

Life(r)'s Work

AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF A PROGRAM
FOR LIFE SENTENCED PEOPLE IN CANADA

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Life(r)'s Work: An Historical Analysis and Evaluation of a Program for Life Sentenced People in Canada

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- a) Provision of support to as many Lifers as possible through employment of In-Reach Workers
- b) Advocating and collaborating with government and other partners to find meaningful and sustainable ways of addressing the growing number of Lifers in Canada (both in prisons and the community).

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Executive Summary

Life sentenced people in Canada face unique challenges and have needs that are different from other prisoners/parolees. Various services have aimed to address these needs and challenges; however, few have been as successful in doing so as the LifeLine®¹ program. This report provides an historical analysis and evaluation of LifeLine services in order to support the development of an enhanced strategy for Lifers in Canada.

Through various external and internal funding grants over the past twenty-six years, the LifeLine program has sought to support Lifers through their transitions in the institution and community settings. Since Government funding for LifeLine services was ended in September 2012 as part of the Government of Canada's Deficit Reduction Action Plan, the program has been funded internally.

Support for Lifers was accomplished through three core program components outlined in the report, which are:

1. *In-Reach*: In-Reach brings Lifers who are on parole back into the institution to help Lifers make their time in prison productive.
2. *Community residential resources*: Community residential resources assist Lifers as they leave the institution to re-integrate into the community.
3. *Public education*: Public education helps to create support in the community by sending In-Reach Workers to meet with interested groups and others in the correctional community. In addition, the In-Reach Workers carry out preventive work such as trying to deter youth from becoming involved in crime or drugs, assisting in special education initiatives, and developing positive values and role models (Braithwaite, 1993; The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

In its present iteration, the LifeLine service is coordinated by a group of not-for-profit agencies called the PeerLife Collaborative. This group is presently self-funding services to federal institutions, and relies on assistance from skilled In-Reach Workers, and various institutional and community-based stakeholders.

The focus of this evaluation report is to provide an assessment of the relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency of the LifeLine service, as delivered by In-Reach Workers, since Federal government program funding was terminated in August 2012. To accomplish this, qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed through the review of relevant documents, literature and the collection of a small subset of client data.

Through this analysis, the following six findings were identified:

Relevancy

1. There is a demonstrated need for a program modelled on the LifeLine concept.
2. The LifeLine program contributed to interviews/case conferences with Lifers and the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) staff, the availability of resources to support release activities and hearings and some presentations, interviews, and workshops.

¹ ® LifeLine is a Registered Trademark of St. Leonard's Society of Canada.

Effectiveness

3. A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine service, and particularly the experienced and knowledgeable approach of In-Reach Workers, contributed to improving their outlook, their ability to cope, and facilitating their release.
4. A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine program contributed to their cascading to lower security levels, and their comfortable release to the community.
5. The LifeLine service delivery model is supported by evidence of effectiveness found in published research and evaluations in the area of successful reintegration of Lifers in the community.

Efficiency

6. The LifeLine service was run as expected with some identified areas for improvement in relation to: program duration and depth; the need for sustained staff and funding for complete program services; and formalized performance monitoring and evaluation activities built throughout the evaluation.

Based on these findings, a number of lessons learned and recommendations were identified for inclusion in future iterations of programs serving Lifers. These five recommendations include:

Program duration and depth

1. Continue to deliver the modules, but in a flexible, open and judgement-free environment and consider alternative ways of doing so, while able to reach more individuals.
2. Continue to employ program staff and mentors with expert knowledge and experience to run the services.

In-Reach Worker role

3. Continue to highlight the need for In-Reach Workers to be Lifers on parole who serve as pro-social examples for successful community reintegration.

Sustained staff and funding

4. Secure staff and funding for a small, multi-year period, in order to secure and support skilled staff, and to allow for the continuation of services to inmates throughout crucial periods of their preparation for reintegration.

Performance monitoring and evaluation

5. At the initiation of a new round of program and funding, build in a consistent and frequent mechanism for monitoring program achievements (i.e. expectations related to performance, data collection and analysis). This would allow for reporting on service implementation and impacts, and identify meaningful opportunities to improve outcomes.

Revisions will be made to future iterations of the service to include recommendations and build on what was learned by implementing the program over the last five years. It is believed that with these revisions, a new program modeled on LifeLine can enhance relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, it would provide the Lifer population in Canada with needed services and support for a safe and successful transition within institutions and when reintegrating into the community.

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SECTION 1

Introduction

Report Structure

LifeLine® has an extensive history within Canadian correctional institutions and the community, starting in the early 1990s. During its full operation over the course of more than 25 years, LifeLine was recognized with awards from the International Corrections and Prisons Association, the American Correctional Association, and in 2011, the service was the recipient of the Canadian Criminal Justice Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. This contributed to recognition at home and abroad and helped identify Canada as being in the forefront of progressive corrections. However, without the appropriate metrics in place to evaluate the service in a formal way, in early 2012 LifeLine became a target of the Government of Canada's Deficit Reduction Action Plan. This summative evaluation report provides an analysis of the LifeLine program for the period beginning in September 2012 and ending in October 2017. Where possible and relevant to do so, historical context has been included.

The purpose of this report is two-fold. First, this report provides an evaluation of the success of the implementation of LifeLine services by community-based service providers following the termination of federal government funding for LifeLine services in August of 2012. Success is measured by assessing the outputs and short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes of the LifeLine program, according to a number of particular evaluation questions relating to the approach and achievements of the service. Areas for improvement in future program iterations will also be identified and recommendations for a modernized program have been provided. Second, as private funding for the current In-Reach services comes to an end in March 2018 and the PeerLife Collaborative works towards building the next phase of supports and services for life sentenced persons, this report will serve as an historical record. Such a record describes the efforts of the PeerLife Collaborative and their dedicated In-Reach Workers to date, so as to ensure this crucial work is not forgotten, but enhanced, revitalized and respected in future programming.

Following this preamble (section 1), the report provides an introduction to the LifeLine program (section 2), which includes:

1. An overview of the LifeLine program,
2. An explanation of each of the LifeLine program activities, and
3. A description of the program governance structure and management.

The second half of the report (section 3) provides a description of the evaluation design used to assess success for the LifeLine service during this evaluation period (i.e., 2012-2017), followed by a presentation and analysis of the resulting evaluation findings (section 4). The analysis section presents each evaluation finding and describes the data and performance measures that were used to demonstrate the findings. The report then presents an analysis on the lessons learned and recommendations for improving the LifeLine concept for future program iterations (section 5). The lessons learned and recommendations section of the report (section 5) provides a brief summary of the evaluation findings and recommendations for moving forward in

developing and establishing a revitalized program in support of life sentenced persons in Canadian Federal institutions (herein referred to as 'Lifers'²) and their safe and successful reintegration back into the community. The report then concludes with a detailed annotated bibliography of the LifeLine service prepared by Danielle Kouri, St. Leonard's Society of Canada (section 6).

² The term 'Lifers' refers to "life sentenced persons" but may also include those with indeterminate sentences. However, 'indeterminate' sentences are not synonymous with 'life' sentences. While both can result in imprisonment for life, life sentences have a time set (i.e. 25 years) when a person is sentenced. An indeterminate sentence is a result of a designation, where an application is made to the court to declare a person a Dangerous Offender (DO), and the consequence of this designation is imprisonment for an indeterminate period.

SECTION 2

Program Description

Context

Lifers are different from other inmates for a number of reasons: (1) Those receiving life sentences do not have a fixed release date; (2) They face much longer sentences, compared to the average sentence of three and a half years; and (3) When released, Lifers will be on parole for the rest of their natural lives (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

The LifeLine® concept was developed to meet the unique needs of Lifers, as it includes the following characteristics: Lifers on parole assisting other Lifers; a partnership between Lifers, community agencies, and government correctional services; and collaboration among community-based agencies across Canada, each independent of the other but who share the same goals and are committed to LifeLine (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

It was determined – through extensive consultation and collaboration – that there are four stages that comprise an inmate's successful transition through a Life sentence: 1) Adaption, 2) Integration into prison, 3) Preparation for release, and 4) Reintegration into the community (visually depicted in Figure 1 below) (Correctional Service Canada, 1998; Gagnon & Dunn, 2010). In addition, it was highlighted that such a strategy would need to focus on (a) Sentence management, (b) Productive use of time, and (c) Interpersonal intervention and services. Providing such services to "Lifers and long-term prisoners, when they have demonstrated a history of successful reintegration into the community themselves, are effective interveners" (Correctional Service Canada, 1998, p. 2; Gagnon & Dunn, 2010).

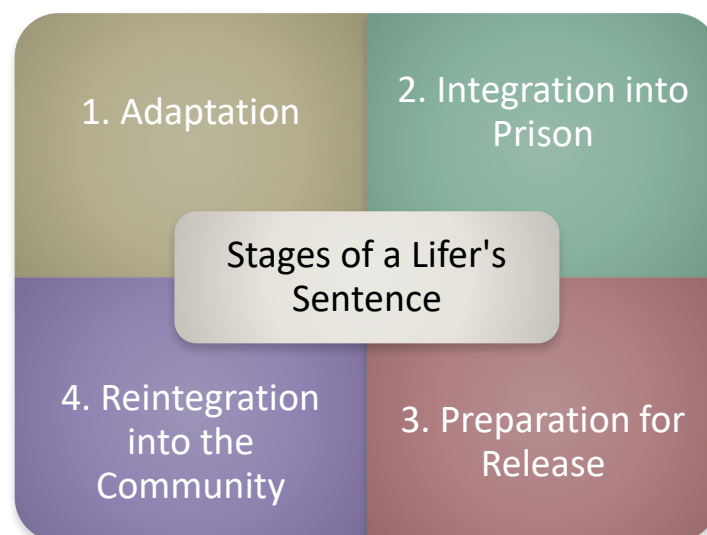


Figure 1. The Four Stages of a Lifer's Sentence (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010)

Based on the LifeLine concept, the LifeLine Project was then founded as a long-term, practical, and cost-effective plan to address the abundance of inmates with life sentences (Advisory Committee on the LifeLine Project, 1990, p. 4). It was anticipated that by providing proper resources and support to address the particular needs of Lifers, that they could make more meaningful use of their time while incarcerated. In turn, this would increase their likelihood of obtaining parole upon reaching eligibility, and reintegrating into the community faster and with higher success rates (Advisory Committee on the LifeLine Project, 1990, p. 5).

Genesis of the LifeLine Program

St. Leonard's House Windsor (SLHW) began formalizing concern for the welfare of Lifers and their increasing prevalence in prisons in 1982. After completing two phases: A Needs Assessment, followed by program development, SLHW, in collaboration with partners, reworked and formalized the concept. In 1991, the first In-Reach Worker began provision of services inside Ontario prisons. In 1992, the Pacific, Prairie, Quebec, and Atlantic regions established support and implementation of the program in various capacities (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2001).

In 1998 a Task Force on Long Term Offenders was initiated by the Federal government to evaluate, expand and formalize the LifeLine concept into a national strategy across Canada. This once again involved examining the needs of Lifers in Canada and designing and implementing a national strategy using the LifeLine concept to support this population of inmates (Correctional Service of Canada, n.d., p. 3). In particular, the task force recommended that such services and supports should be delivered by community members who are paroled Lifers or Lifers with a record of successful reintegration into the community. Because of their personal experience these individuals are particularly well suited to provide motivation and support to inmates serving life sentences throughout their incarceration and release and reintegration to the community³.

From 1999 to 2000, LifeLine services were expanded upon through the hiring of more In-Reach Workers and ensuring greater consistency in application (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2001). In 2005 and 2010, CSC provided funding to community partners to develop a comprehensive Lifer Resource Strategy, led by Maison Cross Roads in Montreal, Quebec (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, p. 1). Available in both French and English, the Lifer Resource Strategy serves as a formalized training resource to guide service implementation and delivery through directive modules. Modules specific to men, women, and Indigenous Lifers were developed to begin and maintain a process of "healing, rehabilitation and reintegration" (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, p. 2).

