

International Trends in Community Alternatives to Incarceration:

A Literature Review

Task Force on Women and Community Corrections

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Lindsay Fulham, M.A.

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Introduction

The excessive use of incarceration as a response to criminality has led to prison overcrowding across the world (Walmsley, 2018). The growing population of incarcerated offenders can be partially attributed to long-established beliefs about the effectiveness of punitive sentences as a deterrent of criminal behavior (Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2002). Contrary to this belief, previous research has consistently demonstrated the negative outcomes of imprisonment and harsh sentences, such as its association with adverse effects on the health of inmates, increases in recidivism, and economical costs (Roodman, 2017). Empirically supported theories of offender rehabilitation such as the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) highlight the importance of addressing the offender's unique needs and the development of programs that are gender- and culturally-responsive (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Many programs that align with RNR principles fall under the umbrella of community corrections, which are alternative measures to incarceration such as probation and parole (Bell & Trevethan, 2004). Community corrections are previously found to be more effective at improving criminal justice outcomes such as recidivism (Durlauf & Nagin, 2011). In addition, these programs are found to be especially effective for offenders of minority groups such as women offenders and Indigenous offenders because of their ability to address individual needs (Modley & Guigere, 2010). Due to the burgeoning evidence for the efficacy of these programs compared to incarceration, community corrections are becoming more prevalent in various countries around the world (UN Human Rights Council, 2017). The purpose of this review is to therefore examine the effectiveness of community corrections relative to incarceration as well as highlight recent trends in the use of community corrections for women offenders and offenders of other minority groups. This review will first summarize current trends on the use of imprisonment and community corrections, which will be followed by a discussion of these trends for specific groups.

The Global Over-use of Incarceration

The use of imprisonment as an automatic response to criminal behavior is common practice around the world. According to Walmsley (2018), there are currently well over 11 million prisoners worldwide, with the majority of them incarcerated in prisons in the United States, China, Russia, and Brazil. The country with the highest prison population rate is the United States, which currently incarcerates 655 individuals per 100,000 of the nation's population (Walmsley, 2018). Since the post-war period, the world prison population has risen sharply with different countries participating in this trend to varying degrees. More precisely, between the years 2000 and 2018, the world prison population increased by 24%, which is roughly the same as the estimated increase in the world's general population (Walmsley, 2018). These trends vary considerably across countries, with some of the greatest increases in prisoners found in South America (by 175%) and Southeast Asia (by 122%) and some decreases found in Europe (by 22%) and Russia (by 45%) (Walmsley, 2018). Understanding the causes growing prison populations is especially challenging given the complex sociopolitical and economic factors that play a role in each country's contribution of this trend (Coyle, Heard & Fair, 2016). Some identified factors contributing to the global overuse of incarceration include the frequent

use of pre-trial detention, increases in punitive sanctions, increases in prison sentences for minor, petty offences, and increases in the lengths of sentences (Prison Reform International, 2018). As a result, the increasing reliance on incarceration has led to the growing issue of prison overcrowding in many countries around the world (PRI, 2018).

The longstanding tradition of tough-on-crime approaches is still very much alive in many countries. The reliance on punitive measures is founded on the belief that punishment in the form of imprisonment and longer sentences is an effective deterrent of criminal behaviour (Gendreau, et al., 2002). However, previous research has indicated that harsher custodial sentences are not an effective strategy for reducing criminal behavior (PRI, 2018). In particular, recent report by the Open Philanthropy Project in 2017 reviewed 35 international studies examining the effects of harsh sentences on offending. From their analysis, it was concluded that while imprisonment temporarily inhibits offenders from committing crime, incarceration is not effective for reducing criminality and may actually increase it in the long-term (Roodman, 2017). In addition to its association with increases in recidivism, incarceration is associated with various other negative physical and psychological effects (PRI, 2018). Specifically, as a result of prison overcrowding, prisoners have experienced reduced access to the care and services they need such as healthcare and accommodation. In addition, violent and physical victimization is a prevalent issue in many penal systems across the world with more extreme cases leading to murder or suicide in custody (Zheng, 2016). Some of the psychological forms of adversity associated with incarceration include but are not limited to: the relinquishment of freedom and autonomy, isolation, physical dangers of the prison environment, lack of access to services, deviant peer associations, diminished self-worth, and the development of mental illness (Haney, 2003). Given the costs of incarceration for offenders, the community, and the economy, the expansion of alternatives to incarceration is proposed to be a viable solution to the growing issue of prison overcrowding (Durlauf & Nagin, 2011).

Women offenders are especially affected by the adverse conditions of the prison environment due to the fact that prisons are largely designed for the majority male population (PRI, 2016). The growing trend of prison overcrowding also limits the capacity of prison systems to deal effectively with the specific needs of women and other minority groups (PRI, 2016). According to previous research, women's pathways to criminality are significantly different from those of their male counterparts and therefore differ in their treatment needs (Wu & Leschied, 2013). Previous research has found that women have distinct pathways to criminality that involve many factors such as poverty, traumatic experiences, lack of social support and isolation, intimate partner violence, childcare responsibilities, mental illness, and substance abuse (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). As such, incarceration does not effectively address the root causes of criminality in women and could in turn have harmful consequences (Barlow 2014). In addition, women face considerable adversity within correctional settings, such as violence and abuse, an increased likelihood of suicide and self-harm, suffer from mental illness, and lack of healthcare and childcare services (PRI, 2016). Furthermore, the experience of solitary confinement is especially harmful to women offenders given their relational and mental health needs (Mears & Reisig, 2006). According to Covington and Bloom (2006), addressing women's needs in correctional settings is essential to developing effective rehabilitation practices. Given the harmful effects of incarceration on women, recent international reforms have promoted the

use of alternative sanctions for women offenders such as community corrections on an international level (PRI, 2016).

Community Corrections as Alternative to Incarceration

In general, community corrections refer to any other punishment or sanction outside of imprisonment that can be given to an offender (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2006). Included under this umbrella term is a wide range of community-based programs offered at various stages of the criminal justice process from the early intervention and diversion stage to re-entry and aftercare programs (Bell, Trevathan, & Allegri, 2004). In addition, such programs may target different needs of offenders from different demographic groups and provide a range of services that address specific issues (UNODC, 2006). According to Correctional Service Canada, there are three main components of community corrections: 1) supervision, consisting of direct monitoring and communication with offenders, 2) programming, in which the offender participates in programs that are best tailored to their needs such as substance abuse programs, and 3) community involvement, which involves informing the community about the status of the offender's reintegration into society and the involvement of the community to support these efforts (CSC, 2012). The most common forms of community corrections are probation and parole, which includes 'one-stop shops' that offer a variety of services and community residential facilities or 'halfway houses' where offenders are most commonly supervised (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). The increasing evidence for the efficacy of community corrections over incarceration has led to a growing interest in these programs in criminal justice systems around the world.

