



Ministry of Justice

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# **Integrated Offender Management Return to Custody Survey Report**

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## **Survey Results**

B.C. Corrections

Performance, Research and Evaluation Unit

Government of British Columbia

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Attributions

This report was completed by the Performance, Research and Evaluation (PREv) unit of the Strategic Operations Division of the Corrections Branch, Ministry of Justice, British Columbia.

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# Introduction

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## Program Overview

The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) program is designed to implement collaborative case planning and management procedures between Adult Custody and Community Corrections. The goal is to create an environment where B.C. Corrections works collaboratively towards the successful reintegration of offenders, by providing consistent structure and accountability in the development of case supervision plans for offenders who are currently incarcerated and are transitioning to community supervision.

Although the survey respondents are offenders in custody and at the time of the “Exit Survey” completion, they begin their participation in the IOM program as offenders/inmates and complete much of the work when they are released to community supervision, as clients. For consistency throughout this document, respondents are referred to as clients.

The IOM team consists of an Adult Custody correctional supervisor, and a Community Corrections probation officer. Together they are known as *Case Coordinators*. The teams are supported by the applicable Local Manager and Assistant Deputy Warden, an IOM project manager, and the headquarters staff of Corrections Branch.

The IOM team works with the client to develop a comprehensive and integrated case plan. The case plan addresses the person’s criminogenic factors while in custody, during the reintegration period into the community, and when residing in the community. The goals of the partnership between custody and community include:

- Improving the reintegration process of the client into the community;
- Reducing reoffending with proven practices; adherence to risk/needs principles; and
- Demonstration of a cost-effective approach.

To participate in the IOM program, clients must have (at the time of this evaluation):

- A minimum sentence length of 135 days for men and 90 days for women;

- A minimum of six months community supervision following release from custody;
- A previous community or custody sentence; and
- An overall high supervision and high needs assessment rating.

In 2010, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation looked to expand the Homelessness Intervention Project (HIP). This was to strengthen transition points for vulnerable populations such as; the homeless or at risk of homelessness, those with Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI) and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The consultations led to the development and subsequent pilot project in the Lower Mainland and in Victoria of the *Integrated Offender Management/Homelessness Intervention Project* (IOM/HIP). Key partners of the IOM/HIP pilot include; Ministry of Health, BC Housing, Community Living BC and local Health Authorities (Fraser Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, Island Health, and Provincial Health Services).

Therefore, in addition to participation in IOM, clients who are homeless, or at-risk of homelessness, were screened for eligibility for IOM/HIP. IOM/HIP provides these clients with the contacts and information surrounding resources and services needed at release for successful transition from custody into the community. The intended outcomes for IOM/HIP clients include: increasing housing stability; increasing connections to the community; and increasing employability, self-sufficiency and well-being.

The return to custody survey (RTC) is a survey for IOM (and IOM/HIP) clients who have returned to custody and identified themselves as having participated in IOM (and IOM/HIP). The surveys collected did not distinguish between IOM and IOM/HIP clients; therefore, responses are combined. For the remainder of this document, only the term IOM is used. This survey is administered to gain a better understanding of the participant population and to gather data concerning the reasons for their return to custody. All data in the survey is collected directly from the individual and therefore reflects the individual's opinions, recollections and perspectives.

The survey results contained in this document are part of a series of reports, including an IOM Impact Analysis and an IOM/HIP Evaluation.

# Methodology

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The IOM/RTC surveys were administered by IOM *Case Coordinators* to clients who identified themselves as having participated in IOM during their previous custodial term, and returned to a centre offering the IOM program. Survey data for the present study was collected between October 2007 and April 2013, from two B.C. Corrections Custody Centres: Allouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW) and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC). One-hundred and twenty-eight client surveys were recorded and analysed for this study. Survey responses were voluntary. Although most surveys were completely filled out, four surveys had the majority of questions left unanswered. Two surveys failed to indicate the facility and were excluded from the results.