From 1991 to August 2012, LifeLine services were provided by various non-profit, non-governmental organizations, including St. Leonard's Society of Canada (SLSC) and its member agencies, who had established relationships with experienced and skilled In-Reach Workers, with financial assistance from the Federal government. "At its peak, twenty-six LifeLine In-Reach Workers provided service to more than 2,200 life sentenced people per year" (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2017, p. 2).

Federal funding for LifeLine was terminated at the end of August 2012. Yet, there is no other directed and individualized program that currently exists within the Federal prison system to

³ For a more detailed history on the development of the LifeLine Concept, the LifeLine program and the work of the Task Forces involved, see St. Leonard's House Windsor's publication "LifeLine: A Historical Perspective" and CSC's publications "[Task Force on Long-term Offenders: A summary](#)" and "[Implementing The LifeLine Concept: Report of The Task Force on Long Term Offenders](#)".

specifically address the serious concerns and information gaps experienced by Federal inmates serving life sentences in Canada. Instead, according to the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), inmates generally have access to the hard copy binders of the Lifer Resources Strategy (LRS) within their institutional libraries (Correctional Service Canada, 2012).

Faced with the loss of a vital and important service, each region put together different initiatives. In Ontario, for example, a small group of not-for-profit organizations pooled resources and self-funded a program called PeerLife. This group recognized the value of the work and its importance for safely reintegrating Lifers they were serving in the community.⁴ All worked to provide financial and moral support. Together, this group retained the services of Rick Sauvé and John Rives as In-Reach Workers and continued to provide In-Reach services. This group is now called the PeerLife Collaborative.

There were two primary reasons for continuing this program without funding. First, the service is vital to humane incarceration and the safe release of long-term offenders. Second, the two In-Reach Workers, John Rives and Rick Sauvé represented the highest quality of In-Reach work, and the risk of losing their expertise was determined to be too great a loss for effective community corrections. Rick and John are two people serving Life sentences with recognized credibility and acceptance from Lifers, CSC and the Parole Board of Canada (PBC).

At the time of this report, the PeerLife Collaborative comprises: St. Leonard's House Windsor, St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton, St. Leonard's Society of Peterborough, and House of Hope (Ottawa). The collaborative is supported in a research and advisory capacity by St. Leonard's Society of Canada and Maison Cross Roads (Montreal). The aim of the collaborative and its partners is to support a strategy for life sentenced persons in Canada. Its activities include:

- a) Provision of support to as many Lifers as possible through employment of In-Reach Workers
- b) Advocating and collaborating with government and other partners to find meaningful and sustainable ways of addressing the growing number of Lifers in Canada (both in prisons and the community).

Program Profile

Activities

According to CSC, “The LifeLine Program is a social program designed to assist Lifers to adapt to their sentences, integrate into the institution, prepare for release, and reintegrate into the community as law abiding citizens” (Correctional Service Canada, 2009, p. 1). During its initial development as a service, LifeLine was comprised of three basic components:

1. *In-Reach*: In-Reach brings Lifers who are on parole back into the institution to help Lifers make their time in prison productive.

⁴ The initial members of the not-for-profit collaborative group were: St. Leonard's House Windsor, St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton and St. Leonard's Society of Peterborough. This group was subsequently joined by House of Hope, and Maison Decision House in Ottawa. The group is now formalized as the PeerLife Collaborative, and is supported in a research and advisory capacity by St. Leonard's Society of Canada and Maison Cross Roads.

2. Community residential resources: Community residential resources assist Lifers as they leave the institution to re-integrate into the community.
3. Public education: Public education helps to create support in the community by sending In-Reach Workers to meet with interested groups and others in the correctional community. In addition, the In-Reach Workers carry out preventive work such as trying to deter youth from becoming involved in crime or drugs, assisting in special education initiatives, and developing positive values and role models (Braithwaite, 1993; The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

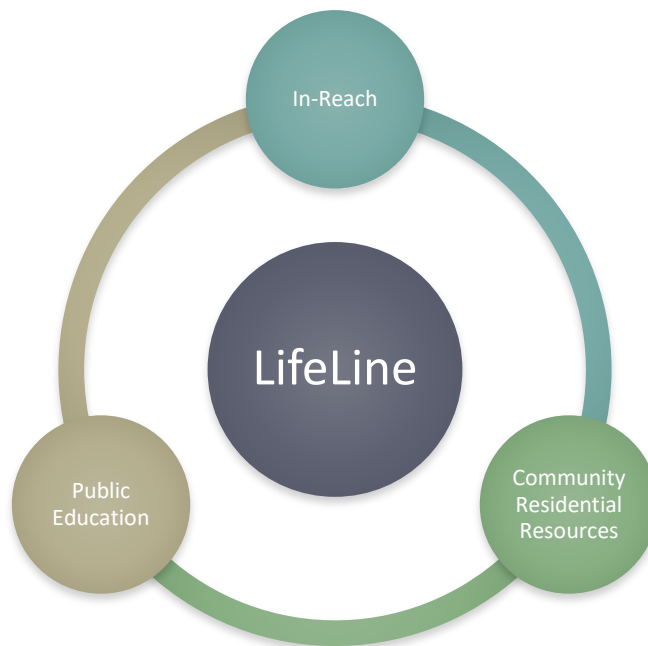


Figure 2. LifeLine Program Components

1. In-Reach

In-Reach Workers are peers with lived experience who assist Lifers to adapt to life within the correctional environment, and encouraged the constructive use of time while in the institution (Braithwaite, 1993; Correctional Service Canada, 2009). By providing encouragement, support, and sensitivity to the Lifers on a consistent basis from a shared perspective, Lifers develop positive networks within and outside the institution. In this way, In-Reach Workers play a role in resolving tensions within the “institutional milieu” and assist in the development of new and enhanced initiatives for the program (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 2).

The In-Reach component can be broken down into four core activities.

- a. Interaction with CSC;
- b. Recruitment of clients and introduction to mentor and program;
- c. Delivery of the Lifer Resources Strategy modules by mentor;
- d. Ongoing client support and mentorship.

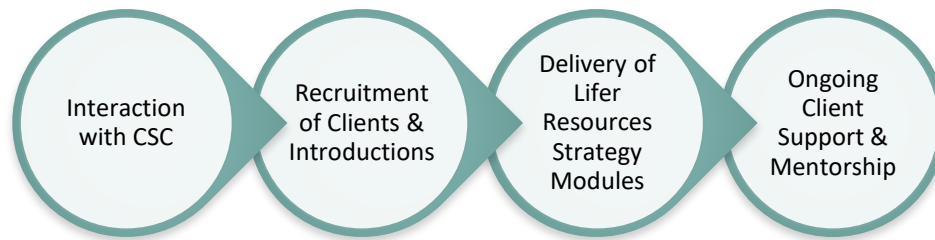


Figure 3. In-Reach Component Activities of the LifeLine Program

Interaction with CSC

Supporting Lifers requires In-Reach Workers to have access to inmates and an opportunity to discuss client needs, plans, progress, and to raise awareness related to the role of In-Reach with CSC management and institutional staff (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012). This requires a significant amount of coordination between service providers and CSC to allow for regular and frequent access and discussions.

Recruitment of Clients and Introductions to In-Reach Workers and the Program

To recruit Lifer service clients, In-Reach Workers obtain a list of individuals who are interested in participating in a service for Lifers and long-term sentenced individuals. The list can come from Institutional Parole Officers, Social Programs Officers, or Lifers within the institution reaching out directly to service providers. Once this information has been provided, the In-Reach Worker meets with each Lifer to introduce themselves and the service, as well as to establish rapport with the client and answer any questions they may have. These meetings typically occur as individual one-on-one sessions with the In-Reach Worker and client. However, In-Reach Workers also provide group orientation sessions to Lifers.

Delivery of the Lifer Resources Strategy Modules

In meetings (i.e. interviews) with clients, In-Reach Workers provide assistance as needed, by addressing Lifer questions and explaining the various Lifer Resources Strategy modules, which includes a series of handbooks to guide Lifers through the four stages of their sentence (i.e. adaption, integration, preparation for release, and re-integration into the community). In-Reach Workers help to guide clients through the modules based on the stage they are at in their sentence, and provided peer support based on their knowledge, experience, and training.

The Lifer Resource Strategy was developed in 2010, funded by CSC, in order to formalize service-delivery. It was developed by community-based service providers, Michel Gagnon and Michel Dunn, from Maison Cross Roads, Quebec LifeLine Service Contract Authority. To create the modules, the existing understandings and approaches used by In-Reach Workers were catalogued. This was done in order to formalize the system so the Workers would have a clear understanding of what is required of them and be able to better manage their work. It was designed to help new Lifers become familiar with the LifeLine service during the Adaption stage. It was anticipated that they would continue their involvement with the program at each stage not

as a new intervention, but rather building on to the knowledge and skills acquired as each stage was completed. The aim of all stages of the Strategy modules is to “motivate the Lifers to become personally and consistently involved in a process of healing, rehabilitation and reintegration” (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, p. 1).

The authors emphasize that the modules do not duplicate work being done in existing programs provided in the institution, but rather highlight and complement the importance and value of participating in the programs set out in the correctional plan (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010). It would also be complementary to other CSC services offered by psychologists, chaplains, staff, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders. The service is designed so that Lifers can assess the progress they have made in different aspects of their lives with a peer who has shared experiences, to determine what areas still need work, and to identify barriers or obstacles that may need to be addressed in order to progress further. The unique ability of In-Reach Workers to empathize with the service recipients is identified as an integral element of service delivery. It is intended that the modules “will empower the Lifers to take control of their lives and engage in a process of self-knowledge, awareness of real needs, and various areas of personal development” (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, pp. 2-3).

Ongoing Client Mentorship and Support

In addition to the delivery of the Lifer Resource Strategy modules, In-Reach Workers also meet with Lifers, as well as their case management teams and institutional staff to provide ongoing support to Lifers. This is provided in the form of information, experiential advice, friendly compassion and inspirational hope. They serve as a pro-social role model, and as proof that there can be life beyond ‘Life’.

In addition to the involvement of In-Reach Workers in these formal and informal meetings, In-Reach Workers also play a significant leadership role in the establishment and continuation of Lifers Groups and Associations within the institutions as well as in the community (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

2. Community Residential Resources

Community residential resources are aimed to help facilitate the gradual and supervised reintegration of paroled Lifers into the community (Braithwaite, 1993; Correctional Service Canada, 2009). Residency generally lasts between one to three years, but Lifers can receive additional support if needed, providing the possibility of long-term residency designed to serve the specific needs of Lifers that is not necessarily provided in other halfway houses (Advisory Committee on the LifeLine Project, 1990; Braithwaite, 1993).

The community residential resources component involves four core activities:

- a. Preparation for parole application;
- b. Support during judicial reviews and parole hearings;
- c. Release preparation in the form of meeting with community residential centre staff and assisting with escorted temporary absences (ETAs) and unescorted temporary absences (UTAs) from the institution;
- d. Community support to assist Lifers’ family members (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012).

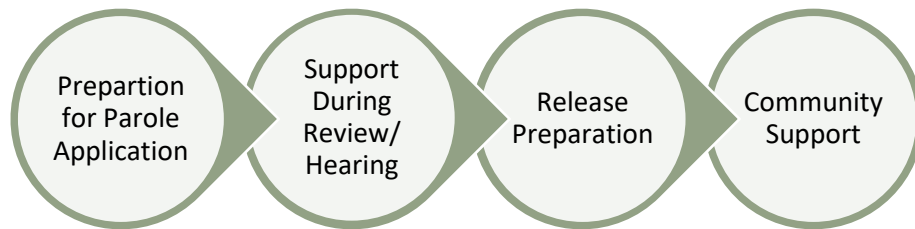


Figure 4. Community Residential Resources Component Activities of the LifeLine Program

Preparation for Parole Application

Due to the experiential knowledge of In-Reach Workers, they provide an essential service to Lifers by providing them with information on the application process for parole and advice about how to proceed. In-Reach Workers also work with the Lifer's case management team and institutional staff to complete and support the submitted application.

Support during judicial reviews and parole hearings

In-Reach Workers also bring a wealth of information regarding the judicial review and parole hearing process and often speak on behalf of the Lifer as an expert witness to provide juries with information about the realities of prison and life on parole.