Research has indicated that community correctional programs may be more effective in reducing recidivism compared to incarceration (Durlauf & Nagin, 2011). For example, Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, and Andrews examined two sets of data involving 222 comparisons of groups of offenders ($n = 68, 248$) who spent more or less time in and found that offenders who were incarcerated longer had a slight 3% increase in recidivism compared to offenders who were incarcerated for a shorter period of time (Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2000). Moreover, when comparing an additional sample of 267, 804 offenders who were either incarcerated or received a community-based sanction, it was found that offenders who were incarcerated demonstrated an increase in recidivism by 7% (Gendreau et al., 2000). Bales and Piquero (2012) compared the effectiveness of a community-based diversion program to incarceration using different methodological approaches with a population sample. Using different methodologies, their results revealed that incarceration increased recidivism relative to community-based diversion at one, two, and three year follow-up periods, even after controlling for different variables such as age, sex, and race (Bales & Piquero, 2012). While both of these studies have several limitations, including a lack of information regarding the variables that may account for this difference, these results using large samples are in line with the offender treatment literature pointing to the superior efficacy of community corrections over incarceration on decreasing recidivism.

In addition to their effects on reoffending, community corrections may also be better equipped at addressing the specific issues faced by women such as mental health needs, exposure to domestic and sexual abuse, drug and alcohol use, and homelessness (Bloom, 2002). According

to previous research, the practices in community corrections programs should be responsive to the needs of women and other minority groups in order to effectively rehabilitate these groups (Bloom, 2002; Modley & Guigere, 2010). Covington and Bloom (2000) define gender-responsive programming as creating an environment that reflects an understanding of women's pathways to criminality by addressing social, cultural, and personal factors using a strengths-based approach. According to Modley and Guigere (2010), gender-responsive programming should be guided by five major themes: 1) they should be relational (i.e., acknowledging the importance of relationships in women's recovery), strengths-based (i.e., incorporating using women's strengths in their recovery and to foster empowerment), trauma-informed (i.e., recognizing the role of trauma in women's criminality), holistic (i.e., providing a comprehensive model that addresses multiple and complex needs of women offenders), and be culturally-informed (i.e., services should be responsive to different cultural backgrounds (Modley & Guigere, 2010). Some specific examples of gender-responsive practices include creating a safe physical and psychological environment, take into account parenting responsibilities in case planning, and providing women opportunities to improve their socioeconomic situation (Sydney, 2005). Given that community corrections are an effective alternative to incarceration, global reforms for the increased use of gender-responsive community corrections have been occurring in different countries. The next section will therefore discuss these movements in more detail followed by recent trends in the use of community corrections for specific groups.

International Principles for Increasing Alternatives to Incarceration

The gradual shift towards less punitive approaches to crime has been echoed in criminal justice systems across the world. A major driving force of these movements was the development of the United Nations' Norms and Standards for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 1955 (UNODC, 2006). Since its initial implementation, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) has continued to revise and develop standards that support the use of alternative sanctions (UNODC, 2006). Among these standards are the United Nations Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners, which were later revised and adopted as the Nelson Mandela Rules in 2015 (General Assembly resolution 70/175, annex of 17 December 2015). These rules outline minimum standards for the humane treatment of prisoners, including respect for prisoners' inherent dignity, the proper use of restraints, and limitations on the use of solitary confinement. While these rules are not legally binding, they have contributed to a reduced emphasis on punishment and the harsh treatment of offenders in penal systems across the world (PRI, 2018).

In line with the movement away from punitive measures, international standards have been adopted to promote the use of alternative sanctions to incarceration. A key set of standards that has influenced these efforts is the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-Custodial Measures, also known as the Tokyo Rules (1991). The major aims of these standards are to promote non-custodial measures, enhance reintegration, reduce prison overcrowding, reduce recidivism, and promote community involvement and human rights in the criminal justice system (PRI, 2015). According to these rules, the criminal justice system should provide a wide range of non-custodial measures at various stages of the criminal justice process, from pre-trial to post-sentencing decisions (UN General Assembly, 1991). Since their development, the Tokyo Rules have served as international guiding principles for the use of alternative sanctions in the

management of criminal justice and have played a major role in addressing the issue of prison overcrowding in various countries (UNODC, 2010). For example, the increased use of community service orders in Kenya has increased the number of offenders serving community sanctions from 43,145 in 2004 to 366,617 in 2015 (PRI, 2016). In the United States where incarceration rates are highest, the expansion of community-based reforms have been associated with a 14-25% reduction in prison populations in specific states, such as Connecticut, Michigan, Mississippi, Rhode Island, and South Carolina (Walmsley, 2018). While various factors account for this trend, expanding the use of community-based alternative sanctions is considered a crucial step towards reducing the prison population (Coyle et al., 2014).

This gradual rise in prison populations are a growing issue in many countries across the world. Despite recent reforms to combat over-incarceration rates such as movements towards the increased use of community sanctions, increases in plea bargains, and reductions in punitive drug laws, many countries are experiencing an over-emphasis on harsh measures and custodial sentences (PRI, 2018). As previously mentioned, the consequences of these trends include prison overcrowding, decreased access to care and services, prison violence, reductions in the quality of life, economic costs, and recidivism (Haney, 2001). Furthermore, the over-reliance on custodial sanctions are especially detrimental to women and minority groups because of the additional discrimination experienced by these groups. Indeed, minorities are more likely to be arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned for longer terms than members of the majority population in various countries (PRI, 2018). For this reason, it is crucial to develop new strategies that are responsive to minority groups in order to effectively address their unique needs. The following sections will discuss recent international trends in alternatives to incarceration for specific groups, namely, women offenders, LGBT offenders, Indigenous offenders, elderly offenders, and offenders with mental illness.

Trends in Community Corrections for Women Offenders

It has recently been reported that there are 714,000 women and girls held in penal institutions across the world (Walmsley, 2017). The female prison population has continued to rise in all continents and has increased by 53% between 2000 and 2017 (Walmsley, 2017). The countries with the sharpest increases in the population of incarcerated women are in Central America, notably Guatemala (more than five times the level since 2001), El Salvador (more than ten times the level since 2001), South America—Brazil (four and a half times the 2000 level), and Southeastern Asia—Cambodia and Indonesia (both more than six times the level than 2000) (Walmsley, 2017). While women remain a minority in the global prison population, these figures suggest that women have been incarcerated at a faster rate than their male counterparts since 2000. Some of the factors that may account for this discrepancy include the high incarceration rate of drug-related offences (e.g., as ‘drug mules’), harsh drug laws that impact women disproportionately, and imprisonment for non-violent minor offences committed in the context of poverty or discrimination (PRI, 2017). According to a 2017 UN report, poverty, drug-related offences, and domestic abuse are factors linked to offending behaviours and incarceration of women. In addition, given that women represent a minority group in prison populations, their characteristics and needs are largely unmet in the criminal justice system (UN Human Rights Council, 2017). For these reasons, recent reforms have been implemented to promote the use of alternative sanctions for women.

