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Can Collaboration Provide Integrated Services for Prisoners in Norway?

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Abstract

In this article, my contention is that Norway's criminal justice policy is increasingly based on principles taken from positive criminology. This means that the correctional service places strong emphasis on establishing collaboration with the local authorities (the municipalities) in order to offer convicted persons integrated services, both during and after serving their sentences. I also point out that positive criminology's principle of viewing convicted persons as unique individuals with individual problems and resources – problems to which there are rarely clear-cut solutions – means that these problems are perceived as 'wicked problems'. A recommended approach to 'wicked problems' is to establish collaboration between the different service providers involved. The article describes the experiences gained from a pilot project that entailed offering a training programme to convicted persons with substance abuse problems. One of the goals of the project was to link the programme to an offer of integrated services after the sentence had been served. The experiences described in semi-structured interviews with 16 convicted persons, seven correctional service employees and three local authority employees was that it was difficult to put in place such an integrated service package. On this basis, I discuss the reasons why it was so difficult to achieve the desired collaboration, and I outline some proposals for how these challenges can be resolved in future.

Keywords

Correctional service; positive criminology; substance abuse; collaboration; Norway.

Introduction

This article focuses on services offered by the Norwegian correctional service in collaboration with this country's municipalities to convicted persons coping with substance abuse. Norway's system of government is organised into three tiers. Below the state there are two levels of local government: regional municipalities and local counties. The more than 400 municipalities vary in size from fewer than 500 inhabitants to more than 600,000. The correctional service is the state's responsibility; the municipalities are responsible for the provision of not only primary health and social services but also for convicted persons serving their sentences. The municipal comprehensive health and social services include housing, financial support, medical treatment,

substance abuse counselling and activity-based services. These are services that a large proportion of convicted persons need after serving their sentences.

In 2013 roughly three-quarters of all inmates in Norwegian prisons were serving sentences that are less than three months (Statistics Norway 2015). Those who were sentenced to imprisonment came from markedly poorer backgrounds than others in the population. Thirty per cent of convicted persons had been in contact with the child welfare service during their upbringing, and two-thirds reported having experienced difficult conditions during childhood, including because of parental substance abuse or because they were not followed up by parents, school and/or social services in the expected manner. Earlier statistics discussed by Skardhamar and Telle (2009) indicated that inmates had lower educational levels than others, 70 per cent were unemployed, and around 30 per cent did not have their own housing. Friestad and Skog Hansen (2004) found that inmates also had other problems with living conditions: for example, 40 per cent lived below the poverty line, 50 per cent had chronic illnesses and, not least, almost 70 per cent had substance abuse problems. Recent surveys of inmates' mental health showed that 70 per cent of inmates had a mental illness, although the figure for substance abuse, at just under 60 per cent, was lower than previously reported (Cramer 2014; Friestad and Kjelsberg 2009). Another important result from these surveys was that around 60 per cent of inmates could be diagnosed with comorbidity (defined as two or more mental illnesses and/or substance abuse problems). The link between substance abuse and crime means that the chances of criminal activity are 2.8 to 3.8 times higher for persons with a substance abuse problem than for other groups in the population (Bennett, Holloway and Farrington 2008). There is, therefore, good reason to believe that a reduction in substance abuse can help to reduce criminal behaviour (Koehler, Humphreys, Akoensi et al. 2013).

