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**CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC SAFETY REALIGNMENT: EXAMINING THE  
LINK BETWEEN MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS AND RECIDIVISM  
FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 109 - REALIGNMENT AND RE-ENTRY  
PARTICIPANTS**

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AND RECIDIVISM FOR  
ASSEMBLY BILL 109 - REALIGNMENT AND RE-ENTRY PARTICIPANTS

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ABSTRACT..... 4**

**CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION..... 5**

Historical and Contemporary Context..... 5

Research Problem..... 9

Purpose of the Study..... 9

**CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW..... 11**

Recidivism..... 11

Ex-Offender Reintegration into Communities..... 14

Current State of Realignment..... 17

Funding..... 20

Evidence-Based Treatment..... 22

Future of Prisoner Re-entry..... 31

**CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... 38**

Research Question..... 38

Research Sub-Questions..... 40

Research Hypothesis..... 41

Dependent and Independent Variables..... 41

Data Collection Plan Overview..... 43

Interview Data..... 43

Survey Data..... 45

Secondary Data..... 46

Ensuring Internal and External Validity and Controlling for Bias..... 46

Limitations of Research..... 47

**CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS AND FINDINGS..... 48**  
Survey Data Results..... 48  
Interview Data Results..... 60  
Significant Key Findings..... 75

**CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 81**  
Conclusion..... 81  
Recommendations..... 82

**REFERENCES..... 91**

**APPENDIX A..... 97**  
**APPENDIX B..... 98**  
**APPENDIX C..... 103**  
**APPENDIX D..... 104**  
**APPENDIX E..... 105**  
**APPENDIX F..... 106**

**ABSTRACT**

The implementation of Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109) in October 2011 initiated the shifting of responsibility for a substantial number of non-serious, non-violent, and non-sexual felony offenders from state prisons down to local county jurisdictions in the state of California. Although AB 109, also commonly referred to as “realignment,” initially resulted from overcrowding in state prisons, the multidisciplinary collaboration between Probation Departments and Health and Human Services Agencies may affect recidivism rates and the resulting reintegration of offenders back into local communities. The literature review chapter examines the effects of realignment on public safety, offender rehabilitation, rates of recidivism, and the roles that county agencies play in reintegration. This study will primarily consist of qualitative data collection through key informant interviews. Review and examination of the collected data will provide essential information on the value of such collaboration in respect to the realignment population.

The research encompassed in this study provides value for the County of San Mateo, as well as other similar organizations by identifying the necessary components of successful collaboration, reduced rates of recidivism, and successful reintegration back into communities. The researcher is currently employed as a Legal Office Services Supervisor in the Adult Probation Department for the County of San Mateo. This study is important because responsibility for public safety now resides with local county jurisdictions. The goals of reducing recidivism rates and ensuring public safety have long been top priorities for Probation Departments. AB 109 has brought about the opportunity for local counties to focus on providing the appropriate type and level of service in order to move one step closer to those goals.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

### Historical and Contemporary Context

On October 1, 2011, California and its 58 counties began implementation of AB 109, also commonly referred to as “realignment.” This process entails the shifting of responsibility for a substantial number of non-serious, non-violent, and non-sexual felony offenders (aka “triple-nons”) from state prisons down to local county jurisdictions.

According to a Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) (2012) brief, public safety realignment can be divided into two types: Mandatory supervision (MS) and post-release community supervision (PRCS). According to CPOC (2012), MS is defined as a court ordered period of time in the community under the supervision of the county probation department, and PRCS are eligible offenders who would have previously been under parole supervision and will now be supervised by probation after release from prison. In addition, Penal Code 1170(h)(5) sentences refer to felony offenders who are sentenced to local prison terms, which also allow judges to impose a straight sentence of incarceration, or a split sentence of incarceration followed by a mandatory form of supervision for offenders convicted of a non-serious, non-violent, and non-sexual offense (CPOC, 2012). According to Petersilia and Snyder (2013), “After October 1, 2011, any adult convicted of these amended felony crimes [Penal Code Section 1170(h)] cannot be sentenced to prison unless they have a prior serious or violent felony conviction” (p. 270).

While this reform initially resulted from overcrowding in state prisons, proponents of this decision also believe that counties are better suited to handle low-level felons, especially considering that AB 109 felons who are sent to county jails are from local communities and will likely return to those communities after serving their

sentences. Therefore, local counties have a greater stake in the outcome of these offenders. Counties are thus incentivized to deal with these low-level offenders in ways that are more likely to reduce the chance of recidivism since responsibility for local public safety and the cost of repetitive crime will remain within their respective counties.

The implementation of AB 109 in local county jurisdictions has brought about a number of issues regarding the shifting of responsibility for these “triple-nons.” These issues include, but are not limited to, overcrowding in county jails, funding, public safety, recidivism, and rehabilitation efforts. According to an article in *The Crime Report* discussing the story of realignment so far, “motivated in part by rulings from the federal courts to reduce prison overcrowding, this is the biggest shift in California corrections policy in decades. It affects tens of thousands of prisoners and the public safety of all Californians” (Grattet, 2013, para. 2). Currently, there are two sides to the effects of AB 109 on local counties. On one hand, AB 109 has been touted as a necessary cost savings measure in dealing with state prison overcrowding that has been a long time coming. On the other hand, AB 109 has also been described as complex with undefined parameters. In an article in *The Sacramento Bee* Nina Salarno Ashford of Crime Victims United even likened the 2011 law to “building a plane without knowing how to fly it” (Branan, 2013, para. 8). Many others also seem to share a similar negative perspective on the direct effects that AB 109 has had on daily operations in local counties.

The importance of AB 109 cannot be ignored. However, in evaluating such legislation that affects the entire state of California, two sides will emerge: the best and the worst aspects of realignment. In a *California Journal of Politics and Policy* article, Petersilia and Snyder (2013) state:

At its best, investing in rehabilitation for lower-level offenders will reduce their recidivism, and over time, reduce the pressure on California to build more prisons, which takes money away from the education and work programs that might have helped offenders in the first place. (p. 267)

In the same *California Journal of Politics and Policy* article, Petersilia and Snyder (2013) also identify the worst case scenario:

At its worst, overcrowded jails become revolving doors providing ‘get out of jail free’ cards for offenders who continue to commit crime with impunity. At its worst, most people will end up under criminal justice supervision, but at the county rather than state level, and realignment will just have shifted its mass incarceration to counties without any decreased cost or recidivism reduction, and without any improvement to public safety. (pp. 267-268)

As with most new legislation, implementation takes time and effort from all parties involved in order to obtain the desired results. AB 109 has been in effect for all California counties since October 2011, but it was unlikely that many counties, if any, were truly ready to manage all the various aspects that came with realignment efforts. AB 109’s implementation in all of California’s counties was mandatory. Some even refer to the implementation of AB 109 as “California’s realignment experiment” (Petersilia & Snyder, 2013, p. 306). There is no guarantee as to how realignment will positively or negatively affect local county jurisdictions in the future, but it is indisputable that AB 109 will have a resounding impact that will be felt for years to come. The discussion of state prison overcrowding has been an ongoing topic of discussion for years; now, the topic of county jail overcrowding is at the forefront, along with issues surrounding funding, public safety, recidivism, and rehabilitation.



Most county jails were designed to house non-serious inmates for relatively short sentences with serious offenders incarcerated in state prisons. Today, with the huge influx of state prisoners being transferred to county jails, there is a mixed bag of offenders. Inmates who were listed as one of the “triple-nons” under state prison guidelines may still be considered dangerous. At a future point in time, county jails will address the same issue of overcrowding that state prisons faced, except that county jails will not be able to shift these inmates to other jails or prisons. Lofstrom and Raphael (2013) state, “This overcrowding has been aggravated by the substantial transfer of responsibilities of inmates from the state prisons, and it is likely to grow worse if the state is forced to meet the population targets demanded by the federal court overseeing the prison system” (p. 7). It is undeniable that some of these “triple-non” inmates will need to be released into the community even when it may not be safe to do so. Newly sentenced realigned felons and released prison inmates now falling within the jurisdiction of local community corrections are basically ousting lower-level offenders from local county jails (Lofstrom & Raphael, 2013). Releasing the ‘best of the worst’ raises major issues for how counties plan to keep the public safe. Therefore, the focus must now shift to the proper treatment and rehabilitation of these offenders in order to decrease future threat levels to public safety and increase the possibilities of success in community reintegration.

The implementation of AB 109 directly affects local county agencies and departments, while indirectly affecting the public in local communities as well. While the indirect effect on local communities may have gone unnoticed in the early stages of AB 109’s implementation, it is undeniable that there will be far-reaching effects in due

time, including issues surrounding public safety, funding sources, overcrowding in county jails, and the availability of alcohol and drug treatment, as well as mental health treatment.

### **Research Problem**

The effects of AB 109 are continuous and compounding as it manages to affect a multitude of local county agencies and departments all at once. While the goal of reducing recidivism has long been industry recognized as a top priority for law enforcement agencies, AB 109 has managed to thrust it to the forefront of not only law enforcement agencies, but also social services and health departments. However, the root of the problem lies within the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders in order to stop the ‘revolving door’ of recidivism. In order to reduce recidivism rates, offenders must be treated as a whole and receive the proper treatment and rehabilitation for their ailments. If offenders are not treated for their conditions and are instead only supervised by probation and released back into local communities, the root of their problems (i.e. underlying conditions) will not have been properly addressed, thus leading to a greater likelihood of reoffending.

### **Purpose of the Study**

It is the purpose of this research study to examine a multidisciplinary approach between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies in treating and rehabilitating individuals in the attempt to achieve greater success and positive results with a reduced likelihood or propensity to recidivate. The potential success of this collaboration is based upon a multitude of factors, including enforcement of conditions

by the Probation Department, treatment by Health Services, and skills and community support by Human Services. Treatment and skills and community support are provided by various community-based and faith based organizations through the assistance of Service Connect. Service Connect receives client referrals solely from Probation and Corrections staff. The purpose of Service Connect is to provide a framework for multiple agencies to funnel clients through in attempts to provide adequate resources and appropriate assistance to all potential clients.

There are numerous programs that realignment defendants may be funneled into through Service Connect. These programs include social work therapy, support groups, vocational services, temporary emergency assistance, medical care and coverage, drug and alcohol treatment, and mental health services. The focus of this research will be to thoroughly evaluate the significance and appropriateness of these programs and the clients in which they serve. This will bring clarity and provide a roadmap for success among future placements of individuals, in addition to a determination as to which programs will lead to a greater likelihood of success for the realignment population. A review of these areas is important especially now during this period of economic stress as funding for other public services is stretched to the outer limits with more and more resources being utilized by the California Department of Corrections.

## CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

An extensive review of literature across scholarly resources demonstrates common themes that can be categorized into the following groups: recidivism, ex-offender reintegration into communities, current state of realignment, evidence-based treatment, and the future of prisoner re-entry. A majority of the literature review provided support for the necessity of evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation of offenders in order to reduce recidivism rates and increase public safety efforts. A key focus among these literature reviews was on the importance and effectiveness of treatment and rehabilitation of offenders.

### **Recidivism**

Recidivism is often looked upon to “showcase the failures of certain programs and the efficiency and successes of others” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 519). If a program is successful, the expectation is that there will be little or no incidences of recidivism. It is based on the logic of rehabilitation and deterrence, meaning that if rehabilitation programs work, recidivism rates should be low (Maxwell, 2005). Among public policy makers, recidivism is the key factor by which the cost-effectiveness of correctional policies is gauged (Maxwell, 2005). Public policy makers must justify their actions to the public. Therefore, if a program does not effectively contribute to the reduction of recidivism, it is highly unlikely that the program will continue receiving local, state, or federal funding and support.

According to Palermo (2009), “the failure of reintegration contributes to the plague of recidivism...recidivism is multi-factorial, it fluctuates widely, from 5% to 40%

depending on the study, and rates vary from country to country” (p. 3). This fact lends to the continued efforts by social criminologists and policy makers to develop new methods in the constant battle to reduce recidivism rates. A variety of factors contribute to the failure of reintegration into society. These factors are either static or dynamic. Static factors include age, family structure, criminal history, and high social stress, while dynamic factors include antisocial personality traits, a criminogenic family or neighborhood, intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, and serious emotional disorders (Palermo, 2009). Static and dynamic factors can be likened to the age-old psychology debate of nature versus nurture. While static factors are more analogous to the concept of nature, dynamic factors are likely more “amenable to treatment” (Palermo, 2009, p. 3). One cannot necessarily change the family structure that he or she is born into, but there is a greater likelihood for success when treating dynamic factors such as emotional disorders.

In addition to treating emotional disorders, mental disorders are often included among the top list of concerns with probationers. In an experimental investigation published in *Law and Human Behavior*, Louden and Skeem (2013) identify “persons with a mental disorder as significantly overrepresented in the criminal justice system” (p. 22). Because of this, more focus and attention is naturally directed towards these individuals by law enforcement, health departments, and social services agencies. While the majority of these offenders are supervised by either probation or parole agencies, it is incontrovertible that the “effects of their success or failure extend beyond the criminal justice system into the community” (Louden & Skeem, 2013, p. 22). The needs of these offenders are unique, both in and out of custody. Probation officers typically do not

possess the credentials or necessary training in order to effectively handle and properly treat offenders with various forms and levels of mental disorders. Therefore, it must be noted that the extent to which probation officers are able to effectively supervise offenders with mental health disorders can vary greatly. This in turn, can directly affect potential recidivism rates for this group of offenders.

There are many theories as to why probationers re-offend and what factors are associated with probation success. According to Gray, Fields, and Maxwell (2001), the success or failure of probation is often associated with the following factors: “sociodemographic characteristics of the offender, prior criminal histories, drug and alcohol problems, and committing offenses” (p. 540). Some or all of these factors likely play a role in the success or failure of probation. Research of the literature in this study reveals the importance of making educated predictions in terms of probation success or failure in order to effectively address outstanding issues that may have an effect on policy-making decisions.