One of the most significant developments promoting alternative sanctions for women offenders is the United Nations' international guidelines for the treatment of women, namely, the United Nations' Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders, also known as the Bangkok Rules (2010). These rules are crucial for protecting the rights of women offenders by explicitly addressing their needs and the unique challenges they face. In particular, the Bangkok Rules seek to prevent the incarceration of women as well as protect female prisoners who are in prison awaiting trial, serving prison sentences following a conviction, given a non-custodial sanction as well as children of incarcerated parents (PRI, 2017). With regard to preventing the incarceration of women, the Bangkok Rules promote the use of gender-sensitive alternatives for both pre-trial detention and sentencing post-conviction that address the common causes of offending (PRI, 2017). As a result of these standards, alternatives to incarceration for women have been implemented in different countries around the world. The remaining sections will highlight examples of innovative programs for women at different stages of the criminal justice process in specific countries.

Early Intervention and Diversion

Early intervention and diversion are alternatives to incarceration that aim to avoid the formal processing of an offender in the criminal justice system and provide access to treatment services and community support (Livingston, 2008). These services may be especially suitable for women because they redirect them away from the criminal justice system, help them avoid the negative consequences of incarceration, and prevent their separation from children and families (Henriques, 2002). Diversion programs for women vary across and within countries and include programs targeting various issues such as mental illness, substance-abuse, homelessness, and childcare needs (Prison Reform Trust, 2016). Gender-responsive programs for women have also been implemented at the early intervention and diversion stage of the criminal justice process, predominantly in the United States and the United Kingdom. Recent evaluations of these programs have suggested their promising effects for reducing criminality and reintegrating women back into society (e.g., Woodward, n.d.).

Oklahoma has been named the 'world's prison capital' and currently is ranked the highest for female incarceration per capita in the United States (Kajstura, 2018). In response to the growing population of women offenders, several programs have emerged in Oklahoma to promote the diversion of women offenders from the correctional system. One such program is the Female Offender Intervention Diversion (FOID) program developed in 2010. FOID is a community-based supervision and wraparound service for women with moderate to high risk/needs with a specific focus on treating mental health and substance use problems to reduce recidivism (Woodward, n.d.). Using a multi-agency approach, FOID provides gender-specific and trauma-informed treatment services for women, such as employment training, parenting skills, domestic violence and sexual assault counselling, and support with medical, housing, and childcare needs (Woodward, n.d.). The program consists of four phases: 1) initial engagement through case management, peer support, and crisis intervention, 2) continued engagement, with individual, family, and group therapy, 3) preparation for aftercare by decreasing the use of agency-based services and encouraging engagement with the community, and 4) aftercare that includes ongoing peer support, community group meetings, and individual family therapy. According to a recent review, the majority of women enrolled in the program successfully

completed their mental health (61%) and substance use treatment (78%) (Woodward, n.d.). In addition, it was also reported that only 7% of the 150 participants ended up in prison since the program's implementation in 2010. However, it is unclear when this evaluation was conducted and whether it included a comparison group. Altogether, while diversion programs designed for women in the US are becoming more available (e.g., CASES Women's Diversion Services), evaluations supporting their effectiveness in reducing recidivism are lacking.

In the UK, there are also gender-responsive programs designed for women at the pre-charge and diversion stage. A recent example of a diversion scheme for women offenders is the Humberside Police Adult Female Triage Project developed in Hull in 2012, which was implemented in response to the Baroness Corston Report that advocated increased efforts towards improving the treatment of women entering criminal justice systems in the UK, (The Corston Report, 2007). The Adult Female Triage Project was developed by a community safety partnership including the Humberside Police, local drug services, and the Hull Together Women Project (TWP). TWP is a voluntary and gender-responsive one-stop-shop program that offers a variety of services that teach new skills such as parenting, relationships, confidence building, anger management, and domestic abuse awareness (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). TWP also offers support services such as counselling, healthcare, access to a drug and alcohol specialist, mentoring, financial advice, and housing support (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). Although TWP works with a range of criminal justice professionals such as police and probation officers, the main focus is to triage women into the right services at the early intervention and diversion stage to address the underlying causes of their criminal behaviour (Brennan, Gree, & Sturgeon-Adams, 2018). A recent evaluation compared the recidivism rates of arrested women referred to TWP to those processed through the criminal justice system in 596 women after a one-year follow-up. According to the results, TWP demonstrated a 46% reduction in the re-arrest after one-year compared to the control group. The re-arrest rate was 14% for women in TWP and 25% for women in the control group (Brennan et al., 2018). Despite the study's reliance on police data and low statistical power, these results suggest the utility of diversion strategies for women offenders.

Another recent example of a successful program in Wales is the Women's Pathfinder Initiative established in 2013. The Women's Pathfinder Initiative seeks to reduce reoffending in women by supporting them and their children in connecting them to services that best suit their needs (Holloway, Williams, & Brayford, 2017). More specifically, the program seeks to address the needs of women and their children at an early stage of the intervention process using an efficient Whole System Approach that brings together local agencies in the criminal justice system. The agencies involved in the program work together using a holistic approach and include support with housing, accommodation, healthcare, and education for both women and their children (Holloway et al., 2017). A recent evaluation of the Women's Pathfinder Initiative demonstrated a 26% reduction in reoffending (after an 18-month follow-up) and found that the overall re-arrest rate of women in the pilot sites was significantly less than a matched group of women in a control area (17% compared with 35%) (after a six-month follow-up) (Holloway et al., 2017). Moreover, it was reported that women experienced improvements in other domains such as resilience, agency, hope, wellbeing, impulsivity, and practical problems as measured by the Intermediate Outcomes Measurement Instrument (IOMI) (Holloway et al., 2007). Although the authors caution that conclusions cannot be drawn due to a lack of an adequate control group

and small sample size, these results suggest the effectiveness of diversion programs designed for women.

Altogether, new diversion schemes for women offenders appear to show promising effects in reducing recidivism. In addition, these programs assist women in navigating useful services that lead to other positive outcomes such as improvements in wellbeing and resilience (e.g., Holloway et al., 2007). Some of the common effective practices in women's diversion programs include efficient triage into a suitable program, a holistic and integrated approach that provides a variety of services, as well as ongoing care, both during and after treatment (e.g., Brennan et al., 2017).

