



DENVER HEALTH

GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE

CORRECTIONS TRANSITIONS CLINIC

Clinical Pearls for Providing Care after Incarceration

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Initiate and frame the visit

The most imperative objective is to build trust between a provider and a patient with criminal-legal system involvement (CLSI), a population which has significant distrust of authoritative figures, including in healthcare staff.

- Ask for a patient with CLSI's preferred name.
- Make it clear that your interest is helping every patient with CLSI achieve *their* health priorities.
"Getting out can be hard and, sometimes, dangerous on health. I want to help you achieve your goals for your health."
- State that you recognize some of the many barriers that get in the way of staying healthy, both inside and outside of carceral facilities.
- Set boundaries on agenda: "If we cannot cover everything today, we will get you a follow-up visit with me to continue working on your health."
- Key Questions:
 - "What do you need to walk out of here with today?"
 - "Who's looking out for you? Which organizations are helping you right now?" If no one, connect them with community-based support.
 - "What do you need to do to stay out [of prison or jail]? How can I help with that?"
- Ask permission prior to and during the physical examination
- Follow the six [principles](#) of trauma-informed care (SAMHSA)

Taking a Carceral History

"It may be helpful for us to review some of your criminal-legal system involvement because it helps us find the best treatments for you; may I ask you some questions about it?" Discuss what you document and why.

- Age at first incarceration.
- When did you most recently get out of jail/prison? Which one?
- How many months/years of your life have you been incarcerated? Duration and frequency.
- What's the longest you have been able to stay out as an adult? What worked?
- Are you on parole/probation?
- What skills or certifications did you earn while you were incarcerated?
- Were you ever in solitary confinement? For how long? Was your body ever hurt while you were incarcerated?



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I recommend against documenting thorough details. For example, write “Out 4 weeks ago, down for 2 years, on parole, longest period out in adult life was 6 years.”

Health providers do not need to know any individual’s specific convictions, so I recommend against asking or looking up this information, as it can lead to a negative bias and impact the provider’s perceptions and responsibility toward the patient.

Obtaining Medical Records from Carceral/Correctional Facilities

1. Denver Sheriff Health Services, Email: DSD_HIM@dhha.org
2. Colorado Department of Corrections/DRDC Storage/Medical Records, Fax #: (303) 307-2227
3. Arapahoe County Jail, Fax #: 303-792-0822
4. Wellpath / DCSO (Douglas County Sheriff’s Office), Fax #: (303) 814-2605
5. Adams County Detention Center Medical, Dates of Records, Fax #: (303) 655-3416
6. Jefferson County Sheriff, Tele #: (303) 271-5562, Fax #: 303-271-5432

Screening for Social Determinants of Health

Consider using a screening questionnaire, like the [Health-Related Social Needs Screening Tool](#)

Testing

Consider CMP, CBC, Lipids, Hemoglobin A1c, HIV, Hepatitis B Surface Antigen/Surface Antibody, Hepatitis C Antibody, Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia

Harm Reduction

Empower this population with harm reduction information and supplies. For example, Naloxone (Narcan®), fentanyl and xylazine test strips, education on mitigating drug use risk and preventing overdose, condoms, et cetera.

Health System Navigation

Be prepared to teach or have your staff teach patients how to make follow-up appointments, get in touch with you, call the Registered Nurse, pick up and refill prescription medications, and carry out recommending lab testing, diagnostic orders, and referrals.

Community Corrections Residential Programs

- Some health supplies can be misinterpreted as contraband (e.g. urine cups for kidney stone).
- Patients often need passes for appointments.
- Patients often need letters to discontinue any medication, even if it is causing a side effect.
- Patients often need to pick up their phones to report where they are to parole or probation.