In terms of sociodemographic characteristics of the offender, it appears that “minority, less educated offenders with prior drug use were more likely to have technical violations” (Gray, Fields, & Maxwell, 2001, p. 554). While race was not necessarily significant in predicting new crimes, it was significant in predicting technical violations (Gray, Fields, & Maxwell, 2001). Technical violations are different from the commitment of new offenses in that they “constitute the most common type of violation, followed by major and minor violations” (Gray, Fields, & Maxwell, 2001, p. 539). In addition, “unemployed probationers with previous misdemeanor convictions, those committed for assaultive crimes, and those with more technical violations were more

likely to commit a new crime while on probation” (Gray, Fields, & Maxwell, 2001, p. 554). While these factors are simply indicators associated with the likelihood of a probationer’s success or failure, it is by no means a conclusive list. This data represents a general consensus of the history of probation violations and is therefore subject to change as people and times change.

### **Ex-Offender Reintegration into Communities**

Faye Taxman’s (2004) article, *The Offender and Reentry: Supporting Active Participation in Reintegration*, focuses on the importance of offenders taking an active role in the success of their reintegration and providing services to the offender being released from prison into the community. Reentry into the community “has been premised on the notion that a transition process is needed that addresses both the survival needs (e.g. food, housing, employment) and skill-based services (e.g. treatment, literacy, job training) to thwart the recycling of offenders from prison to the community and back to prison” (Taxman, 2004, p. 31). Throughout the years, the role of the offender in the reentry process has been debatable, but it is likely that those offenders who take an active role in reintegration back into the community will have the most success. Taxman (2004) states “there are two different models for how offenders are to be part of the process: as active participants or as active recipients” (p. 31). An offender who is an active participant is one who takes part in the decision-making process of how and when to be reintegrated back into the community, whereas an offender who is an active recipient does not typically get to choose which services he or she will receive. According to Taxman (2004), most contemporary models utilize an active recipient model.

Taxman (2004) identifies three major themes that are crucial to an offender assuming responsibility for his or her actions, including self-awareness, self-diagnosis, and self-management. By being an active participant, the offender can be proactive in their decisions and utilize or develop any necessary skills throughout the reentry process. Taxman (2004) presents a five-step active participant model that supports an offender taking responsibility for his or her own actions:

- 1) Message to the offender
- 2) Institutional treatment
- 3) Institutional/Pre-release
- 4) Post release
- 5) Reintegration

In step one, the message to the offender must be clear: he or she must take personal responsibility for his or her actions. Taxman (2004) states, “the message to the offender needs to underscore that the plan is actually the offender’s plan” (p. 33). The offender must believe in the plan in order to successfully participate in the implementation process. In step two, institutional treatment is identified as the time period from incarceration to 90 days before release. During this time, there must be a focus on setting reintegration goals and linking the program to transitional planning (Taxman, 2004). In step three, institutional/pre-release is identified as the time period from 90 days before release to the actual release day. The offender’s focus in this step should be on planning for his or her transition into the community and determining “basic survival needs,” including housing and employment plans (Taxman, 2004, p. 34). In step



four, post release is identified as the time period from release day to 30 days, where the focus should be on “adjustment in the community and a reassessment of criminogenic factors” (Taxman, 2004, p. 34). In step five, integration is identified as the time period from 30 days after release and up to two years thereafter. This final step focuses on “maintenance and crisis management” along with “incremental advancements in the offender’s life” (Taxman, 2004, p. 34).

The transition from prison back into the community is difficult and complex for any offender. Law enforcement and social services agencies are concerned with public safety as well as providing the necessary rehabilitation services to offenders in order for them to be successfully reintegrated back into the community. Because this process is twofold, “it is important for reentry to occur in a manner that empowers the offender to be a productive citizen contributing to the community” (Taxman, 2004, p. 35). Being an active participant in one’s own recovery and reintegration back into the community will provide the most opportunities for success.

Public CEO.com, a local government news site, is dedicated to providing a statewide perspective on California’s cities, counties and special districts. The writers of Public CEO.com aim to provide the tools for local government employees to succeed, including best practices information from around the state. Public CEO.com has also provided valuable information and insight on the various stages of AB 109’s implementation. Public CEO.com’s website provides an interesting view on what they termed “smart justice.” The California State Association of Counties Institute for Local Government (CSAC) has been covering the different ways in how counties have been implementing AB 109 requirements. Public CEO.com’s article, *Smart Justice in Merced*

County, highlights Merced County's "Leadership for Life" program, which establishes the fact that enhancing a father's bond with his children can be a powerful motivator for positive changes. This provides another example of how rehabilitation, when implemented properly, can indeed change people's lives for the better. When a father's bond with his children and family is strong, he is more likely to make positive choices and changes that will benefit himself and his family. Merced County has worked to integrate their AB 109 population into an existing program called "All Dads Matter," which aims to help fathers learn basic parenting skills and open lines of communication between fathers and their children (Public CEO.com, 2013). Merced County is on the right track for developing new methods and programs that include the AB 109 population, but it is unclear from this article alone the full details of who is eligible to enter into these programs, the parameters of the programs, and who or how the determination is made as to when an offender has successfully completed the program. Regardless, this appears to be an example of a program with the right focus and platform to build upon for successful reintegration back into communities.

### **Current State of Realignment**

Christopher Nelson's article, *Realignment in Review: Two Studies Reinforce Long Term Goals for Realignment*, evaluates two studies, one in-state and one national, in regards to the current state of realignment. According to Dr. Joan Petersilia of the Stanford Criminal Justice Center, "broadly speaking, realignment gets mixed reviews so far...counties are struggling to carry out an initiative that was poorly planned and imposed upon them almost overnight, giving them little time to prepare" (Nelson, 2013, para. 5). According to Nelson (2013), out of all county agencies, the implementation of

AB 109 has the largest direct effect on Probation Departments. Even though Probation Departments are directly affected the most, Dr. Petersilia received a completely different response when she spoke to those in Probation, where she encountered the most “unified voice”; Probation Departments felt that “Realignment gave them an opportunity to fully test whether well-tailored rehabilitation services can keep lower-level felony offenders from committing new crimes and returning to prison” (Nelson, 2013, para. 7). State prison overcrowding is what began AB 109’s journey, but population reduction is only the first step. Dr. Petersilia points out “the real opportunities lie in probation and post-release supervision, as well as in sentencing reform” (Nelson, 2013, para. 9). The study also suggests that some of the burden shift back to the state in cases with repeat probation violators or by keeping the more serious offenders on state parole to begin with (Nelson, 2013).

The second study from the non-partisan Pew Institute, highlighted the increasingly high costs of prison health care nationwide in the past decade. This ties California back to the importance of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as a huge cost-savings opportunity, especially for the realignment population. The study examined prison health care spending in 44 different states between 2001-2008 and found that spending went up in 42 of those states by a median of 52 percent. Twelve of those states, including California, saw costs rise 90 percent or more (Nelson, 2013). The Pew study provided four solutions to tackle this issue, but “only Medi-Cal enrollment has tangible, quantifiable and immediate benefits” (Nelson, 2013, para. 16). Effective January 1, 2014, federal reimbursement began for all medically necessary treatment for more

inmates than ever before, so counties must now take action if they are looking to take advantage of the ACA as a potentially eminent cost-savings measure.

The ACA's Medicaid (Medi-Cal) expansion has significant implications for uninsured, low-income adults, but there are even greater implications for the criminal justice system. According to a policy brief released by the Justice Center (2013), "Estimates indicate that approximately 35 percent of people gaining Medicaid eligibility under the ACA will have a history of criminal justice system involvement" (p. 5). As local county jurisdictions continue to receive more inmates from state prisons, some of these individuals will undoubtedly be released back into the community. It is important to note that "as many as 70 to 90 percent of the approximately 10 million individuals released from prison or jail each year are uninsured" (Justice Center, 2013, p. 1). Research has shown that within the first few weeks of an individual's release back into the community, disruptions or cessation of medical treatment can lead to increased rates of reincarceration and costly health consequences (Justice Center, 2013). The first few weeks upon release is crucial in terms of being directed to and receiving any necessary treatments.

While the main focus of law enforcement remains on reducing recidivism rates and maintaining public safety, re-entry into the community can also be difficult for inmates. The re-entry period may be viewed as a "vulnerable time, marked by difficulties adjusting, increased drug use, and a 12-fold increase in the risk of death in the first two weeks after release" (Justice Center, 2013, p. 1). For many inmates, they are in desperate need of access to health care to avoid further difficulties. The ACA has the potential to reduce the number of individuals without health care coverage, both inside and outside of

the criminal justice system. Due to the ongoing increase in the sheer volume of state prisoners, opportunities to maximize and maintain health care coverage must also be a priority.

### **Funding**

The full impact of prison realignment will certainly be felt in time, but at the moment, one of the major issues is funding. Richard Muench, Chief Probation Officer for Tehama County, identifies the challenge as, “how do you assure the safety of the community without locking up as many offenders” (Johnson, 2011, para. 4). In June 2011, the legislature passed a budget for AB 109, including \$6.3 billion in total realignment funds, in addition to other programs including local public safety programs, mental health, and substance abuse (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall, & Snyder, 2013). A legitimate concern of counties is whether the funding for realignment will be guaranteed. While specific program allocations are not mandated, revenues are guaranteed to be deposited into the fund on an ongoing basis, providing “sufficient protections be put in place to provide ongoing funding and mandate protection for the state and local governments” (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall, & Snyder, 2013, p. 7). This is necessary in order to maintain public safety and ensure sustained levels of success moving forward.

It is important to note that while state funds are provided to all affected counties, individual counties may choose how they wish to delegate the funds for realignment. According to a report on *Evaluating the Effects of California’s Corrections Realignment on Public Safety*, “It is not obvious whether realignment will increase or decrease crime rates or whether the effect might vary by county, particularly since counties will differ in

how they use the state funds designated for realignment” (Lofstrom, Petersilia, & Raphael, 2012, p. 8). In addition, there is set criteria that the state utilizes when determining the amount of funding for each county. These criteria include “past crime trends, number of convictions, length of sentences, and jail operation costs” (Lofstrom, Petersilia, & Raphael, 2012, p. 11). The current plan for state funding will likely fluctuate in upcoming years depending on a variety of factors specific to each individual county. These factors will need to be addressed by counties due to the fact that state funding will likely not pay for additional county responsibilities as the realignment population continues to grow.

In addition to the increase in the number of state prisoners, per inmate spending has also increased vastly. According to an analysis conducted by the *Stanford Criminal Justice Center*, “one of the main culprits of per inmate spending increases have been the increase in health care costs...just in the past decade, health care expenditures more than tripled rising to over \$2.1 billion in 2010-11. This was an increase from 12.4 percent of total corrections spending to 22.8 percent in a single decade” (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall, & Snyder, 2013, p. 3). Health care costs for prisoners is only one of several issues that AB 109 has brought forth to local county jurisdictions.

With respect to the jail population size, “Realignment increases the jail population by roughly one inmate for every three-inmate decline in the state prison population...most of this relationship is driven by relatively large increases in the sentenced jail populations in counties experiencing relatively large doses of realignment” (Lofstrom & Raphael, 2013, p. 27). This is mainly in reference to counties that already

relied heavily on state prisons prior to the implementation of AB 109. Due to significant differences between counties, it is not unusual that the jail population size greatly varies.

Local county Probation Departments have looked to implement risk and needs assessment tools, offer additional training to Probation Officers in case planning, motivational interviewing, and cognitive behavioral therapy, and increase rehabilitation services offered to probationers. When implemented properly, these services leads to 47 of California's 58 counties seeing a reduction in probation failures to state prison and 14 counties qualifying for high performance grants (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall, & Snyder, 2013). With funding being a constant topic of debate, "the savings from this program amounted to \$179 million in 2010 alone, and is considered by many counties in their Realignment plans as an important part of the ongoing Realignment efforts" (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall, & Snyder, 2013, p. 4).

### **Evidence-based treatment**

Overwhelming research suggests evidence-based treatment is the basis of future success for offenders. According to the *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*, "To qualify as an evidence-based practice or program, research must demonstrate that a specific practice or program increases the likelihood of positive outcomes" (Blandford & Osher, 2012, p. 1). Due to increasing prison and county jail populations, the question of funding arises. According to MacKenzie (2000), corrections makes up an increasing proportion of state and local budgets, therefore bringing up the question of whether their funds are being spent effectively. Research of the literature suggest that the leading issue that needs to be addressed is whether the programs and treatment options are having a positive effect and impact on criminal behavior.

Variations do indeed exist when addressing this question simply due to the nature of human beings being unpredictable.

There is more than one way to look at crime prevention. According to MacKenzie (2000), a traditional method of crime prevention involves efforts directed towards those who are not yet involved in any type of crime. Research of the literature in this study revealed the secondary method of analyzing crime prevention efforts, which is to focus on reducing the criminal activities of known offenders (MacKenzie, 2000). According to MacKenzie (2000), the Department of Justice (DOJ) provides more than \$3 billion annually in grants to assist state and local criminal justice and community efforts to prevent crime (as cited in Sherman et al., 1997, p. v). The main reason for this is because “past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior...it is reasonable to attempt to prevent crime by preventing known offenders from continuing their criminal behavior” (MacKenzie, 2000, p. 458). MacKenzie (2000) argues that because the majority of offenders already serve their time in the community in the forms of probation, parole, or some type of supervised release, it is reasonable to focus attention on the criminal activities of these individuals. This may become the new standard to treat offenders who have already committed crimes and are in the criminal justice system.

A variety of crime prevention strategies can be utilized in order to determine what works best for any given set of offenders. It is important to note that each program or crime prevention strategy has impacts other than crime reduction (MacKenzie, 2000). For example, in order to implement a high-quality intensive treatment program, it is likely that the implementation of such a program will be rather costly. MacKenzie (2000) makes an important point that “the advantages of the program must be weighed



against the costs” (p. 459). While it may be preferable to implement numerous high-quality programs, the effectiveness of the programs must be justified by the overall costs to implement or continue the programs. As new research continues to shed light on ‘what works’ and what does not work, “the best one can claim to ‘know’ about effectiveness is based only on the quality and quantity of the available evidence at one point in time” (MacKenzie, 2000, p. 460). This is an important distinction in that there are constant claims about ‘what works’ in crime prevention and therefore, it is crucial that the strength of scientific evidence be considered when evaluating various strategies and programs.

The discussion surrounding evidence-based corrections and decision making would “use the best evidence to shape the best practice” (MacKenzie, 2000, pp. 462-463). The goal would be to “use scientific evidence to hold officials accountable for results” (MacKenzie, 2000, p. 463). Ultimately, public funding and public safety both come into play when dealing with the treatment and subsequent actions of offenders once they are released. This study identifies two different types of research utilizing evidence-based corrections: basic research and outcome. Basic research examines what works best when implemented in the intended way under controlled settings, whereas outcome research examines individual program, agency, and facility achievement results (MacKenzie, 2000). Both basic and outcome research must be utilized in conjunction to obtain the desired results.