The results section describes each question in detail. The number of responses per question varies as not all clients responded to each question, and not all questions were necessarily applicable to each client. For each set of responses identified in the results section, percentages out of the total 128 surveys analyzed are provided and breakdowns between facilities are indicated.

# Results

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The *Return to Custody* surveys analysed for this report were collected between October 2007 and April 2013. A total number of 128 surveys were analysed from two centres in British Columbia, Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC) and Allouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW). Across the centers, 61% of clients responded from ACCW (n=78) and 39% responded from FRCC (n=50). During this same time period, 671 IOM clients were released from ACCW and FRCC. Of the 671 IOM clients released, 443 were readmitted to a custody facility after their release (admissions up to April 2013); however, only 343 clients returned to ACCW and/or FRCC.

Of the 128 clients who returned to custody and completed a survey, responses indicated that 41% clients (n=53) were re-enrolled in the IOM program for their current custodial term (this includes four individuals who were re-enrolled more than once). Of the clients re-enrolled in IOM, 33 were at ACCW and 20 at FRCC. Forty-seven percent of responses (n=60) indicated the client was not subsequently re-enrolled in the IOM program, 37 at ACCW and 23 at FRCC. Twelve percent (n=15) did not provide information on whether or not the client would be re-enrolled in IOM. Although an explanation was not requested for reasons a client would or would not be re-enrolled in the IOM program, several correctional officers indicated that the client did not have a long enough sentence to be re-admitted into the program.



Questions 1 and 2: “Why are you being held in jail right now?” AND “In your opinion, what led to you ending up back in jail?”

One hundred and twenty seven clients indicated reasons for their current stay in custody (see Table 1).

Table 1. Contexts for Clients for Current Stay in Custody

Response Reason	Number of Clients		
	ACCW	FRCC	Total
Remand for New Charges	4	4	8
Sentence for Breach of Probation	6	4	10
Sentenced for New Charges	33	33	66
Remand for Breach of Probation	28	8	36
Parole Suspension	3	0	3
Parole Revocation	1	0	1
Multiple Reasons	3	0	3
No response	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>128</b>

Clients responded with a wide variety of reasons for their return to custody although over 50% (n=66) from both ACCW and FRCC returned due to new charges. Other reasons included, but are not limited to; financial troubles, return to criminal friends, substance use, lack of stable support/housing, bad judgement, and failure to report to community supervision.

Question 3: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, did you have a stable residence?”

Although just over half (52%, n=67) reported that they did have stable housing (ACCW 56.4%, n=44; FRCC 46%, n=23), more than 40 percent of the clients (n=56) did not. This was more prevalent with clients at FRCC (50%, n=25) than clients from ACCW (46%, n=23). One client responded both stable and unstable housing, and the remaining four surveys did not provide a response to this question.

Question 4: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you hanging out with the same friends/acquaintances you used to?”

Over half of the clients (59%, n=75) returning to custody noted that they were “hanging out with the same friends/acquaintances” that they had prior to their arrest. Fifty-one clients (40%) responded “no” to this question. The remaining clients provided no response.

Of the 75 clients who indicated “yes”, almost 70% (n=52) were from ACCW while only 46% (n=23) clients were from FRCC. One client from each facility chose not to respond.

Question 5: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, was your relationship with your family stable?”

Overall, half (50.8%, n=65) indicated they had a stable relationship with their family immediately prior to being arrested. Of those with a stable relationship with their family, 62% (n=31) were from FRCC, however only just over 40% (n=34) of clients from ACCW reported the same. Fifty-nine clients (46.1%) responded that their relationship was not stable (52.6%, n=41, ACCW) but only 36% (n=18) from FRCC responded the same. The remaining four clients did not respond.

Question 6: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, did you have a job?”, “If no, were you aware of job assistance programs?” AND “If you were aware of job assistance programs, were you using them?”

Overall, just over 20% of clients (n=27) indicated that they had a job immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody, with only 11.5% (n=9) from ACCW and 36.0% (n=18) from FRCC. The majority (76%, n=97) indicated that they did not have a job, 68 of these clients were at ACCW and 29 were at FRCC. The remaining three clients from FRCC and 1 client from ACCW did not respond.