Background

Over time, the correctional service in Norway has come to place more emphasis on theories that focus on what can help people to become law-abiding rather than on looking at what leads to crime (Hansen, Dahl and Samuelsen 2014). These theories are often gathered under the general heading of positive criminology. In Norway, the theories of desistance and restorative justice in particular have been given a central place. Positive criminology primarily focuses on what contributes to someone desisting from criminal behaviour for good, or at least for a period of time (Ronel and Elisha 2011). Further, Ronel and Elisha (2011) describe positive criminology as a perspective that unites a number of theories, models and approaches. In their opinion, this perspective fills a vacuum and can contribute to expanding and developing this new field of criminology. Positive criminology is not intended to refute or replace classical criminological approaches but rather to represent a different aspect in order to achieve complementarity. This means that it is equally interesting to counteract criminogenic factors as to take account of processes rooted in theories of desistance and restorative justice. Convicted persons must be seen as individuals with different problems, different wishes and, not least, different 'routes' out of crime (Ronel and Segev 2014). Measures taken in relation to individual convicted persons cannot, therefore, be based largely on standardised solutions but should instead emphasise individual solutions in which endeavours are made to utilise existing resources (Weaver and McNeill 2011).

One consequence of positive criminology viewing individuals as holistic beings is that the correctional service also sees a need for integrated services. The concepts of throughcare and aftercare are now used to describe how integrated services can be developed for convicted persons (Fox et al. 2005). Throughcare is described as the organisation of a coordinated and integrated service that starts as soon as convicted person comes into contact with the correctional service. It continues throughout the serving of his or her sentence until re-establishment in society, while aftercare comprises the services (housing, a job, treatment, and so on) that must be in place and must be offered upon completion of the sentence. Creating a

system of this kind is clearly easier said than done. A review of the experiences from six European countries shows that, despite good intentions, it is difficult to implement throughcare/aftercare in the European criminal justice context (MacDonald, Williams and Kane 2013). The experience is similar in Australia, where it is recommended to deal with the challenges by adapting measures to individuals and by integrating measures within and outside the correctional service (Kinner and Williams 2006).

Some concrete measures have also been initiated in Norway with a view to achieving better collaboration between the correctional service and external services. What is referred to as the 'reintegration guarantee' is probably the most comprehensive measure. It is a programme commitment on the government's part that it will work to ensure that convicted persons receive a satisfactory offer of help to be reintegrated into society.

There are several ways of organising collaboration on providing integrated services, depending on which problems are to be solved. We can describe two opposite ends of the problem spectrum: tame problems and wicked problems (Rittel and Webber 1973). Tame problems are problems that can be isolated individually; where there is a known connection between cause and effect; where there is agreement on what goals are to be achieved by the measures taken; and where it is possible to use established standards to find a solution. It is characteristic of wicked problems that the knowledge basis is incomplete or contradictory and that the different sub-problems are intertwined with other sub-problems. Goals and success criteria are also difficult to define (Einstein 2007; Rittel and Webber 1973; Weaver and McNeill 2011). As regards crime and substance abuse, our knowledge of what gives rise to crime or substance abuse is limited and we do not have precise insights into what helps people to cope with substance abuse problems or desist from crime. Crime and substance abuse are, therefore, wicked problems (Head and Alford 2013).

Tame problems, on the one hand, can be solved by resolving the different sub-problems separately, because the different solutions do not affect the solutions to the other problems. Integrated services can then be organised by the different service providers taking responsibility for one sub-problem each and solving them either sequentially or as parallel processes (Fineide and Ramsdal 2014).

Wicked problems, on the other hand, are interconnected in such a way that the solution for one sub-problem affects the other sub-problems. Similarly, we know that unemployment, lack of housing and education, poor finances, substance abuse problems and crime affect each other, and that the solution to one problem has consequences for the other problems. Because we lack clear knowledge about causes and effects, it is necessary for the different agencies involved to collaborate in trying to find a joint solution (Burnett and Appleton 2004; Weaver and McNeill 2011). The consequence of crime being perceived as a wicked problem is that there is greater focus on collaboration and integrated services (Ferlie, Fitzgerald, McGivern et al. 2011). The challenge for the correctional service is that only some of the problems that convicted persons have can be solved within the correctional service. Integrated services must be based, therefore, on collaboration with others, mainly located within the municipalities.

