



FEB 20 2019

MR. TOM BEAULIEU
MLA, TU NEDHE-WIILIDEH

Oral Question 571-18(3):
Impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder on the Justice System

On February 14, 2019, you asked a question in the Legislative Assembly regarding the impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) on the justice system and its prevalence within the Corrections system.

Although the Corrections Service does not currently track the prevalence of FASD within the Corrections system, the importance of working with inmates and offenders with complex needs is fully recognized, and ongoing FASD awareness education has been provided to Corrections staff since 2006. Securing an FASD diagnosis is a complex process, may not capture the full spectrum of challenges faced by an individual with complex needs and is not required to access services and programs within the Corrections system.

Individuals with complex needs within the Corrections Service require supports appropriate to their needs and circumstances. Such supports to improve participation in criminogenic programming and functioning are offered to those under the care and supervision of the Corrections Service. Offenders in correctional facilities who are unable to participate in criminogenic programming due to cognitive limitations may be considered for a program equivalency plan. In such cases, the case manager in consultation with a correctional psychologist may establish an alternative individual program for the offender on a case by case basis.

The Corrections Service utilizes mental health screening tools for men and women to identify and address potential mental health issues and cognitive challenges presented by inmates and offenders. Corrections Service staff working in correctional facilities and in probation offices have been trained in Mental Health First Aid. This training helps staff to recognize the signs and symptoms of common mental health problems, as well as equip them to provide assistance and make referrals to ensure concerns are addressed with health professionals.

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The Department of Justice continues to explore effective and innovative approaches in programming to meet the underlying needs of offenders in NWT Corrections and would like to thank you for your interest in this very important initiative.



Louis Sebert
Minister of Justice

- c. Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
- Mr. Martin Goldney, Deputy Minister, Justice
- Mr. David Hastings, Legislative Coordinator