Seventy clients (55%) indicated that they were aware of job assistance programs. Of these, 56 noted that they were not using job assistance programs. Of those who answered that they were aware (55%, n=70) less than 10% (n=6) of clients from both facilities indicated that they were using job assistance programs. Eight did not respond. Of the 56 clients whom provided reasons why they were not using these programs, three primary themes emerged: 1) not interested; 2)

lack of time; and 3) drug use. One client indicated that he or she was not aware of job assistance programs but was currently in one, suggesting that there may be some confusion surrounding how some client interpreted some questions in this survey.

In total, twenty-seven clients (21%) indicated that they were unaware of job assistance programs. Of these, ten clients elaborated on their answers with responses indicating that they; “had too many personal problems,” “were becoming aware” or “were prevented from working by their addictions” (e.g., “alcohol prevented me from working”).

**Question 7: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, did you have enough money for living expenses?”**

A majority of clients (55%, n=70) indicated that they had enough money for living expenses immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody. However, clients from ACCW (51.3%, n=40) were less likely than clients from FRCC (60%, n=30) to report this. Fifty-five (43%) clients indicated that they did not have sufficient money for living expenses. Of these clients, 46.2% (n=36) were at ACCW and 38% (n=19) were at FRCC. Three clients did not respond.

**Question 8: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you using drugs and/or alcohol?”**

Over three quarters of the clients (77%, n=98) indicated that they were using drugs or alcohol immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody. Of these, almost 80% were from ACWW (n=62) and just over 70% (n=36) were from FRCC. Twenty-eight clients (22%) reported they were not using drugs or alcohol, although seven of these 28 clients had previously indicated in *Question 2* that they were returned to custody due to issues related to drugs, relapse and addiction.

**Question 9: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you actively seeing an alcohol and drug counsellor?”**

Only 25 clients (20%) indicated that they were seeing an alcohol or drug counsellor immediately prior to being returned to custody. Just over three quarters of respondents (75.8%, n=97) indicated that they were not, while six chose not to respond.

Of the 97 individuals who were not seeing an alcohol or drug counsellor, eighty-two percent (n=80) indicated that they were using drugs immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody. Of the 25 clients who were seeing a counsellor, sixty percent (n=15) were using drugs or alcohol immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody. Eight percent (n=10) indicated that they were not seeing an alcohol or drug counsellor nor were they on drugs immediately prior to their return to custody. However, of these ten clients, half (n=5) alluded to drug and alcohol issues in *Question 2* regarding why they returned to custody. For example: “I started using immediately after release” and “I relapse after 7 months.” These responses indicate that there were drug related issues for some clients.

**Question 10: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, did you have a relapse prevention plan in place?” AND “If yes, were you following your relapse prevention plan?”**

The majority (64.8%, n=83), indicated that they did not have a relapse prevention plan in place. Of the 39 clients who had a plan in place, only 15 clients (less than twelve percent of the total respondents) indicated that they were following the plan. Twenty-two clients indicated that they had a plan in place but were not following it, while two clients indicated that they had a plan in place but gave no indication as to whether or not it was being followed. Six clients did not indicate whether or not they had a relapse prevention plan, though their reasons for returning to custody included; “housing, addiction”, “alcohol and failing to obey order,” “relapse,” and “back to drugs and old friends.”

**Question 11: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you on a waitlist for treatment, counselling or programs?”**

Almost one-third of clients (29.7%, n=38) indicated that they were on a waitlist for treatment, counselling or programs immediately prior to being returned to custody. Of the thirty-eight clients who were on waitlists, 84 percent indicated that they were using drugs or alcohol.

Two-thirds of the clients (67.2%, n=86) indicated that they were not on a waitlist for treatment, counselling or programs; however, the majority (76.5%, n=65) indicated that they had been on drugs or alcohol immediately prior to being returned to custody.