Research in this study revealed what currently works, what does not work, and what appears to be promising. MacKenzie (2000) identifies the following as ‘what works’:

- 1) Rehabilitation programs with particular characteristics (i.e. cognitive-behavioral methods)
- 2) Incapacitating offenders who continue to commit crimes at high rates
- 3) Prison-based therapeutic community treatment of drug-involved offenders and in-prison therapeutic communities with follow-up community treatment
- 4) Cognitive behavioral therapy – Reasoning and Rehabilitation and Moral Recondition Therapy
- 5) Non-prison-based sex offender treatment programs
- 6) Vocational education programs provided in prison or residential settings
- 7) Multicomponent correctional industry programs
- 8) Community employment programs

According to Pearson, Lipton, Cleland, and Yee's (2002) research in *The Effects of Behavioral/Cognitive-Behavioral Programs on Recidivism*, the use of "behavioral learning techniques to change the general adaptive behaviors of the clients, to have the clients return to their natural environment with new repertoires of skills so they can obtain reinforcement in socially acceptable ways instead of illegal ways" can be an effective cognitive-behavioral program method (p. 493). By implementing cognitive-behavioral programming components as a foundation for potential treatment, agencies can consider utilizing this option for suitable clients who appear to be agreeable to this form of evidence-based treatment.

What do not appear to work are programs that continue to focus on traditional methods of law enforcement. Programs that emphasize structure, discipline, and challenge are not effective (MacKenzie, 2000). What appears to be promising include:

finer for criminal activities, drug treatment combined with urine testing, jail-based treatment programs with follow-up treatment and urine testing, and offenders who begin employment preparation and job search assistance before being released and continues seeking assistance upon release also appears promising in reducing recidivism (MacKenzie, 2000). Research continues to further our knowledge on how to effectively treat and modify the behavior of offenders and it is becoming increasingly geared towards evidence-based corrections with decisions made on both the basis of basic and outcome research.

While the emphasis on implementing evidence-based practices and programs has become more compelling, Wright, Zhang, and Farabee (2010) note how critical it is for corrections to call for “verifiable and measurable outcomes as justifications for implementing and expanding correctional programs rather than relying on personal experience, political convictions, or common sense as grounds for new interventions” (as cited in Cullen & Sundt, 2003; Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Paparozzi, 2002). Traditionally, literature reviews and expert opinions were relied upon for treatment providers to decide on strategies to implement evidence-based treatment (Wright, Zhang, & Farabee, 2010). This would likely result in time-consuming strategies that were not efficient or effective. Therefore, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) launched the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) in 1997 to “assist the public in identifying approaches to preventing and treating mental and/or substance use disorders that have been scientifically tested and that can be readily disseminated to the field” (Wright, Zhang, & Farabee, 2010, p. 959). This web-based registry was created to assist in reducing the

time gap between obtaining scientific knowledge and being able to apply it in the real world.

As with most registries and programs, NREPP has been modified multiple times since its inception in order to remain relevant and up-to-date. According to Wright, Zhang, and Farabee (2010), the registry has listed a total of 119 intervention programs that have proven efficacy and have been reviewed by independent researchers as of February 2009. These NREPP programs include a variety of treatments and interventions, including but not limited to, substance abuse programs, mental health programs, and hybrid programs that were mainly focused on behavior modification (Wright, Zhang, & Farabee, 2010). Wright, Zhang, and Farabee's (2010) research examined the extent to which the NREPP is able to fulfill its intended purpose, which is to "assist the public in identifying approaches to preventing and treating mental and/or substance use disorders that have been scientifically tested and that can be readily disseminated to the field" (as cited in NREPP, 2009). This is crucial considering the approaches listed in the NREPP are meant to be high quality, effective treatments and interventions that can be utilized at any given moment.

Wright, Zhang, and Farabee's (2010) findings indicated that while the focus is on the importance of evidence-based research and treatment, there has been little attention paid to the "quality of evaluation research" (p. 969). In addition to the lack of consistency in the quality of research and readiness for implementation, what is troubling is "the larger number of program developers who were involved in the evaluation of their own programs" (Wright, Zhang, & Farabee, 2010, p. 969). While it is not necessarily wrong to evaluate one's own programs, there should be full disclosure of the relationship

between the program developers and authors of studies, or the pursuit of either a second opinion or independent evaluation of the programs to maintain consistency and objectivity. The NREPP is a valuable resource and tool for a multitude of agencies to utilize. Therefore, maintaining its credibility is essential to its purpose and for agencies to choose interventions that are best suited to their clients' specific needs.

According to Owen and Mobley (2012), "the assumption is that counties will develop a greater emphasis on 'evidence-based' programs in local corrections, and importantly, in community supervision practices" (p. 47). The idea surrounding 'evidence-based' programs is continually growing as organizations believe this is where the future of offender rehabilitation is headed. In order to provide necessary law enforcement services while treating offenders, local county jurisdictions must spread their focus among all areas of realignment in order to ensure public safety. This requires the dedicated participation of all members and practitioners involved in the contact and treatment of offenders. The importance of selecting the proper sanctions and programs for offenders is discussed by Owen and Mobley (2012):

AB 109 is specific on the kinds of 'evidence-based correctional sanctions and programming other than jail incarceration alone or traditional routine supervision' that should be pursued at the local level. These include but are not limited to: day reporting centers, drug courts, residential multi-service centers, mental health treatment programs, electronic and GPS monitoring programs, victim restitution programs, counseling programs, community service programs, educational programs, and work training programs. (p. 47)

These 'evidence-based' programs are necessary in order for counties to direct their focus towards lowering custody costs and increasing rehabilitation outcomes while maintaining or improving public safety (Owen & Mobley, 2012). Without such

programs, local county jurisdictions would not have a starting point in learning how to handle and deal with the effects of AB 109. In addition to lowering custody costs and increasing rehabilitation outcomes, “Utilizing alternatives to incarceration will help prevent overcrowding in county jails and will make it easier to provide constitutionally-required mental and physical health care to those who are incarcerated” (Hopper, Evans, & Soltain, 2011, p. 15). By being able to reduce and manage the existing jail population, counties can continue making strides towards reducing recidivism and maintaining focus on improving public safety.

Marciniak’s article, *The Addition of Day Reporting to Intensive Supervision Probation: A Comparison of Recidivism Rates*, discusses the use of day reporting centers in addition to other programs and their combined effectiveness in the battle to reduce recidivism rates. Marciniak (2000) defines a day reporting center as an “intermediate sanction that requires the offender to be supervised by a probation officer and assigned to a facility to which offenders are required to report on a daily or other regular basis at specified times for a specified length of time to participate in activities such as counseling, treatment, social skill training, or employment training” (as cited in Clarke, 1994, p. 6). Marciniak’s study compared rates of rearrest from a sample of individuals sentenced to intensive supervision probation only with a sample of offenders sentenced to intensive supervision probation plus the day reporting center (Marciniak, 2000).

The results of Marciniak’s study found that the addition of a day reporting center to intensive supervised probation “does not significantly reduce the rate of rearrest” (Marciniak, 2000, p. 34). A variety of factors could have affected this result, including the fact that those who were sentenced to both day reporting and intensive supervised

probation may have increased surveillance versus those who were only sentenced to intensive supervised probation (Marciniak, 2000). In general, increased surveillance in addition to the rehabilitation component of a day reporting center can logically lead to more positive results. However, this cannot be a guaranteed result.

Even though the results of the study did not reveal a significant reduction in the rate of arrests with the addition of a day reporting center, Marciniak (2000) touched on an important factor to consider when discussing recidivism: “Day Reporting provides rehabilitation programs well beyond what intensive supervised probation has to offer...regardless of effect on recidivism, day reporting centers empowers the individual offender by offering him or her literacy courses, GED, substance abuse counseling, and anger management classes” (p. 34). The importance of rehabilitation is vital and cannot be ignored in the discussions and determination of what programs will yield the desired results of long-term reduced recidivism rates.

Farabee (2013) states, “it is difficult to make the case that increasing the severity of punishment will produce a general deterrent effect on crime” (p. 83). Individuals who choose a path of crime in life will likely continue down the same path regardless of the potential consequences. It is unlikely that an increase in the severity of punishment alone can dramatically reduce crime. Farabee (2013) also states, “it is equally difficult to identify models of offender rehabilitation that hold up under rigorous empirical scrutiny” (p. 83). This has led to an industry wide movement towards evidence-based practices in the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders. While this has been the common direction in the criminal justice industry in recent years, this movement is not a guaranteed factor of success.

Farabee (2013) makes an important distinction that “even in studies that find a significant relationship between completion of a treatment program and post-release outcomes, the overall positive effect is attenuated by inconsistent findings” (p. 83). Rather, determining the success of a program appears to be based more on the ‘eye of the beholder.’ Farabee (2013) discusses one of the negative consequences of evidence-based programs as the “growing public perception that effective ‘cures’ for criminal behavior exist” (p. 92). While research for answers to reducing crime will obviously continue, the idea that criminal behavior can be ‘cured’ will continue to undoubtedly be challenged.

The focus on evidence-based practices and programs appears to be the wave of the future. In research conducted by *Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice*, evidence-based community programs and policies have been identified as “less expensive and more effective at reducing recidivism compared to incarceration as long as individual criminogenic risks and needs are addressed” (as cited in Gerlinger & Turner, 2013, p. 3). While there is “no one-size-fits-all approach to advance the recovery of individuals under criminal justice supervision with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders, or to reduce their likelihood of reoffending,” it is crucial to continue taking positive strides towards what is now proving to be more and more effective in treating offenders (Blandford & Osher, 2012, p. 1). As with nearly all individuals, offenders are unique, thereby requiring services and support that must be tailored in some way, shape, or form, to individual needs and risk levels if they are to be effective.

### **Future of Prisoner Re-entry**

The review of literature has indicated that treatment programs attending to both offender sanctions and rehabilitation have been associated with reduced rates of



recidivism. According to Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney (2000), there is also recognition that sanctions alone without a rehabilitative component are ineffective in reducing recidivism. Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney (2000) focus on three important principles when determining treatment options: risk, need, and responsivity principles. The underlying concepts behind each principle is simple yet significant.

The risk principle suggests that the intensity of treatment chosen should correspond to the risk level of the offender (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). By properly matching treatment options with the offender, there is an increased likelihood of success. The need principle identifies a discrepancy between criminogenic and noncriminogenic needs (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). Offenders and non-offenders alike all have many different needs, but not all offenders' needs are directly related to their criminal behavior. Therefore, in order for treatment programs to be effective, they must target criminogenic needs (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). Finally, the responsivity principle directs focus to the importance of matching the type of treatment offered to the cognitive and personality characteristics of each offender (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). By treating the whole person and not simply one aspect, there is a greater probability of achieving the desired results.

The research study of Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney (2000) identified offenders who were exposed to both intensive rehabilitation supervision and electronic monitoring (EM) surveillance. The use of electronic monitoring surveillance raises questions on their necessity, effectiveness, and additional potential benefits to the public, offender, and the correctional system. The results of this study found that "although EM demonstrated little effect on recidivism, it may serve other important functions" (Bonta,

Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000, p. 326). EM can provide options for correctional officials with the issue of prison overcrowding. EM allows for the release of low to moderate-risk inmates into the community while minimizing the concerns for public safety (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). According to Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney (2000), “most of the offenders under EM completed treatment (87%), but the completion rate for probationers was only 52.9%” (pp. 326-327). The fear of easily being detected for failing to comply with EM conditions may have served as motivation for offenders to continue seeking and receiving treatment.

Overall, treatment was effective in reducing recidivism for higher risk offenders, which confirms the risk principle of offender treatment as effective (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). It is vital to correctly match treatment intensity to offender risk level in order to obtain the preferred results. In addition, the merging of intensive rehabilitation services with close supervision may be the ideal method for directing community services to those in need (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 2000). There is no one blanket method that can be applied to all offenders in hopes of achieving the same results. However, by modifying treatment methods provided based on ‘new research’ merging with ‘old research,’ it brings us one step closer to successful re-entry.

Wroblewski’s article, *ReSTART: GPS, Offender Reentry, and a New Paradigm for Determinate Sentencing*, focuses on a law signed by President Bush in spring 2008, in which Congress authorized the Federal Remote Satellite Tracking and Reentry Training Program (ReSTART) through the Second Chance Act. The ReSTART program was initially developed in 2000 at the Department of Justice as a new form for determinate sentencing, designed as a cost-effective method to promote public safety (Wroblewski,

2008). Wroblewski (2008) identifies three principles underlying the Sentencing Reform Act:

- 1) Framework principle of the Sentencing Reform Act, focusing on certainty of punishment, truth-in-sentencing, appropriate uniformity, and limits on judicial discretion in sentencing
- 2) Modest imprisonment terms for nonviolent offenders
- 3) Comprehensive and demanding reentry strategy for offenders returning to the community utilizing global positioning system (GPS) technology, substance abuse treatment, and job training

These components were designed to assist in the successful reintegration of offenders back into society while also targeting a significant reduction in recidivism (Wroblewski, 2008). If proven to be successful, ReSTART and like programs could become the wave of the future in determinate sentencing.

According to Wroblewski (2008), ReSTART combines the certainty of punishment, highly effective monitoring, and comprehensive reentry services to handle and treat offenders. The certainty of punishment factor acts as a deterrent, while GPS monitoring technology provides constant location services. Comprehensive reentry services can include any combination of rehabilitation, vocational, and social services that will lead offenders towards successful reintegration into society. Some people may also believe that “ReSTART has the potential of providing the foundation for bipartisan reform of U.S. sentencing and corrections policy” (Wroblewski, 2008, p. 314). As a society, we are constantly in search of what we can do in order to improve or make something more effective. In the process of doing so, the foundation of a new project or

proposal may not always be clearly laid out. In the case of ReSTART and GPS tracking technology, Wroblewski (2008) warns, “despite the enormous potential of GPS tracking technology, policy makers should not overstate the technology’s potential and must be realistic about the time needed to fully assess its potential” (p. 317). It is critical to thoroughly review and evaluate the benefits and consequences prior to fully implementing a strategy that could have catastrophic results if implemented poorly or improperly.

