

## Part 1

- For more than four decades, people with serious mental illnesses (PSMIs) have been falling outside the country's social safety net—a net that has been steadily shrinking—and simply “landing in the criminal justice system at an alarming rate” (CSG, 2002).
- Gross racial and economic disparities in mental health/addiction services and increasingly punitive crime control policies, especially the War on Drugs, have contributed to the presence of more and more PSMIs in the criminal justice system.
- Percentages of most types of mental illnesses are significantly higher in correctional populations than in the general population.
- Rates of “disabled mentally ill” increased 6-fold from 1955-2007.
- Federal legislation, the BJA, the NIJ, the GAINS Center, the Criminal Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project, the CSG, and the CBHS/CJR, Rutgers University have all brought much needed attention and resources to better understand and alleviate the problem.

## Part 2

- A practical motivation for providing services to PSMIs in jails and prisons and also to those on community supervision is to reduce crime and recidivism.
- More accessible and effective mental health treatment for criminally involved PSMIs is viewed widely as the key to addressing the problem of the mentally ill in the criminal justice system at every stage in the process.
- No pathogenesis between major mental illnesses and crime has ever been established. The untreated symptoms of the three most serious mental illnesses (schizophrenia, bipolar, and major depression) have no or a weak causal relationship to crime.
- No theoretical model explains or predicts a clear-cut association between serious mental illnesses and criminal behaviors.
- Serious mental illnesses alone rarely lead people to commit crimes and, therefore, the treatment of mental illnesses alone is unlikely to prevent or reduce crime or recidivism.
- Mental health services are a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for reducing criminalization and recidivism.

- **The provision of psychiatric treatment is a sound criminal justice investment; the stabilization of symptoms can enhance the receptivity of PSMIs to other interventions that can reduce crime and recidivism.**
- **The provision of treatment is also a moral, ethical, and legal obligation, and the right and humane thing to do.**
- **The delivery of integrated/individualized services is the best strategy for PSMIs; they suffer from multiple morbidities and have a multiplicity of service needs (person/place focused).**
- **PSMIs “normal” on risk factors for crime (the “big 8”).**
- **The criminal justice system has made several noteworthy advances to address the needs of PSMIs but fall short (either/or).**

### **Part 3**

- **Researchers should use consensual definitions of mental illnesses and standardized tools to diagnose psychiatric disorders, which will help precisely measure the prevalence of mental illnesses in correctional populations in order to develop more effectively matched treatments and services.**
- **Criminalization must be reduced even further by stepping up diversionary programming at preadjudication interception points.**

- **CJ practitioners should focus their attention on ameliorating criminogenic factors (needs) and not simply on treating mental illnesses among PSMIs in the CJS.**
- **Intensive and comprehensive set of service modules is the best approach for working with PSMIs in the CJS (integrated philosophies, services, and outcomes).**
- **A greater investment must be made to treat co-occurring disorders and trauma.**
- **More funding should be allocated for all services, especially those that can promote recovery and reduce criminal involvement.**

#### **Take Away Points**

- **PSMIs in the CJS are heterogeneous.**
- **Deinstitutionalization contributed to, but was not principally responsible for, the disproportionate representation of PSMIs in the criminal justice system. Shared demographic characteristics and environments played a critical explanatory role.**
- **Harsh crime control policies and, in particular, draconian drug laws account greatly for the apparently large number of PSMIs at every step in the criminal justice process.**

- **Mental illnesses are not the primary cause of criminal behaviors.**
- **Untreated comorbidities and unmet criminogenic needs of PSMIs are crucial variables in explaining continued criminality.**
- **The criminal justice system has made several programmatic efforts to accommodate the presence of the mentally ill in correctional institutions and in community-based correctional programs but we must advance to next generation of services.**