Question 12: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you meeting with a psychologist or mental health worker?”

Over 82% (n=106) of clients indicated they were not meeting with a psychologist or mental health worker immediately prior to their return to custody. Nineteen clients (14.8%) responded that they were meeting with a psychologist or mental health worker (ACCW 19.2%, n=15; FRCC 8.0%, n=4). Only eight clients (6%) indicated that they were meeting with a psychologist or mental health worker and were on a waitlist for treatment, counselling or programs.

Question 13: “Immediately before you were arrested and returned to jail, were you taking any prescription medication?” AND “If yes, what were you taking?”

Almost forty percent (39.8%, n=51) indicated that they were on prescription medications, while 74 clients (57.8%) indicated that they were not taking prescription medication immediately prior to returning to custody. Of those clients that indicated that they were taking prescription medications, responses included: methadone, anti-depressants, anti-anxiety, and sleep medications. However, of the clients who were taking prescription medications, 23.5% (n=12) were meeting with a psychologist or mental health worker.

Question 14: “Did you feel comfortable discussion your life/circumstances with your probation officer?”

The majority of clients (57%, n=73) indicated that they felt comfortable discussing their life and circumstances with their probation officers (ACCW 52.6%, n=41; FRCC 64.0%, n=32). Forty-eight (38%) indicated that they did not feel comfortable having these discussions (ACCW 42.3%, n=33; FRCC 30.0%, n=15). Five percent of clients (n=7) did not respond to the question.

Question 15: “Did you advise your probation officer of the difficulties you were facing in your life?”

*Figure 1* illustrates client responses as to whether or not they advised their probation officer of the difficulties that they were facing in their lives although clients from FRCC were more likely to talk to probation officers about life circumstances (44 %, n=22) as opposed to clients from ACCW (33.3%, n=26).

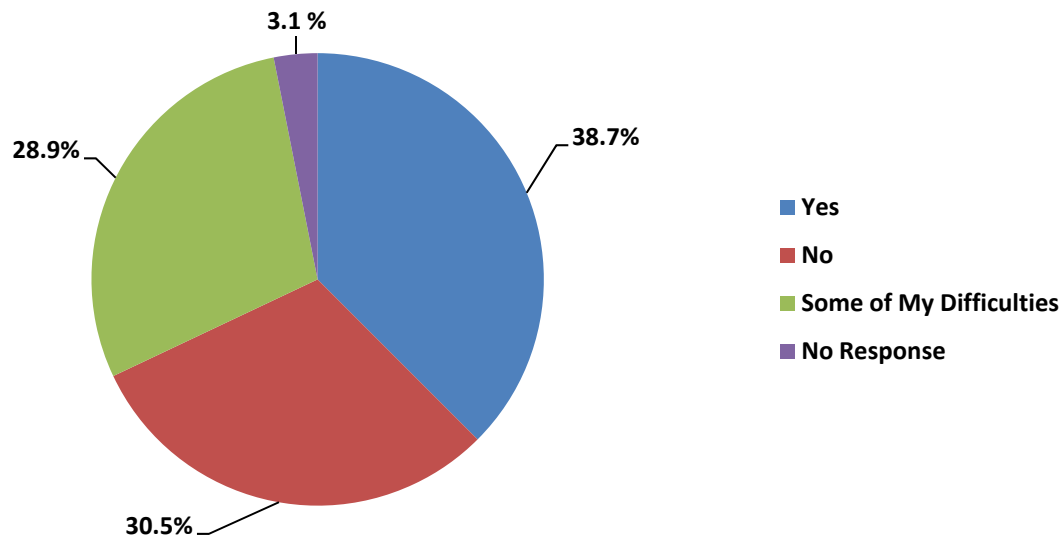


Figure 1. Responses from Clients from ACWW and FRCC as to Advising Life Difficulties to Probation Officers.

Questions 16 & 17: “Were you aware that your probation officer had a case plan that identified certain things she/he thought you should work on?” and “How active do you believe you were in working on your case plan with your probation officer?”