Reintegration Programs

Along with early intervention and diversion programs, there are also efforts to incorporate gender-responsive programming into custodial sentences. Such programs operate within or in correspondence with a community agency outside of the prison that assists the offender in their preparation for release. One form of practice that has utilized gender-responsive methods is the Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCMM) implemented in Connecticut in 2005. The WOCMM is used for medium to high-risk women during a custodial sentence until the end of the criminal justice process (Turner & Trotter, 2010). In line with gender-responsive practices, the WOCMM is guided by principles such as relational theory and strengths-based approaches and uses evidence-based practices for reducing recidivism (Turner & Trotter, 2010). Such practices include connecting women to services that address their needs, providing risk and needs assessment, and monitoring their outcomes (Thigpen, Beauclair, & Buell, 2006). There are four major stages of the WOCMM, which begin with 1) an assessment of the client's risks and needs, 2) identifying personal goals to enhance motivation, 3) developing a case plan that uses services to address their needs, and 4) monitoring their progress (Thigpen et al., 2006). A recent evaluation has indicated that these four stages are successful at reducing re-arrest in women after one-year follow-up (31.6%) compared to a matched control group (42.5%), especially for black and minority women (35.8% for WOCMM, 50.6% for control group) (Milson, Robinson, Rubin, & Van Dieten, 2009). As such, case management models like the WOCMM may be an effective gender-responsive service for women who are already in the correctional system.

Like case management, programs that work with offenders throughout their custodial sentence to assist them in transitioning back into the community are known as 'throughcare' programs (Borzycki, 2005). The major aim of throughcare programs is to provide support during each stage of the offender's successful reintegration into the community in an effort to reduce recidivism and costs (Borzycki, 2005). An example of an innovative throughcare program in Scotland is the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) Throughcare Support Service developed in 2015. This service specifically assists both men and women serving short-term custodial sentences through the use of Throughcare Support Officers (TSOs). TSOs specifically assist the offender with connecting them to community-based services prior to their release, support them throughout the process of release and re-integration, and monitor their successful reintegration (Scottish Prison Service, 2017). Therefore, TSOs play a key role in the offender's rehabilitation by creating an individualized plan, engaging the offender in beneficial services, and encouraging

prosocial development (SPS, 2017). A recent qualitative evaluation of the efficacy of the Throughcare Support Service indicated that the program had a positive impact on various outcomes such as engagement, assistance with specific issues (e.g., housing, substance abuse), self-efficacy, and self-reported likelihood of re-offending (SPS, 2017). However, there is currently no experimental evidence for the program's efficacy in reducing recidivism. Nevertheless, given its holistic approach that assists offenders throughout their sentence, such programs may be promising for women offenders, as one of the recommendations in the report suggests (SPS, 2017).

Along with community-based services there are also gender-responsive innovations within prisons in European countries. For example, Germany's Frodenburg prison offers community-based accommodation or half-way houses for women offenders and their children. In addition to providing an open living space, women offenders are provided various resources to meet their needs such as training programs, education, and support while their children are attending nursery or school (Easton, 2011). A similar program is the mother-child program at Preungesheim in Frankfurt, which places high value on parental responsibilities and allows mothers to leave the prison on a daily basis to support their families. In this way, mothers can serve their sentence while maintaining contact with their family and fulfilling personal responsibilities. Another innovative resettlement program for women prisoners in Europe is Ter Peel's Development Partnership Programme in the Netherlands. The Development Partnership Programme is a comprehensive re-entry and resettlement program that uses a holistic approach to reintegration with a specific focus on enhancing employment opportunities (Caddle, 1998). In this program, a job coach collaborates with the prisoner three months before their release to determine a future employment strategy. The program also provides childcare services as well as housing needs, including community residential accommodation for up to nine months following their release. Previous evaluations of the program have indicated its effectiveness in reducing recidivism such that only 7% of women have reoffended since its inception in 2002 compared to the average reoffending rate in women of 35% (Prison Reform Trust, 2017).

The aforementioned programs delivered during a custodial sentence have a holistic structure that serve as a hub for the offender to connect to various services in the community. A common structure begins with an assessment of their risk and needs, engagement and goal development, reintegration assistance, and ongoing support after release. These programs may be especially helpful for women offenders given their complex needs and criminal trajectories. In many ways, these programs are in line with gender-responsive practices given that it takes a person-centered and strengths-based approach to developing a plan for the offender's successful reintegration. In addition, some prisons are providing additional services such as childcare services to improve the conditions of custodial sentences for women (e.g., Caddle, 1998). Despite some positive preliminary results, the evaluation of these programs is still very much in its early stages and more research is needed to evaluate their effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

Community Residential Facilities

Community residential facilities, also known as 'halfway houses', provide supervision for offenders on probation and parole and are the most common forms of community corrections

(Knapp & Burke, 1992). Given that community residential facilities are a common sanction for women, it is argued that these services should incorporate gender-responsive programming to enhance their effectiveness (Convington, 2000). According to Covington (2000), there is a need for correctional residential facilities to provide gender-responsive wraparound services that are holistic and tailored to the women's specific needs. An example of such a program is Parramatta Women's Transitional Centre in New South Wales, which is a minimum-security community residential facility for women serving the last portion of their prison sentence (Lynch, 2000). The Centre's primary goal is to prepare women for their release from prison by assisting them in the process of community reintegration. Some of the ways it achieves this goal is by providing accommodation in an open environment as well as a range of services including case management, counselling, healthcare, mother-child programs, employment assistance, financial management, and educational programs. Furthermore, this program facilitates self-sufficiency in women by providing them the responsibility housekeeping duties (e.g., cooking, cleaning) as well as working or volunteering in the community (Lynch, 2000). A previous evaluation of this program has indicated that it is effective in reducing costs compared to traditional custodial units and that only 1 of the 99 clients had reoffended in the following two years (Bartels & Gaffney, 2010).

As a result of their limited security, community residential facilities are often designed for low to medium risk offenders. However, an innovative halfway house provides services for high-risk women, known as the Drew House. Located in New York, Drew House is a small community residential facility for women and their children operated by the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office and local NGO Housing and Solutions. The Drew House is unique from other small community residential facilities such that it is inclusive to women who have committed more severe or violent crimes (National Resources Centre of Justice Involved Women, n.d.). The target population for this service is women who have experienced homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse problems and provides monitored accommodation for 12 to 24 months (Goshin & Byrne, 2011). In addition, Drew House provides a range of other services such as education, healthcare, employment, and housing. After completion of the program, the charges against the women are dismissed in order to prevent future stigma and discrimination. According to a recent evaluation, the Drew House has been found to be an economical alternative to incarceration by costing \$34,000 a year to house a mother and her children compared to \$129,000 a year for imprisonment and foster care (National Resource Centre of Justice Involved Women, n.d.). With regard to reducing recidivism, the most recent report indicated that none of the women referred to the Drew House have committed subsequent offences (Goshin & Byrne, 2011). Aside from criminal justice outcomes, the Drew House has also been reported to enhance overall wellbeing for mothers and their families, including improving academic achievement among children (National Resources Centre of Justice Involved Women).

