



Connecticut

CONTINUING CARE/REINTEGRATION PROGRAM
Connecticut Department of Corrections

Continuing Care/Reintegration Program



Connecticut Department of Corrections
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FY2024 RSAT funded program

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) funding, through the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Criminal Justice Planning and Policy Division (CJPPD), funds Recovery Coaching and Aftercare & Case Management services. The continuing care program is offered to those individuals with a primary diagnosis of substance use disorder (SUD) and are discharging from Connecticut's prison system. These services are provided through grant sub-award contracts with Wheeler Clinic Inc. and Connecticut Community Recovery, Inc. (CCAR). Wheeler Clinic delivers behavioral health and primary care services in the agency's catchment areas across Connecticut, and links participants to the services they need in their communities.

Upon release from one of four prisons, participants are offered this continuing care aftercare program. RSAT funding supports Wheeler Clinic by providing a Clinical Case Manager and a Peer Recovery Specialist to work with participants, and CCAR two Recovery Coaches to work directly with RSAT program participants. These coaches promote a recovery-based approach by providing peer support that helps offenders adjust to a new sober lifestyle.

Connecticut was first awarded RSAT funds in the 1990s to support addiction treatment programs, starting at the Robinson Correctional Institution. Since then, SUD programs have expanded thanks to funding from the BJA, and other federal agencies, along with state resources, to three additional prisons, including:

- Willard-Cybulski Correctional Institution (DUI unit)
- Osborn Correctional Institution
- York Correctional Institution (women's prison)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, SCREENING/ASSESSMENT, AND TREATMENT PLANNING

The Connecticut Department of Corrections' (DOC's) addiction services provide a graduated system of SUD treatment programs. Each participant's needs are determined through a formal assessment. Based on those findings, they may receive one of the following "tiers" of treatment:

- **Tier 1:** A nine session pre-release substance use treatment program focusing on reentry and reintegration issues for individuals returning to the community.
- **Tier 2:** An intensive outpatient program meeting four times a week with a curriculum that helps develop an understanding of addiction.
- **Tier 4:** A residential 6-month program in a modified therapeutic community setting. The TC lays the foundation of recovery and promotes behavioral change through a highly structured and disciplined framework utilizing small and large group interactions to promote and shape pro-social behavior. In collaboration with the Addiction Treatment Unit staff, CCAR Recovery Coaches assist by providing personal assistance, education on community resources, and other recovery supportive services to participants of the program.

Tiers 2 and 4 offer reentry programs designed to provide a continuum of care and maintenance of recovery. To be eligible for the residential program (Tier 4), an individual must be in the state prison a minimum of 6 months and diagnosed with a SUD by a licensed/ certified substance abuse counselor, thorough biopsychosocial assessment, and other screening tools. Once an individual enters the program, service and reentry plans are developed based upon information already provided, other assessment details, and additional assessments, as needed.

MODALITY OF THE PROGRAM

Program participants have very structured days while in prison. They live in separate units with designated program staff, and case managers carry caseloads at the site. Staff use cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and interventions and integrate co-occurring disorder (COD) and trauma-informed treatment. Groups include life skills, self-help, school, work, religious, and peer/mentor meetings, as well as required recreational activities. Participants live together, but they eat and participate in recreational activities with other incarcerated individuals.

What we can learn from this RSAT program

The ATU has been collaborating with Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) program to provide training in Recovery Coaching to offenders who are incarcerated. This collaboration between both programs has allowed the offenders in the Tier 4 Residential Units who continue to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors the ability to work towards becoming a Recovery Coach in their community upon their release.

The Wheeler Clinic ARCH (Addiction, ReEntry, Community, Health) Program provides wrap around services that support the offender's recovery and over all well-being. Clinical engagement by Wheeler staff begins prior to discharge date where the program assessment is completed. The ARCH program intake appointment is set up upon discharge to ensure services are initiated in order to assist with this immediate transition period.

CCAR's Recovery Coaches play a vital role in the reintegration process by helping navigate the offender through obstacles to recovery; linking and introduction to the recovery community, and serving as a personal guide and mentor.

MAT PROGRAMMING

The Department of Correction is currently treating between 800-850 individuals daily with medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). They have expanded to offer the full scope of services in 10 of the 13 correctional facilities with methadone, naltrexone (Vivitrol), and buprenorphine (suboxone).

CONTINUING CARE/REINTEGRATION

In partnership with the CDC Foundation, the Department of Correction's Addiction Treatment Unit now has a Linkage to Care Coordinator on staff. This position was created as a resource to answer questions concerning substance use, overdose prevention and connection to resources surrounding addiction for families of discharging offenders.

Individuals that have been identified to be at risk for potential opioid overdose upon their release including all offenders involved medicated assisted treatment (MAT) are offered naloxone at the time of discharge. In addition to those that have been identified as at risk, any individual that is discharging from custody can request a naloxone kit. Training on signs of overdose and how to respond to an overdose emergency is now being provided in all the DOC intake facilities to all newly admitted individuals as part of their orientation.

CONTINUING CARE PROVIDERS

Wheeler Clinic Community Health Center

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Outpatient locations in Hartford, Bristol, New Britain, Waterbury, and Plainville, Connecticut, and more than 100 community-based programs cover the entire state.

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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