Release Preparation

Since preparing for release is best achieved within the community, In-Reach Workers assist with setting up meetings with community residential centre staff and with Escorted Temporary Absences (ETAs) and Unescorted Temporary Absences (UTAs) from the institution to develop a comfort level with community living and to establish important community networks and supports for the Lifer. This allows the In-Reach Worker and client to work through anticipated transitional issues from institution to community before release.

Community Support

In-Reach Workers also provide support to the family members of Lifers when assistance is needed. They liaise with community-based residential facilities that are considering accepting Lifers to their facility. These are critical components that contribute to community safety and reintegration planning. In some regions, In-Reach Workers facilitated community reintegration support groups to maintain options for supporting effective reintegration.

3. Public Education

The third component, public education, includes informing the general population about LifeLine's mandate and the services it provides as well as the promotion of inmates' rights. These components can be achieved by participating in media interviews and documentaries, speaking at parliamentary and senate committee meetings, giving educational workshops, and acting as representatives in community organizations and advocacy associations (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2017). Historically, LifeLine has been implemented as a national service that is

coordinated by community agencies and delivered by In-Reach Workers hired or supported with available resources by those agencies. This has occurred through alternate Transition Services and Peer Support Workers, yet remained reflective of the mission of LifeLine to “provide through the In-Reach component and community supports, an opportunity to motivate long-term offenders and to marshal resources to achieve successful, supervised, gradual reintegration into the community” (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2017).

Logic model

Figure 5 presents the logic model for the LifeLine program⁵. This logic model depicts the service components, inputs, activities, outputs, short-term, intermediate term and long-term outcomes.

⁵ This logic model was adapted and modified to suit the implementation of the LifeLine program of concern to this report from the LifeLine logic model that appeared in the 2009 CSC Evaluation Report on the LifeLine service (Correctional Service Canada, 2009, p. 7).

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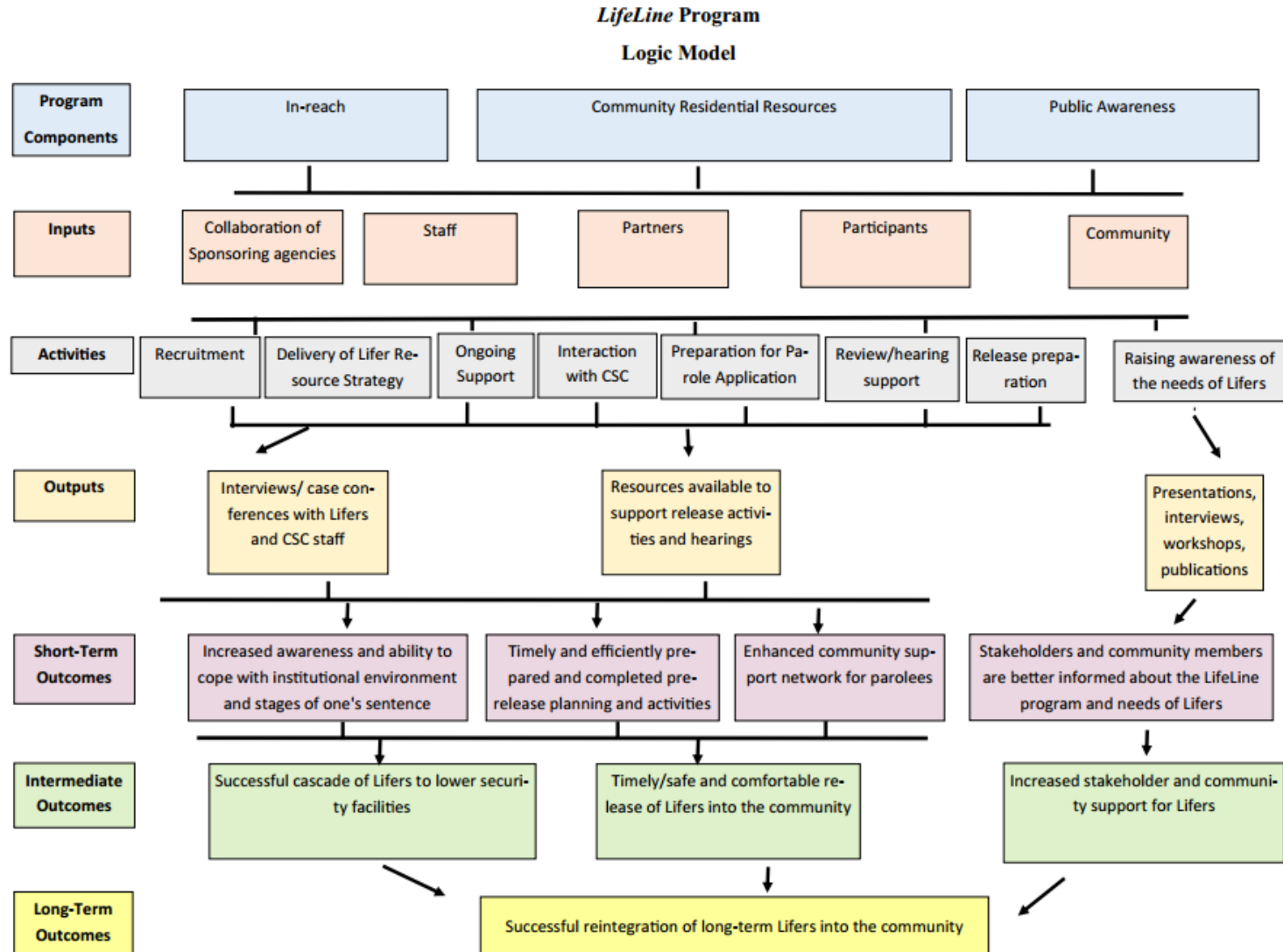


Figure 5. Logic Model of the LifeLine Program

Governance and program inputs

The governance model of the LifeLine program shifted in 2012 when CSC oversaw the cancellation of contracts for LifeLine under the Deficit Reduction Action Plan.

Since 2012 many agencies including the PeerLife Collaborative, have continued working to support life and long-term sentenced persons, recognizing its importance to Canada's growing Lifer population and its value to institutional and community corrections staff. Additionally, after 2012, a handful of Lifers carried on their work as In-Reach Workers:

- In Ontario those In-Reach Workers have been financially supported by the PeerLife collaborative and its donors to continue providing vital services
- Some in Quebec were retained for as long as their not-for-profit employer could manage
- Some in Alberta did so as volunteers, however, volunteering is not a sustainable model and many skilled and dedicated In-Reach Workers have been forced to retire find alternate employment

The Quebec and Alberta In-Reach Workers were sustained for as long as possible following the loss of government funding, but ultimately were forced to discontinue without sufficient resources in place. As much as possible, and when access to institutions decreased, services were continued in various communities to ensure that Lifers who had left prison were not left without supports.

In Ontario, meetings have occurred on a regular basis to discuss budgeting for the program, support for In-Reach Workers and strategic plans for future iterations of the program. The Ontario based PeerLife collaborative is presently self-funding services to federal institutions, and relies on assistance from skilled In-Reach Workers, and various institutional and community-based stakeholders. Project clients included Lifers in the Ontario medium and maximum institutions who wished to participate in the LifeLine program. However, the not-for-profit collaborative will no longer have the capacity to continue funding an In-Reach program past March 2018.

SECTION 3

Evaluation Description

Evaluation Scope

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the implementation of LifeLine services for the period of September 2012 to October 2017, to help inform a plan to revitalize and modernize a strategy for life sentenced persons in Canada.

Relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency of this five year implementation of the LifeLine service were assessed in this report. That is, the evaluation was concerned with: 1) the need for and responsiveness of the program (relevancy), 2) the achievement of immediate and expected outcomes (effectiveness), and 3) the use of resources to undertake project activities (efficiency). Findings related to project implementation improvement were particularly of interest to those involved in the LifeLine Program. As a result, the evaluation will also examine unintended consequences, lessons learned, and recommendations for improvement for future years.

Evaluation Questions

Relevancy and (relating to program outputs)

1. Is there evidence to suggest that there is a need for a program to support the Lifer community?
2. Did the LifeLine service contribute to the production of expected outputs (i.e., interviews/case conferences with Lifers and CSC staff, resources available to support release activities and hearings, and presentations, interviews, workshops, and publications)

Effectiveness (relating to short-term, intermediate and long-term program outcomes)

3. Did the LifeLine service contribute to improvements for those who participated and if so, what types of improvements were observed and by who, and; what was perceived to make it effective?
4. Is there evidence to support the LifeLine service model or is there a more effective alternative program that should be considered to support the reintegration of Lifers?

Efficiency

5. Did the LifeLine service run as expected and what areas of improvement may be needed to better support program implementation and achievements?

Evaluation Design

A variety of analyses were used to assess the achievement of expectations. As a result, the evaluation methodology followed a mixed methods approach, which included the use of both quantitative and qualitative measures. A post design was utilized whenever possible to determine changes over the course of the project.

This methodology focused on the following lines of evidence, which were considered in combination with one another to increase the reliability and credibility of the evaluation findings and recommendations:

- *Document Review:* Documents related to the management of the LifeLine service and general tracking of ongoing program activities were reviewed and analyzed to provide information and evidence for this evaluation. Examples of such documents include published annual reports and the raw data related to In-Reach Worker activities collected by each collaborating organization.
- *Literature Review:* The literature review focused on documents outlining the effectiveness of programming for long-term inmates. The purpose of this exercise was to assess the evidence-base behind using the LifeLine concept to assist and support long-term inmates during their time in custody and upon release into the community.
- *Client questionnaires:* A small subset ($n = 12$) of Lifers who were receiving LifeLine support during June 2017 were surveyed about their engagement with the LifeLine service. Lifers were asked a series of questions related to their perceptions of the service in written and individual survey forms. The forms were comprised of closed-ended questions, and open-text short answer questions. Since the number of Lifers surveyed includes only a very small number of Lifers, particularly Lifers who received services from the LifeLine program, the survey responses are not representative of all Lifers or Lifers involved with LifeLine services.

SECTION 4

Findings and Analysis

Relevancy – Assessment of Need and Outputs

Finding 1: There is a demonstrated need for the LifeLine service

The significant number of inmates serving life or indeterminate sentences in Canadian institutions and the large number of LifeLine clients demonstrates a need for the LifeLine service.

For the past decade, the number of admissions of inmates with life or indeterminate sentences has remained relatively stable, adding to the 66.6% of the Lifer population that remains in custody (Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 57, 59). Historical and recent statistics reveal that the average Lifer has been convicted of second-degree murder, comes from a disadvantaged background, and has never previously been convicted of a crime (Advisory Committee on the LifeLine Project, 1990; Public Safety Canada, 2017).

A significant number of inmates are currently serving indeterminate sentences in Canadian institutions. Indeed, almost one quarter (23.4%) of the total inmate population⁶ was serving an indeterminate sentence in the fiscal year 2015-16. Likewise, the total number of inmates with indeterminate sentences has increased 6.0% since 2011-12 from 5,088 to 5,393 in 2015-16 (Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 57).

To have these unique needs addressed, from September 2012 to October 2017, 1,581 Lifers requested and received support from various iterations of the LifeLine/Option Vie program in Ontario, Alberta and Quebec. Based on data that has been provided to the PeerLife Collaborative and its partners, in the past five years there have been at least 8,966 requests for involvement from LifeLine In-Reach Workers. These interactions took the form of client contacts/interviews, In-Reach Worker attendance at parole hearings, In-Reach Worker participation in case conferences, In-Reach Worker expertise requested at judicial reviews, facilitation of institutional group discussions, public education and media engagements, community relations, assistance for family members, and informal and formal meetings with CSC staff and other institutional and community partners (see Table 1). These requests were made by an average of 316 inmates per year (247 within the institution and 69 in the community) (see Table 2). It is likely that there were more than 8,966 instances where support for individual Lifers was needed but was not requested due to certain individuals not knowing about the existence of LifeLine and the services it provides, and/or did not have access to the service due to the location of the institution they are detained in.

⁶ *Total Inmate Population* includes all inmates who are incarcerated in a CSC facility, inmates on temporary absence from a CSC facility, inmates who are temporarily detained, inmates who are actively supervised, and inmates who are unlawfully at large for less than 90 days (Public Safety Canada, 2017).