It is difficult to give a precise definition of collaboration. There are several factors, such as structure, process, roles and relations, which can be used to describe collaboration (Axelsson and Axelsson 2014; San Martin-Rodriguez, Beaulieu, D'Amour et al. 2005). One way of describing different forms of collaboration is to create a scale on which we place each factor in ascending order, from simple to complex collaboration, in the following way (Andersson, Ahgren, Axelsson et al. 2011):

1. Information exchange
2. Case coordination
3. Interagency meetings
4. Multidisciplinary teams
5. Partnership
6. Co-location
7. Pooled budgets

Information exchange is the simplest model, while pooled budgets, which will, to a large extent, contain elements from the other models, is the most complex model. In Norway, we have experience of organising trial collaborations in the correctional service in the form of projects (Schafft, Frøyland and Spjelkavik 2013; Sverdrup 2013). For instance, a project has been carried out in which the correctional service collaborated with external parties to ensure that convicted persons gained lasting employment after completing their education. Among other things, the project funds were used to pay salaries for employees from both the correctional service and external partners. The project had a pooled budget, the employees were co-located in the same office premises, all members of the project staff had a common goal, and the project had to report on how it succeeded in achieving the goal of providing an integrated and coordinated service. The reports from this project were unequivocally positive (Neumann and Pettersen 2013). The experience from a project of this kind cannot automatically be transferred to ordinary operations but it shows that more complex collaboration models actually work.

The goal must be to ensure that the measures implemented by the correctional service are integrated with the services provided by the municipalities (Kinner and Williams 2006). In the case I present here, one of the goals was precisely to create a link between the measures the correctional service was to implement and those of the municipal services.

The short programme RUS

The short programme RUS (where RUS equates with substance abuse) primarily targets those inmates serving short sentences or those on remand. The programme consists of two main elements: training and counselling that takes place during serving of the sentence; and planning where the ambition is to put in place follow-up in the form of integrated services immediately after release. The training and counselling component takes place at four group sessions over four weeks. During this period, participants are also offered individual counselling. The reason for carrying out the programme over four weeks is to make it possible to offer the programme to people who are serving short sentences or who are on remand. Many of those with substance abuse problems and drug or alcohol-related convictions are given short sentences. The participants are assessed or 'mapped' before starting on the programme to clarify what follow-up needs they will have after release. This mapping process gives the correctional service a basis on which to contact external service providers with a view to putting in place immediate follow-up after release. No other programmes in the correctional service have the same ambition of having follow-up in place immediately after release. It is this latter goal – of follow-up being in place after release – that is the primary focus of this article.

Data collection

Data collection and method

Based on a desire to capture participants' experiences of the programme, I chose to use semi-structured interviews (Danermark et al. 2003). I first conducted a group interview with the seven participants who had taken part the first time the programme was implemented. I assumed that, since the participants had sat together during four programme sessions and discussed fairly sensitive matters with each other, that they would be able to have an open

discussion with me as well. This did not work well. Although some interesting points of view emerged, it was difficult to get the participants to talk about how they had experienced the content of the programme and how it had been implemented. The consequence was that the rest of the interviews with the participants were conducted as individual interviews. A total of nine individual interviews were conducted with participants from three different rounds of the programme, in addition to the group interview with participants from the first round of the programme. For two of the rounds of the programme, the interviews were conducted roughly two weeks after its conclusion and included all the participants who were willing to take part and who were still in prison. Interviews were also conducted with a participant who had completed the programme six months earlier and who was still in prison when the participants in a later programme were interviewed. For practical reasons, it was the correctional service that was responsible for selecting the informants. Data were thereby collected from a total of 16 participants. The participants were all men aged between 20 and 50 years and with between 2 and 21 convictions. The individual interviews with the participants normally lasted for around 20 minutes; some were a little longer and others a little less.

Members of staff were also interviewed. A total of seven staff members were interviewed in three group interviews, and four in two group interviews. The three group interviews with staff each lasted for between an hour and an hour and a half.

