



Five years of achievements: Correctional Health Services (CHS) meets and exceeds its 2020 goals

In 2016, CHS, a division of NYC Health + Hospitals, developed a five-year plan to improve the quality of and access to care for people incarcerated in New York City. Despite contending with the COVID-19 pandemic, CHS met or exceeded all of these goals - expanding and enhancing health care services through a set of innovative and ambitious initiatives. Areas of focus included:

- **Mental Health Services**
- **Health Screening Services**
- **Substance Use Services**
- **Hepatitis C Treatment**
- **Geriatric and Complex Care Services**
- **Women's Health and Wellness**
- **Reentry Support**
- **Therapeutic Housing Units**
- **Telehealth**
- **System Improvements**



In 2020, CHS also expanded its civic engagement work in the jails, including a book drive and voter-registration efforts. Achieving the CHS 2020 goals drove improvements in patient care while bolstering the City's commitment to creating a better criminal justice system.

Mental Health Services

CHS exponentially expanded its innovative mental health program: **Program to Accelerate Clinical Effectiveness (PACE)** and voluntarily assumed management of all four **Forensic Psychiatric Evaluation Court Clinics (FPECC)** in the City.

Program to Accelerate Clinical Effectiveness (PACE) units, part of CHS' mental health therapeutic housing continuum, serve patients with serious mental illness who present a high risk of clinical decompensation in the jail. Each unit maintains a full complement of health staff, allowing for near-constant access to care and therapeutic interventions. Patients in PACE demonstrate improved medication adherence and health outcomes and reduced violence and rehospitalization.



Through the **Forensic Psychiatric Evaluation Court Clinics (FPECC)**, CHS conducts court-ordered psychiatric evaluations of adult criminal defendants in order to assess competence to stand trial and support pre-sentencing investigations. Systemwide improvements made by CHS significantly increased the quality and timeliness of evaluations.



PACE units quadrupled by spring 2021 (3 to 12)

- Increase in medication adherence
- Reduction in rehospitalization
- Reduction in self-harm

FPECC sites consolidated into one unified system

- Reduction in reporting time

Health Screening Services

Enhanced Pre-arraignment Screening Service (EPASS)

Through EPASS, CHS screens individuals in Central Booking for medical and behavioral health issues in order to identify patients with priority health issues; to avoid emergency department runs that disrupt court proceedings; and to support diversion and alternatives to incarceration. EPASS sites quintupled, from one to five, increasing the number of patients served across the City.

36,000

EPASS screenings conducted since 2016

12,000*

estimated prevented emergency room runs

Substance Use Services

Key Extended Entry Program (KEEP)

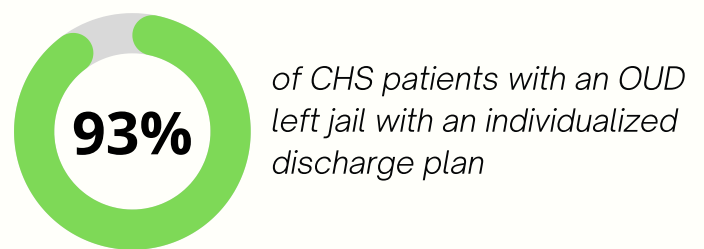
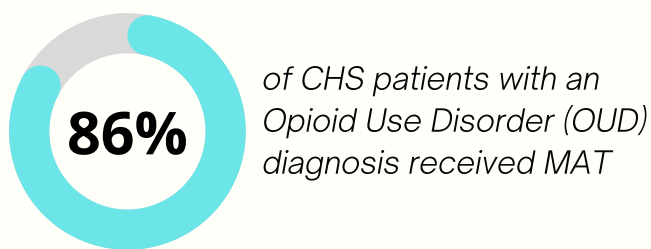
Through KEEP, the nation's oldest jail-based opioid treatment program, CHS provides methadone and buprenorphine maintenance to patients while they are in jail and provides linkages to community-based treatment and harm-reduction services to patients reentering their communities.

In five years, CHS:

- **Doubled** the number of patients on Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), including methadone and buprenorphine maintenance.
- Distributed more than **42,000 naloxone kits** to patients, staff, and the community.