An example of an innovative half-way house program in Scotland is the 218 Service for women offenders that takes a person-centered approach in dealing with the specific challenges women face. Specifically, 218 is housed in an apartment building in an urban metropolitan location in Glasgow and is a 12-bed residential facility and community engagement service for women providing services to address the root causes of their offending (Loucks, Malloch, McIvor, & Gelsthorpe, 2006). Some of the services provided at 218 group interventions on different topics (e.g., substance abuse, managing emotions, and coping with stress and anxiety),

evening activities that assist in reintegration, and a six-week aftercare program (Loucks et al., 2006). In addition, 218 has its own on-site medical care that provides various healthcare services such as HIV testing (Loucks et al., 2006). A recent two-year evaluation of the program has noted its success in improving relationships with family and children, reducing substance use, and enhancing overall well-being (Easton & Matthews, 2010). In addition, of the 343 women referred to 218 within a two-year period, the program demonstrated a 22% reduction in offending across all offence types and reduction in the frequency of reoffending in 64% of the women offenders (Loucks et al., 2006). These developments are part of the Prison Reform Trust's three-year initiative to reduce women's imprisonment in the UK through educating professionals on gender-responsive practices and evaluating alternative programs for women.

Halfway-houses are becoming more frequently used in other regions such as Asia and Africa (e.g., The Turning Point). For example, Singapore has made progressive efforts to promote alternative sanctions for women offenders such as the expansion of half-way houses. One such program is the Halfway House Service Model (HSM) implemented in 2011 at the The Turning Point program in Singapore. The HSM is a Christian-oriented service specifically tailored to the needs of female offenders and substance abusers and provides accommodation and support to promote women's reintegration back into the community (The Turning Point, n.d.). Some of the services provided by the HSM include aftercare services, community outreach, social services such as educational advice, and residential rehabilitation, including Spiritual Therapy. In South Africa, the Beauty for Ashes Halfway House was established in 2003 in Cape Town and provides a number of services designed to meet the needs of women offenders. The main goal of the program is to provide a safe transition service for women that supports their rehabilitation using a holistic approach. In particular, Beauty for Ashes provides a range of services such as health programs, alcoholics anonymous, and individual training courses (e.g., computer courses), psychological health services, employment assistance, and housekeeping skills training such as cooking (Mathabathe, 2016). Like Turning Point, Beauty for Ashes is a program focused on personal growth and spirituality rather than reducing reoffending (Mathabathe, 2016). Although there are currently no empirical evaluations of these programs, they illustrate the development of halfway houses for women in different countries where gender-responsive programming is less prevalent.

In sum, half-way houses are one of the most common forms of community alternatives for women. Many half-way houses provide a range of services on-site such as counselling programs, skills training, healthcare, and childcare services. In addition, half-way houses can be used as a hub to refer women to other services that meet their unique needs. Despite some evidence for their effectiveness in reducing recidivism, evaluations using rigorous scientific methods are lacking. In addition, more research is needed to determine whether these programs are effective for enhancing women's reintegration back into the community.

Probation and Parole Programs

A pilot project was implemented in Kenya by the Penal Reform International (PRI) and the Probation and Aftercare Service (KPAS) to develop and pilot evidence-based practices for the treatment of women offenders serving community services orders and probation orders. Probation officers were trained on the amended tools and guidelines for gender-sensitive

practices for women offenders in Kenya such as choosing appropriate community service placements, determining times during which community service is delivered by women, length and frequency of probation appointments, and type of support, such as counselling (PRI, 2017). For example, probation officers were given training on how to adapt work hours for women to fit with family obligations. The evaluation phase of the project consisted of semi-structured interviews with probation officers on the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of gender-sensitive community service and probation orders in Kenya (Khan, 2018). According to the results of the evaluation, probation officers expressed positive attitudes about the importance of gender-sensitive training and amendments, their effectiveness for improving the understanding of women's issues for probation officers and magistrates, and the sustainability of these practices in Kenya (Khan 2018). While specific intervention outcomes such as reoffending and offender satisfaction were not measured in this study, these initial findings suggest the promising effectiveness of gender-sensitive training and amendments within the Kenyan context (Khan, 2018).

An effective program for women parole stage of the criminal justice process is the Female Offender Re-entry Group Effort (FORGE) implemented in New Jersey in 2004. The New Jersey State Parole Board developed this strategy in response to the recognition that female parolees did not succeed as often as men when placed in community rehabilitative programs. Therefore, FORGE was implemented as a one-stop re-entry center for women using gender-responsive, holistic approach. In particular, women receive access to job training, substance abuse treatment, life skills training, and medical assistance. FORGE also facilitates support group meetings known as Participation in Parole Accountability Conference Team (PACT), which covers a variety of topics such as parenting, housing advice, and other challenges (New Jersey State Parole Board, 2010). One of its major aims is to assist women parolees in gaining and maintaining employment such as by purchasing bus tickets and providing a resource center where they can obtain birth certificates and other forms of identification necessary for employment and housing. An evaluation of the program by Rutgers University indicated that women participating in the program demonstrated an 83% decrease in recidivism (New Jersey State Parole Board, 2010). In addition, parolees that participated in the PACT meetings demonstrated a 72% decrease in recidivism after their release (New Jersey State Parole Board, 2010). Hence, these results suggest the efficacy of one-stop parole programs designed for women, specifically with regard to the use of support groups and employment assistance on their effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

Canada's community correctional system is a leading advocate of gender-responsive programming for women offenders. Correctional Service Canada's (CSC) 1990 report *Creating Choices: Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women* outlined a plan for female offenders guided by five principles, including empowerment and a supportive environment, and made recommendations such as the use of regional facilities and a healing lodge instead of Prison for Women. In addition, CSC implemented a comprehensive model of women offender correctional programming (WOCP) and Aboriginal women offender correctional programming (AWOCP) (CSC, 2015). The overall goal of this project was to provide a holistic, women-centered program model that enhanced accessibility and offender rehabilitation for women on parole. A recent evaluation of both WOCP and AWOCP programs examined whether these programs were meeting their objectives such as program completion, intermediate outcomes, and long-term

outcomes. The study recruited two samples of 549 federally sentenced women in the AWOC program and 1,278 women in the WOC program between 2010 and 2015. The results indicated that the majority of women successfully completed the program, demonstrated positive treatment gains as well as improvements in perceived self-efficacy, performance, and responsivity to treatment (Wardrop, Thompson, & Derkzen, 2018). For both programs, non-completers had higher rates of return while completers had lower rates of return, even after controlling for various factors such as risk level (Wardrop et al., 2018). Although the authors noted several limitations including the small sample size and short follow-up period, these findings were among the first to demonstrate the effectiveness of a gender-responsive program that also adheres to principles of effective offender rehabilitation.

Since the UN adoption of the Bangkok Rules, various countries have participated in a global campaign to increase the use of alternatives to incarceration for women offenders. These efforts have taken the form of diversion programs, community residential facilities, and re-entry programs that adhere to a gender-sensitive theory of offender rehabilitation. Gender-sensitive programs most commonly use a holistic approach that considers women's complex needs and incorporates practices that are culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and person-centered. In addition, many of these programs provide gender-responsive services such as substance use and mental health treatment, accommodations and vocational skills training, opportunities to strengthen relationships within the family and community, and assistance with childcare responsibilities. While the majority of gender-responsive programming for women utilize a holistic approach, there are also many programs that focus on the unique needs of individual offenders. The next section will therefore discuss alternatives to incarceration for individuals of other minority groups, namely, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) offenders, Indigenous offenders, offenders with mental illness, and elderly and physically disabled offenders. Alternative programs designed for women offenders of these groups will be discussed whenever possible.