In a case study released by the *Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice*, Santa Cruz County is highlighted as a self-reliant county that has demonstrated how “strong local leadership combined with data-driven interventions can cultivate systemic change” (Macallair, MacDonald, Males, & McCracken, 2012, p. 12). With the onset of realignment, Santa Cruz County focused on establishing community based alternatives and implementing evidence-based practices rather than simply sentencing individuals to jail commitments. The focus of this study was on the concept of structured community based alternatives assisting with learning to change behaviors in order to reduce recidivism and promote accountability (Macallair, MacDonald, Males, & McCracken, 2012).

In analyzing Santa Cruz’s crime trends in relation to its rates of incarceration, Macallair, MacDonald, Males, and McCracken (2012) found that “the correlation showed crime changes are not related to incarceration changes” (p. 8). In addition, the study reveals, “that a third of jail capacity is utilized on direct drug and alcohol violations indicates that expanded use of treatment and probation may conserve jail space” (Macallair, MacDonald, Males, & McCracken, 2012, p.10). Conserving jail space is

directly linked to wisely utilizing public dollars. According to Scott MacDonald, the Chief Probation Officer of Santa Cruz County, "...jail, while absolutely necessary in some cases, can have an unintended consequence of making individuals more criminogenic. This is all too often the result of placing high risk and low risk offenders in crowded jails with insufficient programming" (Macallair, MacDonald, Males, & McCracken, 2012, p.12). Counties moving forward with decisions on realignment will need to take into consideration all factors surrounding their local criminal justice system. Evaluating alternatives to incarceration and implementing evidence-based programs and practices will set local county jurisdictions up for what appears to be greater opportunities for success in reducing recidivism and improving public safety.

Tom G. Hoffman's article, *AB 109: A Rare Opportunity for Thoughtful Criminal Justice*, is written from the perspective of someone who has experienced sides of the criminal justice system. As a former police officer and also former Director of the Department of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO) for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) from August 2006 to August 2009, Hoffman provides a diverse perspective on AB 109. Hoffman (2013) states that AB 109 has caused "all the disciplines in the criminal justice system (Police, Sheriff, District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation, Parole, service providers, elected officials, etc.) to have "skin in the game...incentivizing collaboration, which is absent and badly needed because prisoner re-entry is no longer an abstract State responsibility" (para. 6). Every department and agency will continue to operate based on policy, regulations, administrative oversight, and the law, but "people are starting to realize the need to respond differently to the two groups if we are ever to truly reduce recidivism, impact

street crime, address the issue of widespread mental illness and drug/alcohol addiction in this population...it is no longer acceptable public policy to merely *postpone* the next crime through mass incarceration, as a 70 percent recidivism rate in California would suggest” (Hoffman, 2013, para. 5). Hoffman (2013) is a believer in the “fundamental logic and appropriateness of AB 109... everything done must build trust so as to maximize the likelihood of successful re-entry” (para. 8).

AB 109 has had the most direct effect on Probation Departments statewide. Rather than accepting this as a negative situation, many Probation Departments have taken this opportunity to work more closely with inmates and with Health and Human Services to focus on treatment and rehabilitation rather than simply punishment. While this is a positive start in the rehabilitation of offenders in the hopes of reduced recidivism in the long run, there simply are not enough officers and agency representatives to maintain constant contact with these inmates. This is why counties must front-load their time and efforts towards developing detailed processes and contingency plans for any and all scenarios. Rather than being reactive when situations occur with these offenders, counties can choose to be proactive and develop standard procedures and train all agency representatives who come into contact with these offenders on best practices. The responsibility for these inmates and their subsequent actions if released into the community now lie solely with county government agencies and no longer with the state government.

### **CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study utilizes a case study research design to collect data, including primary data through key informant interviews and surveys, and a review of secondary data through the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation statistics. A research method of interviews and surveys was used due to a limited number of available participants for internal and external key informant interviews. These key informants have been chosen in order to follow a logical path to indirectly experience what the realignment defendants do. This will aid the researcher in understanding if the services that defendants received were either what they had expected or what they believe they needed in order to successfully complete their terms of probation and successfully reintegrate back into the community. Determining whether the current level and types of services provided are appropriate and useful to defendants will assist in future successful treatment and rehabilitation methods.

#### **Research Question**

This research examines whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies result in lower rates of recidivism and an increase in successful reintegration back into the community for the realignment population. With the movement towards evidence-based treatments and programs over the last several decades, the importance placed on providing proper treatment and services is becoming greater. Senate Bill 678 was developed by the State Legislature in order to provide sustainable funding for improved, evidence-based probation supervision practices in order to improve public safety outcomes. This

movement into an era focused on treatment and rehabilitation of offenders has come about in a manner that is less gradual and instead more deliberate. Traditional methods of strictly supervising offenders and enforcing conditions of probation have not produced positive results in the reduction of recidivism. Due to the effects of AB 109 on local county jurisdictions, there simply is not enough physical space to house all inmates. Therefore, county jurisdictions are forced to develop procedures to handle the continuous influx of state prisoners into county jails and communities.

In order to address these issues, the County of San Mateo has decided to implement a multidisciplinary approach to treating and releasing these offenders back into the community. Does the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies result in lower rates of recidivism and an increase in successful reintegration back into the community for the realignment population? Are these clients receiving the appropriate level and type of service and treatment that will assist in their rehabilitation and reduce their likelihood of recidivating? The results and findings of this study will help determine if the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies is appropriate and sufficient in providing services to the realignment population, thus leading to lower rates of recidivism.

The long-standing history of law enforcement agencies is to enforce the law. Current literature suggests evidence-based treatment of offenders increases the likelihood of success, leading to rehabilitated offenders and lower recidivism rates. A slow transition towards evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation would be ideal in order to provide Probation Departments and Health and Human Services Agencies the time



needed in order to adopt this method. However, AB 109 has eliminated the possibility and luxury of time to implement fully developed treatment plans and methods. The multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies is an attempt at efficiency and effectiveness in reaching the ultimate goals of lower recidivism rates and an increase in public safety.

### **Research Sub-Questions**

The following sub-questions provided a framework for this research study. While it is not feasible to attain reduced recidivism rates at a significant level considering it is a long-standing issue among all law enforcement agencies, it is reasonable to ascertain whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between Probation and Health and Human Services displayed positive signs of reduction in recidivism.

1. Did overall recidivism rates decrease by at least 10% in contrast to 2010-2011 recidivism rates?
2. Did successful reintegration back into the community increase by at least 10% of released individuals who have not been rearrested/rebooked/returned to custody for a revocation/convicted of a new offense?
3. What modifications are needed to make the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies more effective, from the perspective of Probation Officers, Case Managers, and Program Coordinators?

## **Research Hypothesis**

With the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services, overall recidivism rates will be lowered along with an increase in successful integration back into the community for the realignment population.

By providing and maintaining adequate and appropriate treatment and services to the realignment population, the County of San Mateo is doing its due diligence in ensuring that no defendant is released back into the community without sufficient resources. Surveys and key informant interviews conducted with sworn and non-sworn personnel will provide a baseline as to the current processes in place. Additional key informant interviews with realignment defendants will provide crucial information on the services and treatments that they are receiving and whether they are sufficient, adequate, and appropriate based on their needs.

## **Dependent and Independent Variables**

This research will lead to a determination as to whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between Probation and Health and Human Services is viable and productive and identify what needs to be added, deleted, or modified for future success (reduced recidivism rates and successful reintegration back into local communities).

The independent variable is the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services. The independent variable, “multidisciplinary collaboration” is defined as formally collaborating and developing treatment methods and processes for all agencies involved to follow. This

multidisciplinary collaboration comprises of members and practitioners from the Probation Department, Health Department, and Human Services Agency who come together, coordinate, and plan for the enforcement of conditions (Probation), provide treatment (Health Services), and skills and community support (Human Services).

There are two dependent variables. First, the dependent variable, “overall recidivism rates will be lowered”, is defined as a reduction in overall recidivism rates by 10% in contrast to 2010 - 2011 recidivism rates compiled by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. These statistics will be compared to October 1, 2011 - September 30, 2012 recidivism rates since the implementation of AB 109 (including both Post-Release Community Supervision and Mandatory Supervision recidivism rates) compiled by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. For the purposes of this study, recidivism, as defined by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, may be measured using various methods, including the measurement of arrests, convictions, and returns to prison. The second dependent variable is that there will be an increase in successful reintegration back into the community for the realignment population. For the purposes of this study, an increase in successful reintegration will represent a 10% increase of released individuals who have not been rearrested/rebooked/returned to custody for a revocation/convicted of a new offense after receiving services from Probation, Health, and Human Services compared to released individuals who have been rearrested/rebooked/returned to custody for a revocation or conviction of a new offense prior to the formation of multidisciplinary teams.

**Data Collection Plan Overview**

Data was collected from secondary (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) and primary (surveys and key informant interviews of sworn personnel from various ranks and positions within the County of San Mateo's Probation Department) sources. Additional primary data was collected from personnel directly involved with policy, decision-making, and the administering of programs offered for the realignment population within the Health Department and the Human Services Agency of the County of San Mateo. The calendar years identified for data collection is from October 2010 to September 2012.

**Interview Data**

Semi-structured interviews were held with a total of ten key informants, consisting of seven internal staff and three external individuals to learn about their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding the current collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies through Service Connect.

Of the seven internal staff interviewed, two were from the Probation Department. The County of San Mateo's Adult Probation Department is made up of two divisions: Adult and Realignment. Under the Realignment Division, there is one Deputy Chief of Realignment who oversees the entire Realignment Division for the Adult Probation Department. There is one Probation Services Manager who oversees all Probation Officers who supervise the realignment population in the County of San Mateo.

Of the seven internal staff interviewed, three were from the Health Department. Within the Health Department, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) with Correctional Health, is dedicated to work specifically with the AB 109 population, serving as the defendant's initial contact while still in custody. A Psychiatric Social Worker with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), a division of the Health Department, is dedicated to work solely with realignment defendants through Service Connect. A Substance Abuse Counselor/Case Manager/Assessment Specialist with BHRS, is dedicated to work solely with realignment defendants through Service Connect.

Of the seven internal staff interviewed, two were from the Human Services Agency. Within the Human Services Agency, a Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program Manager who oversees all aspects of job development and placement among five components: vocational rehabilitation counseling, supportive employment, Financial Empowerment Program (FEP), the Work Center, and Catering Connection. A Job Development Specialist with 550 Jobs! through the Human Services Agency, who is dedicated to work solely with realignment defendants to successfully obtain and maintain employment.

The three external interviews comprised of informant interviews with three realignment defendants. Two of these realignment defendants are currently on probation and receiving services through Service Connect, and one of the realignment defendants has successfully completed terms of probation and had previously utilized treatment and resources through Service Connect. While it is not possible to interview all 480 realignment defendants currently on probation, these three defendants were chosen due to their varying states of probation and level of services received. This timeline identifies

realignment probationers in three different stages: currently a new probationer utilizing treatment and resources through Service Connect, currently a probationer who has re-offended multiple times while utilizing treatment and resources through Service Connect, and a probationer who has successfully completed terms of probation with the assistance of treatment and resources provided through Service Connect.

The use of semi-structured interviews allowed a list of specific questions to be asked in addition to any remarks or comments made by participants during the interview to be utilized. This was intended to allow for explanations or clarifications to the findings. The same set of ten open-ended questions was asked of the staff within the Health Department and Human Services Agencies. The Deputy Chief of Realignment and Probation Services Manager of the Probation Department were both asked a similar set of questions, but with slight variations due to their level of knowledge and expertise. The same set of nine questions was asked of all three realignment defendants as well, regardless of what stage of probation or services received they were in.

All but one of the informant interviews was conducted in-person. One of the informant interviews was conducted via telephone due to the convenience factor. Complete anonymity is impossible due to the specific target population. However, confidentiality will be exercised to ensure privacy to all participants.

### **Survey Data**

Primary data was also compiled through surveys provided to all Probation Officers of the Realignment Unit in the County of San Mateo's Adult Probation Department. There is currently one Realignment Unit that is comprised of nine Probation

Officers. The same set of eleven multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question was asked of all nine Probation Officers.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data furnished by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation was used to compile statistics for the County of San Mateo's recidivism rates based on the number and percentage of adults who were rearrested, convicted, and returned to prison for the pre-realignment period between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011, and the post-realignment period between October 1, 2011 and September 30, 2012.

### **Ensuring Internal and External Validity and Controlling for Bias**

Any form of research may be affected by a number of biases and the validity of the research will pose as a significant factor in the proposal of policy recommendations.

To control for bias, the population group for data collection includes a selection of both sworn and non-sworn personnel among the Probation Department, Health Department, and Human Services Agency. Internal staff was selected from all sections within Service Connect to be representative of the entire internal population group. External interviews were selected to be representative of the three stages or levels that a realignment probationer could potentially be in. The inclusion of both internal and external representatives was aimed at preventing bias.

Other factors that may affect the internal validity of this research may include a decline in the economy, Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies staffing levels, and increasing numbers of offenders eligible under realignment. To

ensure internal validity, internal staff was instructed to focus on their experience working directly with the realignment population in their capacity. This research should have external validity with other Probation Departments of a similar size in the State of California.

### **Limitations of Research**

Due to the implementation of AB 109 being relatively new and still in its early stages, various counties within California will have experimented with a variety of methods in handling and treating the realignment population. The multidisciplinary collaboration between the County of San Mateo's Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies can also be looked upon as experimental to some degree. This study recognizes that while the County of San Mateo has implemented this strategy, not all counties are operating under the same methods and all strategies are still subject to change.



## CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The research for this project was devised to analyze the effectiveness of the linkage between the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies (through the aid of Service Connect) with lowering overall rates of recidivism. As such, internal sworn and non-sworn staff was asked to provide responses on their agency's current processes and services provided to the realignment population. External individuals include realignment defendants who were asked to provide responses on their experiences with the various agencies through Service Connect. This section contains summary data from the surveys and key informant interviews.