Table 1. LifeLine Service *Engagements* in Ontario, Alberta and Montreal

	Client contacts (Interviews)	Parole hearings attended	Case conferences	Judicial reviews	Institutional groups	Public education and media	Community relations	Family assistance	Meetings
Sept 2012-13	662	2	13	2	7	9	30	2	64
2013-14	1585	19	31	13	5	13	1	3	73
2014-15	1883	41	34	3	7	15	18	2	99
2015-16	1872	42	20	0	77	13	20	3	126
2016-17	1911	48	23	5	29	10	31	3	97
Total	7913	152	121	23	125	60	100	13	459
Grand Total	8966 LifeLine engagements between 2012-2017								

Table 2. LifeLine Service *Clients* in Ontario, Alberta and Montreal

	Individual clients – institution	Individual clients - community	Total
Sept 2012-13	131	65	196
2013-14	233	65	298
2014-15	264	68	332
2015-16	294	73	367
2016-17	313	75	388
Total	1235	346	1581
Average	247	69	316

Finding 2: The LifeLine service contributed to interviews/case conferences with Lifers and CSC staff, the availability of resources to support release activities and hearings and some presentations, interviews, and workshops.

Between September 2012 and October 2017, In-Reach Workers associated with three agencies (i.e., St. Leonard's House Windsor, St. Leonard's Society of Canada, and Maison Cross Roads) assisted Lifers by:

- Participating in interviews/case conferences with Lifers and CSC staff. In-Reach Workers conducted 7,315 interviews and 108 case conferences with Lifers and CSC staff (see Table 1). And while these requests for contact with In-Reach Workers were typically based on the individual needs of each inmate, meetings also involved group discussions, peer support training, relationship maintenance/general support, crisis support and assistance with preparing applications for review (SLSC, 2017).
- Assisting Lifers with release activities and hearings by providing them with resources, such as information and support. They attended 152 parole hearings and 21 judicial reviews (see Table 1). In-Reach Workers provided Lifers with information on the judicial review or parole application/hearing process, assisted in the drafting of judicial review and parole applications, acted as witnesses and observers for Lifers at reviews/hearings, provided transportation to reviews/hearings, provided contacts to community residential centres in the community and took Lifers out on escorted temporary absences and unescorted temporary absences to increase their comfort level with the community. For example, a snapshot of interactions (n = 149 interactions) recorded on Form 1 documents (part of the LRS toolkit) between one In-Reach Worker in Ontario and their clients in the month of June 2017 reveals that 12% of interactions related to judicial review preparation and support, and parole hearing preparation or support (see Appendix: Form 1).
- In-Reach Workers also carried out presentations and workshops to Lifers in the institutions, media outlets, and the general public. They ran 118 institutional groups and engaged in 51 public education and media activities. In the institutions, In-Reach Workers ran a pilot group program for Lifers who wish to leave the gang lifestyle, called the Breakaway program. It provided orientation sessions for Lifers in Millhaven maximum security institution to orient them to their context and the LRS (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2014). On the side of public education, In-Reach Workers participated in senate and parliamentary committee meetings and took part in media interviews⁷ and public documentaries⁸ on prison issues (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2014).

⁷ For example, see: *A Life After Life*. (August 30, 2012). CBC The National. Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br_rkmWdZz0

⁸ For example, see: *State of Incarceration*. (October 18, 2014). CBC Doc Zone. Available: <http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/episodes/new-season-state-of-incarceration>

Form 1 data collected (n = 149) in June – July 2017 offers a snapshot of areas of support provided to Lifers by one In-Reach Worker in Ontario (see Figure 1 and Appendix).

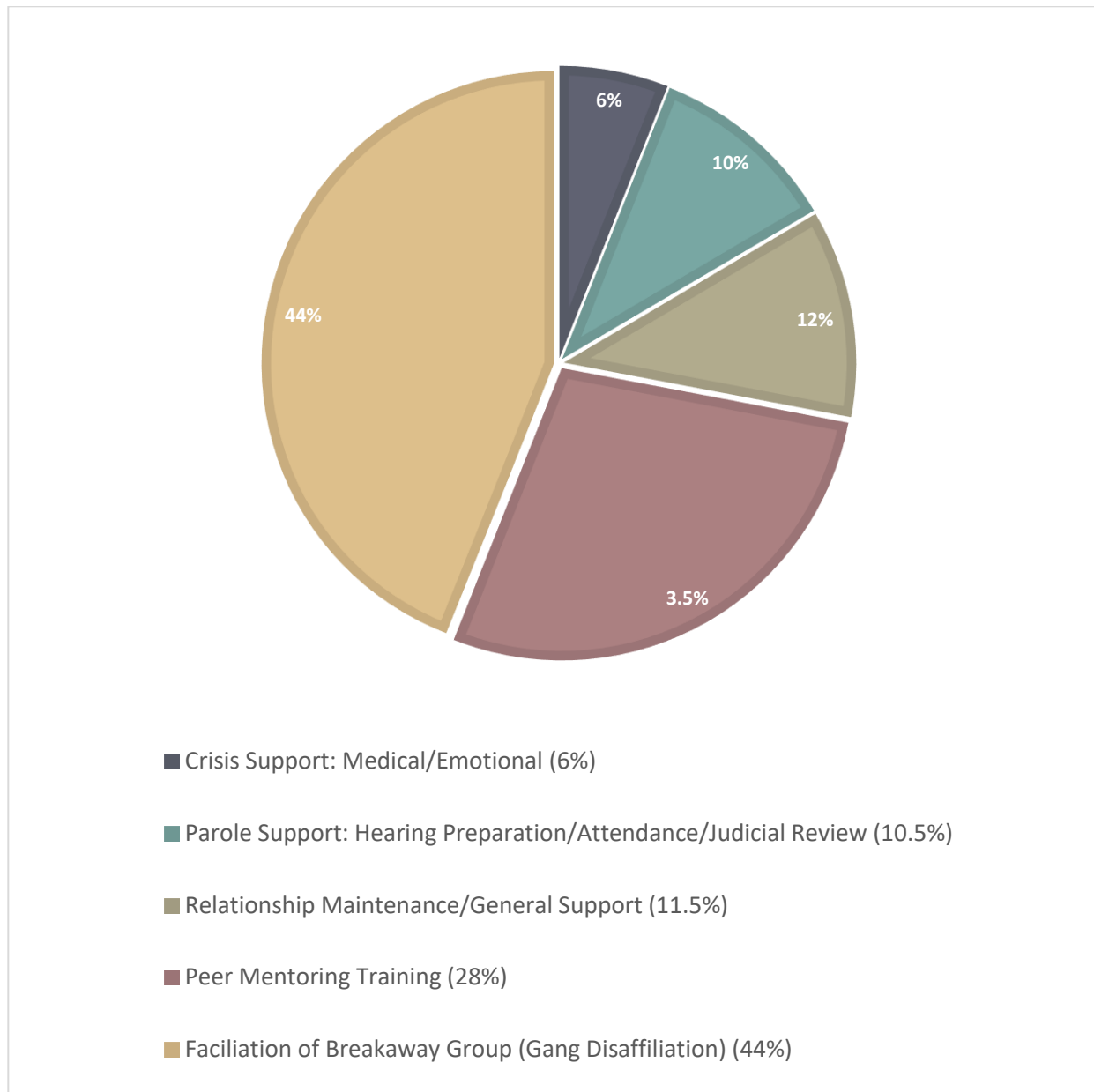


Figure 6. In-Reach Worker Interactions

Effectiveness – Assessment of Short-term, Intermediate and Long-term Outcomes

Finding 3: A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine service, and particularly the experienced and knowledgeable approach of In-Reach Workers contributed to their improved outlook, ability to cope, and facilitating their release.

All 12 clients surveyed in June 2017 indicated that they learned what they were hoping to learn about from the LifeLine service. In addition, 100% of respondents also replied that the program helped them.

In qualitative descriptions of how the program had helped them, clients noted their improved outlook and understanding about their current situation and strengthened their ability to cope in the future. For example, in responding to how the service helped, Lifer 1 said *“HOPE – I felt like a human being – not a number”* and Lifer 7 said *“Hope and a sense of being ‘not alone’.”* Another Lifer noted the importance of the program on their perceptions and actions:

“This program helped me create goals and insight. It provided me with friendship and a stronger outlook into my future and my potential. It gave me strength and most of all ‘understanding’. It’s powerful, necessary and very much needed” (Lifer 8).

Lifers also mentioned how the service assisted with their successful and productive transitions to the community. For example, Lifer 3 mentioned *“I owe where I am today to all of the work in the [LifeLine] office”* and Lifer 2 said *“LifeLine helps a lot of people get out of prison. They helped me out”*.

Also, clients from a small subset of Lifers surveyed attributed their success in the community to the ability of the LifeLine program to ease them back into the public setting in a manner that was appropriate and comfortable for them. For example, Lifer 4 said *“I was able to get back into the community in a way that I was comfortable and easy to deal with people correctly”* and Lifer 11 said *“This program gave me the confidence I needed to re-enter civilization using the respect I received from [LifeLine staff]”*. Another client mentioned the comforting support they received from LifeLine which strengthened their ability to cope with a potentially hazardous situation:

“It was challenging to say the least when I had my very first ETA with LifeLine, trying to get used to the crowds, traffic, etc. And LifeLine helped me to navigate through it all and I am happy and thankful that I had someone guiding me” (Lifer 9).

Additionally, the ability of the In-Reach Worker to effectively support the client appears to be based in a core tenant of the LifeLine concept to employ In-Reach Workers with institutional experience who are role models in the Lifer community. Many clients emphasized the importance of this factor and the role it played in their ability to cope with the difficulties of transition. For example, Lifer 4 said *“In-Reach Workers know what you are going through and they know what you need to help you get back into the community”* and Lifer 6 said *“you can talk with people who have been through the same things as you and can give you real answers to questions you have. It’s also easier to talk to somebody who has been there, and I like the accessibility to people in the program who know your concerns and understand what might be giving you a little stress”*. Another client highlighted this important tenant of the LifeLine program and emphasized how the service is particularly different and particularly helpful in this way:

“To receive advice from those who don’t understand is difficult to accept. LifeLine ‘gets it’” (Lifer 8).

Finding 4: A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine program contributed to their cascading to lower security levels and their comfortable release to the community.

Through the LifeLine program, Lifers receive important information about the correctional environment, the four stages of one’s sentence that Lifers experience and advice about how to move towards eventual release by cascading to lower security levels. The importance of this timely advice for perspective and planning purposes was highlighted by the small subset of clients surveyed. For example, one Lifer spoke about how the information and encouragement provided by LifeLine at the beginning of their sentence helped them understand and plan their time in the institution towards eventual release:

“LifeLine presented an overview of Corrections Canada with a wide scope of potential challenges, including social norms which can seem extremely abnormal to a STRAIGHT JOHN. Cascading to institutions with fewer restrictions was explained well, as was eventual strategies for ETAs, UTAs and day parole. The tone of instructions and peer In-Reach Workers was refreshingly encouraging” (Lifer 10).

Additionally, the role that LifeLine plays in supporting ETAs and UTAs appears crucial to the comfortable release of Lifers to the community. This important role played by the LifeLine program to understand the unique needs and anxieties for Lifers in re-entering the community was emphasized by the small subset of clients surveyed. For example, another Lifer spoke about the role that LifeLine played and the importance of this supportive role at very sensitive times in a Lifer’s transition:

“LifeLine specifically deals with the needs and issues that a Lifer faces especially when having to go into the outside world as such, for the very first time (on ETAs) and subsequently thereafter. Also, I found that I could open up and communicate with someone who had been through these issues before” (Lifer 9).

Finding 5: The LifeLine program model is supported by evidence of effectiveness found in published research and evaluation in the area of successful reintegration of Lifers in the community

Many evaluation reports and several research studies have been completed on the LifeLine concept and associated peer support/peer mentoring model. For a full listing of the research and evaluation literature consulted please see the annotated bibliography in Section 6 and attached reference list.