Nearly two-thirds of clients (64.1%, n=82) indicated that they were aware that their probation officer had a case plan that identified certain things that the probation officer felt the client should work on (ACCW 59%, n=46; FRCC 72%, n=36). Three clients from each facility did not respond.

Sixty-five clients (51%) indicated that they were somewhat or very active in working with their probation officer on their case plan. *Figure 2* illustrates the levels of involvement in relation to working with their probation officer. Of the fifty-nine clients (46.1%) that indicated they were not actively working with their probation officer on a case plan, 50% (n=39) were from ACCW while 40% (n=20) were from FRCC. Of the 59 clients who were not active in working with their

probation officer, over half (54.2%, n=32) indicated that they were aware that their probation officer had a case plan.

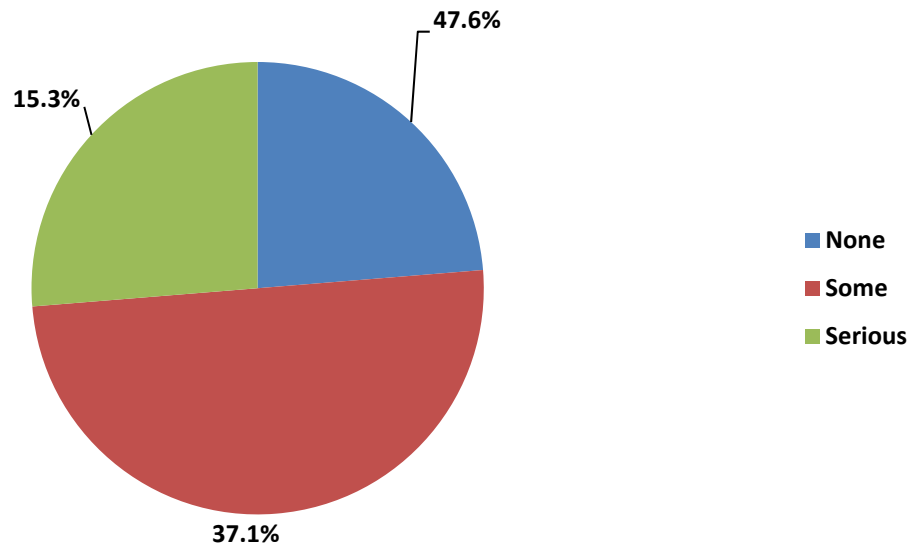


Figure 2. Client Activity Level Working on Case Plan with Probation Officer

Questions 18 & 19: “How much of an effort do you believe you made to avoid ending up back in jail or reoffending?” AND “What do you think could have been done to prevent you from ending up back in jail?”

Less than 30% of clients (28.1%, n=36) indicated that they put serious or no effort into avoiding ending up back in jail or reoffending. However, over half (53.1%, n=68) said that they put somewhat of an effort into the process. Overall, 16.4% (n=21) admitted that they put no effort into avoiding returning to jail. Interestingly, there were quite large differences between the two facilities with almost one quarter of respondents from ACCW identifying that they put no effort as opposed to those from FRCC (ACCW 23.1%, n=18; FRCC 6.0%, n=3). *Figures 3 and 4* exemplify the overall responses between categories and the differences between facilities.

