



Ministry of Justice

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# **Integrated Offender Management Participant Exit 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 exit survey is a survey for IOM and IOM/HIP clients who have participated in IOM and IOM/HIP, and are being released to community supervision. 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. The purpose of the exit survey is to determine the level of understanding clients have of the IOM program and to solicit input on potential improvements. All data in the survey is collected directly from the client and reflects only the client'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 return to custody evaluation.

# Methodology

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The IOM Participant Exit Surveys were administered by IOM *Case Coordinators* to clients who participated in IOM during their current custodial term, and were being released to community supervision. Survey data for the present study was collected between September 2007 and April 2013, from two B.C. Corrections Custody Centres: Allouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW) and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC). Four hundred and sixty-six client surveys were recorded and analysed for this study.

The results section describes the analysis of each question in detail. Response rates varied per question as not all questions were necessarily applicable to each client or the client chose to not respond to a particular question. For each set of responses identified in the results section, the number of responses is indicated, as well as the percentages out of the total 466 surveys analyzed. In addition, difference in response rates between centres is noted.

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# Results

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The Participant Exit Surveys analysed for this report were collected between September 2007 and April 2013. A total number of 466 surveys were analysed from two centres in British Columbia: Allouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW) and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC). A total of 466 clients responded with a 50% rate from each facility (ACCW, n= 234; FRCC, n=232). During this same time period, 671 IOM clients were released from ACCW and FRCC.

## Question 1: “Do you have a clear understanding of what the IOM project hopes to do?”

An overwhelmingly 97% (n=450) of clients noted that they had a clear understanding of the intention of the program. Only fifteen clients indicated that they did not have a clear understanding (one client did not respond). Results differed slightly between facilities with approximately 5% (n=11) of clients from ACCW reporting that they were unclear of the goals of the IOM program while less than 2% (n=4) of clients from FRCC noted the same.

## Question 2: “Do you understand why you were chosen to participate in the IOM project?”

Four hundred and twenty respondents (90%) indicated that they understood why they were chosen to participate in the IOM program. In total, forty-two clients (9%) did not understand why they were chosen. Four did not respond. Of the 42 clients who did not understand why they were chosen, 13% (n=30) were from ACCW, while 5% (n=12) of clients were from FRCC.

## Question 3: “Did you find the case planning process useful? (E.g., meeting with the case coordinators, working on your case plan, working with the IOM/HIP worker planning for your release from jail).”

Overall, four hundred and forty six clients (96%) indicated that they found the case planning process useful. Four clients did not respond to this question. Results varied slightly between facilities with just over 5% (n=12) of clients from ACCW and just under 2% (n=4) of clients from FRCC reporting that they did not find the case planning process useful.



**Question 4: “Having the jail and probation staff working together on my case plan has been to my benefit.”**

Four hundred and twenty six clients (91%) either agreed or strongly agreed that having the jail and probation staff working together benefited them (88% ACCW, n=206) and (95% FRCC, n=220). Almost equal number from both facilities indicated that they “strongly agreed” (ACCW 55.1%, n=129) and (FRCC 56.5%, n=131). Thirty five (8%) neither agreed nor disagreed (ACCW, 10.7%, n=25; FRCC, 4.3%, n=10). Only four clients, representing both institutions, either disagreed or strongly disagreed (1%), and one client did not respond to the question.

**Question 5: “What part of the IOM process did you find most helpful?”**

Clients were asked to comment on what part of the IOM process was most helpful. Responses were clustered thematically. One hundred and sixty five clients (35%) indicated that they found the meetings and emotional support provided through the IOM program to be the most helpful while one-third (33%, n=153) of clients indicated that the long term planning was the most helpful. This included examples such as; “getting a plan,” “plans, looking for shelter and other programs,” and “bridging the gap between myself and community resources”. Forty-two clients (9%) specified that the housing and relocation support was the most helpful aspect for them. Twenty three respondents (5%) indicated that everything about the program was helpful and supportive, and 6 clients (1%) were not sure what the most helpful aspect of the IOM program was. Five clients (1%) indicated that that “none of it” was helpful. Finally, 72 clients (15%) provided a range of other responses, including: “phone” and “TA” (temporary assignment in the community). *Figure 1* illustrates the processes that clients from ACCW and FRCC felt were beneficial from the IOM program.

Differences between the two facilities was found with 36% (n=73) of clients from ACCW indicating that they found the meetings and emotional support provided through this program to be the most helpful aspect while over 48% (n=92) of clients from FRCC reported the same. In addition, a greater number of clients from ACCW (41.9%, n=85) in comparison to clients from FRCC (35.6%, n= 68) found the planning, housing and relocation aspects of the program the most helpful.