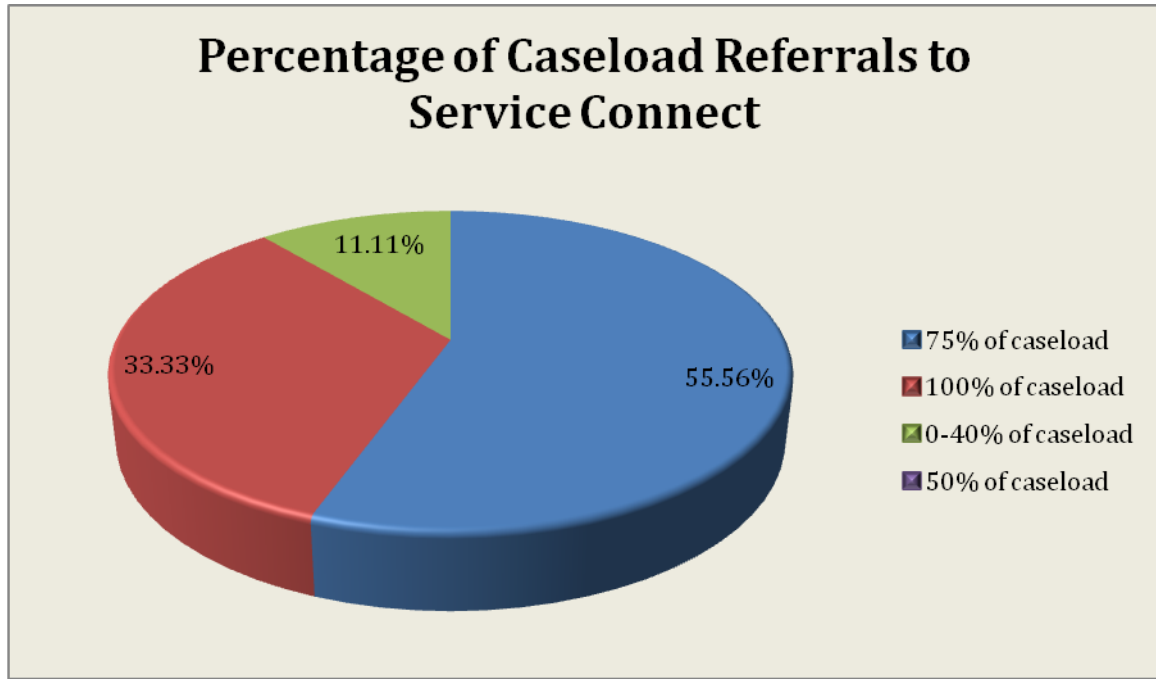
### **Survey Data Results**

#### **Realignment Probation Officers**

There are a total of nine Realignment Probation Officers in the Adult Probation Department for the County of San Mateo. Surveys (see Appendix B) were distributed to all nine Realignment Probation Officers. Total participation response: 100%

#### ***Question #1 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What percentage of your caseload do you refer to Service Connect for assistance?

**Table 4.1 (A) – Referrals to Service Connect**

**N = 9**

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to the question, *What percentage of your caseload do you refer to Service Connect for assistance?* The results are arranged in descending order as follows:

- 5 respondents refer 75% of their caseload to Service Connect (55.56%)
- 3 respondents refer 100% of their caseload to Service Connect (33.33%)
- 1 respondent refers 0-40% of their caseload to Service Connect (11.11%)
- 0 respondents refer 50% of their caseload to Service Connect (0%)

This information shows that more than half of Realignment Probation Officers (55.56%) refer at least 75% of their defendants to Service Connect for additional services and resources. With another 33.33% of Realignment Probation Officers referring 100% of their clients to Service Connect, this makes up the majority of all realignment defendants receiving at least an initial referral for services and resources. This first step of awareness by the Realignment Probation Officers to refer their defendants to Service Connect should not be taken lightly as it is an integral part of the process for who eventually receives the necessary services.

***Question #2 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

Is there a noticeable increase in defendant participation with Service Connect when a defendant is physically “walked down” to the program versus simply being referred?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. The results are as follows:

- 6 respondents answered yes (66.67%)
- 3 respondents answered no (33.33%)

With the majority of Realignment Probation Officers (66.67%) responding that they believe there is a noticeable increase in defendant participation with Service Connect if the defendants are walked down to the program versus simply being told about it, it demonstrates their awareness of what Service Connect may potentially offer their defendants. Therefore, if the defendants are physically walked down to Service Connect, they may be one step closer to receiving necessary services and resources.

***Question #3 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What is your main concern with using a multidisciplinary approach in addition to probation services?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. The results are defined as follows:

- 6 respondents answered both defendants check in with Service Connect and feel that they do not have to check in with probation, and defendants abuse the Service Connect program by requesting services that they do not need (66.67%)
- 2 respondents answered defendants check in with Service Connect and feel that they do not have to check in with probation (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered no issues or concerns (11.11%)

The majority of Realignment Probation Officers (66.67%) responded that their main concern with using a multidisciplinary approach in addition to probation services was that defendants who check in with Service Connect do not feel as though they need to also check in with probation, and also that defendants abuse the Service Connect program by requesting services that they do not need. Their first concern about defendants not checking in with probation when they check in with Service Connect demonstrates a potential gap in communication between the Realignment Probation Officers and the program case managers at Service Connect. Open communication between the Realignment Probation Officers and program case managers at Service Connect will also assist in their second concern about defendants who abuse the services and resources offered by requesting services that they do not need. Maintaining open lines of communication at all times can lead to an increase in check ins with probation

and Service Connect, and a decrease in defendants attempting to obtain unnecessary services.

***Question #4 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

Based on an average caseload of 55, how many defendants opt out from Service Connect completely?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. The results are arranged in descending order as follows:

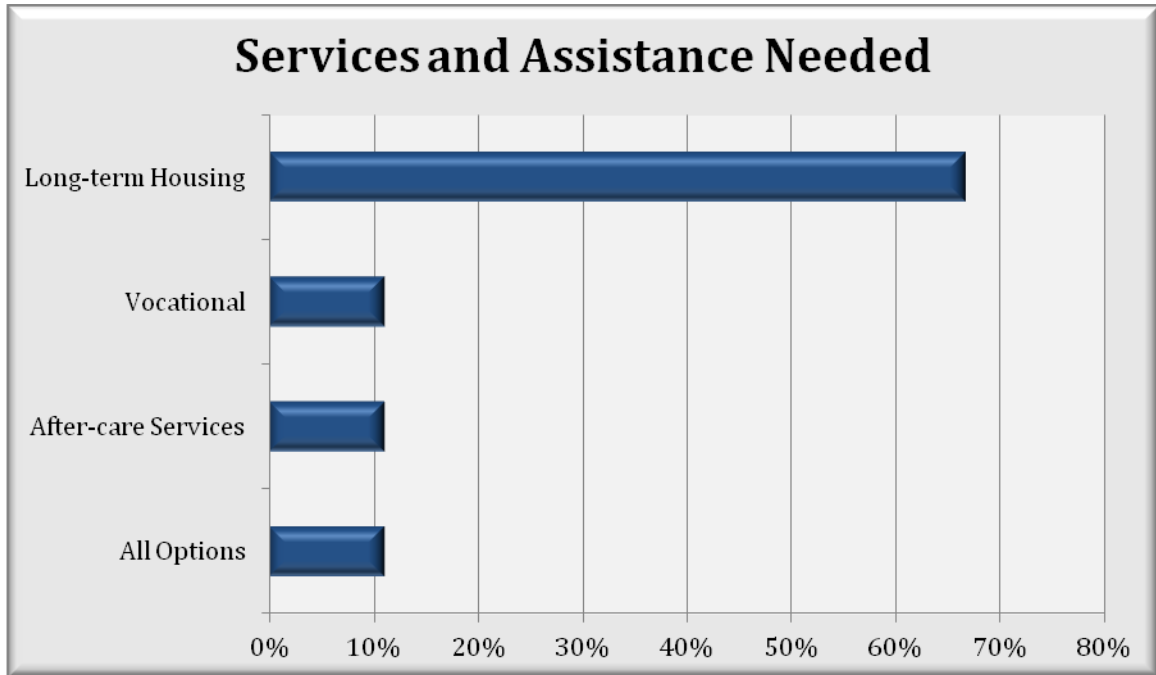
- 6 respondents answered 6-10 defendants opt out from Service Connect completely (66.67%)
- 2 respondents answered 11-20 defendants opt out from Service Connect completely (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered over 20 defendants opt out from Service Connect completely (11.11%)

Since Service Connect is a voluntary service, it is impossible to have all defendants participate. However, with over half (66.67%) of Realignment Probation Officers responding that only 6-10 defendants out of an average caseload of 55 opt out from Service Connect, this demonstrates that the need for such a program exists. Of those defendants, between 10.9% - 18.2% (6-10 defendants out of an average caseload of 55) of defendants opt out, but what remains is up to 89.1% of defendants in that caseload are voluntarily choosing to receive services and resources from Service Connect that can benefit them.

***Question #5 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

In addition to current services being provided through Service Connect, what extra services and assistance would lead to higher rates of success in the treatment and rehabilitation of the Realignment population?

**Table 4.1 (B) – Extra Services and Assistance Needed**



**N = 9**

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. One respondent also selected all options plus listed an additional fill-in answer. The results are arranged in descending order as follows:

- 6 respondents answered long-term housing (66.67%)
- 1 respondent answered vocational (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered after-care services (upon successful completion of probation) (11.11%)

- 1 respondent selected all options (vocational, long-term housing, emergency bundle services, and after care services) in addition to other (writing in family reunification counselor) (11.11%)

With the majority (66.67%) of Realignment Probation Officers responding with long-term housing as a necessary service that would help lead to higher rates of success with their defendants, it identifies a distinct need in an area that the County of San Mateo may be currently lacking. The message that long-term housing is a critical service needed for these defendants is clear because the Realignment Probation Officers are supervising these defendants and are hearing these issues and concerns firsthand.

***Question #6 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What primary issue can be attributed to low success rates in the rehabilitation of the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. One respondent also selected two options. The results are as follows:

- 3 respondents answered all of the above (continued criminal conduct, substance abuse, and refusal to participate with Service Connect) (33.33%)
- 2 respondents answered continued criminal conduct (22.22%)
- 2 respondents answered substance abuse (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered continued criminal conduct and substance abuse (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered other (writing in failure to sever old negative ties) (11.11%)

These responses demonstrate that there is no single issue that can be agreed upon by all that attributes to low success rates in rehabilitation for the realignment population. This suggests that a combination of factors (continued criminal conduct, substance abuse, etc.) generally play a role in the success or failure of one's rehabilitation.

***Question #7 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What is the main contributor to the increase in recidivism rates for the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. One respondent also selected two options. The results are as follows:

- 4 respondents answered propensity to continue criminal behavior (44.44%)
- 2 respondents answered lack of support system (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered lack of self-motivation (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered inadequate treatment/services/resources offered (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered insufficient probation officer to defendant ratios, and propensity to continue criminal behavior (11.11%)

Although the responses were spread out, the highest contributor to the increase in recidivism rates for the realignment population was identified as defendants' criminal tendencies (44.44%). This provides an indication as to the type of population realignment defendants are made up of (prior to the implementation of AB 109, some of these defendants would have been sent to prison for their crimes).

***Question #8 (Realignment Probation Officer):***



How do high caseload numbers negatively impact the treatment and rehabilitation of the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. Three respondents also selected two options. The results are arranged in descending order as follows:

- 5 respondents answered reactive case management approach versus pro-active approach (55.56%)
- 2 respondents answered reduction in the amount of direct supervision time (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered reduction in the amount of supervision time, and reactive case management approach versus pro-active approach (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered reactive case management approach versus pro-active approach and reduction in the use of evidence-based practices (11.11%)

With more than half of Realignment Probation Officers (55.56%) identifying high caseload numbers as a contributor to taking a reactive case management approach versus a pro-active approach, it may be safe to assume that with a manageable number of defendants to supervise per officer, a greater focus could be placed on ensuring each defendant is on the right track.

***Question #9 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What impact would the elimination of Service Connect have on the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. One respondent also selected three options. The results are as follows:

- 4 respondents answered limited or insufficient access to necessary resources (44.44%)
- 4 respondents answered decrease in the ability to access social services (44.44%)
- 1 respondent answered limited or insufficient access to necessary resources, decrease in the ability to access social services, and lack of positive environment and reinforcements (11.11%)

This response demonstrates that Realignment Probation Officers are aware of the important role that Service Connect plays with their defendants. The reduction or loss of services would likely have a domino effect, which in turn would affect their ability to effectively supervise all of their defendants.

***Question #10 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What types of specific training have you already received in order to handle the specific needs of the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided an answer to this question. Two respondents selected two options and one respondent also selected three options. The results are arranged as follows:

- 4 respondents answered all of the above (officer safety, social services, motivational interviewing, and behavioral modification) (44.44%)
- 2 respondents answered officer safety (22.22%)
- 1 respondent answered officer safety and social services (11.11%)

- 1 respondent answered officer safety and all of the above (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered officer safety, social services, and motivational interviewing (11.11%)

This information shows that all Realignment Probation Officers have had at least some of the necessary training that will assist them in supervising, handling, and treating realignment defendants. This can be utilized as a building block for the Probation Department to continue building additional training upon.

***Question #11 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

What types of future training should be offered in order to better prepare you to handle the specific needs of the Realignment population?

Of the nine respondents, eight respondents provided an answer to this question. One respondent selected two options. One respondent skipped this question. The results are arranged as follows:

- 3 respondents answered officer safety (33.33%)
- 3 respondents answered all of the above (officer safety, social services, motivational interviewing, and behavioral modification) (33.33%)
- 1 respondent answered behavioral modification (11.11%)
- 1 respondent answered social services and behavioral modification (11.11%)

This information shows that Realignment Probation Officers are concerned about their safety in dealing with the realignment population, in addition to the willingness to continue training and learning new skills that can increase their abilities to effectively and efficiently supervise defendants.

***Question #12 (Realignment Probation Officer):***

Would requiring all Realignment defendants to participate with Service Connect as part of their conditions of probation lead to a reduction in recidivism? Please explain.

Of the nine respondents, all nine respondents provided a written answer to this question.

- 9 respondents answered no (100%)
- 0 respondents answered yes (0%)

Six respondents mentioned a common theme that requiring defendants to participate with Service Connect will not lead to a reduction in recidivism. The defendant must first have the desire to change. Two respondents mentioned that some defendants simply do not require the services or assistance that Service Connect offers, or that the services they require are not offered by Service Connect. One respondent mentioned that there are two types of realignment defendants: the career criminal and the criminal who stays under the radar, and neither of those types of defendants are willing to change and they will continue to commit crimes.

