



ICPA
International
Corrections and Prisons Association
for the Advancement of Professional Corrections

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISONS ASSOCIATION

Annual Activity Report: Research and Development Network Group

2017-18

Last Updated: 25/08/2018

by Chair Frank J. Porporino, Ph.D. (fporporino@rogers.com)

1. MISSION

“To effectively disseminate research-informed correctional knowledge and promote its application for the advancement of professional and humane corrections and prisons world-wide.”

2. OBJECTIVES

- ② Assist ICPA members (i.e., individuals & agencies/jurisdictions, committees) to become more aware of the most recent, relevant and reliable research findings in the field; **(CO1; CO2 & CO3)**
- ② Help in translating (explaining) the practice and policy-related implications of this research knowledge; **(CO1; CO2; & CO3)**
- ② As it becomes practical and possible to do, offer ‘technical assistance’ for capacity building in select jurisdictions/agencies in implementing and evaluating research-informed change in correctional operations; **(CO2 & CO3)**
- ② Conduct some useful and needed cross-national comparative studies (i.e., surveys and/or other data gathering efforts) in thematic areas identified in conjunction with the other ICPA Network Groups; **(CO1)**
- ② In assisting ICPA in promoting and realizing its Vision and Objectives, work towards establishing collaborative partnerships and garnering greater support and involvement from the academic and scientific research communities in our Annual & Regional Conferences, Newsletter, Web Site, and other ICPA activities; **(CO2)**

Annual Activity Report: Research & Development Network Group Activity (2017-18)

The ICPA R&D Network is an informal collection of both researchers and other corrections professionals committed to promoting evidence-informed practice in our field. With a current signed-up count of more than 60 members from 18 countries, the group concentrates on a few major activities in realizing its mission -- ‘To effectively disseminate research-informed correctional knowledge and promote its application for the advancement of professional and humane corrections and prisons world-wide’. In view of the size and spread of the Network, most communication among members is conducted via e-mail, mostly as follow-through from our Annual Network Meeting in conjunction with the Annual ICPA Conference.

The following are some of the key activities of the Network for 2017-18. Related goals for 2018-19 are also listed.

1. Advancing Corrections Journal

Many of the group’s members also serve on the Editorial Board of the ICPA **Advancing Corrections** Journal. This is a peer reviewed, practitioner-oriented scholarly Journal where each Edition highlights thoughtful discussion and recent research around a particular theme or issue. All submitted manuscripts are carefully reviewed independently by at least two members of the Journal’s Editorial Board, a responsibility that imposes significantly on Network volunteers. The review and revision process have proven invaluable both in improving the quality of papers for the Journal and in sharing views on particular areas of research evidence.

Two Editions of the Journal were published in the last year, on the theme of **System Level Innovation in Delivery of Correctional Services** for the 4th Edition (in October) and to profile **Applied Research to Improve Practice** for the 5th Edition. An important and unique 6th Edition on the theme of “**Innovation in Education: Voices from the Front Lines**” is scheduled to be released in conjunction with our 20th Anniversary ICPA Conference in Montreal. In developing this 6th Edition, I welcomed the involvement of three enthusiastic Network members as Associate Editors (Helen Farley, Anne Pike and Fina McGregor). Their expertise in correctional education was invaluable in broadening the scope of the Edition’s content to include the ‘voices’ of ex-offenders, educators, researchers and administrators.

The increasing popularity of our ICPA Journal is evidenced by the fact that manuscript submissions have grown exponentially since its inception – with 27 manuscripts being submitted for the 6th Edition from 13 countries. Thanks to the support of Emiliano Blanco, the National Director of the Argentine Federal Prison Service, each Edition of Advancing Corrections is now also being translated into Spanish, and being disseminated to Heads of Service throughout Latin and South America. Launching of this

new and very successful ICPA initiative to publish a professional Journal would not have been possible without the steadfast support of our R&D Network.

