

# N E B R A S K A

# JAIL BULLETIN

JULY/AUGUST 1999

NUMBER 148

The *Jail Bulletin* may be used as a supplement to your jail in-service training program. If officers study the material and complete the attached "open book" quiz, they may receive **one hour of credit**. The bulletin and quiz may be reproduced for staff use as necessary. **We welcome any material you would like to contribute to the "Jail Bulletin"**.

## MANAGING MENTALLY DISORDERED INMATES PART V

### Corrections Officers Responsibilities

#### COUNSELING SKILLS WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO WORKING WITH MENTALLY DISORDERED INMATES, CONTINUED:

**D. Asking:** Asking as a means of getting information is a skill that most detention staff have mastered.

Knowing how and when to ask the questions requires skill. More important, the intent of the question should be the major factor in determining whether questions are necessary.

The intent of all questions should be to get basic necessary information and to find solutions to problems or issues.

It is generally not useful and can be harmful to ask rhetorical questions as a way to prove a point ("Is someone in the room not following my directions?") or to ask questions that satisfy the adults

curiosity but do not pertain directly to issues or specific problems that the staff can address.

A pattern of questioning can also serve to re-focus inmates on certain topics. This may be useful for delayed inmates who need frequent reminders, but may not be useful for depressed or traumatized inmates since it continues to reinforce the painful memories or hopeless thinking.

MOST USEFUL:

Substance effected  
Psychotic  
Learning/Development disorders

LEAST USEFUL:

Depression  
Stress/Anxiety

**E. Directing:** Giving directions as a counseling skill helps to focus the inmate towards talking or thinking in a direction that is positive. This skill can broaden the inmate's perspective on a problem by examining an issue from alternative points of view. In this way the staff can help the inmate focus on important issues that he/she can take action on and de-emphasizes other issues that may be important but are not within the staff or inmate's ability to solve. Focusing may include the staff selecting one issue among many and directing the inmate to write or address solutions about that one issue. For example, an inmate may be very depressed that their drug problem will cause her to lose custody of her child. Directing the inmate to write down three steps she needs to take to get into a drug and alcohol program may be a more effective management strategy than listening for hours about how worried and depressed the inmate is.

MOST USEFUL:

Depression  
Stress/Anxiety  
Substance effected  
Learning/Developmental disorders

LEAST USEFUL:

Psychotic

**F. Confronting:** Confronting is a "challenge" for both the inmate and the staff. Confrontation is not effective if it alienates or escalates the inmate. The task of confrontation is to facilitate individual's moving beyond their immediate impulses and needs and to help them to realize that they have more potential. Knowledge and skill with confrontation includes the ability to assess the inmate's emotional and developmental levels and to chose appropriate ways of pointing out behaviors or thoughts that cause the inmate problems. Confrontation is not arguing when angry, having ultimate control because you are the staff, or having the final word.

MOST USEFUL:

Learning/Developmental disorders  
Substance effected Psychotic

LEAST USEFUL:

Depression  
Stress/Anxiety

**G. Observing:** Observing is the art of paying attention to what you see and hear, rather than what you know. In other words, don't pay attention to the information previously learned. By observing the staff can respond to the inmate. Observation skills enable the staff to note and understand inmate's behavior and their patterns of descriptions of key situations. This will help the staff to choose useful interviewing skills and counseling interventions to facilitate inmate's coping and adjustment. Staff must observe inmates both verbally and non-verbally in order to use more active counseling skills such as confrontation.

MOST USEFUL:

Depression  
Substance effected  
Stress and Trauma  
Psychotic  
Learning/Behavioral  
Others

LEAST USEFUL:

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- ! Try to ascertain by observing and talking to the inmate what best explains multiple impaired behaviors.
- ! Allow your knowledge of what motivates or drives the behaviors to suggest an effective management strategy.
- ! Know that effective group control in large part lies in your relationships with individuals and your ability to manage individuals in a group setting.
- ! Increase your knowledge about which symptoms are short term and which are long term.