This information shows that a single aspect, such as Service Connect, will not be able to change a defendant completely. Mandating Service Connect as a condition of probation would not create long-term positive results because the defendants must decide that they want to make a change in order for it to be meaningful and lasting.

## **Interview Data Results**

### **Program Case Managers**

The five program case managers interviewed are all employees within the Health Department (including Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and Correctional Health) or Human Services Agency. Service Connect is the common thread that links the realignment defendants with the various programs and contacts. The areas covered by these case managers include social work, vocational services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse counseling. Note: 'Defendants' and 'clients' are used interchangeably.

#### ***Question #1 (Program Case Managers) – Of the clients that you treat on a regular basis, how many are Realignment defendants?***

Of the five program case managers interviewed, four stated that 100% of their clients are strictly realignment defendants. The one interviewee who does not strictly treat realignment defendants is due to her executive management position, where she oversees five different areas and numerous case managers, including one job developer who handles only realignment defendants. This information shows that by having dedicated program case managers work with a specific population, it can lead to greater continuity of care.

#### ***Question #2 (Program Case Managers) – What direct services do you provide to your client?***

Depending on their area of expertise, each case manager provides a specific service to the realignment defendants. These services range from initial case assessments

to a guaranteed short-term job, social work services, psychotherapy assessments and clinical case management. The overall consensus from the program case managers is that the course of treatment and services provided is dependent on every individual's needs.

This demonstrates the need to acknowledge that all individuals are unique and must be treated as such. While these particular defendants may all be considered a part of the realignment population, the services that they each require may greatly vary.

***Question #3 (Program Case Managers) – What are the top three concerns clients request assistance with?***

Three out of the five interviewees mentioned jobs as one of the primary concerns of clients that they deal with. Two out of the five interviewees mentioned housing as the next highest concern of clients. In addition, medical needs, alcohol and drug treatment, as well as mental health, were mentioned as concerns that are frequently brought up by clients.

Employment and housing are basic human needs that are critical in order for most people to survive without turning to committing crimes as a solution. Further, this finding is consistent with the Realignment Probation Officers identifying housing as necessary for higher rates of success in the treatment and rehabilitation process.

***Question #4 (Program Case Managers) – What are the top three concerns that you address with clients?***

All five interviewees mentioned that the top concerns that they address with clients are typically quite similar to what clients are already requesting assistance with.

The one addition would be identifying if clients have the necessary social support to continue making positive progress.

This information demonstrates that Service Connect is attempting to provide services that are in line with what defendants require in order to successfully reintegrate into society as a law-abiding citizen.

***Question #5 (Program Case Managers) – How is the determination made, if at all, as to what issues are addressed and what services are offered?***

Due to the services being voluntary, all five interviewees mentioned that the issues addressed and services offered are largely based upon what the client is most concerned about. The general consensus of the interviewees is that a lot of time and energy is put into having conversations and engaging clients in order for the services and treatment provided to be as effective as possible. One interviewee also mentioned that the funding stream may play a role in what services are offered to clients. For example, mental health clients may receive more supportive services than a client who is receiving General Assistance (GA) because with a GA client, the funding is through net county costs, whereas the funding for mental health clients is available through the mental health cooperative.

This information shows that defendants must take an active role in their own path of treatment and rehabilitation. As mentioned above in Question #2, treatment and services are often provided based on every individual's unique needs.

***Question #6 (Program Case Managers) – How is the progress of each client tracked and measured?***

In addition to physical logs that are kept for progress notes, all five interviewees noted that communication plays a key role in the tracking and measurement of progress for each client. Clients receive a variety of services through the assistance of Service Connect programs. The design of the program is meant to be multi-agency and multidisciplinary. Therefore, all parties must keep lines of communication open in order to provide effective and efficient services. This includes staff from Probation, Health, and Human Services.

This information demonstrates how crucial communication is when multiple parties are dealing with one defendant. This can be tied back to Question #3 from the Realignment Probation Officers' responses. In order for the program to operate smoothly, all lines of communication must be kept open in order to provide adequate and necessary services. Thus, the program must also communicate with defendants in emphasizing the need to also check in with probation just as probation encourages defendants to obtain services from Service Connect.

***Question #7 (Program Case Managers) – What form of measurement does the program use to determine if a client is successful or not?***

The overall consensus from the five interviewees is that the measurement of progress is utilized. If the client appears to be doing better, that would include employment and retention in employment, successfully completing terms of probation, and not recidivating.

This information shows the human factor that is involved when dealing with defendants. There may not always be a literal form of measurement used to determine if



a defendant successfully completes a program, but both program case managers and Realignment Probation Officers utilize common sense in making an assessment on the progress of each individual.

***Question #8 (Program Case Managers) – What steps are taken, if any, when the program is unable to provide the necessary services for a client?***

Three interviewees mentioned the option to coordinate, link, and refer clients to other resources that may be able to assist them with their additional needs. The remaining two interviewees mentioned that they would sit down with the client, have a discussion and re-evaluate their goals.

While there do not appear to be any formal steps that must be taken by program case managers when the program is unable to fulfill all of the needs of a client, every effort is still made to fill any known gaps in services provided.

***Question #9 (Program Case Managers) – If a client is re-arrested for any reason, how is the case dispositioned?***

The directive would generally come from Service Connect. Other times, interviewees mentioned that they may hear about a client being re-arrested through the probation officer or at a multidisciplinary meeting where Probation, Health, and Human Services all get together to discuss current case statuses and plans for clients. There appears to be a gap in communication at this stage because ultimately, Probation makes the final call on whether a client is removed from services based on a violation that they committed. One interviewee mentioned that having a genuine dialogue between everyone who has provided services or treatment to a client involved before taking steps

for a final disposition would be ideal and more productive. For example, if a client is making noticeable progress, but commits a minor, technical violation, communicating with all program managers working with that client prior to Probation making a decision would be preferable. This would give other members of the multidisciplinary team an opportunity to voice their thoughts and concerns on the progress, or lack thereof, of the client. This could potentially reduce the amount of clients being cut off of services when they were beginning to make meaningful progress.

***Question #10 (Program Case Managers) – Would you consider the services that you provide to clients effective for helping to set them up for successful reintegration back into the community to be a law-abiding citizen?***

All five interviewees responded yes to this question. However, three of the five interviewees added a caveat to their response because they believe that the services that they provide to clients are quite effective, but not 100% effective. The belief that meaningful differences are being made in clients' lives seems to be true across the board. However, there are big gaps in some resource issues, with access to long-term stable housing being one of the largest problems for clients. Another interviewee mentioned that while employment gives people hope, they need the stability of housing as well. Otherwise, it is not uncommon for them to recidivate in order to survive.

This information demonstrates the need for even more to be done by all agencies involved. Housing continues to be a recurring theme in the issues that are seen by various parties. In order to begin closing such gaps in resource issues, changes must be made at a higher level.

**Deputy Chief of Realignment and Probation Services Manager**

The Deputy Chief of Realignment oversees the entire Realignment Division of the Adult Probation Department. The Probation Services Manager currently oversees all Realignment Probation Officers. The questions asked slightly differed for the Deputy Chief and the Probation Services Manager due to the manager providing direct supervision over Realignment Probation Officers.

***Question #1 (Deputy Chief of Realignment and Probation Services Manager) – How has the implementation of AB 109 impacted the daily operations of San Mateo County’s Adult Probation Department?***

Both interviewees agreed that the impact to Probation has been huge. New procedures and new tracking methods had to be created to handle the Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS) clients coming from the California Department of Corrections (CDCR). From the perspective of the Deputy Chief of Realignment, he stated that realignment is not going anywhere and even though funding and the budget is the true reason realignment is here, the positive take away is that more funding that is directed at low-level and medium-level offenders will eventually gain enough traction with some of them and cause them to change.

This information shows that the Probation Department’s upper level management has embraced the changes that AB 109 has brought to the County of San Mateo and is ready and willing to develop the necessary methods and procedures to accommodate the changes as they come.

***Question #2 (Deputy Chief of Realignment) and Question #3 (Probation Services Manager) – How much training has been provided to Probation Services Managers and Probation Officers to supervise the Realignment population to date?***

A lot of training has been provided, especially in the last eight months. Most of this push for training has been through the energy and support behind realignment from the new Chief of Probation. The Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) sponsored an AB 109 series of trainings that all probation officers, managers, and directors in the Realignment Division attended. Statewide trainings have been about the laws and bringing in incentive-based supervision or evidence-based supervision, and working with people with substance abuse and mental health disorders.

This provides information on how the new Chief of Probation for the County of San Mateo has whole-heartedly embraced realignment and therefore, trainings and evidence-based practices will likely continue to be implemented.

***Question #2 (Probation Services Manager) – How has the implementation of AB 109 impacted the daily operations of the Probation Officers that you supervise?***

The cases are more challenging to begin with because while these offenders are considered low-level offenders in theory, no one is given a prison sentence on a low-level offense right out of the gate. These offenders are sent to prison because they have a history of non-compliance under supervision or they continue to commit new felonies while under supervision, or both. The law requires that evidence-based supervision and intermediate sanctions be used, which brings upon the juvenile model of supervision.

Offenders are not sent to jail or prison for no reason, so what is now taking place is that the only people who will be left in prison are the ones that the law intended to be there.

This information sheds some light on how the realignment population can be quite different from the standard population of defendants on probation. Because these defendants are either coming out of state prison or should have been sent to state prison (prior to the implementation of AB 109), the cases may require more attention and expertise.

***Question #3 (Deputy Chief of Realignment) and Question #4 (Probation Services Manager) – What types of training have been provided thus far?***

San Mateo County will be providing additional training for all Realignment Probation Officers, including crisis intervention training and cognitive skills training. There is a two-day cognitive skills training that involves journaling, which allows the assignment of different components to fit whatever issue the offender is dealing with instantly. This training can later be used in the field as an alternative tool and applied as an intermediate sanction. Now that realignment is at the start of its third year, there will be more specific and mandatory training.

This information provides insight into the types of training that are now being required of Realignment Probation Officers. In addition to trainings that all Probation Officers would need to go through (i.e. officer safety), due to the nature of their defendants, Realignment Probation Officers will need to take additional training that is focused more on the treatment and rehabilitation of defendants rather than simply the enforcement of laws.

***Question #5 (Probation Services Manager) – How much additional time will need to be dedicated towards future training for Probation Officers in the Realignment Unit to effectively supervise the defendants?***

The department is looking towards investing the time and energy to have many probation officers become motivational interview trainers. From the beginning, the law always required evidence-based supervision, and now the trend in probation is becoming more similar to that of realignment. The trend with realignment has been that money and resources will continue to go towards what works in treating and rehabilitating offenders. Evidence has also shown that people can recidivate if we do the wrong thing when supervising and providing treatment and services to offenders.

This information demonstrates the commitment that the County of San Mateo is making to equip Realignment Probation Officers with as much knowledge and means as possible in order to be successful in assisting with the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders.

***Question #5 (Deputy Chief of Realignment) and Question #7 (Probation Services Manager) – Has the collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services been effective in providing services and treatment to defendants? If yes, how so? If no, why not?***

Both interviewees responded yes, emphasizing that county wide, communication and collaboration between and across agencies are now taking place. The county intends to eventually apply evidence-based treatments and services that are currently being applied towards realignment defendants to everyone being released from jail, regardless

if they are a part of realignment or not. It is important to note that while the collaboration between Probation, Health, and Human Services has been effective in general, it should not be forgotten or taken lightly that realignment defendants are a difficult population to deal with when encouraging them to get treatment or services.

This information shows that the County of San Mateo is continuing to move forward, following the trend of collaborating with other agencies in order to achieve a common goal. With the long-term goal being the application of evidence-based treatments for all defendants, regardless if they are realignment defendants or not, open lines of constant communication and collaboration among various agencies will be vital.

***Question #6 (Deputy Chief of Realignment) – What is the Probation Department’s plans for further implementation training and collaboration with other agencies to promote public safety and reduce recidivism rates in regards to the Realignment population?***

The lines of what Probation, Human Services, Behavioral Health, Service Connect, and community-based organizations currently do are starting to blur. All agencies are starting to work together more often and are realizing that each agency or component has something to contribute to the successful outcome of clients. If Human Services can provide social support while Behavioral Health provides the physical and mental health treatment, and 550 Jobs! provides employment, all of these factors will help to stabilize the client and have them re-integrate back into society better than they were, which in turn will reduce recidivism.

This information sheds light on the future of government services. What used to be strictly Probation is now Probation and Human Services, and what used to be strictly Human Services is now Human Services and the Health Department. In order to reach the ultimate goal of reducing recidivism rates, the individual must be treated as a whole, meaning supervision, services, and treatments provided should cover all aspects of an individual's life.

### **Realignment Defendants Data**

All realignment defendants interviewed are either currently or formerly on Probation with the County of San Mateo.

***Question #1 (Realignment Defendants) – How did you first hear about Service Connect?***

Two out of the three interviewees stated that they were first made aware of Service Connect through their Probation Officer. One interviewee mentioned that someone who was previously on probation provided information on the programs available and then had it reinforced by the Probation Officer.

This can be utilized for informational purposes to understand where defendants are first receiving notice of the existence of Service Connect.

***Question #3 (Realignment Defendants) – Would you have gone to Service Connect on your own as opposed to your Probation Officer walking you down to the program? Why or why not?***



Two interviewees stated that they would have still gone to Service Connect to seek out services on their own once they were informed about it, regardless of whether the Probation Officer physically walked them down and introduced the program to them. One interviewee was resistant to the idea of going to Service Connect to receive services due to previous poor experiences with other programs that did not follow through.

This information reveals that while two out of the three interviewees would have gone down to Service Connect on their own, one interviewee still would not have without the insistence of the Probation Officer. Therefore, the need still exists to urge defendants to take advantage of necessary services and resources offered through Service Connect. For every one interviewee that does not go down to Service Connect simply because they were not urged to by their Probation Officer, that is one additional defendant who may be more likely to recidivate.

***Question #4 (Realignment Defendants) – How often do you participate or visit Service Connect for assistance or resources?***

Two of the interviewees mentioned that they would go to Service Connect anywhere from 2-4 times per week. It would vary by week depending on what other treatment or services they were receiving elsewhere, but the intention was always to visit as often as possible. One of the interviewees mentioned that a daily visit was ideal, but once the program helped him gain employment, he was obviously no longer able to visit Service Connect on a daily basis anymore.