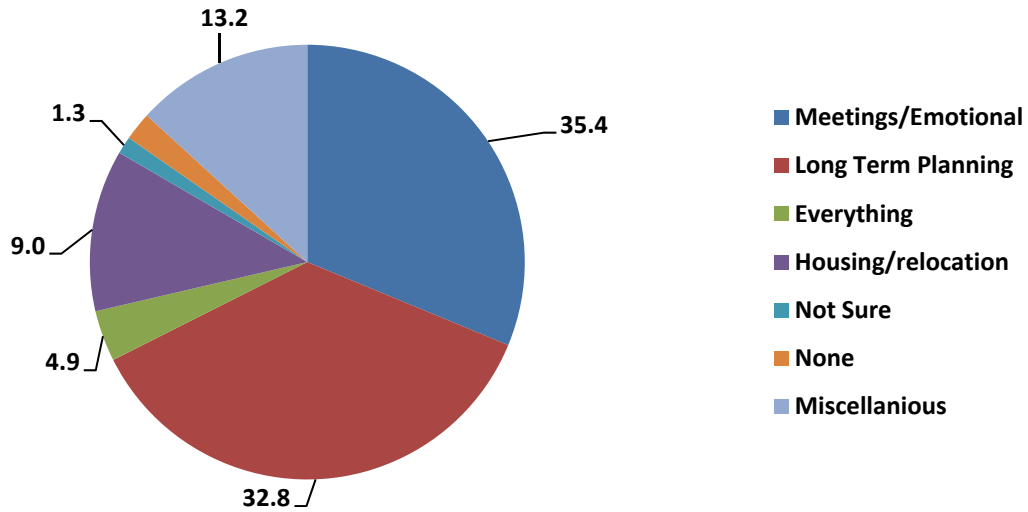


Figure 1. Processes ACCW and FRCC Clients Felt Beneficial from the IOM Program.

#### Question 6: “What part of the IOM process did you find least helpful?”

The majority of clients (79%, n=369) did not respond to this open ended question although twenty-five clients (5%) wrote that the program was “all good” or there was “nothing bad” to report. From feedback received, six clients indicated that acquiring housing should be a greater portion of the program services, while four clients indicated that they wanted more time and support. The remaining responses were divided into two themes: 1) issues with program protocols; and 2) uncertainties regarding their status in jail in relation to time in or out of IOM. In the first category, there were a range of complaints that included; “wished they wouldn’t wake me up”, “small room”, and “paperwork.” In the second category, there were comments such as; “not knowing when I might get gated”, “release date was changed so I didn’t get as much time in IOM”, and “the waiting for it.”

#### Question 7: “During my present time in jail I have received:”

IOM survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt that they had more, similar or less individualized attention than their previous time in jail. Responses options were:

- 1) More individualized attention than any previous time spent in jail
- 2) About the same amount of individualized attention as any previous time spent in jail
- 3) Less individualized attention than any previous time spent in jail
- 4) Not Applicable (i.e. never been in jail before)

The majority of clients (n=341, 73%) indicated that they felt that they had more individualized attention than during their previous stay. Of these clients, 65% from ACCW indicated more individualized attention (n=150), while 82% clients from FRCC indicated the same (n=191). Overall, fifty one clients (11%) indicated that they received about the same level of individualized attention, while 58 clients (12%) indicated that this question was not applicable to them. Only 2% (n=10) indicated that they received less individualized attention than they had previously. Four clients did not respond to this question.

#### Question 8: “If you received more individualized attention, did you find this attention to be a positive experience?”

To further explore perceptions concerning greater individualized attention, the client was asked to comment on the nature of the experience. An overwhelming 98.8% of clients indicated that this was a positive experience. Just over 1% indicated that this was a neither positive nor a negative experience, or they chose not to answer the question.

#### Question 9: “Do you think the assistance you received will reduce your chances of ending up back in jail?”

Overall, three hundred and sixty-eight (79%) clients responded that they believed the assistance they received while in the IOM program would reduce their chances of ending up back in jail. This included 74% (n=173) from ACCW and 84% (n=195) from FRCC. Overall, seventy-two clients (15%) indicated that they were unsure if the assistance they received while in the IOM program would reduce their chances of ending up back in jail. Only nineteen clients (4%) believed that their chances of ending up back in jail had not been reduced.

The clients who responded “no” or “not sure” were asked to elaborate. Of those clients who were unsure about any reduction in their chances of ending up back in jail, several clients elaborated with comments such as; “you never know”, “life of crime”, “just have to follow with the plan”, “I have court next month for upcoming charges” and “it did help, but for how long?”