- ! Be able to determine which behaviors can be managed and which must be ignored.
- ! Be able to determine which external/environmental stimulants increase the severity of the symptoms or maladaptive behaviors.
- ! Monitor your own progress with the inmate to determine what is working and what is not. Be flexible and able to change what is not working.
- ! Make the inmate a partner in the program as much as possible and allow the inmate's input into what will or won't work.
- ! Utilize coworkers, volunteers and professional staff as much as possible in all aspects of management, including monitoring the progress of a program. Consult a delegate in order to preserve your time and creativity.
- ! Be aware of illness or behaviors that are personally distressing to you and learn to increase your reliance on others when managing those inmates.

## **SUMMARY**

**BRIEF REVIEW:** At this point in the training we have:

- ! Learned how important it is for the safety of the facility that staff be knowledgeable about inmates with mental disorders because this knowledge makes you aware of what the risks are and therefore what the management priorities need to be.
- ! Learned what "mental disorder" means.
- ! Looked at five broad subtypes of disorders (Depression, Substance effected, Stress/Anxiety, Psychosis and Learning/Developmental disorders).
- ! Looked briefly at specific diagnoses under these broad subtypes.
- ! Learned to identify what behaviors we may be observing may be reflected to a mental disorder type.

- ! Learned that when we believe that an inmate's behavior or thinking is affected by a mental disorder, the most important way to document or refer this inmate to others is to be able to accurately report on the inmate's mood, specific behaviors and specific situations.
- ! Reviewed specific behaviors and moods associated with certain types of mental disorders.
- ! Reviewed some simple skills which most staff already know and when these skills are most and least useful.

Material prepared by staff of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. If you or your agency wish to contribute to the ***Jail Bulletin*** or have a special subject to be addressed through the bulletin, please contact: Jail Standards Division, P.O. Box 94946, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-94946, Telephone 402-471-3710, FAX 402-471-2837.

The contents of the ***Jail Bulletin*** represent the views of the various author(s) and do not necessarily reflect official views or policies of the Nebraska Crime Commission or the Nebraska Jail Standards Board.

JULY/AUGUST 1999

# QUIZ

NUMBER 148

Nebraska Jail Standards require that jail staff receive eighteen (18) hours of in service training each year. The Jail Bulletin may be used to supplement in service training if an officer studies the bulletin, completes the quiz, and this process is documented by the jail administrator for review during annual jail inspections. **CREDIT: One Hour credit for jail in service training requirement.**

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**SUBJECT: MANAGING MENTALLY  
DISORDERED INMATES  
PART V**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which of the following are counseling skills that may be employed in detention facilities? (circle those that apply):
  - a. Directing
  - b. Asking
  - c. Responding
  - d. Confronting
  - e. Observing
  - f. All of the above except c
  
2. According to the material, which of the following counseling skills is least useful for inmates exhibiting symptoms of depression and stress/anxiety? (Circle those that apply):
  - a. Asking
  - b. Silence
  - c. Confronting
  - d. Posturing
  - e. All of the above
  - f. Only a and c above
  
3. Observing is the art of paying attention to what you see and hear rather than what you know. (Circle one):
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. With "asking" as a counseling method, the intent of all questions should be to get basic information and to find solutions to problems or issues.(circle one):
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. Directing is a counseling skill that is most useful for those who have symptoms of depression, stress/anxiety, substance effects and learning and developmental disorders.(circle one):

- a. True
- b. False

**Answer sheets should be retained by the Jail Administrator.**

## **QUIZ**

**(Answers)**

Nebraska Jail Standards require that jail staff receive eighteen (18) hours of in service training each year. The Jail Bulletin may be used to supplement in service training if an officer studies the bulletin, completes the quiz, and this process is documented by the jail administrator for review during annual jail inspections. **Credit: One Hour credit for jail in-service training requirement.**

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**JULY/AUGUST 1999**

**NUMBER 148**

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**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Observing is the art of paying attention to what you see and hear rather than what you know. (Circle one):
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4. With "asking" as a counseling method, the intent of all questions should be to get basic information and to find solutions to problems or issues.(circle one):
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5. Directing is a counseling skill that is most useful for those who have symptoms of depression, stress/anxiety, substance effects and learning and developmental disorders.(circle one):
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**Answer sheets should be retained by the Jail Administrator.**

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