I also interviewed three employees in a municipality who had experience of collaborative projects with the correctional service. All three worked in a large municipality that had received project funding from the state to establish collaboration with the correctional service and to follow up inmates after completion of their sentences. One of them had worked on a one-year project aimed at finding housing for homeless people released from prison in 2010–2011. She had also been employed by the correctional service for a year as a reintegration coordinator. Another was part of a two-year project that had just started (in March 2015). The latter had experience of following up some of the clients with whom she had established contact before they had been imprisoned. The interviews with the employees of the municipality each lasted for around 30 minutes.

All interviews were semi-structured and were recorded using a digital recorder. The sound files were transferred to a PC and listened to several times using the computer programme Olympus DSS Player. The overall impressions were noted down during the first listening. The sound files were then listened to again in order to identify which topics the participants emphasised. The condensation of meaning and categorisation were also first done directly from the sound files (Hansen 2007; Kvale 1997). Central sections of the interviews were transcribed but, for reasons of anonymity, information about informants' backgrounds (criminal career, substance use, social network, and so on), which many of the participants proffered voluntarily, was not written down. The texts were then categorised again. Through a process of identification and sorting of units of meaning, condensation and synthesising (Malterud 2012), I arrived at relevant statements about the need for and experience of collaboration between the correctional service and the municipalities.

Data presentation

The interviews with both participants and members of staff showed that collaboration with offering coordinated and integrated services was a challenge. It proved difficult to get the participants to describe what services they needed. There may be several reasons for this: for example, they might not have trusted me and, therefore, did not wish to reveal what needs they had; or they did not know what needs they could get help with. Some of the participants, however, were very clear about their need for integrated and coordinated services. One of the participants put it as follows:

I would like to have a clear offer of services when I get out ... I need structured follow-up when I get out.

Another told the following story to show how things might turn out if an offer was not in place immediately after he completed his sentence:

The last time I was inside, I had a job to go to and was expecting things to go well, but then I was released in the middle of the trades holidays and, before the holidays were over, I had started using drugs – so it didn't work out.

It is not just after release that the participants need help from external services. The following story illustrates this:

I have some debt – credit card debt. I had therefore arranged an appointment with a debt counsellor at the social security office, but I wasn't granted leave to go and meet him, and he can't come here. That's a problem – and in the meantime, my debt keeps increasing.

These are just a few selected examples that show that there is a need for assistance from agencies outside the correctional service, both during and after the completion of sentences.

Of course, the participants are not entirely without previous experience of the public help services before starting to serve their sentences. Even though a number of the participants had had close contact with and been followed up by various services before beginning their sentences, none of them reported that this contact was maintained while they were in prison. The participants were therefore unable to describe collaboration with municipalities.

Members of staff of the correctional service, however, could do so. That the participants have a need for external assistance was something that the programme managers became aware of prior to the programme commencement.

All the participants are mapped when starting the programme – others should also take part in this mapping. The mapping often identifies what needs the participants have in addition to the need to take part in the programme itself. It very often also identifies what follow-up needs the participants have after serving their sentence.

Here, we see that the correctional service is clear already from start-up of the programme that there is a need for collaboration with others. Unlike other programmes in the correctional service, the short programme RUS focuses from the outset on what help the participants need after completing their sentences. Two statements from members of staff illustrate this:

No other programmes in the correctional service are based on collaboration with services outside the correctional service, although more or less all of them should be.

In the programme itself, we place great emphasis on raising participants' awareness of what they want to do in future.

This focus on measures after release has consequences for the concerns of participants. One of the members of staff put it as follows:

Because the programme is concerned with the whole picture and follow-up, the participants also become more concerned with having an offer of services in place later.

It is thus not just staff who are concerned with putting an offer of services in place after release. However, it is the staff that must do the job of establishing contact with external services. How this is done and what challenges are encountered is described in the following statements:

As soon as we have accepted participants for the programme, the social adviser in this prison sends a letter to the municipality in question, informing them that this person will complete the programme. This means that, at least in some cases, we get the name of the relevant social worker and how he or she can be contacted.