Going Forward: Goals for 2018-19

- To continue solidifying the Journal’s reputation as the premier, international, practitioner-oriented publication in the field. With the support of ICPA Executive Team, efforts will be made to promote the Journal with relevant academic institutions and departments around the world, and with other associations who share ICPA’s respect for evidence in corrections.
- To publish another two issues of the Journal around the themes of ICPA’s ‘Strategic Focal Points’.
 - Effective Community Corrections
 - Investment in Staff
 - Offender Population-Specific Strategies
 - Reducing Reoffending

2. International Correctional Research Symposium

Another major initiative in the last year was the *2nd International Correctional Research Symposium* held in Prague, Czech Republic, 9-10 May 2017 and organized in collaboration with EuroPris and the Czech Prisons Service. With some 120 professionals from more than 30 countries, both researchers and practitioners, the symposium was a unique opportunity to develop a stronger global research network in corrections and to debate issues on the rather engaging theme of ‘What is Good Prisons Research’. A number of R&D Network members served on the Program Committee for the Symposium and others either participated or presented. Very encouragingly, the Symposium also received the full support of the very reputable and active Cambridge University Prisons Research Centre. This is another key collaborative partnership that will serve ICPA well going forward. Summaries of Symposium presentations are available on the ICPA Web Site (<https://icpa.ca/crs2018/>). An interesting perspective on the value of the Symposium was published in the July issue of the ICPA E-Bulletin by Michelle Shelley, a Ph.D. student from York University in Canada. Another member of our Network, Steve Pitts, who attended the Symposium as ambassador for the Confederation of European Probation (CEP), has also reflected interestingly on the implications for research on probation practice (see his summary on the CEP Web site at <https://www.cep-probation.org>).

Going Forward: Goals for 2018-19

- Planning will be initiated to hold the *4th International Corrections Research Symposium* (likely in May 2020).
- Consideration will be given to holding a smaller Pre-Conference Research Symposium around

the similar theme of ‘What is Good Prisons/Probations Research’ in conjunction with the Annual ICPA Conference in Argentina in 2019.

3. Founding Statements

Consistent with one of our key Network objectives to ‘Help in translating (explaining) the practice and policy-related implications of research knowledge’, three active members of our Network (Helen Farley, Anne Pike and Fiona McGregor) assisted in developing two ICPA Founding Statements – on Education and Vocational Training. The negotiation with the ICPA Board on the focus/emphasis for these Statements proved to be an interesting exercise in how far we can expect evidence realistically to direct practice. Both Statements will be presented for ratification at the ICPA AGM in Montreal.

Going Forward: Goals for 2018-19

- To assist in development of a Founding Statement on Evidence-Informed Practice.

4. Other Activities

In addition to these major activities, the Network has also contributed in the last year in other ways.

- Members of the Network are encouraged to regularly submit practical research summaries for the ICPA E-Bulletin. The intent is to make this a regular feature of the E-Bulletin where important examples of research in the field are summarized in a practitioner-friendly manner.
- Network members continue to make a visible and valuable contribution to our ICPA Annual Conference. At least 16 members of the R&D Network will be presenting research-oriented workshops at our upcoming ICPA Conference in Montreal. In addition, on behalf of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), one of our Canadian members (Larry Motiuk), has organized a series of Research Poster Sessions over three days featuring 34 applied research projects – highlighting the incredible breadth of operationally-relevant research being conducted by (or sponsored by) the CSC.
- Working with the Canadian Criminal Justice Assortation, the International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, a unique one-day Pre-Conference event has been organized in conjunction with the ICPA Annual Conference in Montreal – a first Graduate Student Research Symposium with 19 presentations from criminology/psychology graduate students representing Canada, the US, Australia and Ireland (see the program at <https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/montreal2018/654497/>). This is a truly impressive example of what is achievable in collaborative partnership with other organizations.
- In cooperation with the ICPA Program Committee and the International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology, we continue to identify a suitable speaker for the Annual ICPA Distinguished Scholar Lecture (for 2018, Dr. Paul Gendreau).

- Uniquely for this year’s Annual Conference, arrangements were made for Dr. Gerard Seigts to deliver a Workshop on ‘Leader Character’ to the Heads of Service Meeting held before the Annual ICPA Conference. Dr. Seigts is Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Ivey School of Business in Canada and Executive Director of the Ian O. Ihnatowycz Institute for Leadership. He is also a world-renowned expert and researcher on the importance of ‘Character’ in determining success in leadership. The Workshop will hopefully spark interest among Heads of Service.

Going Forward: Goals for 2018-19

- One of the Network’s objectives has not yet received much attention – “To conduct some useful and needed cross-national comparative studies (i.e., surveys and/or other data gathering efforts) in thematic areas identified in conjunction with the other ICPA Network Groups”. For the next year, the Network will work on collaborating with one or more other ICPA Networks in conducting some action-oriented survey research, perhaps looking at the barriers and challenges for ongoing attempts to implement evidence-informed practice. This could inform the ICPA community in various ways and lead to some greater inter-agency cooperation to advance evidence-informed correctional practice. The R&D Network members will be encouraged to assist in conducting at least one such survey in the coming year.

Annex A: Alignment with Core Objectives