This information reveals the significant role that Service Connect can play in a defendant's daily life. With defendants going to Service Connect a minimum of two

times per week, and up to five times per week, this is time spent performing productive activities or obtaining necessary services or treatment rather than engaging in possibly unproductive or criminal activities.

***Question #5 (Realignment Defendants) – What primary services or resources do you seek through Service Connect programs?***

Two interviewees mentioned housing and employment as their primary needs. One interviewee also mentioned alcohol and drug treatment, and mental health treatment in addition to employment and housing needs. One interviewee also mentioned transportation (bus passes), food vouchers, and a cell phone.

Once again, this information reveals that housing and employment are the two primary needs for most realignment defendants. This finding is consistent with what the Realignment Probation Officers, program case managers, and upper level probation management have previously identified as essentials for realignment defendants.

***Question #6 (Realignment Defendants) – Have the services and resources provided by Service Connect made a positive impact in your adjustment back into the community? If yes, how so? If no, why not?***

All three interviewees responded yes with similar reasons. One interviewee mentioned that Service Connect is a one-stop shop, so it avoids the factor of having to go to six different county buildings to obtain necessary services. Two interviewees mentioned that the social support services provided are crucial. Being able to speak to someone who does not hold any pre-conceived notions or judgment is important and helpful when trying to make significant changes for the better.

This information reveals that realignment defendants recognize the significance of what Service Connect provides. This finding is also consistent with the findings from Question #9 for the Realignment Probation Officers, where the recognition of the importance of Service Connect is apparent.

***Question #7 (Realignment Defendants) – What types of additional services would you like to see provided by Service Connect?***

Two interviewees mentioned additional housing options as a critical service that is needed. Even when employed, long-term housing is still an issue. One interviewee mentioned having mentors would be a viable option. Being able to speak to people who have gone through similar situations helps a lot, especially when there is a factor of embarrassment or shame involved.

This information reveals the common thread among all interviewees, regardless of position or department.

***Question #8 (Realignment Defendants) – Do you think you would have committed the crime that sent you to prison or jail if you had been participating with a “Service Connect type of program” in the past?***

All three interviewees answered no, mainly because having the assistance available and being made aware of it could have potentially assisted them in making better choices and decisions along the way. One interviewee mentioned that there were plenty of times he wanted to stop committing crimes, but he continued doing so because there either were not enough resources available or it was taking too long to receive necessary services. One interviewee also mentioned that while a program like Service

Connect could have greatly helped, timing was another issue. Being ready and willing to ask for and accept help is necessary in order for any meaningful change to take place.

This information suggests that having services, treatment, and resources available to all, regardless if one is dealing with a crisis or not, can assist in preventing the commitment of crimes. This can be a pro-active measure that promotes assistance to those in need when they are ready to receive it.

### **Significant Key Findings**

#### **Pre-Realignment Data**

According to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2013), in the County of San Mateo for the period between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011, 64.9% of adults were released from prison and subsequently arrested for a misdemeanor, felony or supervision violation within the one-year period following their release; 23.9% of adults were released from prison and convicted of a new crime, whether a misdemeanor or a felony, within the one-year period following their release; 35.8% of adults were released from prison and then returned to prison for a parole violation or new crime within the one-year period following their release (only the first arrest or conviction episode, as well as the most serious charge within the first arrest or conviction episode, is counted).

#### **Post-Realignment Data**

According to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2013), in the County of San Mateo for the period between October 1, 2011 and September 30, 2012, 57.5% of adults were released from prison and subsequently arrested for a

misdemeanor, felony or supervision violation within the one-year period following their release; 24.9% of adults were released from prison and convicted of a new crime, whether a misdemeanor or a felony, within the one-year period following their release; 3.4% of adults were released from prison and then returned to prison for a parole violation or new crime within the one-year period following their release (only the first arrest or conviction episode, as well as the most serious charge within the first arrest or conviction episode, is counted).

The data presented by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation represents the effects, if any, that realignment has had for the County of San Mateo. The following represents the change comparison of pre-realignment and post-realignment rates in terms of arrests, convictions, and returns to prison:

<b>County of San Mateo</b>	<b>Pre-Realignment</b>	<b>Post-Realignment</b>	<b>Change Comparison</b>
Arrests	64.9%	57.5%	- 7.5%
Convictions	23.9%	24.9%	0.9%
Returns	35.8%	3.4%	- 32.5%

The above secondary data suggests that the main research question and sub-questions #1 and #2 are not fully supported. While on initial glance it may appear as though post-realignment offenders returned to prison at a significantly lower rate than pre-realignment offenders (3.4% and 35.8%, respectively), it should be noted that this was an intended effect of realignment due to the fact that only certain offenders are eligible to return to prison on a parole violation (i.e. three-strikes offenders). Therefore, in reviewing the overall change comparison rates, there has not been at least a 10%

reduction in recidivism rates for post-realignment offenders in the categories of arrests and convictions.

While the 7.5% change in rate of arrests post-realignment is less than a 10% decrease overall, it still represents a movement towards positive change under realignment. The conviction rate remained relatively stable, with a 0.9% increase post-realignment. This data represents the first year results of realignment for the County of San Mateo. Therefore, the little differences that are initially shown are not unexpected. As we continue to move forward into the full third year of realignment and beyond, the change comparison rates may reflect more significant changes.

***Main research question***

Significant key findings through primary data compiled in this research reveal mixed responses to the main research question. The question of whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies result in lower rates of recidivism and an increase in successful reintegration back into the community for the realignment population appears to be supported to some degree.

Based on the survey responses, the majority of Realignment Probation Officers (66.67%) responded that *they believe there is a noticeable increase in defendant participation with Service Connect if the defendants are walked down to the program versus simply being told about it*. This first step of Realignment Probation Officers being aware that Service Connect is a valuable resource and tool for realignment defendants reveal that if the defendants are physically walked down to Service Connect, they may be

one step closer to receiving necessary services and resources, which may in turn assist with offenders not recidivating. In addition, survey responses reveal that 44.44% of Realignment Probation Officers *believe that the highest contributor to the increase in recidivism rates for the realignment population was the propensity to continue criminal behavior.* This finding is significant because it hints at the type of population realignment defendants are made up of. This finding is also supported by the key informant interview of the Probation Services Manager, which revealed that *these cases are more challenging to begin with because while these offenders are considered low-level offenders in theory, no one is given a prison sentence on a low-level offense right out of the gate.*

### ***Sub-question #3***

Both survey responses and informant interviews revealed a significant key finding across all respondents that provide valuable insight into sub-question #3. Survey and interview findings identify long-term housing as a distinct need that the County of San Mateo is currently lacking. Survey findings show that the majority (66.67%) of Realignment Probation Officers believe that *long-term housing* is a necessary component that would help lead to higher rates of success in the treatment and rehabilitation of the realignment population. This finding is also supported by informant interviews with Program Case Managers in terms of the top three concerns that they assist clients with as well as the top three concerns that clients request assistance with. Two out of the three realignment defendants interviewed also identified *additional housing options as a critical service that is needed.* Furthermore, the Deputy Chief of Realignment responded that *the lines of what Probation, Human Services, Behavioral Health, Service Connect,*

*and community-based organizations currently do are starting to blur. All agencies and departments working together will help to stabilize the client and have them re-integrate back into society better than they were, which in turn will reduce recidivism.*

The message that long-term housing is a critical need for these defendants is clear. Representatives from the Probation Department, Health and Human Services Agencies, in addition to realignment defendants are all on the same page. Additional long-term housing options would make the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department, Health and Human Services Agencies a more effective partnership.

Based on survey responses, 33.33% of Realignment Probation Officers believe that *officer safety, social services, motivational interviewing, and behavioral modification training* should be offered in order to better handle the specific needs of the realignment population. This finding is supported by informant interview results as well, including the Probation Services Manager identifying that *the department is looking towards investing the time and energy to have many probation officers become motivational interview trainers. The trend with realignment has been that money and resources will continue to go towards what works in treating and rehabilitating offenders.*

Future training that assists in learning to address the offender as a whole (physical, mental, and emotional needs) is a pro-active approach to the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders, which can lead to potentially lower long-term rates of recidivism. In addition, literature review suggests the importance for “reentry to occur in a manner that empowers the offender to be a productive citizen contributing to the community” (Taxman, 2004, p. 35). An offender who is an active participant is one who takes part in the decision-making process of how and when to be reintegrated back into



the community, whereas an offender who is an active recipient does not typically get to choose which services he or she will receive. Trainings such as motivational interviewing and behavior modification would equip Realignment Probation Officers with the necessary knowledge and skills to more accurately determine who can truly benefit from services offered through Service Connect and like programs. The proper amount of time, effort, and energy can then be directed towards the services and support for these offenders, while the focus on enforcement of laws can be more accurately directed towards *career criminals* until they are either ready to make some positive changes in their lives or display real signs of effort in the attempts to do so.

## CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The October 1, 2011 implementation of AB 109 has transferred an unprecedented amount of responsibility for offenders from the state's prison system down to local county jurisdictions. As the realignment population continues to grow in size and responsibilities for local counties, there is a need to pursue improved methods to provide services to these offenders while maintaining public safety. Therefore, the importance of this research study to analyze whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies result in lower rates of recidivism and an increase in successful reintegration back into the community for the realignment population is significant in future policy implications.

Timing appears to be an underlying factor that plays a significant role in the successful treatment and rehabilitation of an offender. Even if the proper services and treatment are available and offered, success will likely depend on each individual. If the individual is ready and willing to accept assistance, then it is the proper time to offer and receive it. However, if the individual is resistant to the idea of making positive lifestyle changes, it is unlikely that any true changes will be lasting.

The results and findings indicate that the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services Agencies is a sufficient starting point for the County of San Mateo in determining how to handle realignment defendants while simultaneously working towards lowering recidivism rates. It is also important to note that the implementation of additional crime prevention programs can

have impacts other than the reduction of crime. For example, if a high-quality, intensive treatment program for offenders is implemented, the costs can be quite high. Therefore, “the advantages of the program must be weighed against the costs” (MacKenzie, 2000, p. 459). While there is still much more work to do in order to reach the goal of reduced rates of recidivism and successful reintegration back into communities for the realignment population, we must keep in mind that AB 109 is still in its infancy stages.

In just its third full year, we are still in new territory and local county jurisdictions will continue to receive increasing numbers of offenders. Hence, the importance of determining what works and what does not work in the treatment and rehabilitation of the realignment population. While the initial trial and error phase has elapsed, entering the second phase with a distinct purpose and manageable goals will be imperative. The following next steps can be assumed to address some of the issues discussed in this study.

## **Recommendations**

### **Policy Recommendation #1 – Close the gap in communication between agencies**

With multiple agencies involved in different aspects and on different levels with the realignment population, it is not surprising that a gap or disconnect in communication exists. With increasing numbers of realignment defendants every year, the likelihood of additional departments and agencies becoming involved in a multidisciplinary collaboration to provide treatments and services to the realignment population will undoubtedly grow. Local county jurisdictions were not initially given an abundant amount of time to prepare for the impact of obtaining large amounts of offenders. Thus, it is understandable that comprehensive plans for communication between all personnel

and agencies were not fully developed back in October 2011. Therefore, it is imperative to now establish best practices and standard procedures while still in the relatively early stages of realignment. 'Realignment' is the term that is currently being utilized for public safety efforts. However, 'realignment' can also be applied towards the levels and frequency of appropriate communication between agencies.

The implementation of standard procedures and best practices for all agencies to follow will assist in improving consistency in the flow and method of communication between all parties involved. The implementation of such a standard requires three major steps. First, the directors of each agency currently involved (in addition to directors of any future agencies that may join the collaboration efforts) must meet and confer in order to agree that a standard operating procedure must be created and decide what it must entail. Support from executive management in each agency (Probation Department, Health Department, Human Services Agency) is needed in order for this initiative to gain traction and be successful.

Second, teams representative of the personnel in various stages of handling and interacting with realignment defendants should be formed to meet either bi-weekly or at a minimum, once a month to discuss what needs to be standardized, and to create policy and procedure guidelines for all personnel and agencies involved to follow. Developing multiple teams that will target one or two of the various stages that a realignment defendant goes through will provide clarity and purpose to each team's goals. This will lead to the prevention of future realignment defendants going through unnecessary periods of 'falling through the cracks' in requesting or obtaining necessary services and resources. With providers from all agencies aware of a defendant's current situation and

what stage in the process he or she is in (i.e. already had an assessment completed while in custody, specifically seeking vocational assistance, etc.), any unnecessary duplication of efforts can be reduced or eliminated right from the start.

Lastly, as with any new policy or procedure, review and analysis must follow the application of standard operating procedures. It is recommended that the initial meeting between directors of all agencies involved be conducted no later than the beginning of the 2014 – 2015 fiscal year, in addition to quarterly update meetings for executive management thereafter. It is also recommended that the teams put together from all agencies to develop standard operating procedures meet within one month after approval to develop said procedures is given by executive management. After the initial meeting with all teams, it is recommended that bi-weekly meetings with full participation from all teams shall occur in order to provide updates and additions to the best practices that are being developed.

With funding always being a contentious topic among all agencies, the elimination of unnecessary duplications of effort will benefit all agencies and the county as a whole. By operating under reliable and united practices, even the slightest improvements in closing the gap in communication between agencies will be greatly welcomed.

**Policy Recommendation #2 – Provide additional funding options for long-term housing**

A consistent theme found in this research study was the immense need for long-term housing options for the realignment population. Nearly all respondents and

interviewees mentioned the necessity of having additional long-term housing options, especially for the realignment population. The fact that long-term housing is such a significant concern for Probation Officers, Program Case Managers, and for realignment defendants demonstrates the lack of touch that the County of San Mateo may have in considering its level of importance. There is a great need to attack this serious, chronic problem in order to achieve better long-term results in the constant fight against recidivism. Simply by residing in the County of San Mateo (or any other Bay Area county), this section of the realignment population must deal with a significantly higher cost of living standard than in other parts of California where the realignment population also exists. This creates another barrier for offenders to overcome when attempting to get back on their feet, lead a life free of crime, and not recidivate.