Trends in Community Corrections for Other Minority Groups

LGBT Offenders

LGBT offenders represent a vulnerable group within correctional systems across the world. In over 70 countries, the criminalization of same-sex relationships under sodomy laws or abuse of morality laws is still an ongoing practice (PRI, 2018). In addition, the death penalty for same-sex relations is can still be applied in a number of countries across Africa and Asia (United Nations, 2017). In the US, a recent report found that LGBT youth as well as women identifying as lesbian or bisexual were overrepresented compared to juveniles and women in general, respectively (PRI, 2018). The legal discrimination against LGBT offenders can therefore lead to their unequal treatment by law enforcement agencies, such as unequal standards of protection against domestic violence. Within the correctional system, LGBT offenders are also at a greater risk of being discriminated against, experiencing harassment, and are victims of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association, 2017). A set of international standards for the treatment of LGBT offenders known as the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, ('Yogyakarta Principles'), were developed in 2006 by the International Commission of

Jurists and the International Service for Human Rights (UNODC, 2009). A key standard that was added in 2017 is Principle 9, which seeks to reduce the marginalization of LGBT offenders in detention and increase access to services to address their needs such as healthcare and counselling (PRI, 2018). In addition to improving the treatment of LGBT offenders in detention, an important step towards adopting the Yogyakarta Principles is the increased implementation of alternatives to incarceration for these groups (UNODC, 2009).

An exemplary program run by the Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP) in California aims to promote the use of alternative sanctions to incarceration for these groups, especially transgender women. TGIJP was initiated in 2004 in collaboration with the Open Society Institute to provide legal services for transgender and gender variant/non-conforming individuals in California detention centers. In recognition of the challenges and discriminatory treatment experienced by transgender and intersex (TGI) offenders in detention, TGIJP seeks to divert these populations away from the correctional system and into programs that are tailored to their needs. TGIJP specifically assists TGI offenders in the San Francisco Bay area awaiting sentencing by petitioning judges to divert TGI offenders into programs that would provide access to social, economic, and health services, and away from the correctional system (UNODC, 2009). These alternative plans can connect clients to services and opportunities that address the underlying conditions that lead to arrest in the first place (UNODC, 2009). Furthermore, TGIJP also advocates for human rights and dignity of TGI offenders who are serving their custodial sentences. While there are currently no empirical evaluations of the outcomes of TGIJP, this program is an innovative first step towards improving the treatment of LGBT offenders and promoting gender-sensitive alternatives for these groups. Given that the lack of alternative programs for LGBT offenders is ubiquitous across different countries, it is clear that the international implementation of the Yogyakarta Principles is still in its early stages.

Indigenous Offenders

Indigenous offenders represent a marginalized group that are overrepresented in many correctional systems across the world (UNODC, 2009). For example, in Australia, the rate of imprisonment of Indigenous peoples was 12 times higher than the rate of non-indigenous imprisonment in the year 2005 (Snowball & Weatherburn, 2006). In addition, the population of incarcerated Indigenous offenders is rising in many countries such as Canada, where the Indigenous population in federal penitentiaries has increased by 16.6% since 2012 (Public Safety, 2016). Although the reasons for the disparity in prison populations between indigenous and non-indigenous offenders vary across countries, current correctional practices may contribute to discriminatory treatment towards Indigenous offenders. For example, increases in police supervision in urban areas where Indigenous populations are more concentrated may increase the likelihood that these populations will be arrested (UNODC, 2009). Discrimination against Indigenous offenders in the correctional system can lead to violent and emotional abuse against these groups as well as harsh treatment by prison staff. Indigenous women face significant disadvantages in the criminal justice system, such as a greater likelihood of being subject to abuse, neglect, and systemic discrimination than their male counterparts (Public Safety, 2012).

Given the unequal treatment of Indigenous offenders in correctional systems, international standards have been developed to support the fair treatment of these populations and promote the use of alternative sanctions. According to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination General Recommendation XXXI on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system, alternatives to imprisonment should be given preference for Indigenous offenders over other punishments. Following this reform, many alternative sanctions have been developed for Indigenous offenders that is culturally responsive, incorporates traditional practices, and addresses the complex needs of these groups. For example, sentencing circles are considered restorative justice programs have become more prevalent in countries such as Canada and Australia (Bazemore, 2001). Such programs are considered community-based alternatives to traditional sanctions such as incarceration and probation and incorporates traditional Indigenous practices. The goal is to bring the victim, community, and the offender together in an open dialogue to discuss the crime, restore broken relationships, and come to a restitution agreement that will assist in the offender's reintegration into the community (Zehr, 2002). While the effectiveness of these programs in reducing recidivism remains controversial, they are previously reported to enhance other outcomes such as increasing victim and offender satisfaction, procedural justice, and fostering empathy (Calhoun & Pelech, 2010).

Programs that address both gender-specific needs and cultural-specific needs of Indigenous women are lacking in criminal justice systems around the world (UNODC, 2009). However, given that a major tenant of gender-responsive alternatives is the acknowledgement of cultural and ethnic needs, the development of community-based programs for Indigenous women is becoming more common. One such program is the Rumbalara Women's Mentoring Program in Victoria, which opened in 2002 and is a culturally-sensitive program for Aboriginal women and Torres Strait Islanders undertaking community-based orders (CBOs) with mentoring and support by an elder or another respected person (Bartels, 2010). In general, the program aims to assist Indigenous women in completing their orders successfully and to support their reintegration back into the community. Using a holistic approach, the Rumbalara program provides a range of services that target women's needs such as family and children services, health and wellbeing services, as well as homecare services for elderly offenders. Many of these services are tailored to the specific needs of Aboriginal women, such as targeting alcohol and drug-related issues and fostering spiritual wellbeing (Atkinson & Kerr 2003). A previous evaluation of the program found that strengths of the program included the positive approach and feedback of the project officer and mentors, as well as program participants. In addition, the 27 women who had taken part in the program, 19 had successfully completed the program, while a further five were still completing CBOs with the assistance of the program (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2007). However, like many programs designed for minority groups, there evidence for its effectiveness on criminal justice outcomes such as recidivism is lacking.