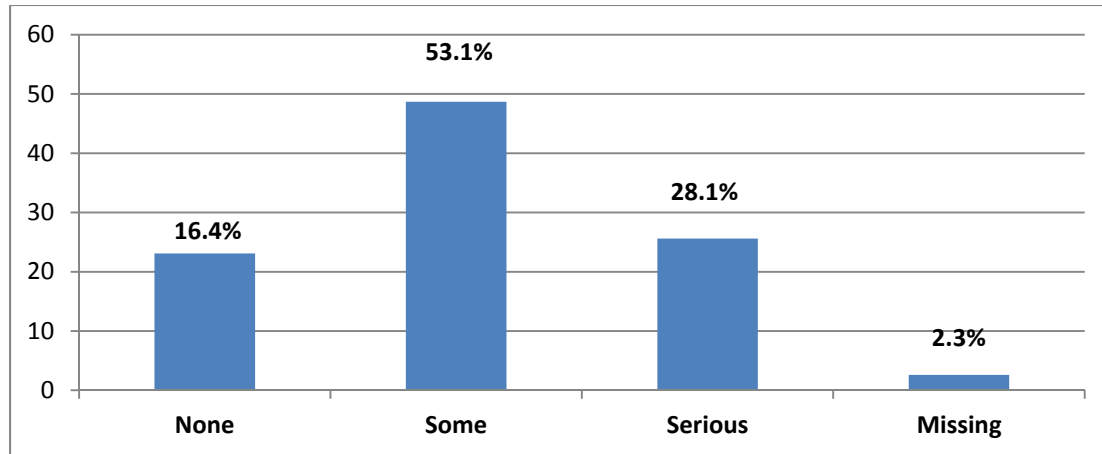


Figure 3. Overall Response Rates from Clients Concerning Efforts to Not Return to Jail

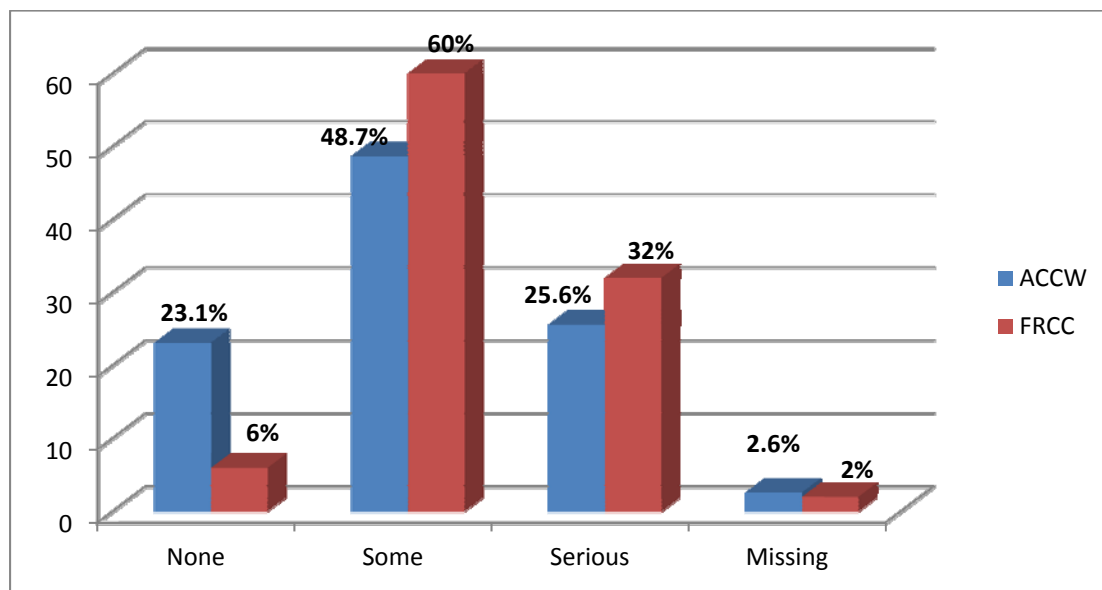


Figure 4. Effort Put into Avoiding Jail for Clients from ACCW and FRCC

When clients were given the opportunity to comment on preventative strategies that would have helped them avoid ending up back in jail, clients offered a range of responses. Many of them referenced avoiding substances or having the availability of treatment programs, in addition to avoiding old acquaintances or geographically changing living circumstances. However, others suggested taking responsibility which included; following through on plans and asking for more help. A few individuals felt that the system itself let them down. They referenced lack of help with housing, work and social support. Among those clients who



indicated that they put “significant” effort into avoiding jail; the answers tended toward taking responsibility for one’s own actions, although there was certainly a significant number that also discussed limited “hands-on” treatment and prevention programs.

