The IP-SIS Framework

Purpose

To support the delivery of equitable, trauma-informed and culturally responsive primary healthcare that meets the complex needs of imprisoned women with severe mental illness and promotes continuity of care beyond release.

Core Principles

Trauma-Informed Practice

- Recognise the impact of trauma.
- Prevent re-traumatisation.
- Support early intervention before crisis occurs.

Cultural Humility, Equity and Inclusion

- Address racial, cultural, linguistic and structural inequalities.
- Provide culturally responsive care and challenge discrimination.

Person-Centred Care

- Ensure women are listened to, informed and involved in decisions about their care.

Six Framework Domains

Early Identification and Intervention

Proactively identify mental health needs, hidden distress and vulnerability to support early intervention and prevent crisis.

Accessible and Equitable Care

Provide interpretation services, accessible information, longer appointments where needed, and support for women facing communication or cultural barriers.

Trauma-Informed Relationships

Build trust through compassionate, culturally humble and consistent relationships between women, healthcare staff and prison staff.

Joined-up and Relational Care

Strengthen communication and continuity between prison, community, primary care and mental health services, including release planning.

Information, Rights and Empowerment

Provide clear information about healthcare services, rights, choices and pathways to support self-advocacy and informed decision-making.

Peer, Community and Faith Support

Engage peer mentors, champions, faith leaders and community resources to strengthen engagement and wellbeing.

Key Policy Recommendations

- Embed trauma-informed care across women's prison healthcare services.
- Address cultural, racial and language inequalities through commissioning and service standards.
- Invest in interpretation and communication support as essential healthcare infrastructure.
- Improve communication and continuity of care between prison and community healthcare systems.
- Ensure lived experience remains central to service design, evaluation and implementation.

Anticipated Impact

Implementation of the IP-SIS Framework has the potential to improve access to care, reduce inequalities, strengthen continuity between prison and community services, increase trust in healthcare providers and improve outcomes for imprisoned women living with severe mental illness.

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