Elderly Offenders

In accordance with other prison populations, the proportion of elderly offenders is on the rise in many countries in the world (PRI, 2018). For instance, it has recently been reported that the number of offenders aged over 60 has tripled over the past 15 years in the UK (Prisons and

Probation Ombudsman, 2017). Some of the possible reasons for the rise in geriatric prison populations include increases in harsher sentences, the use of incarceration, life imprisonment without the possibility of parole and the reduced possibility for early release (PRI, 2007). Furthermore, societal changes in traditional family and community dynamics in certain countries has led some older offenders to rely on criminal activities due to poverty and isolation (Maschi, Viola, & Sun, 2012). While incarcerated, the complex and varying needs of elderly offenders are often overlooked due to the fact that prisons and their programs are designed for the needs younger offenders. The neglect of the needs of elderly prisoners is further exacerbated due to the growing issue of prison overcrowding and lack of resources (UNODC, 2009). Given that the population of elderly offenders is expected to rise, the development of policies and practices designed to address the various needs of elderly offenders such as healthcare and accommodations is crucial (Maschi et al., 2012). For example, some policies have been put forth in the UK that promote the use of alternative sanctions for elderly prisoners whenever possible in order to target their needs more effectively (Howse, 2003).

Considering the lack of age-appropriate care for elderly offenders, there are even less services tailored for the growing population of elderly women offenders (Prison Reform International, 2017). However, practitioners are increasingly acknowledging the varying social and healthcare needs of aging women offenders (Greiner & Allenby, 2010). An example of a gender-responsive program for elderly offenders is the Silver Fox Program at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF). This program is designed for women over the age of 55 and provides women offenders special privileges such as extra pillows and blankets, shortcuts for walking from one place to the next, and extra time for housekeeping duties (Upton, 2014). More recently, the CCWF implemented a residential component to the program designed for women offenders in 2011, known as the Senior Living Unit (SLU). The SLU specifically provides the opportunity to utilize programs and services such as healthcare and group therapy programs that are both age- and gender-responsive to accommodate the unique needs of aging women offenders (Upton, 2014). There are currently no reports on the effectiveness of the Silver Fox Program and SLU in reducing recidivism or improving other criminal justice outcomes. Given the growing population of elderly female prisoners, the development of these programs and their evaluation is needed in many countries.

Offenders with Mental Illness

A consistent trend in correctional systems across the world is the overrepresentation of offenders with mental illness and other mental health-related needs (PRI, 2017). Previous reports have indicated that prisoners have high rates of mental illness such as psychotic symptoms, although they are frequently underdiagnosed and inadequately treated (Fazel, Hayes, Bartellas, Clerisi & Trestman, 2016). There are a wide range of mental illnesses within prison populations such as psychotic disorders, personality disorders, mood disorders, intellectual disabilities, suicidal behaviours, and substance abuse (UNODC, 2009). Although the greater prevalence of mental illness among offenders is a complex issue, the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Committee of the Red Cross have identified prison overcrowding, various forms of violence, isolation, lack of privacy, lack of meaningful activity, and inadequate health services as factors promoting the development and maintenance of mental illness (UNODC, 2009). In the climate of prison overcrowding, offenders with mental illness are particularly vulnerable in the

poor and brutal conditions of the prison environment in the absence of adequate emotional and healthcare support. For women, there are higher rates of abuse, self-harm, and deteriorating overall mental wellbeing in correctional systems compared to their male counterparts (Fazel et al., 2016). In light of the adversities faced by offenders with mental illness, international standards for the treatment of mentally ill offenders have been upheld in various countries. According to the *Mental Illness Principles* by WHO, offenders suffering from a mental illness should be diverted from the criminal justice system whenever possible and should never be held in prisons, regardless of the severity of the offence (WHO, 2005). As such, alternatives to incarceration for offenders with mental illness continue to develop throughout many countries.

For women offenders with mental illness, there are a range of community-based alternatives that are designed to address specific mental health needs that are more common in women. Some of the mental health needs that are more commonly addressed for women offenders include substance abuse and addictions treatment, treatment for trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and treatment for mood and personality disorders. For example, the Women Offender Substance Abuse Program (WOSAP) is a treatment program for women who are struggling with substance abuse issues (Hume & Grant, 2001). Like many gender-responsive programs, WOSAP is a community-oriented program that uses a holistic approach to address the complex needs of women offenders who are in need of treatment for substance abuse and addictions. WOSAP draws from relational theory, harm reduction, and cognitive-behavioural therapy that targets many of the complex and co-occurring issues related to substance abuse such as relationship difficulties (Matheson, Doherty, & Grant, 2011). In addition, the Community Relapse Prevention and Maintenance (CRPM) component of WOSAP is an effective program designed for women on parole and consists of 20 weekly group sessions. Throughout these sessions, clients participate in group activities that are based on CBT practices and develop an individualized drug relapse prevention plan (Matheson et al., 2011). The CRPM has been previously found to be effective in reducing reoffending such that women who participated in the program had only a 5% recidivism rate after one-year follow-up compared to a control group who were ten times more likely to reoffend (Matheson et al., 2011). As a result of its demonstrated success, WOSAP is considered an effective substance abuse program for women and is currently being implemented across Canada.

To summarize, it is clear that offenders from marginalized groups are at a greater risk of experiencing different forms of adversity in correctional systems all over the world. The recent adoption of international standards for the treatment of offenders from specific minority groups has promoted the development of community alternatives for these groups. Despite these efforts, the availability of programs designed to meet the specific needs of offenders who are LGBT, Indigenous, elderly, and suffer from mental illness are very rare compared to programs designed for the general offender population. Some of the notable trends in programs for marginalized offenders include the advocating of LGBT rights and needs in correctional systems, the incorporation of gender-sensitive practices for specific groups, the expansion of restorative justice programs for Indigenous offenders, and the use of gender-sensitive treatment practices for mental disorders. Despite some examples of innovative programs designed for marginalized groups, their scarcity in most countries suggest that more work is needed to promote their expansion internationally. Based on preliminary findings thus far, community corrections for

marginalized groups seem promising for improving criminal justice outcomes, however, more research is needed to evaluate their effectiveness.

Discussion

Summary of Review

The increasing population of imprisoned offenders around the world has forced criminal justice systems to turn more attention to community-based solutions. The global movement towards community corrections is even more pertinent to women and other minority groups due to the additional risks they face in the correctional system. Such risks include discrimination, abuse, lack of adequate care, and mental health-related issues, which are not adequately addressed while in custody (PRI, 2016). According to theories of offender rehabilitation for women and other minority groups, correctional programs should be gender- and culturally-responsive to the complex needs of these marginalized groups (Covington & Bloom, 2000). For women specifically, there are various types of programs at different stages of the criminal justice process such as the early intervention stage and diversion, custodial programs, community residential facilities, probation programs, and parole programs (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). Programs with varying degrees of adherence to gender-responsivity and empirical grounding are available in many countries around the world, however reports were predominantly found by this review in Western countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

For offenders of other minority groups, the implementation of international standards for the treatment of LGBT offenders, Indigenous offenders, elderly offender, and offenders suffering from mental illness has led to various efforts to improve the treatment of these populations. Some of these efforts include the development of programs for LGBT offenders, incorporation of gender-sensitive practices for these groups, the expansion of restorative justice programs for Indigenous offenders, and the use of gender-specific treatment practices for offenders with mental illness. While the few aforementioned programs are promising alternatives, programs designed to meet the needs of these minority groups are very rare in criminal justice systems around the world. In addition, more research is needed to determine whether the outcomes of the programs that are available reflect the values and standards that they advocate.

