CHAPTER 2
THE INTEGRATED MODEL

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This paper was developed as part of a set of papers focused on the role of system stakeholders in reducing offender recidivism through the use of evidence-based practices in corrections.

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To facilitate the implementation of effective interventions in corrections, the Integrated Model emphasizes the importance of focusing equally on evidence-based practices, organizational development, and collaboration to achieve successful and lasting reform. The scope of the model is broad enough that it can be applied to all components of the criminal justice system (pretrial, jail, probation, parole, private/public, etc.) and across varying jurisdictions. It provides a framework for effective interventions within federal, state, county, local or private corrections systems.

The Integrated Model described in this report recognizes that simply expounding on scientific principles is not sufficient to guide the ongoing political and organizational change necessary to support implementation of evidence-based principles in a complex system. It requires the integration of seemingly disparate best practices from a number disciplines, a development that is gradually being recognized in the field of community corrections, in order to achieve better outcomes (Bogue 2002; Carey 2002; Corbett et al. 2000; Lipton et al. 2000; Taxman and Byrne 2001). Fundamentally it is designed to achieve lasting change in both practice and policy.

Three components form the Integrated Model for system reform. Each component of the integrated model is essential. Evidence-based principles form the basis of effective supervision and service provision. Organizational development is required to successfully move from traditional supervision to evidence-based practice. Organizations must rethink their missions and values; gain new knowledge and skills; adjust their infrastructure to support this new way of doing business; and transform their organizational culture. Collaboration with system stakeholders enhances internal and external buy-in and creates more holistic system change.

There are a number of reasons why the Integrated Model is a worthwhile long term investment:

- **The model is clearly evidence-based, having been developed from empirically tried and tested practices.** It does not require risky ‘trial and error’ approaches with offenders but instead builds on lessons learned from previous policy and practice. By adopting the model, employees are required to question and challenge the blind adoption of practices, countering a naïve adherence to the status quo, which often unintentionally does harm by producing poor results. So called ‘pop’ psychology is eliminated and there is greater consistency across organizations. Consequently, it
gives correctional employees a clear rationale and mission for the work they are doing.

- **The model provides for the demonstration of public value.** At a time of fiscal constraint it is necessary to invest limited resources wisely to ensure the best return on investment. The model is based on the premise that funding will be targeted on the interventions that bring the greatest returns. In the long term there should be significant financial savings from adopting policies and practices that have proven outcomes, and are worthy of public and political support.

- **The model fosters responsible practices and promotes accountability.** It ensures that employees are accountable for their actions and that correctional departments are more accountable to their local communities. In relations with internal and external stakeholders it also ensures that there is greater understanding and support for practices and decisions.

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| The Integrated Model is a systemic approach, and its implementation requires a critical review the way a system does business. Often, implementation of evidence-based practices focuses on the day-to-day procedures and practices within community corrections agencies. However, true systemic change requires reflection on the big picture: *are the policies governing corrections practice, include statutes, regulations, and judicial guidelines, in line with the evidence?*

Thoughtful review of policy and the implementation of evidence-based policy change can promote coordinated implementation, create a sense of urgency, and provide and avenue for holding system stakeholder accountable. Policy change can be complex, and change may take time, but the long-term impact can be significant.

Some examples of evidence-based policy change:

- Statutes requiring or encouraging reductions in revocation to prison or jail;
- Statutes requiring funding to be used for evidence-based programming;
- Statutes or administrative policies requiring structured responses to probation or parole violations;
- Statutes allowing for earned early release from incarceration or supervision for compliant behavior;
- Use of actuarial risk/needs assessment tool for supervision and case planning;
- Use of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils or other collaborative bodies for criminal justice system planning, decision-making, and resource allocation.

For more information on evidence-based policy change, please see the Policy Framework to Strengthen Community Corrections from the Pew Center on the States, Public Safety Performance Project (2008).

- **The model creates a learning system of informed policymakers, practitioners, and consumers.** They are more knowledgeable not only about what works in their field, but also about the effectiveness of their own practices due to regular review of
data. Consequently they are able to make better informed decisions that are likely to result in better outcomes.

Ultimately the model should result in improved measurable outcomes in terms of reduced recidivism, improved public safety, and improved social outcomes for offenders in relation to education, training and employment, housing, substance misuse and health needs. There are also additional improved organizational outcomes as a result of effective collaboration with stakeholders, higher quality data and information sharing, better decision making and a more productive organizational culture. The community also benefits from a collaborative approach, where the perspectives of system stakeholders, victims, and the public are taken into consideration when making public safety decisions. The subsequent sections of this paper describe the components of the integrated model in detail, and their role in creating and sustaining evidence-based organizations and systems.