The thing that has been a particular challenge is establishing contact with the municipalities – finding out who is the right person in the municipality in question.

In practice, therefore, it has been difficult to achieve the ambitions of this programme in terms of it being part of the provision of a coordinated and integrated service. Accordingly, the ambition level has been gradually reduced somewhat:

Our minimum requirement is that the participants are at least given a post-it note with the name of someone who can and will follow them up later.

One staff member described this challenge, expressing his concern as follows:

The challenge is that we do our bit, but then others have to take over – who is going to take over the baton?

This statement illustrates to some extent what many people think: the most important thing is having someone there and ready when an inmate completes his sentence.

The three employees who worked in a municipality where collaboration had been established with parts of the correctional service had a different answer to this question. They all agreed that it was important to establish contact with the inmates while they were still serving their sentences. As one of them explained:

My focus has been on establishing and maintaining good, secure relations with convicted persons I was in contact with. Most convicted persons have previously had bad experiences with the help services and will, to a certain extent, test me and check whether I am also one of those adults who give up on and lose belief in them. Showing that you as a helper can be depended on in the relationship is important in terms of maintaining relations. It is also important to tell convicted persons that we wish the best for them and to communicate hope of a better life after they are released.

The feedback is clear, however, about the fact that it is not always easy to establish the contact that it is seen as necessary to achieve. One member of staff tells of how it is difficult to establish contact with inmates, even if it only involves a phone conversation:

It is difficult to make contact with the inmates. If I phone the prison, I am not allowed to speak to the inmate because the prison, for reasons of confidentiality, will not confirm that the person in question is an inmate. I therefore have to wait

until the inmate himself calls me back, but that isn't easy either, because the inmates have limited possibilities to make outside calls.

There are thus some practical challenges involved in establishing or maintaining contact with inmates while they are serving their sentences.

One member of staff – the woman who had experience from both a municipality and the correctional service – summed up what she felt was important as follows:

... that we meet the inmate in good time before release and have focus on good mapping and relations-building. We have to follow up the inmates closely in the period just prior to release and after release when they have found a place to stay. We must follow them up closely after that as well.

This is a municipality that has experience of collaborating with the correctional service through dedicated projects. They conclude fairly unambiguously that it is also important to have contact with inmates while they are serving their sentences. Only a few municipalities have received government funding for such projects, so there is reason to believe that the experience that forms the basis for this conclusion is not general.

Discussion

The short programme RUS is mentioned here because it has such a clear ambition to link activity in prison with follow-up after release. My experience from a number of other projects in the correctional service is that there is rarely such a strong emphasis on linking activity in prison with subsequent follow-up as there is in this example.

The data presented above show that, despite inmates having a need for follow-up immediately after release, the correctional service has difficulty putting such an offer in place. The feedback from the employees in the municipality that, through dedicated projects, has succeeded in establishing some contact with the correctional service shows that it is necessary to start this collaboration while inmates are still serving their sentences. The question is, therefore, why this is so difficult to achieve?

One answer to this question is that inmates' problems are dealt with too much as tame problems. People assume to a much too great extent that it is possible to solve the different problems separately. Even though the correctional service has been aware of the fact that inmates have a number of problems to deal with during and after serving their sentences, the measures they have been offered have not been coordinated. An important part of the services they are offered by the correctional service is organised in programmes. One important element of these programmes is that they are standardised, so that the services offered will be the same from one prison to the next (Maguire, Grubin, Lösel et al. 2010). The consequence of this is that they are neither adapted to differences between the different prisons nor to differences between inmates (Hansen, Arvesen and Tonholm 2013). Positive criminology's ambition of seeing inmates as holistic and unique individuals is, therefore, difficult to achieve. While it is true that the ambition of the short programme RUS was to ensure such an integrated approach, the rest of the correctional service and the municipality clearly failed to see that this programme had different ambitions. In the correctional service, it was, therefore, regarded in the same way as any other programme: something that did not concern anyone who was not involved in its implementation.