According to this evidence, when the following program components are present, LifeLine and peer mentoring/support programs appear to be effective:

- Services are delivered by a trusted and positive role-model and who is willing to work with case management teams to guide the inmate through various corrections/parole processes (Correctional Service Canada, 2000; Munn, 2012)
- Individual needs of inmates are met through consistently delivered services, meeting general standards (Correctional Service Canada, 2000; Correctional Service Canada, 2009; Munn, 2012)
- Sufficient financial resources are available to provide (frequent and continual) support, when needed/requested (Munn, 2012)
- Services are particularly targeted to inmates with life or indeterminate sentences (Correctional Service Canada, 2009)
- The ratio of In-Reach Workers to clients is feasible to consistently provide a high level of service and support (Correctional Service Canada, 2009)

Indeed, LifeLine and peer mentoring/support appears to be associated with the following successful reintegration factors:

- An overall positive impact on clients in prison and once released (Munn, 2012)
- “For life-sentence individuals, particularly those still imprisoned, LifeLine services provided hope” (Munn, 2012, p. 3)
- Positive impacts on clients related to conflict mediation skills, decreased feelings of anxiety and depression, enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem, and general personal growth, as well as preventing crisis (Correctional Service Canada, 2000; Correctional Service Canada, 2009)
- Better self-understanding, practical knowledge, and possible career-related experience/skills (Correctional Service Canada, 2000)

- Increased ability to cope with their sentence, adapt to the institutional environment, and participate actively in the institutional environment (Correctional Service Canada, 2009)
- Increased program participation in the community (Correctional Service Canada, 2009)
- Some public awareness about the program and the needs of Lifers (Correctional Service Canada, 2009)
- High success rate for participating parolees (Elizabeth Fry Society, 2004) and reduced likelihood of being involved in minor institutional incidents or put in segregation (Correctional Service Canada, 2010)

LifeLine appears to be unique in its concern for meeting the particular needs of Lifers over the course of their incarceration, release and beyond. A brief scan was conducted of research published since 2000 on programming for the successful reintegration of life or long-term inmates into the community. The results indicated that most programming is focused on providing reintegration/re-entry support in the form of specific services related to housing, job-training or education and treatment for substance abuse. These results did not specify meeting the needs of long-term or life sentenced inmates, or focusing on all four stages that an inmate serving a life sentence goes through. Instead, the focus is largely on release. These results would suggest that there does not appear to be any actively researched and published alternative models matching the LifeLine program at this time.

As additional support for this finding, the program has received recognition both internationally and in Canada. In addition to being recognized by the International Corrections & Prisons Association, in August 1998, the American Correctional Association recognised LifeLine as a "program of excellence". In 2011, the Canadian Criminal Justice Association presented its Achievement Award to the LifeLine program (The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, 2012), where In-Reach Workers were recognized among criminal justice experts across Canada. This contributed to recognition at home and abroad and helped identify Canada as being in the forefront of progressive corrections (Munn, 2012, p. 3).

Efficiency

Finding 6: The LifeLine program was run as expected with some identified areas for improvement in relation to: program duration and depth; the need for sustained staff and funding for complete program services; and formalized performance monitoring and evaluation activities built throughout the evaluation.

Program duration and depth

Clients noted that the time needed to build rapport with the LifeLine In-Reach Worker was very important to their experience in the LifeLine program. In addition, ensuring that the program was delivered at an individual level and amended to the specific needs of each Lifer, as opposed to Lifers as a group in general, was crucial.

Sustained staff and funding

Inmates mentioned that there were not enough LifeLine Workers to meet their individual needs. This perspective was also supported by the 2014 PeerLife Annual Report in which it was reported that:

“Given limited resources, PeerLife reaches out to only 25% of the Lifer population” (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2014, p. 2)

Additionally, as all four stages of transition in the course of a Lifer's sentence require a different set of skills and abilities, clients mentioned that it would be important to ensure that inmates in all security levels were supported (i.e., minimum, medium and maximum), however, only four specific minimum and medium institutions have been serviced by In-Reach Workers over the last five years due to financial restrictions. For example, one client related the importance of this type of support for maximum and medium security inmates to their attitude and general outlook:

“Access to one on one counselling with peer Workers in maximum security and medium security institutions may offer an enhanced level of continuity. Time lapses in uplifting communication sessions can result in a tendency to give up hope” (Lifer 10).

Clients also noted that as a result of resource limitations In-Reach Workers could not do as much to support someone in their community reintegration, especially in the wake of institutional or legislative changes. For example, Lifer 4 said *“as time went on there were more and more restrictions and less and less helping to get inmates out into the community. [And instead of supporting ETAs and UTAs] all [In-Reach Workers] can do now is talk and it is hard to get to know someone if all you do is talk. They have to see how the person acts in the community”*.

This need for more services also related to institutional services as clients mentioned that there was a need for the In-Reach component in particular to be played out to a fuller extent by spending more time and energy on the Lifers groups in the institutions, public education, and community service aspects of the program. For example, Lifer 9 said *“we need to see increased representation at Lifer's meetings in the institutions, creating awareness through communication with the Lifer population in the institutions by way of a Lifer bulletin/newsletter.”*

Yet, this is not a reflection of the work of the In-Reach Workers as clients consistently raved about the In-Reach model and the two In-Reach Workers in particular that they had worked with. The Workers played an important and intermediary advocacy role between the client and the institution, community residential staff and general public. For example, Lifer 2 said *“LifeLine works hard”* and Lifer 3 noted *“The work they put in to help people and the effort is above average. They are by far the most important program CSC had.”*

Additionally, despite resource limitations, In-Reach Workers through SLH Windsor commenced two new initiatives associated with the LifeLine project: (1) The development of the Breakaway

program run as a pilot in medium security institutions in Ontario for Lifers wishing to leave the gang lifestyle; and (2) An orientation program for Lifers in Millhaven maximum security institution (St. Leonard's House Windsor, 2014). Particularly, the delivery of an orientation session was noted as an important success for the program as resource limitations have kept the program from making immediate contact, despite this time being an important point of service. For example, St. Leonard's House Windsor noted *"making contact with Lifers when they first arrive has been a keynote of the services we have delivered in the past, our inability to do so over the past few years has had, we believe, a negative impact on Lifers' adaption to their new reality"* (PeerLife Annual Report, 2014, p. 4).

The reputation that the In-Reach Workers have in their community as advocates of Lifers appears to also play a significant role in the ability of clients to receive the assistance they need. Additionally, there is a need for a certain level of trustworthiness in order for the program to run as expected. The capacity to establish this level of trust in an environment that is wrought with mistrust among inmates, and mistrust for authority is hard for CSC programs to achieve, but is easily accomplished by In-Reach Workers. For example, one client noted the difference between LifeLine programs and other (institutional) programs:

“Most programs I felt I had to cross my ‘Ts’ and dot my ‘Is’ so to speak. I was concerned my iterations and answers may have been captured and documented incorrectly and in turn become fact in my paperwork. A false perception of my truth that I would later have to dispute. I never felt this way about LifeLine” (Lifer 8).

Performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation

While cross-regional data pertaining to the number of client contacts and the overall nature of those contacts, as well as the use of the Lifer Resource Strategy (LRS) modules and corresponding Forms (see Appendix: Form 1) were collected over the past five years. The data is limited to the measuring of outputs and more thorough, frequent and consistent data collection related to short, intermediate and long-term outcomes of the LifeLine program would be very useful for future evaluations. However, it was noted by LifeLine service staff that the ability to collect data is compromised with the limited resources available, and so priority is placed on delivering services and support for clients over performance monitoring, reporting and evaluations. The LRS has associated with it a performance monitoring template for tracking client interactions (known as ‘Form 1’). While this form does track important information related to the LRS, there were some limitations to how the form could be used to speak about the program impacts. For example, 149 Form 1's were completed between July and October of 2017 in order to feed into this evaluation report. While the data yielded information as to the achievement of program outputs (e.g., frequency, length and type of meetings held with clients), the data collected on the forms could not be used to assess the achievement of short, intermediate and long-term outcomes of the LifeLine program.

SECTION 5

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

As private funding for the current program service delivery model comes to an end in March 2018, and the PeerLife Collaborative works towards building the next phase of supports and services for Lifers, this report will serve as an historical record. Such a record describes the efforts of the PeerLife Collaborative and their dedicated In-Reach Workers to date so as to ensure this crucial work is not forgotten, but enhanced, revitalized and respected in future programming for Lifers.

Indeed, in line with the recommendation made by the Office of the Correctional Investigator in its 2016-2017 Annual Report that the LifeLine program be reinstated, future iterations of the LifeLine program must now be thoroughly investigated (The Correctional Investigator Canada, 2017).

There is a continuing and demonstrated need to bring back a program that helps prepare offenders to safely reintegrate back into society after serving a lengthy sentence behind bars. 15. I recommend reinstatement of the LifeLine program (The Correctional Investigator Canada, 2017, p. 57).

Building on the findings reported in the previous section of this report, several areas have been identified for continuation and/or improvement. Specifically, in relation to program duration and depth, the role of the In-Reach Worker, sustained staff and funding for complete program services, and formalized performance monitoring and evaluation activities built throughout the evaluation, a number of recommendations have been made for future iterations of the program. The specific lessons learned and recommendations related to each area are outlined below.

Program duration and depth

Continue to deliver the modules, but in a flexible, open and judgement-free environment. Consider alternative ways of doing so and enhancing capacity to reach more individuals.

The way the program is currently delivered should be continued as many clients raved about their ability to open up and discuss issues that they normally would not disclose. If structured properly, as exemplified in the Breakaway program and various group train-the-trainer models, group settings can be an effective approach to deliver the LRS module material in a way that is able to reach more individuals.

Continue to employ program staff and mentors with expert knowledge and experience to run programming

The overwhelming appreciation of In-Reach Workers and the experience and knowledge they bring to the LifeLine program must continue, as it appears to be a key factor to client completion and success. Suggestions were made to employ further individuals like them to allow the program to expand, while still allowing individual attention when necessary.

In-Reach Worker role

Continue to highlight the need for In-Reach Workers to be Lifers on parole

An evident key to the success of the LifeLine program appears to be the invaluable role played by In-Reach Workers and the ease, expertise, skill and knowledge they bring to this position as a result of their own personal experience. This requirement should continue for further iterations of the program.

Sustained staff and funding for complete program services

Secure staff and funding for multi-year periods, in order to retain and support skilled staff, and to allow for the continuation of services to inmates throughout crucial periods of their preparation for reintegration.

Since the In-Reach Worker plays such a critical role in the delivery of the LifeLine program it is important to secure enough skilled and well-experienced In-Reach Workers who have a strong reputation as role-models in the Lifer community to effectively support the Lifer population in all Canadian institutions. Sufficient time is needed to identify and recruit qualified candidates for training.

With enough staff and resources, it is believed that an enhanced program model will have the capacity to deliver effectively on all components and core activities identified across institutions in Canada.

Program structure/governance

Continue to coordinate and deliver services in collaboration with community-partners

The LifeLine program provides support for Lifers with an emphasis on compassion, hope, encouragement, and personal advocacy. This level of support appears to have allowed clients to participate in the program, ask difficult questions and open-up as they would prefer to do, which is often not seen as possible when programs are delivered by correctional staff.

Additionally, collaboration with community partners supports prisoners in making connections outside of the institution and promotes timely and successful reintegration opportunities.

Performance monitoring and evaluation

Build in a consistent and frequent mechanism for monitoring program achievements, along with expectations related to performance, and a plan for data collection and analysis to report on program implementation and impacts, at the initiation of a new round of program and funding.

The early design and implementation of regular performance monitoring, assessment and evaluation tools will ensure the timely collection and analysis of data, resulting in more frequent updates to program staff and funders about the achievements and potential implementation challenges of delivering the LifeLine program. The Form 1 data collection documents associated with the LRS are a good model for the collection of regular performance monitoring data by In-Reach Workers. To make it more conducive for In-Reach Workers, the form's template could be modified to include fewer questions. Furthermore, in addition to including some data related to the type of activities completed while interacting with clients (i.e., measuring program outputs), a small number of additional questions could be asked to track the achievement of client goals and perspectives (i.e., measuring program outcomes).

Conclusion

Overall, the last five years of operating on reduced funding have been challenging, and the program has witnessed gaps in services as a result. However, despite this challenge, much was achieved and learned from this minimized implementation of the program over the last five years. PeerLife has also maintained the support and credibility of the Parole Board of Canada to date.

