



# DENVER HEALTH

## GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE

### CORRECTIONS TRANSITIONS CLINIC

Clinical Pearls for Providing Care after Incarceration

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Updated March 20, 2025

#### 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](mailto: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.