It also appears that implementation of the programme was based on the idea that the programme would first contribute to helping participants to cope with substance abuse problems, then others would take over. The statement, 'The challenge is that we do our bit, but

then others have to take over,' indicates that a process is envisaged in which there is a clear division of tasks and responsibility. The result is a process-oriented offer of services where each service is provided independently of each other and where it is important to ensure that everyone adapts in a way that means that the services are connected in a chain (Fineide and Ramsdal 2014).

It is also important to recognise that incentives are lacking for the development of integrated services. Both the correctional service and the municipalities report on their activities in relation to delimited areas. This means, for example, that the correctional service is measured in relation to the measures it has implemented and that it can report that it has implemented a programme without questions being asked about whether the participants were followed up. This kind of reporting contributes to a focus on limited measures and not on offering integrated services (Ketelaars 2011).

In addition, we have seen that there are a number of practical challenges for municipal staff relating to having access to prisons and contact with inmates. Municipal staff do not come up against these obstacles if they wait until an inmate has completed his sentence, in which case it can be tempting to postpone making contact until after the inmate is released. In addition, some inmates have plans to move to a different municipality than the one they lived in when they were imprisoned. It can be unclear to people in this category which municipality is responsible for follow-up after they are released.

There are, therefore, a number of factors that can explain why it is difficult for the correctional service to get municipalities to follow up inmates while they are serving their sentences. I believe, however, that the biggest problem is that neither the correctional service nor the municipalities acknowledge to a sufficient extent that positive criminology entails accepting that inmates represent wicked problems. Positive criminology can entail placing emphasis on removing criminogenic factors but it also entails emphasising what is important to the individual in the process of finding a way out of crime. It is necessary, therefore, to develop an integrated service based on active collaboration between the correctional service and the municipalities (Kinner and Williams 2006; Ferlie, Fitzgerald, McGivern et al. 2011).

I have pointed out that it is not always easy to define what is meant by collaboration. In the case that I have taken as my reference point – the short programme RUS – it appears to have been assumed that collaboration is about exchanging information. That is the simplest form of collaboration on the scale presented above (Andersson, Ahgren, Axelsson et al. 2011). Experience shows that this is not sufficient in this context. The next step on the scale I presented is case coordination. In such a model, a service provider is given responsibility for identifying needs, helping to establish measures and planning and coordinating the progress of service provision. In the correctional service, it is contact officers who are assigned this responsibility. The contact officers do not usually have a social work background and therefore have limited knowledge about what services the municipalities can offer (Schafft et al. 2013). We also know that it can be problematic for inmates to raise some of the challenges they experience with correctional service staff. To what extent these members of staff represent punishment or help can be unclear to inmates, and this can give rise to uncertainty (Kolind et al. 2010). Among other things, the possibility of being granted leave from prison and early release is influenced by whether the inmate is offered satisfactory services outside the prison. This can lead to inmates omitting to disclose their problems to correctional service staff. The mapping that was carried out initially in connection with the short programme RUS was not communicated to the contact officers and, since they apparently do not carry out such mapping themselves, the contact officers do not take steps to ensure that inmates receive immediate follow-up after their release. In the present case, none of the inmates could report follow-up on the part of their contact officers.

In my opinion, the first step on the road to integrated, coordinated services being provided by the correctional service and the municipalities for inmates with substance abuse problems is to appoint a case manager from the municipality while the inmate is still serving his sentence. This municipal case manager must primarily communicate with the inmate and, if relevant, with the inmate's contact officer, and clarify what his needs will be after serving his sentence. Over time, it has become increasingly apparent that the individual relationship between client and professional is important (see, for example, Redko, Rapp, Elms et al. 2007). It takes time to build such a relationship and it can, therefore, be a challenge for those who are tasked with following up a convicted person post-release if such a relationship is not established until after his release. Moreover, it can be expedient for the municipality as well that those who are to follow up an inmate after his release to establish a relationship with the inmate while he is still serving his sentence.