This project evaluation found various conclusions related to the relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency of LifeLine services. Specifically, it was found that:

1. There is a demonstrated need for a program modelled on the LifeLine concept
2. The LifeLine program contributed to interviews/case conferences with Lifers and CSC staff, the availability of resources to support release activities and hearings, and some presentations, interviews, and workshops.
3. A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine service, and particularly the experienced and knowledgeable approach of In-Reach Workers, contributed to their improved outlook, ability to cope, and facilitating their release.
4. A small subset of clients surveyed noted that the LifeLine service contributed to their cascading to lower security levels and their comfortable release to the community
5. The LifeLine program service delivery model is supported by evidence of effectiveness found in published research and evaluations around the successful reintegration of Lifers in the community
6. The LifeLine program was run as expected with some identified areas for improvement in relation to: program duration and depth; the need for sustained staff and funding for complete program services; and formalized performance monitoring and evaluation activities built throughout the evaluation.

As a result, lessons learned and recommendations for improvement and continuation in the future have been identified in the following areas:

1. Program duration and depth;
2. The In-Reach Worker role;
3. Sustained staff and funding for complete program services;
4. Program structure/governance; and
5. Revision of assessment and data collection forms.

Future iterations of the LifeLine program will be revised to include these recommendations and will consider revisions to the project logic model, and data collection tools to accompany these changes.

SECTION 6

LifeLine Annotated Bibliography

Intro

After capital punishment was abolished in 1976, the number of inmates with life sentences continued to increase in Canadian penitentiaries (Donner Report, 1990, p. vii). As of 2016, individuals with indeterminate sentences or life sentences, also known as “Lifers,” comprise 23.4% of the total Canadian offender population (Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 57). For the past decade, the number of admissions of inmates with life or indeterminate sentences has remained relatively stable, adding to the 66.6% of the Lifer population that remains in custody (Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 57, 59). Historical and recent statistics reveal that the average Lifer has been convicted of second-degree murder, comes from a disadvantaged background, and has never previously been convicted of a crime (Donner Report, 1990, p. 3, 4, 27; Public Safety Canada, 2017, p. 59, 60). Lifers present as one of the most cooperative and non-violent inmate populations, frequently demonstrating positive social attitudes and high rates of success upon release on parole (Donner Report, 1990, p. 3, 4, 27). However, this is not indicative of reduced need. The LifeLine Project was founded as a long-term, practical, and cost-effective plan to address the abundance of inmates with life sentences (Donner Report, 1990, p. vii, 4). It was anticipated that by providing proper resources and support to address the particular needs of Lifers, that they could make more meaningful use of their time while incarcerated. In turn, this would increase their likelihood of obtaining parole upon first eligibility, and reintegrating into the community faster and with higher success rates (Donner Report, 1990, p. 5; Olotu, et al., 2009).

During its initial development as a program, LifeLine® was comprised of three basic components: In-Reach, community residential resources, and public education (Braithwaite, 1993, pp. 2-5; SLHW, 1993, p. 8). In-Reach Workers were peers with lived experience who assisted Lifers adapt to life within the correctional environment, and encouraged the constructive use of time while in the institution (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 2; Olotu, et al., 2009). By providing encouragement, support, and sensitivity to the Lifers on a consistent basis from a shared perspective, positive networks within and outside the institution were developed (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 2, 3). In-Reach Workers played a role in resolving tensions within the “institutional milieu” and assisted in the development of new and enhanced initiatives for the program (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 3, 4). The community residential resource included the LifeLine Community Program, a program that aimed to help facilitate the gradual and supervised reintegration of paroled Lifers into the community (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 4; Olotu, et al., 2009). Residency lasted from one to three years, but Lifers who had already returned to the community could receive on-going/additional support if needed, or return as peer-support for other Lifers (Braithwaite, 1993, p. 4). It provided the possibility of long-term residency and was designed to serve the specific needs of Lifers that were not necessarily available in other halfway houses (Donner Report, 1990, p. 10). The third component, public education, included informing the general population about LifeLine’s mandate and the services it provided, as well as the promotion of crime prevention (Olotu, et al., 2009). The delivery of the program was managed through contractual service agreements with various committees, coordinators, and community-

based agencies with different roles in the delivery model of the LifeLine Project (Olotu, et al., 2009). This program represents a truly collaborative effort among a variety of stakeholders to create meaningful change within Canadian prisons and communities.

St. Leonard's House Windsor (SLHW) began formalizing concern for the welfare of Lifers and their increasing prevalence in prisons in 1982. In 1985, a proposal was presented to conduct a Needs Assessment (Phase I), which was later funded and completed in 1986 (SLHW, 2001). Phase II, which focused on the programming for the LifeLine House was put forward in 1988 (Donner Report, 1990, p. 1). After additional proposals and reworking of the concept, the advisory committee for the LifeLine project submitted the Donner Report (1990), which proposed improvements and guidelines for the redeveloped concept. Later the same year, a Globe & Mail article entitled "Windsor chosen for Halfway House devoted to Killers," impacted how the program would interact with media outlets (SLHW, 2001).

In 1991, Tom French became the first In-Reach Worker to provide services in correctional facilities, followed by Russ Elliot in 1992 (SLHW, 2001). In 1992, the Pacific, Prairie, Quebec, and Atlantic regions established support and implemented the program in various capacities (SLHW, 2001). Between 1999 and 2000, LifeLine services were expanded through hiring more In-Reach Workers and ensuring greater consistency in application (SLHW, 2001). In 2005 and 2010, CSC provided funding to community partners to develop a comprehensive Lifer Resource Strategy (LRS), led by Maison Cross Roads in Montreal, Quebec (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, p. 1). Available in both French and English, the LRS serves as a formalized training resource to guide service implementation and delivery through directive modules. Modules specific to men, women, and Indigenous Lifers were developed to begin and maintain a process of "healing, rehabilitation and reintegration" (Gagnon & Dunn, 2010, p. 2). LifeLine has been recognized with awards from the International Corrections and Prisons Association, the American Correctional Association, and in 2011, the program was the recipient of the Canadian Criminal Justice Association's Achievement Award. This contributed to recognition nationally and internationally, and helped identify Canada as being in the forefront of progressive corrections. However, despite the success and development of LifeLine that was reported in multiple evaluation reports and by clients themselves, the services provided by LifeLine were cancelled by the federal government in 2012 (Munn, 2012, p. 3).

The following annotated bibliography comprises the extensive number of reports and articles based on the LifeLine Program, and highlights its history and contributions to Canadian corrections. Three evaluations of the Peer Support Program for women, a concept similar to LifeLine are included to demonstrate the efficacy of peer support. Where possible, links have been included to provide access to an electronic source. If no link is provided, hard copies can be made available by contacting SLSC. Annual reports from the PeerLife program are also available by contacting the PeerLife Collaborative.

1985. Life-Line: A Community Based Programme for Long-Term Offenders – Report of the Special Advisory Committee. M. Dietz & E. Graham (St. Leonard's House Windsor).

St. Leonard's House Windsor, which forged the halfway house movement in Canada starting in 1962, put forward this study on Community Based Programme for Long-Term Offenders. At the time of the study, a frustrating context existed for both long-term offenders and St. Leonard's House: the rate of long-term sentences was increasing while specialized

programs for reintegration were severely lacking (p. 7, 8). A planning report from 1984 was carried out by St. Leonard's House Windsor to determine the direction for St. Leonard's future plans. It identified the lack of specialized programming for long-term offenders (p. 1). This developmental study aimed to assess the specific programs, resources and necessities that had been proposed for LifeLine (p. 2). Information was acquired through contemporary literature concerning long-term offenders, indicating the negative effects of long-term institutionalization (p. 2). Open-ended interviews were conducted with long-term offenders at various stages of their sentence, including incarcerated individuals, and both successful and unsuccessful parolees (p. 9, 10). Consultations were also conducted with institutional professionals (staff, case managers, psychologists and social workers) to inform the study and develop the selection process for the project (p. 2, 12). After gaining knowledge from the various resources, the objective of St. Leonard's House Windsor was to establish both an In-Reach program to be run in prisons and a specialized residential facility in the community for long-term parolees (p. 2).

1990. [Committee Report on the LifeLine Project.](#) Submitted to the Donner Foundation.
1990. [Rapport du Comité sur le projet Option vie.](#) Présenté à la Fondation Donner.

The Donner Report (1990) was submitted by the advisory committee for the LifeLine Project, comprised of correctional professionals and senior managers, including representatives from the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) and National Parole Board (NPB), and community-based agencies (p. 2). The report is a proposal for improvements on the first proposed phases of LifeLine, the final reports of Phase I and II that were submitted in 1985 and 1988, respectively (p. 1). The Donner Foundation recognized that the program had merit, but sought innovative approaches involving CSC and the NPB. As a result, they provided funding for the Advisory Committee to prepare this report and design a three-year demonstration project that would address concerns about the original submission (p. 2). The report offers guidelines and innovations for the In-Reach program and LifeLine House, evaluative mechanisms, and provides the costs and plans on how to communicate about LifeLine to enhance public understanding and support (p. 2).

The report recognizes that many Lifers are cooperative, have positive social attitudes and are often successful when released on parole, validating the authors' humanitarian approach for their recommendations (p. 4). The approach is justified by the inevitability (with few exceptions) of these inmates returning to the community; LifeLine helps these individuals work towards rehabilitation to increase the likelihood of successful reintegration and providing increased security for the public (p. 4). The report proposes how to ensure no risks are posed to society, staff, or other residents in the LifeLine House (p. 10). The Donner Report contends that LifeLine is of great value to not just the individual Lifers, but also CSC, the NPB, the general public, and other agencies; despite the growing rate of Lifers, there is no other service or project that specializes in the problems that Lifers have during and after incarceration (p. 16, 17).

1992. [More Than a Matter of Time.](#) John Braithwaite (St. Leonard's House Windsor).

John Braithwaite, a member of the Donner committee, published this report in 1992 to serve as a resource document to guide the implementation of LifeLine into each of CSC's regions (p. 3). The report is separated into three sections: a description of the background of the program for Lifers, an assessment of the current climate of the program, and proposed LifeLine initiatives to be considered by CSC in an effort to improve the condition for Lifers in each region

(p. 3). It uses experience acquired over the preceding 30 years from St. Leonard's House Windsor in post-release residential services, and the 10 years spent developing the LifeLine Project (p. 3). Information was also gathered from consultations with Lifers, CSC staff, and stakeholders from the Ontario region (p. 3). The report highlights suggestions for how CSC could utilize the LifeLine concept in relation to the Task Force Report on Long-Term Sentences (The Perron Report) (pp. 44-51). A catalogue of Lifer's needs included in Appendix D per The Perron Report is available through this source (pp. 52-54).

1993. [This Time....](#) John Braithwaite (St. Leonard's House Windsor).

"This Time" describes the LifeLine program with the objective that CSC and relevant voluntary agencies consider implementing LifeLine into daily operations (p. 5). The report refers to the Donner Report (1990) and "More Than A Matter of Time" (Braithwaite, 1992) to provide contextual information. The report highlights CSC's philosophy to justify the use of LifeLine to address challenges pertaining to the abundance of Lifers and the conditions they face (p. 5). CSC's philosophy at the time of publication stated that it protects society by "actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law abiding citizens, while exercising a reasonable, safe, secure and humane control" (p. 5). LifeLine serves as a logical and practical program that helps CSC abide by their proclaimed core values. The author notes the "very low risk" that Lifers generally present but acknowledges how institutionalization can have hindering effects to an individual's capacity to reintegrate into the community (p. 8). The report examines the cases of Lifers with comprehensive plans and/or who were engaged in programming opportunities. It was found in 77% of cases that the parole eligibility date was reduced from the mandatory twenty-five years (p. 8). The author provides eight recommendations for the program (p. 9, 10) and discusses key elements for successful implementation (pp. 11-14).

1993. [National Implementation of the LifeLine Program: Progress Report](#). St. Leonard's House Windsor (SLHW). Submitted to Correctional Service of Canada, Native and Female Offender Programs.