**Question 20: “Were there any areas in which you would have liked more assistance?” AND “If yes, please explain.”**

Just over 40 percent (n=53) of clients (ACCW 44.9%, n=35; FRCC 36.0%, n=18) indicated that there were areas in which they would have liked more assistance during their previous time in custody or while on community supervision. Of these 53 clients, over one-third indicated that they would have liked more help in finding housing, with variations such as “private affordable housing” and “housing not in my neighbourhood.” Nine clients indicated a need for more treatment and support for alcohol and drug issues. Four clients indicated a need for more general assistance such as “better direction on how to balance and cope with my life.” Four clients indicated a need for more help with transportation to appointments, three clients indicated more counselling opportunities for mental health issues (e.g., “hard to get counselling where I lived”) and a further three indicated job assistance support and resume support. Clients from ACCW mentioned more than 50 percent of the time, compared to all others suggestions combined (i.e., addiction, life skills and work support), that assistance with housing would have helped them not to return to jail.

**Question 21: “Do you think the Integrated Offender Management project helped you?” AND “Please explain.”**

The majority of clients (71.1%, n=91) indicated that they thought the IOM program helped them, noting the benefits of the program. However, there was a difference between facilities (ACCW 65.4%, n=51; FRCC 80%, n=40). Clients who recognized the benefits of the program elaborated with such responses as; “helped me map out a treatment plan,” “helped me understand process and more aware of my options,” “made me think twice, helped for a long time”, and “helped set goals and plan my release.” Some clients indicated that they appreciated the program but could not follow through with the plans; “at time of release had plan including

housing, then abandoned it,” “it worked in the first months, it just got out of control,” and “I started it but I decided against it.”

For those that did not think the program helped them (22%, n=28), there were strong indications that clients recognized the benefits of the program, but they did not want to follow through on the plans after their release; “I wasn’t letting it help me,” “didn’t use it to my full advantage,” and “I was resistant to the help offered.” In addition, clients indicated a lack of control over their lives upon release or noted that they intended to disregard the plan objectives such as; “already had made up my mind what I was going to do,” “wasn’t ready to change” and “I started using right away.”

#### Question 22: “Any other comments?”

Clients provided a broad range of comments in the open-ended section. From “great program, helped with relationship with spouse,” to “help me !!!!” Several responses indicated interest in proceeding with the IOM program; “IOM case manager really easy to work with,” “going to try harder, have plans for release next time,” and “only a tiny slip up. I still feel confident in my recovery.”

## Conclusions and Recommendations

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The IOM client base consists of a diverse group of participants, many of whom face struggles with drugs or alcohol. For example, over three-quarters of these clients used alcohol or drugs immediately prior to being arrested and returned to custody. Overall, 71% of clients suggested that they found the IOM program helpful. While 22% of clients did not feel IOM helped them, most of these clients indicated that they could not follow through with their plans to remain out of custody due to their own circumstances or lack of control.

Forty clients (31%) indicated that they were unaware of any case plan with their probation officer, and 65% of clients (n=83), indicated that they did not have a relapse prevention plan in place. The goal of IOM is to create an environment where B.C. Corrections works collaboratively towards the successful reintegration of offenders, by providing consistent structure and accountability in the development of case supervision plans for offenders who are currently incarcerated and are transitioning to community supervision. The lack of awareness of a case plan, and the lack of plans for relapse prevention, suggests that there may be some improvements that can be made to better support these clients in successfully re-entering the community.

It is evident from the results of “Return to Custody Survey” there are also quite significant differences between the facilities in terms of what the clients felt they received or needed as part of the program that would diminish their chances of returning to jail. It is quite likely that the differences are related to gender and not to facility. With the addition of clients from two more facilities (i.e., Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre and Prince George Regional Correctional Centre), attention to regional and gender differences should be explored. These results indicate that as the intended outcomes for IOM/HIP clients are housing stability, increasing connections to the community, improved employability, and encouraging self-sufficiency along with well-being; that continued support from the Corrections Branch of the delivery of the IOM program, is essential.