In many situations, of course, it is not a case of establishing a new relationship. Many convicted persons already have a relationship with the municipal help service, for example. When they start serving their sentence, contact with the municipality appears to cease. This means that the municipality no longer has information about the inmate's development and what service needs he has upon release. An arrangement whereby the municipal help service maintains close contact with the inmate during serving of the sentence therefore appears to be expedient in relation to being able to offer adapted services.

In many cases, interagency meetings will also be necessary. If an offer of services is to be put in place that, in line with the principles of positive criminology, is based on a need for services that contribute to the convicted person being integrated as well as possible into society, meetings will be necessary between the correctional service and the case manager, and between the case manager and various municipal services. This will make it possible to exchange information and consider different alternatives (Hudson 2004). Because we are dealing here with wicked problems, such meetings will also be relevant to hold while the convicted person is still serving his sentence in order to clarify goals and how they can be achieved through the services provided by the municipality (Kinner and Williams 2006).

In order to ensure that both the municipality and the correctional service have sufficient incentives to give priority to the work of putting in place a coordinated and integrated service for convicted persons, it may be expedient to establish reporting arrangements that entail documenting these efforts (Ketelaars 2011). When specially funded collaborative projects have been carried out, there is reason to believe that their success can also be explained by the fact that such projects are required to report on how it has been possible to achieve such integrated services.

The strongest incentive for this type of arrangement should, nonetheless, be that collaboration of the kind I have described between the correctional service and the municipalities can have a number of benefits for both parties. A programme for coping with substance abuse problems of the kind described here can be an example of how collaboration can be helpful for both the correctional service and the municipalities. Firstly, it is positive for the municipalities that convicted persons are given help to cope with their substance abuse problems. Secondly, it is good for the municipalities to be able to communicate with convicted persons while they are serving their sentence. The municipalities then know where the convicted persons are and thus are spared the problem of prisoners not attending appointments and difficulties associated with finding them (see, for example, Hansen and Landsnes 2013; Hansen and Ramsdal 2006). In addition, convicted persons are expected to be drug-free while serving their sentence, and this makes communication easier than if they are using heavily. It is, therefore, also most effective for the municipality that it has a service in place immediately after inmates complete their sentences. For the correctional service, it is also an advantage if a service is in place after their release. Firstly, it means that the programme for coping with substance abuse problems can be

followed up and that those who have participated do not return directly to their old drug *milieu*. Secondly, the chances of the programme leading to a reduction in recidivism are greater if convicted persons are given satisfactory follow-up after completing their sentence.

Summary

In this article, my contention is that Norway's criminal justice policy is increasingly based on principles taken from positive criminology. This means that the correctional service is more aware that it is expedient to both focus on each convicted person's individual needs and establish collaboration with others – primarily the municipalities.

The problems that are typical for convicted persons with a need for coordinated and integrated services are those to which there are rarely simple solutions: this means that they are 'wicked problems'. A recommended approach to wicked problems is to establish collaboration between the different service providers involved. The article describes the experiences gained from a pilot project that entailed offering a training programme to convicted persons with substance abuse problems. One of the goals of the project was to link the programme to an offer of integrated services after they had served their sentences. Unfortunately, such collaboration proved difficult to establish. My explanation for this is that both the correctional service and the municipalities appear to regard convicted persons' problems as tame problems that can be solved separately and sequentially. I recommend, therefore, that there is recognition and acceptance that they are wicked problems without clear-cut solutions and that collaboration be established in the form of information exchange, case management and interagency meetings between the correctional service, the municipality and the convicted person early during the latter's serving of his sentence.

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