This report depicts the progress achieved between October 1st and December 3rd, 1992 for Stage Two of the LifeLine project: the presentation of LifeLine into each region (p. 1). The report notes the extensive engagement efforts with various interest groups (e.g. National Parole Board (NPB), Native Advisory Committee, John Howard Society, individual representatives) in order to review the status of each chapter of LifeLine (pp. 3-23). The authors note the attendees at each meeting/interaction, points of discussion and concern, and make recommendations for future endeavours and successes of the project (pp. 3-23). When presented with the LifeLine project, each Regional Deputy Commissioner replied with various degrees of support (p. 3). Full support was confirmed by the NPB in the Atlantic, Prairies, and Pacific regions, and various voluntary agencies expressed interest in supporting the project within their respective regions (p. 3). By expressing both positive and negative experiences, each interaction presented as a different opportunity to further develop the efficacy of the project in various capacities and levels (p. 5, 6). Open communication between the LifeLine team, CSC representatives, and the NPB improves the operations of the project and ensures that each region has the resources to facilitate success, especially when working towards expanding (p. 2).

The consultations in each region showed a positive interest in the project, its development, and sustainability (p. 21, 22). The report identifies various accomplishments, which include but are

not limited to: the increasing amount of interest among voluntary agencies, the NPB expressing a willingness to support and participate, as well as experience and expertise gained regionally (p. 25, 26). The document concludes with three key observations and nine recommendations to be considered for the next phase of project implementation (pp. 26-29). It was noted that the participating Lifers were seen as “takers not givers,” meaning there was not enough emphasis put on the role that Lifers could play within the program as potential contributors, not just clients (p. 26). The focus on the particularities to each region is key to ensuring needs are being met complementary to the regional initiatives and specific realities (p. 27).

1994. Short Time: A Chronicle of Consultation on LifeLine with the Atlantic and Prairie Regions. John Braithwaite (St. Leonard's House Windsor).

This report is the third in a trilogy prepared by Braithwaite discussing LifeLine and its implementation. The first two sections of this report provide background information about LifeLine. The third section, “Results and Expectations,” is a summary of the achievements and aspirations of the project, while the fourth provides an extensive record and findings from the meetings that occurred in the consultation process. The document refers to the original concept that was presented in 1990 and the subsequent efforts that were proposed (p. 1, 3). It cites the visitation team that represented LifeLine in the consultations, which included Skip Graham (then Executive Director of St. Leonard's Windsor and Special Advisor), Tom French (Senior In-Reach Worker Ontario), and John Braithwaite (Special Advisor), as well as Drury Allen (Special Advisor) who represented the CSC National Headquarters (p. 5). As LifeLine's first In-Reach Worker, French provided a realistic and valuable view of the program (p. 6, 7). Graham also provided accounts of first-hand experiences related to the complications that can arise when introducing LifeLine housing facilities to communities (p. 7). A Regional Implementation Committee for Long-Term Sentences Report scheduled and coordinated the meetings that also informed Braithwaite's report (p. 5). The results showed a universal acceptance of LifeLine's basic concepts but found there to be difficulties in finding resources and appropriate individuals to become In-Reach Workers (p. 9).

1998. CSC: Implementing The LifeLine Concept: Report Of The Task Force On Long Term Offenders. Submitted to Correctional Services of Canada, National Parole Board, & LifeLine National Resource Group.

1998. SCC : Rapport du groupe de travail sur les délinquants purgeant une peine de longue durée, Mise en oeuvre du concept.

The Task Force on Long Term Offenders, made up of non-government partners, officials from Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and National Parole Board (NPB), prepared this report to evaluate the implementation of the LifeLine concept. It serves as a blueprint for the expansion of LifeLine across Canada (Sawdon, 1999, p. 1). The report notes that it was not possible to provide an overview of all the existing In-Reach services due to the inconsistencies provided by workers in regard to the level of detail provided and the varying definitions of specific terminology (Sawdon, 1998, p. ii). LifeLine services are contextualized before the feasibility of expanding services and necessities for successful implementation are discussed (pp. 24-37). The report provides recommendations that address matters such as the specificities for the target clients, the role of In-Reach Workers, training, services specifically for Indigenous and female Lifers, and the effects of location on service delivery (pp. 28-41). Standards and guidelines are listed to ensure a baseline for the quality of service is established and consistently

provided (pp. 42-44). A breakdown of the costs of implementation is provided, considering the variances in costs that may occur between various locations (p. 45). A realistic view is taken to discuss the clients themselves, what it means to be “successful,” and community education strategies (pp. 48-56). This report is offered to CSC, NPB, and relevant non-governmental organizations in order to begin the consultation effort to implement truly effective correctional responses respective of the particular necessities of Lifers while imprisoned and in the community (p. 60).

1999. Expansion of the LifeLine Service: Achieving Consistency of Efforts Through the Provision of Orientation Training. John A. Sawdon (Canadian Training Institute).

The report identifies the training needs and competency domains for LifeLine In-Reach Workers, a proposal of the orientation training program, an overview of the March 22-25, 1999 training program, and a suggestion for a 6-week orientation program. The author discusses operational issues faced in the expansion and acceptance of LifeLine (pp. 15-17). The author commends the development of a service that addresses an often disregarded group within an already marginalized population (p. 17).

2000. CSC: Results of an Evaluation of the Peer Support Program at Grand Valley Institution for Women. Fariya Syed & Kelley Blanchette (CSC).

Syed and Blanchette provide the results of an evaluation of the Peer Support Team (PST), a service similar to LifeLine’s In-Reach program, at Grand Valley Institution for Women. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in order to determine the necessity, quality, and efficacy of the program (p. iii). The evaluation design ensured that staff, PST members, and non-members had the opportunity to be involved and express their views and experiences (p. iii). The authors acknowledge possible reasons some individuals may not benefit from the program, but note the positive regard clients and staff held for the program (p. 37). Syed and Blanchette also recognize that the study is limited by the small sample size and the bias that may exist in the study, as those who positively view PST may have been more willing to participate in the study (p. 38, 39).

The results revealed that there was a great need for the program; participating inmates and staff reported experiencing positive impacts such as conflict mediation skills, decreased feelings of anxiety and depression, enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem, and general personal growth (p. iii). The researchers found that the program requires little funding, but that there was a need for more mental health staff to help facilitate the PST (p. iii). Generally, the program was positively regarded: clients reported appreciating the knowledge they acquired on “a variety of topics” that helped them better support themselves, other women, and promote healing (p. iii, iv). The PST did not necessarily prepare individuals for crisis intervention, but rather helped to prevent crisis and better deal with the ramification of crises should they occur (p. iv).

2000. CSC: Results of an Evaluation of the Peer Support Program at Joliet Institution for Women. Fariya Syed & Kelley Blanchette (CSC).

This research report provides the results of a preliminary evaluation of the Peer Support Team (PST) at Joliet Institution for Women. The PST program provides “intensive training” for inmates with the intent to provide emotional support for other incarcerated women (p. iii). Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to assess the program (p. iii). It was found that

although the program was relatively new to the institution, approximately half of the inmates who were surveyed had used the service and expressed satisfaction with their experience (p. iii). The PST was found to be particularly beneficial for individuals who have been newly admitted, are in segregation, and/or have mental health issues (p. iii). Both staff and clients at Joliette positively rated the PST and found the training, volunteers, and coordinators informative and beneficial (p. iii). Results of the evaluation suggest that PST training and participation supports other programs provided for inmates and their effects, as well as helps the women define their goals and interests (p. iii). The data retrieved also suggests that PST is effective for individual crisis intervention, and somewhat effective for institutional crises and post-crisis intervention (p. iv). Despite some challenges and issues in program delivery and monitoring, the evaluation suggests that PST is well regarded and empowering for prison staff, team members and individuals receiving support (p. iv).

2000. CSC: Results of an [Evaluation of the Peer Support Program at Nova Institution for Women](#). Kendra Delveaux & Kelley Blanchette (CSC).

This research report provides the results of a preliminary evaluation of the Peer Support Team (PST) at the Nova Institution for Women. The research design included both quantitative and qualitative methods of analyses (p. iii). The results showed that there was a lack of use of the PST program for 3 main reasons: lack of awareness of the program, fear of a breaching of confidentiality, and no personal need for the support services (p. iii). However, many women surveyed stated they would use the service in the future should they feel they need it, and if they found a team member whom they trusted (p. iii). The researchers found that there was a lack of understanding and awareness by staff and inmates about the program and specific details pertaining to its operations (p. iii). Issues such as staff confusion as to who team members were, how to facilitate peer support meetings, and inmates not knowing they had the ability to request a session, were identified (p. iii). Concerns were raised about the availability of staff to coordinate PST and the funding of PST as no monetary resources were allocated to the service (p. iii). Despite the noted concerns and issues with the program, positive gains were shown by women who did participate (p. iv). Personal benefits such as the development of problem/crisis-solving skills, better self-understanding, practical knowledge, and possible career-related experience/skills were shown to develop from the service (p. iv). Generally, the program was positively regarded by staff and inmates, and with recommendations for improvement, the program has the potential to be more widely used and successful (p. iv).

2001. LifeLine: A Historical Perspective. St. Leonard's House Windsor (SLHW).

St. Leonard's House Windsor (2001) provides a timeline for the evolution of the LifeLine project over the preceding 25 years. The document refers to the committee report (Donner Report, 1990) to provide background information and build the chronology of key events, such as integral reports, the first In-Reach Workers being hired, and expansions on the project (p. 1).

2004/2005. LifeLine In-Reach for Women in the Ontario Region. Debra Groves (Elizabeth Fry Society).

The report depicts the work that LifeLine services have been providing since 1991 and sets out the guidelines for LifeLine procedures in order to promote access, support, and increased ease for In-Reach Workers in providing assistance to female Lifers (p. 1). It highlights

the merits of the program in holding the individuals accountable for the actions that led to their sentence, and ultimately increase public safety (p. 1). The report notes how LifeLine contributes improvements on existing practices, helping individuals return to the community as purposeful, law-abiding citizens (p. 1). Interviews conducted with Lifers were used to establish evaluation criteria for the service and note best practices (p. 2). The author contends that the interview process demonstrates to Lifers the ability for In-Reach Workers, the NPB and their Case Management Team to work collectively to effectively support the inmates (p. 2).

Groves also discusses concerns that arise when examining the women's institutions, such as the prisons' lack of meaningful employment, employment training, core programs, and the creation and perpetuation of a particularly restrictive environment that can hinder the progress of Lifers (p. 5, 6). The author contends that in many cases the conditions and lack of positive solutions in the women's prisons cause individuals to remain incarcerated longer than necessary (p. 6). The high success rate for participating parolees is correlated to the opportunity for individuals to work closely with In-Reach Workers and their Case Management Team, and to be guided through the corrections and parole processes (p. 6). In concluding the report, the author emphasizes the prioritization of "success of the clients" as an In-Reach Worker (p. 8). LifeLine services are depicted as those that support individuals to best serve and cope with the challenges that accompany their mandated sentence (p. 8). The author's first-hand experiences provide insight into the application of the services and provides a unique perspective of LifeLine. Despite the challenges faced by Lifers, females, in particular, Groves remains optimistic for the continued growth of LifeLine and for its ability to assist these individuals to serve their sentences and reintegrate into society positively and productively, fulfill individual goals, and create a better future for all incarcerated females (p. 8).

2009. [CSC Evaluation Report: LifeLine Program, Evaluation Branch, Policy Sector.](#) Michael Olotu, et al.

2009. [SCC Rapport d'évaluation: Programme Option-Vie, Direction de l'évaluation, Secteur des politiques.](#) Michael Olotu, et al.

The purpose of the evaluation report was to establish the relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness of LifeLine. Stakeholders from various interest groups such as the Citizen Engagement, Women Offenders Sector, Security Branch, Institutional Reintegration Operations, regional representatives, and the National Parole Board, among others, were consulted in developing the evaluation strategy. The surveys and interviews used allowed the researchers to acquire knowledge and feedback about LifeLine services from those who had first-hand experiences with it. Data from CSC's Offender Management System and Citizen Engagement Branch was also collected and reviewed. Reviews of relevant documentation (e.g. Statement of Work and LifeLine annual reports), CSC policies, both government and non-government publications and further reports were also reviewed in order to conduct the evaluation. As a result, 14 findings are listed as well as 13 recommendations for moving forward with the LifeLine Project.