In order to improve the current state of funding towards long-term housing needs for the realignment population and beyond, modifications should be considered to the current disbursement methods of funding. While it is understandable that the teams who make up the county manager's office are under pressure to determine an equitable spread of funding for all agencies and departments throughout the county, a new method of special funds distribution could be considered. Considering the implementation of AB 109 is mandatory and the county will continue receiving more inmates from state prison, the right time to implement a pilot process of distributing funds more evenly could be now.

In addition to any state funding that the county will receive to manage the realignment population, it is recommended that an additional set of funds be set aside for Fiscal Years 2015 - 2018 to pilot an intensive return on investment program by allocating

additional funds towards researching and perhaps purchasing housing that can be utilized long-term (amount of funds to be set aside would be determined by the county manager's office). The aim of starting this pilot program in Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016 rather than in Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015 is due to this effort requiring extensive research, in addition to the requirement of unwavering support of executive management from all agencies and departments countywide due to the potential residual effects on the clients that they serve. Initially, this proposal may garner little in terms of support, but in terms of the bigger picture, it would be more cost-effective in the long run to treat offenders and provide them with the tools and resources needed for them to reintegrate back into communities as law-abiding citizens. One of these crucial resources needed is long-term housing.

With additional funds being allocated towards long-term housing, there is a greater likelihood for offenders who are trying to make positive changes in their lives to succeed. As indicated in the interview findings, offenders who are ready to make a change for the better can do so, but only with necessary services and resources. In addition, idle time is something that can lead to opportunities of poor decisions. Therefore, in conjunction with long-term housing, there shall be conditions that apply to those residing in county properties.

First, anyone residing in a county property housing unit must fit the description of the type of low-level offender that the housing was intended for. Also, offenders shall be pre-screened and assessed in order to determine who shall be chosen to reside in such a housing unit. Any low-level offender who wishes to qualify for one of the housing units must also be pre-determined through case assessments or other similar measurements to have a greater likelihood of success through mandatory services or treatment (i.e.

vocational assistance, mental health treatment, alcohol and substance abuse treatment). Executive management from all relevant county agencies and departments will identify and create a working list of who may qualify and who does not qualify at the start of Fiscal Year 2016 – 2017. Second, it shall be mandatory for all residents in the county property housing units to meet face-to-face with their Probation Officers on a weekly basis. In addition, Probation Officers are allowed to make unscheduled home visits to their probationers. Third, all residents in the county property housing units must agree to participate in at least one form of qualified service or treatment on a regular basis. Lastly, the amount offenders shall pay for monthly rent will be determined on a sliding scale based on their income. For example, if an offender agrees to vocational assistance prior to moving into a county property housing unit and is able to obtain and maintain employment, he or she will contribute a percentage of their income towards rent each month in order to offset county costs.

In summary, Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015 will require executive management to meet and confer, as well as develop teams or units with the responsibility of researching viable long-term housing options that meet the needs of the county as well as the offenders who may reside there. Beginning Fiscal Year 2015 – 2016 and each year thereafter until 2018, additional funds would be set aside and accumulate to start this pilot program. Beginning Fiscal Year 2016 – 2017, executive management from all relevant county agencies and departments will identify and create a working list of offenders who may qualify for such housing. It should be noted that this recommendation does not aim to modify or remove the existing temporary and emergency housing services that is currently being provided to offenders through the assistance of Human Services Agency.



The existing temporary and emergency housing services shall remain intact for offenders who do not qualify for this new county property housing option. Beginning Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018, the first group of offenders may begin moving into the county property housing units. As this would be a pilot program for the county, review, analysis, and evaluation of the successes or improvements needed at the close of Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018 would be warranted. At that time, the county manager's office will make a determination as to the continuation of the program and setting aside of funds or modify the program with any necessary changes.

**Policy Recommendation #3 – Expand training – implement the process of ‘training the trainers’**

As indicated in the survey and interview findings, a variety of current and future trainings for Probation Officers, including motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral training, have been implemented in order to address the criminogenic patterns of thinking and attitudes of the realignment population and other offenders. The ultimate goal is to address the offender as a whole in order to change actions of people from within. Individuals must have the internal desire to make positive changes in order for actual transformations to persist. Once all Realignment Probation Officers (currently nine) have completed the necessary training, the knowledge and tools acquired could very well benefit the remaining Probation Officers in other units. Such training that addresses the mental attitudes and behaviors of offenders, regardless of their association to realignment, is valuable for all Probation Officers.

With newfound knowledge and tools acquired from the various training opportunities, it is recommended that Realignment Probation Officers transfer their

knowledge to the Probation Officers of remaining units in the Adult Probation Department by becoming the ‘trainers’ themselves. This process of ‘training the trainers’ shall start at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016. By investing their own time and energy into training their counterparts, these officers will also have a greater stake in the outcome of the trainings. The expected results from such training will be that it leads to Probation Officers making better and more informed determinations as to who can truly benefit from Service Connect type programs, or any additional programs that offer social support, vocational assistance, emergency benefits, housing assistance, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health treatment, and more. This will eliminate some of the guessing game in the trial and error of attempting to apply multiple forms of treatment and services with an offender and hoping “one sticks.”

By ‘training the trainers’ and expanding the knowledge to all other Probation Officers, it can assist officers in determining which offenders in their caseload are truly ready to make a positive change in their lives. Self-motivation of defendants is necessary to some degree in order to make lasting changes, and “trained Probation Officers” can then work with them either one-on-one or in groups to achieve common goals (i.e. one group is aimed at working on family reunification or one group is working solely on mentoring and providing social support to each other). With the remaining offenders who are not yet prepared to take the necessary steps to make a positive change in their lives, a positive side benefit to having all Probation Officers trained will be that Realignment Probation Officers can then focus on the law enforcement aspect for these ‘career criminals’.

Regardless of which unit Probation Officers are assigned to, one thing that is certain is that a Probation Officer will know his or her probationer better than an officer from a different unit will. Therefore, another added benefit to *all* Probation Officers being trained by their counterparts will be the expansion of knowledge and discussion amongst officers on practices or methods that have proven to be effective with their probationers. It is also recommended that the expansion of this process of ‘training the trainers’ shall extend beyond Fiscal Year 2015 – 2016. This will likely prove to be an effective and efficient method in improving the knowledge and sharing of valuable information and tools, while also reducing the allocation of county funds towards outside contractors for training.

By treating offenders individually based on their needs (i.e. some offenders may already have a place to live but require employment, therefore the focus of our efforts shall go towards assisting them with obtaining employment), efforts made can be more efficient versus spreading ourselves thin by offering a blanket of unnecessary services. Treating the actual root of the problem rather than attempting a variety of potential solutions that may have worked for others will increase long-term success rates. Changing all aspects of everything at once may not be feasible, but making small changes along the way and having some positive wins will lead us into a brighter future.

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## APPENDIX A

### DEFINITIONS

**Evidence-based practice** is defined as the use of current research and data to guide policy and practice decisions.

**Mandatory Supervision (MS)** is defined as a court ordered period of time in the community under the supervision of the county probation department.

**Multidisciplinary collaboration** is defined as the formal collaboration and development of treatment methods and processes for all involved agencies to follow [comprises of members and practitioners from the Probation Department, Health Department, and Human Services Agency who come together, coordinate, and plan for the enforcement of conditions (Probation), provide treatment (Health Department), and skills and community support (Human Services)].

**Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs)** is defined as a group of individuals who review, assess, and recommend appropriate programs for realignment defendants (may include employees from the Sheriff's Office, Correctional Health, Probation Department, Service Connect, and other relevant parties).

**Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS)** is defined as offenders released from State custody that are placed under probation (instead of the State's parole system) for up to three years.

**Program Case Managers** are defined as County of San Mateo employees who are responsible for managing caseloads or projects that require a specific level of expertise or certification. The term "program case manager" is not intended to mean a title of a position.

**Realignment** is defined as the shifting of the state to local level responsibility for dealing with certain felons.

**Recidivism** is defined as reoffending based on the measurement of arrests, convictions, and returns to prison.

**APPENDIX B**

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT REALIGNMENT PROBATION OFFICERS**

**QUESTIONNAIRE INTRODUCTION**

Hello, my name is Caroline Chen and I am currently a graduate student at Golden Gate University. I am conducting research on whether the multidisciplinary collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services through Service Connect leads to greater success and positive results with a reduced likelihood or propensity to recidivate for the Realignment population.

The focus of this research will be to evaluate the significance and appropriateness of the enforcement, treatment, and programs that Probation, Health, Human Services, and Service Connect offers. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing this questionnaire designed to measure your level of knowledge and gauge your thoughts and opinions on the current services being provided to Realignment defendants and what you believe is needed or should be offered. This survey will only take approximately 5-10 minutes of your time to complete and your confidentiality and anonymity will be protected. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT REALIGNMENT PROBATION OFFICERS**

**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 1. What percentage of your caseload do you refer to Service Connect for assistance?**
  - a. 100%
  - b. 75%
  - c. 50%
  - d. 0 – 40%
  
- 2. Is there a noticeable increase in defendant participation with Service Connect when a defendant is physically “walked down” to the program versus simply being referred?**
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
- 3. What is your main concern with using a multidisciplinary approach in addition to probation services?**
  - a. Defendants check in with Service Connect and feel that they do not have to check in with probation
  - b. Defendants abuse the Service Connect program by requesting services that they do not need
  - c. Services offered do not address the needs of all defendants
  - d. No issues or concerns
  - e. Both a. and b.
  
- 4. Based on an average caseload of 55, how many defendants opt out from Service Connect completely?**
  - a. 1-5
  - b. 6-10
  - c. 11-20
  - d. Over 20
  - e. None - they all choose to participate

**5. In addition to current services being provided through Service Connect, what extra services and assistance would lead to higher rates of success in the treatment and rehabilitation of the Realignment population?**

- a. Vocational
- b. Long-term housing
- c. Emergency bundle services (i.e. food, clothing, transportation)
- d. After care services (upon successful completion of probation)
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What primary issue can be attributed to low success rates in the rehabilitation of the Realignment population?**

- a. Continued criminal conduct
- b. Substance abuse
- c. Refusal to participate with Service Connect
- d. All of the above
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is the main contributor to the increase in recidivism rates for the Realignment population?**

- a. Insufficient probation officer to defendant ratios (i.e. high caseload numbers)
- b. Propensity to continue criminal behavior
- c. Lack of self-motivation
- d. Inadequate treatment/services/resources offered
- e. Lack of support system
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How do high caseload numbers negatively impact the treatment and rehabilitation of the Realignment population?**

- a. Reduction in the amount of direct supervision time
- b. Reactive case management approach versus pro-active approach

- c. Reduction in the use of evidence-based practices
- d. No major impact

**9. What impact would the elimination of Service Connect have on the Realignment population?**

- a. Limited or insufficient access to necessary resources
- b. Decrease in the ability to access social services
- c. Loss of 'safe haven' to go during business hours
- d. Lack of positive environment and reinforcements
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**10. What types of specific training have you already received in order to handle the specific needs of the Realignment population?**

- a. Officer safety
- b. Social services
- c. Motivational interviewing
- d. Behavioral modification
- e. All of the above
- f. None of the above

**11. What types of future training should be offered in order to better prepare you to handle the specific needs of the Realignment population?**

- a. Officer safety
- b. Social services
- c. Motivational interviewing
- d. Behavioral modification
- e. All of the above
- f. None of the above

**12. Would requiring all Realignment defendants to participate with Service Connect as part of their conditions of probation lead to a reduction in recidivism? Please explain.**

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**APPENDIX C**

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**PROGRAM CASE MANAGERS**

1. Of the clients that you treat on a regular basis, how many are Realignment defendants?
2. What direct services are provided to all of your clients?
3. What are the top three concerns clients request assistance with?
4. What are the top three concerns that you address with clients?
5. How is the determination made, if at all, as to what issues are addressed and what services are offered?
6. How is the progress of each client tracked and measured?
7. What form of measurement does the program use to determine if a client is successful or not?
8. What steps are taken, if any, when the program is unable to provide the necessary services for a client?
9. If a client is re-arrested for any reason, how is the case dispositioned?
10. Would you consider the services that you provide to clients effective for successful reintegration into the community as a law-abiding citizen?



**APPENDIX D**

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT - DEPUTY CHIEF OF REALIGNMENT**

1. How has the implementation of AB 109 impacted the daily operations of San Mateo County's Adult Probation Department?
2. How much training has been provided to Probation Services Managers and Probation Officers to supervise the Realignment population to date?
3. What types of training have been provided thus far?
4. What types of training will be provided in the future in order to address issues specific to the Realignment Population?
5. Has the collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services been effective in providing services and treatment to defendants? If yes, how so? If no, why not?
6. What is the Probation Department's plans for further implementation training and collaboration with other agencies to promote public safety and reduce recidivism rates in regards to the Realignment population?

**APPENDIX E**

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT – PROBATION SERVICES MANAGER**

1. How has the implementation of AB 109 impacted the daily operations of San Mateo County's Adult Probation Department?
2. How has the implementation of AB 109 impacted the daily operations of the Probation Officers that you supervise?
3. How much training has been provided to Probation Officers in the Realignment Unit to supervise defendants to date?
4. What type of training has been provided thus far?
5. How much additional time will need to be dedicated towards future training for Probation Officers in the Realignment Unit to effectively supervise the defendants?
6. What type of additional future training do you believe is necessary for Probation Officers in the Realignment Unit in order to effectively manage and supervise their defendants?
7. Has the collaboration between the Probation Department and Health and Human Services been effective in promoting services and treatment to defendants? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

**APPENDIX F**

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**REALIGNMENT DEFENDANTS**

1. How did you first hear about Service Connect?
2. Are you currently receiving services through Service Connect? If no, when did you last receive services?
3. Would you have gone to Service Connect on your own as opposed to your Probation Officer walking you down to the program? Why or why not?
4. Do you think it makes a difference if your Probation Officer walks you down to the program versus them asking you to go on your own?
5. How often do you participate or visit Service Connect for assistance or resources?
  - a) Daily
  - b) 3-4 times per week
  - c) 1-2 times per week
  - d) Less than once per week
  - e) Never
6. What primary services or resources do you seek through Service Connect programs?
  - a) Employment
  - b) Housing
  - c) Drug and alcohol treatment
  - d) Mental health treatment
  - e) Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. Have the services and resources provided by Service Connect made a positive impact in your adjustment back into the community? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

8. What types of additional services would you like to see provided by Service Connect?
  
9. Do you think you would have committed the crime that sent you to prison or jail if you had been participating with a “Service Connect type of program” in the past?