvement. Many business owners are Christians and civic minded. Rather than depending on job services and other agencies that take part of a persons wage for placing them.
- I don't see DACC assisting me with any problems once I leave.
- Allow me to post my resume on-line or apply for positions over the internet. Possibly provide our own email account for this purpose
- Let us obtain more information on jobs in our field and send resumes by mail or email. More life work skills.
- Prior to starting ERP, some of us have been waiting for over six months. This time could have been used for education or training for jobs that are in demand such as truck driving, food service, welders, janitors, warehouse operations, etc.
- Set up appointments at a local temp agency, like SEEK. It would put a person to work right away after getting released.
- Giving out some sort of references for jobs performed while incarcerated at DACC. (or use performance evaluations) Use for interview and resume purposes.
- I don't know this yet. The only thing I will need is a way to get my addresses, telephone numbers, and maybe phone access
- See what jobs are willing to hire us with our backgrounds, check with past employers to see if we have good or bad recommendations and decide if we should use them or not, help us find better paying jobs that we can live on, and help us obtain transportation from our home to place of employment.
- Help obtain an occupational license so that I can get to and from work. I will be getting a ride but some might not be so lucky. Work on how to fill out a resume.
- Anything to help me find a job when I get out.
- Establish DOC employment training seminars available to county's requesting them.

2. Identify what employment services DACC and REECC currently offer:

DACC's current Job Readiness component focuses on:

1. Introduction and Motivation: This section focuses on the type of an employee an employer looks for in a good employee. This section also identifies the skills an employee needs to be successful employee.
2. Job Lead Sources: This section helps the client to identify sources/locations to obtain employment. In this section we help the client identify employment skills that are best suited for their skills and personality traits.
3. Applying for a Job and Resume writing: In this section we help the client focus on completing a Job application and Resume. They type a cover letter, Thank you letter, and identify references.   The clients are asked to write a resume which is critiqued by staff. This resume is typed at the institution and taken to DWD. Department of Workforce Development (DWD) assists the client in completing a professional resume.
4. Interview Skills: In this section DACC prepares the clients for the interview process. This helps them to understand the keys to a successful interview. They practice interview questions asked at an interview and critiqued on their responses.
5. Mock Job Interviews: DACC conducts a taped job interview of each group member. The offender views the video along with the group to give the offender feedback on their individual job interview. The group and staff give them pointers for conducting a successful interview in the future.
6. Job Retention. Clients are critiqued on the job performance.

DACC offers Outside Resources

➤ Department of Workforce Development
- Resume – assist in developing a resume
- Job Net – assist in searching on Job Net to locate jobs in the county of their release.

➤ CCEP – Employment program through probation and Parole. CCEP coordinator speaks to the offenders prior to release and informs them of the employment program through Probation and Parole and assists with initial paperwork. CCEP also informs inmates of Federal Tax breaks Employers can receive for hiring a felon.

➤ DACC provides GED / HSED study materials and pre-testing to those wanting and/or needing to complete or obtain a GED/HSED. Ten men are allowed to take official tests at OSCI each month.

➤ Social Workers provide offenders phone contact with potential employment sites. These phone contacts are at the offender's request.

➤ Fox Valley Technical College and UW Oshkosh speak to offenders about college, the enrollment process, and information on the different programs offered in the colleges. The colleges also provide information on how to apply for finical aid.

REECC Program focuses on these steps (information provided by REECC staff):

1st Step: Involves Handout Getting a Job Self Assessment (Covering Personal Qualities, Skills, Interests, Personal Values, and Work Values) Pick three jobs that fit.

2nd Step: Create General resume (Work Sheet)

3rd Step: Write a Specific Job Objective (given handout "Right Words to Use in Your Job Search," a list of action/descriptive verbs to help describe skills, accomplishments and work attitudes). Also get on "JobNet "program

4th Step: Construct a Specific Resume (given handout "Resume Writing"); all the women who graduate will leave with a functional specific resume

5th Step: Construct a Reference List. All the women who graduate will leave with a functional Reference List which matches their resume

6th Step: Write Cover Letter "Mock Cover Letter" using the computer to create a final draft

7th Step: Practice Interview Questions including explaining felony conviction, showing remorse, what they've learned, how they've changed, and why they can be trusted

8th Step: Filling out Mock Employment Application

9th Step: Interview with instructor for their Specific Objective "Mock Interview"

10th Step: Write thank you within 24 hours of interview

View/Discuss tapes: "Looking For Work," "Putting The Bars Behind You," and "Prison To Paycheck: Video 2 The Job Interview"