The findings were overwhelmingly in favour of LifeLine, but it was noted that there were no minimum standards and great variability for the meetings between Lifers, In-Reach Workers, and case management staff. It was also found that there is lack of quantitative data on the correctional results of the program, and the public engagement activities were not being systematically recorded or assessed. The report provides recommendations to enhance existing features of LifeLine and maximize the benefits of the program for the clients. Recommendations

include, but are not limited to, increasing CSC staff awareness of the program, developing strategies to ensure the spiritual and cultural needs of Indigenous offenders are being met, ways to broaden the scope of service, and ensuring that all aspects of the program are being appropriately monitored for assessment of efficacy.

2010. CSC Research Report B45: [A Preliminary Investigation of Institutional Outcomes for LifeLine Clients](#). Shannon Gottschall & Marsha Axford (CSC).

2010. SCC Rapport no. B-45 [Examen préliminaire des résultats en établissement des clients au programme Option-Vie](#). Shannon Gottschall & Marsha Axford.

This report depicts the institutional outcomes for clients of the LifeLine Project. As previous research on the efficacy of LifeLine has primarily been measured through qualitative data collection, the studies conducted by Gottschall and Axford used quantitative measures to gauge success. The researchers aimed to determine whether participation in LifeLine services affected overall risk and dynamic needs, adjustment to the institution, and if the amount of time using services related to institutional outcomes. The first study compared Lifers in prison between August 2007 and January 2010 who participated in the LifeLine versus Lifers who did not. Data was extracted from the Offender Management System to compare the individuals' dynamic and static factors. The researchers used both the Offender Intake Assessment (OIA) and the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis (DFIA) to provide information. The results indicated that neither group was involved in major institutional incidents (as a perpetrator or victim), but those who participated in LifeLine were significantly less likely to be involved in minor institutional incidents. The researchers also found that on average, those who participated in LifeLine were put into segregation less frequently.

The second study carried out looked only at clients of LifeLine services and whether the length of time affected the institutional outcomes noted in the first study. The data used for the study was extracted from the Offender Management System to compare the low use group and high use group. When comparing the two groups, it was found that there was no significant difference in terms of involvement of major or minor institutional incidents or institutional outcomes, but the trends were generally positive for program clients. Although there was not a statistically significant difference between client Lifers versus non-client Lifers in the likelihood to end up in involuntary segregation, a correlation was found connecting the use of LifeLine to the decreased length of time once in segregation. The trends support the positive impacts of LifeLine, but the authors acknowledge that the data may be affected by the inherent nature of LifeLine clients who were willing to participate in the study, and the varying quality of the data received from each region. The results show the possible benefits of LifeLine, but also highlight the need for further data collection that is more detailed and accurate.

2010. Lifer Resource Strategy: Facilitator's Module. Michel Gagnon & Michel Dunn (Maison Cross Roads). (Available in English & French).

In order to formalize service-delivery, in 2010 Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) funded a Lifer Resource Strategy, developed by community-based partners Michel Gagnon and Michel Dunn from Maison Cross Roads, Quebec LifeLine Service Contract Authority. The handbooks were created to guide Lifers through the stages of their sentence beyond the initial Awareness modules created by St. Leonard's Society of Windsor and the Canadian Training Institute in 2005 (p. 1). Gagnon and Dunn identified four major stages of the Lifer sentence,

grounded in research by others on the subject. These included: Adaption, Integration, Preparation for Release, and Re-integration into the Community (p. 1). To create the modules, the existing understandings and approaches used by In-Reach Workers were catalogued (p. 1). This was done in order to formalize the system so workers would have a clear understanding of what is required of them and be able to better manage their work (p. 1). It was hoped that new Lifers would become familiar with the LifeLine service during the Adaption stage, and continue their involvement with the program at each stage, not as a new intervention, but rather building on to the knowledge and skills acquired at the other stages (p. 1). The aim of all stages of the Strategy modules is to “motivate the Lifers to become personally and consistently involved in a process of healing, rehabilitation and reintegration” (p. 1). By doing this, it would help these individuals achieve the objectives laid out in their correctional plan (p. 1).

The authors emphasize that the modules do not duplicate work being done in existing programs provided in the institution, but rather highlight and complement the importance and value of participating in the programs set out in the correctional plan (p. 2). The program is designed so that Lifers can assess the progress they have made in different aspects of their lives, determine what areas still need work, and identify barriers or obstacles that may need to be addressed in order to progress further with a peer who has shared experience (p. 2). The unique ability of In-Reach Workers to empathize with the service recipients is identified as an integral element of service delivery (p. 2). It is intended that the modules will empower the Lifers to take control of their lives and engage in a process of self-knowledge, awareness of real needs, and various areas of personal development (p. 2, 3).

2012. Survey Results: Client Evaluation of LifeLine Services. Melissa Munn (St. Leonard's Society of Canada).

This report provides a summative evaluation of the LifeLine services following the federal government's cancellation of the program in 2012 (p. 3). The data for the report was obtained through surveys from 350 individuals who had participated in LifeLine (p. 3). The average survey client had been involved with the program for over 5 years and was still incarcerated at the time of the survey (p. 7). Both qualitative and quantitative measures indicated that the majority of clients supported the program and found it had positive impacts on their experience while imprisoned and once released (p. 3, 7). As the In-Reach Workers provided peer-based support, their ability to share similar life experiences with the Lifers was noted to be highly valuable (p. 3, 7, 17, 19). Direct quotations are provided to further demonstrate the support shown by clients (pp. 22-47). It was also found that there were inconsistencies in the services provided depending on the region and the available financial resources (p. 3). The author acknowledges that the data collected only represents a portion of the Lifers that were incarcerated at the time and disproportionally represents certain regions (p. 7).

2014. Literature Summary: [Promising Practices for Train the Trainer Peer Mentoring Workshop](#). St. Leonard's Society of Canada.

This literature summary was submitted to Public Safety Canada in March 2014 to support the development of the *Train the Trainer in Peer Mentoring* workshop. The summary describes peer mentoring as a concept and identifies the research that has contributed to the understanding of the best practices for peer mentorship. Peer mentoring is described as a

relationship between an experienced mentor and a less experienced/vulnerable mentee (p. 1). The goal of the mentor is to provide positive support, assist with growth and transition, and facilitate personal development for the mentee (p. 1). Peer mentorship is an important element of the LifeLine service, contributing to its success in assisting with the reintegration of people with life and long-term sentences (p. 1, 2). In the results of the research, three main components were identified as significant factors in developing an effective train the trainer approach: choosing the right trainers, using effective training techniques, and consideration of appropriate training structures and topics (p. 2-5). The Listener Scheme is referenced as a British example of how providing support to inmates can have positive impacts on their future, and demonstrates the effective use of training considerations made previously in the summary (p. 7, 6). The document acknowledges the need for cultural awareness and consideration in respect to Indigenous people, and consideration for the particular experiences of women (p. 6-9). Finally, the document lists the key components for an effective train the trainer program as suggested per research provided by the Correctional Service of Canada, the Department of Public Safety, and the Office of the Correctional Investigator and various other researchers in the field of peer mentoring and reintegration (p. 9-10). Key components highlight: choosing the right trainers; development of training sessions; timing considerations; and, core teaching concepts (p. 9-10).

Conclusion

The preceding reports and articles discussing the LifeLine concept highlight the great value it has provided, as well as the ongoing need for it as a service for the growing Lifer population. The concept was born out of the idea that Lifers have the potential to be successful in returning to the community as law-abiding citizens if given proper support, specialized programming, and resources. Despite some challenges and issues identified in program delivery, the reports and articles consistently provide positive evaluations of LifeLine and its efficacy towards increasing public safety, among other benefits. The program also supports prisoners to serve their time more meaningfully, achieve personal goals and growth, and positively reintegrate into society. All reports were optimistic about its continued development as a service.

CSC's investment demonstrated a recognition of LifeLine as an effective program that served an often forgotten or disregarded population. However, the opportunity to take advantage of measuring the ongoing program results was lost. As recently as 2015, [CSC has acknowledged](#) the benefits of peer-mentorship for women⁹. The preliminary reports outlined within this bibliography highlight that peer mentoring and In-Reach programs merit the opportunity to let new data show the good public safety results it is capable of achieving. Or, at the very least, that LifeLine holds a strong foundation from which to build a new program that can be measurable, meaningful, and effective for all who are involved with the justice system.

⁹ 2015, October 25. Women Helping Women: Peer Mentorship for Women Offenders. Correctional Service of Canada. Available: <http://lte-ene.ca/en/highlights/2015-10/women-helping-women-peer-mentorship-women-offenders>

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Appendix: Form 1

LifeLine – Form 1: IRW – Client Form

Attention: only significant contact concerning LifeLine clients shall be recorded. Significant, for the purpose of this form, refers to contact where a specific aspect of a client's case is discussed/addressed. This does not include contact for minor administrative matters (i.e. arranging a meeting). Asterisks' indicate mandatory fields. Thank You.

*Name of LifeLine In-Reach Worker (Family Name, Given Name): _____

*Date of Contact (yyyy/mm/dd): _____ / _____ / _____

*Method of Contact: ☐ In-Person ☐ Telephone ☐ E-Mail

*Time Spent (days/hours/minutes): With Client: _____ / _____ / _____

On Case: _____ / _____ / _____

With Group: _____ / _____ / _____

CLIENT INFORMATION

*Attendee(s) of Meeting/Contact:

☐ Individual Interview

☐ Offender Support Group

Client (Family Name, Given Name): _____

FPS#: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Sentence Type: ☐ Life ☐ Dangerous Offender

*Client's Residence:

Region: ☐ Atlantic ☐ Quebec ☐ Ontario ☐ Prairie ☐ Pacific

☐ Institution: _____

☐ Community:

☐ Community Correctional Centre ☐ Community Residential Facility ☐ Private Residence/Other

Specify: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

*Who was the Contact With? (Please select all that apply):

☐ Client(s)

☐ Other CSC staff

☐ Client Family/ Friend

☐ Lawyer

☐ Parole Officer

☐ Prison volunteer

☐ Psychologist/Psychiatrist

☐ Community contacts

☐ Clergy/ Religious/ Elders/ Native Liaisons

☐ Medical Staff/Physician/Nurse

☐ Your LifeLine Supervisor / Another In-Reach worker regarding this client

☐ Other (e.g., title/position/status/relationship to client): _____

LIFER RESOURCE STRATEGY (LRS) (Please select all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 1.1	What's happening to me?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 1.2	Understanding the prison community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 1.3	What about my family?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 1.4	Opportunities for me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 1.5	I can get through this
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 2.1	Taking control of your life and your sentence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 2.2	Relationships with others
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 2.3	Work and training
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 2.4	Time for yourself – sports and hobbies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 2.5	Health and drugs and alcohol addiction-sexuality
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 3.1	Review of your personal growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 3.2	Preparing for hearings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 3.3	First contacts with the community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 4.1	Living in the half-way house
<input type="checkbox"/>	Module 4.2	Giant leap into community: full parole

***What is the Main Function of this Contact? (Please select the function that best applies):**

- ☐ Work on LRS modules: content
- ☐ Crisis Support
 - ☐ Medical
 - ☐ Psychological
 - ☐ Family
 - ☐ Emotional
 - ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Relationship Maintenance/ General Support
- ☐ Judicial Review
 - ☐ Observer
 - ☐ Witness
 - ☐ Prepare for/Assist with written submission

Support for/Contribution to Correctional Plan (Please select all activities that apply):

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer | <input type="checkbox"/> Parole | <input type="checkbox"/> ETA/UTA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explain | <input type="checkbox"/> Explain | <input type="checkbox"/> Explain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work for/against | <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for/Assist with written submission | <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get settled | <input type="checkbox"/> Observe/ Assist in hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Review board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet at Community Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Escort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Training /Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Case conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss medical/psychological issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Suspension Intervention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifer Group Meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifer Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/ Activity/ Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Significant Activities: _____ | | |

Contribution to management of other key areas of need (please select all that apply):

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Marital/ Family Issues
- ☐ Substance Abuse
- ☐ Community Functioning/ General Living
- ☐ Personal / Emotional
- ☐ Associates/ Social interaction
- ☐ Promote Prosocial Attitudes