Those who indicated that they felt their chances of ending up back in jail were not reduced also indicated uncertainty about the future. Some clients felt they received less individualized assistance because they were better behaved than in previous stays in jail. Others indicated that they refused to talk with those who could provide assistance, while a few noted that the need to do drugs would be too overwhelming upon release.

**Question 10: “Has the assistance you received made you feel more comfortable about returning to the community?”**

Four hundred and six clients (87%) indicated that they felt more comfortable about returning to the community after having participated in IOM. This included 85% (n=199) from ACCW and 89% (n=207) from FRCC. Overall, thirty eight clients (8%) indicated some hesitance or divided feelings, while 16 clients (3%) responded that they did not feel more comfortable returning to community. Six clients did not respond to the question.

**Question 11: “Is there any other assistance you would have liked to receive?”**

Three hundred and thirty six clients (72%) indicated that they were satisfied with the assistance they received while participating in the IOM program. However, ninety-eight clients (21%) stated that they would have liked to receive some other form of assistance.

When clients were asked to comment and explain as to what other assistance they would have liked to receive, 64 clients provided details. *Figure 2* illustrates responses.

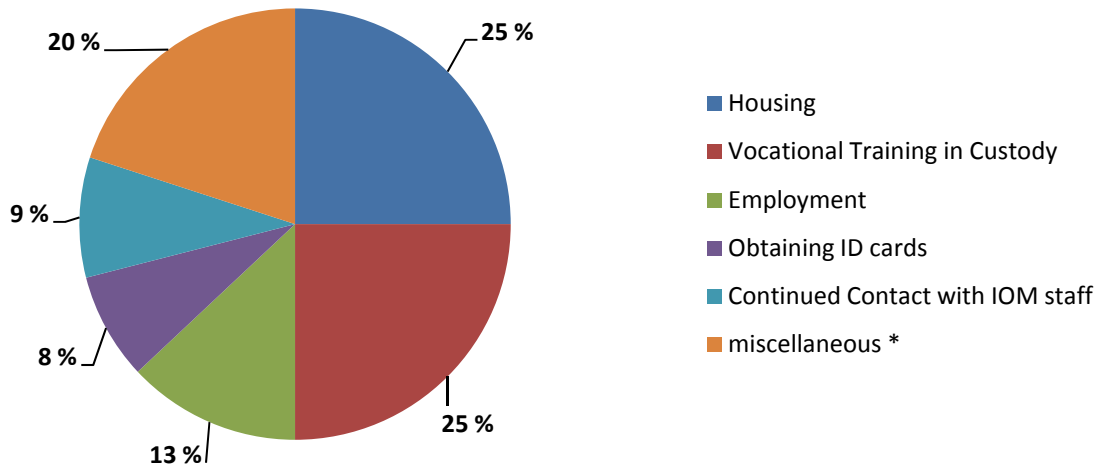


Figure 2. Client Suggestions of Additional Assistance They Would Like to Receive Through the IOM Program. \*Miscellaneous comments included items such as counselling and temporary absences.

### Question 12: “Other Comments”

Two hundred and forty clients provided other comments. The vast majority were positive comments including; “keep it going,” “IOM staff very helpful,” “if someone wants to change, this program will help,” and “more than helpful!” Ninety-two clients left variations of “thank you” as their final comment.

## Conclusion

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The results of the participant exit surveys suggest that the clients believe that the goals of the program are well communicated to the clients, and the clients at both ACCW and FRCC generally found the program supportive and helpful. Ninety-six percent of all respondents indicated that they found the case planning process useful. In addition, the program appears to be very well-received in terms of practical needs/supports (i.e., planning, housing, relocation). Forty-two percent of clients noted that this was the most helpful while 36% of clients indicated that they found the meetings and emotional support provided through this program to be the most beneficial. Almost three quarters of clients felt they received more individualized attention than their previous stay, and of those, over 98% found this to be a positive experience. Although 72% of the clients indicated that they were satisfied with the level of programs and assistance available, 21% noted they would have liked additional assistance. Suggestions included additional programming, assistance toward housing and employment, assistance obtaining identification cards, and continued follow up and contact with the IOM staff. Finally, almost eighty percent of the clients believed the assistance they received within the IOM program would reduce their chances of re-offence and ending up back in jail.

# Recommendations

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It is evident from the results of “Exit Survey” that participation in the IOM program is viewed positively and is extremely beneficial to clients. Clients are provided information and tools for re-entry into the community. Clients also provided suggestions as to improvements that could be taken into consideration should the program evolve. 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.