Recommendations for the Rehabilitation of Women Offenders in Community Corrections

Based on the findings of successful programs outlined in this review, several recommendations can be made for the improving the rehabilitation of women offenders in community corrections:

1. *Programs should be guided by gender-responsive principles.* According to the principles outlined by Modley and Guigere (2010), gender-responsive programs should be 1) relational (i.e., acknowledging the importance of relationships in women's recovery), strengths-based (i.e., incorporating using women's strengths in their recovery and to foster empowerment), trauma-informed (i.e., recognizing the role of trauma in women's criminality), holistic (i.e., providing a comprehensive model that addresses multiple and

complex needs of women offenders), and be culturally-informed (i.e., services should be responsive to different cultural backgrounds (Modley & Guigere, 2010). In addition, given the aforementioned needs of elderly women, programs should also accommodate different age groups. Although these principles do not provide direct guidelines, they are based on previous research on best research practices for the treatment of women offenders (Convington & Bloom, 2000).

2. *Programs should use a holistic, multi-agency approach that provides a ‘wraparound’ services that triages women into agencies that meet their needs.* Many of the programs reviewed thus far has utilized a holistic model that provides a variety of services or refer women to community-based services that address their complex needs. These ‘one-stop-shops’ models have been suggested to be effective in efficiently triage women into rehabilitation programs that target the underlying causes of criminal behavior (e.g., Brennan et al., 2015).
3. *Programs should assist women with gender-specific mental health needs such as treatment for substance abuse and trauma-related issues (e.g., domestic violence).* A growing body of research suggests that women are women with mental illness are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and are at a greater risk of developing mental health-related issues when they are immersed in it (e.g., Mears & Reising, 2006). Moreover, women are more vulnerable for developing specific types of mental disorders that are related to trauma and substance-abuse (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Adhering to gender-responsive principles, correctional programs for women should be equipped for providing evidence-based practices for these mental health issues.
4. *Programs should provide financial assistance, employment services, and housing needs.* Many programs that use a holistic approach incorporate elements of employment services such as job coaching and assistance with connecting women with financial services and housing needs (e.g., Caddle, 1998). Given that women in the correctional system are at a greater risk of poverty and homelessness, such services are pertinent to women’s welfare and reintegration into the community (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009).
5. *Programs should provide assistance with healthcare needs such as HIV screening and prenatal services.* Community correctional programs should provide or assist women with obtaining healthcare services for their specific needs. For example, previous research has indicated that women in the correctional system are at a greater risk of being infected by HIV but do not seek healthcare services for it (UNODC, 2008). In addition, many women in the correctional system are at risk of reproductive health issues, including pregnancy (Hotelling, 2008). Therefore, health services should be made available to target women’s specific needs.
6. *Programs should provide childcare services, such as structuring case management plans around parenting responsibilities and providing accommodation for women and their young children.* A common barrier to reintegration and financial stability is the additional parenting responsibilities of incarcerated mothers. As such, many successful community correctional programs designed for women have incorporated childcare services that

allow mothers to live with their children in residential facilities or provide daycare services for low-income mothers, allowing more time to fulfill other responsibilities (Kaufmann, 2001). Such programs are beneficial not only for the mothers but also support the mother's relationship with her child and family as well as the child's prosocial development (Goshin & Byrne, 2011).

7. *Programs should be designed based on previous research on effective offender rehabilitation and utilize evidence-based practices whenever possible.* Many programs claim that they are based on scientific research, however, the extent of the program's scientific grounding is not made clear. One of the leading theories of offender rehabilitation is known as the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews et al., 1990). RNR theory includes three major guiding principles that guide offender rehabilitation practices: 1) the risk-level of the offender should match the level of intensity of the treatment they receive, 2) treatments are most effective when they target criminogenic needs (i.e., factors that are found to influence recidivism risk such as antisocial peers, substance use, and impulsivity), and 3) treatment should utilize empirically-supported intervention strategies while taking into account the abilities and learning styles of individual offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Given its robust scientific grounding, community correctional programs should adhere to RNR principles whenever possible.
8. *Programs should be evaluated using high quality research standards.* Finally, it is recommended that future programs should utilize evidence-based practices whenever possible and adhere to high quality research standards when conducting evaluations of existing programs. Some of the basic elements of best research practices include including a randomized controlled trial that evaluates the treatment program to an adequate comparison group (e.g., incarceration). In addition, evaluations should utilize a large sample size that control for group differences and uses the least biased statistical comparison. Finally, it is important in treatment outcome research to be transparent as possible when reporting statistical results such as providing a detailed program description and reporting important statistical information such as attrition rates.

Limitations and Conclusion

In light of these recommendations, several limitations of this review warrant mentioning. First, the programs discussed in this review do not represent an exhaustive list of available programs in community corrections for women and other minority groups. There are likely to be innovative programs in other countries that were not covered due to the fact that they are under-reported. For those that are reported, there is a lack of information about the nature of the program such as its specific practices and procedures. There are likely to be innovative programs in other countries that were not covered due to the fact that they are under-reported, the lack of information about the nature of the program, and the literature of this review was limited to those in English. Indeed, while there were many other programs revealed in the literature search, the information provided by online sources were too scarce to provide an accurate description of the program. In addition, the majority of the programs included in this review are from developed countries given that innovative community correctional programs are rare in developing

countries. With the programs that were included, original research reports with the raw statistical information was difficult to retrieve. Furthermore, much of the source material used in this report did not utilize optimal research standards such as randomized controlled trials, large sample sizes, and adequate reporting of statistical data. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the findings of this review relied on the content reported in research articles.

Despite these limitations, the consistency in the research pointing to the effectiveness of gender-responsive programming for women offenders and other minority groups suggests the positive effects of global efforts to improve the treatment of these groups. In general, recent reforms are incorporating more gender-responsive and culturally-responsive practices that are aimed at meeting the needs of offenders of marginalized groups. For women offenders, some of the general themes of these innovative trends are providing holistic and multi-agency services that assist women with navigating agencies to meet their needs, providing services at every stage of the criminal justice process from triage to aftercare, targeting current issues in women offenders such as healthcare needs and substance use, and assisting women with developing skills to encourage their self-efficacy in their own recovery. Some of these trends are reflected in the treatment other marginalized groups in community corrections, such as advocating the fair treatment of these groups, respecting cultural traditions, and targeting specific needs that are more prevalent these groups. As it stands, while there are many recent innovations in community correctional practices for women and minority groups, there is still much more work ahead to substantiate the efficacy of these programs both across and within countries. More research is therefore needed to further evaluate the efficacy of existing programs in reducing recidivism and improving other outcomes as well as guide the development of future programs.

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