In 2020:



CHS' targeted reentry services for this population include connections to harm reduction services, syringe exchange programs, and naloxone distribution sites in the community. CHS also provides referrals to community sites to initiate MAT or inpatient drug treatment.

Hepatitis C Treatment


In addition to initiating or maintaining treatment for substance use disorders, CHS initiates or continues treatment for hepatitis C – a disease that can cause permanent liver damage but can be cured if appropriately diagnosed and treated. CHS also provides referrals to community-based treatment for patients discharged prior to completing their treatment regimen.



In 2016, NYC Health + Hospitals partnered with Merck & Co. to obtain its hepatitis C drug at an unprecedented discounted price, enabling CHS to substantially increase the number of patients who start hepatitis C treatment while incarcerated.

3X

Since 2016, CHS has **tripled** the number of patients treated for hepatitis C while in custody

52  **222**

The number of patients initiating treatment in jail **increased** from **52** patients to **222** patients, from 2016 to 2019

Geriatrics and Complex Care Services

CHS established the **Geriatrics and Complex Care Services (GCCS)** to provide geriatric, palliative, and complex care to older and seriously ill patients. This unique model is the first jail-based program of its type in the country and serves the most vulnerable patients in the jail system. In addition to providing care management and discharge planning, GCCS supports CHS' efforts to secure compassionate release for patients with serious clinical conditions.



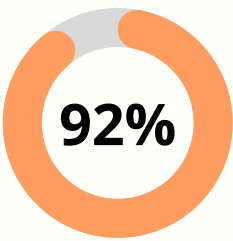
Women's Health & Wellness



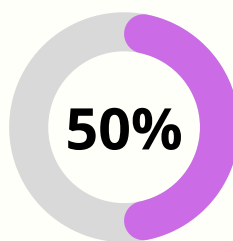
CHS expanded its health and wellness services for women and patients who identify as female. CHS implemented an intimate-partner violence initiative that includes screening, counseling, and linkages to community-based services. CHS also established an intensive treatment model to better manage medical/mental health co-morbidities for patients at the Rose M. Singer Center infirmary. CHS also implemented a healthy lifestyle therapy program that includes acupuncture and mindfulness trainings to help patients learn how to better cope with trauma, anxiety, and other stresses.

Reentry Support

In 2020:



of patients received core reentry services, focused on ensuring access to care post-release: Health insurance, Medication, Link to community health care



of patients qualified for and received personalized discharge planning services (available to patients based on specific clinical criteria)

1,557

patients received "walking medications"

2,851

patients had prescriptions sent to community pharmacies

1,016

patients were referred to community Opioid Treatment Programs

Community Connections Services (CCS), established in 2020, supports reentry preparedness for all patients during their incarceration, starting at intake. In addition to conducting harm-reduction screening, substance-use counseling, and Naloxone training, CCS supports patients' successful transition into the community by helping complete Medicaid applications and providing information about post-release services. CCS also maintains a dedicated phone line within the jails to enable patients to connect directly with the CCS team to discuss reentry needs.

By initiating reentry work during incarceration, CCS serves as a bridge to CHS' own reentry programs:

- **Community Reentry Assistance Network (CRAN)**
- **Point of Reentry & Transition (PORT) program**



To support patients' continuity of care and access to high-quality medical services in the community, CHS connects patients to the Point of Reentry and Transition (PORT) Practices clinics at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue Hospital and Kings County Hospital. The PORT clinics are staffed by CHS primary care providers along with hospital-based clinicians so that patients can receive care from the same providers they saw while detained, after release. Community Health Workers with lived experience serve as peer navigators, assisting patients with registration, scheduling and pharmacy needs. In 2020, the Bellevue PORT location expanded its scope of services to include psychiatric care, and both locations expanded their services to include telehealth visits, in response to COVID-19.

CHS' Portline enables discharged patients to access reentry support, including rerouting of medical scripts, over the phone.

448

PORTline calls made to follow up with patients about their prescriptions and to offer services

Therapeutic Housing Units

The efficacy of CHS' Jail-based Therapeutic Housing Units for patients with mental and physical health needs has been proven to help cushion the impact of incarceration. As part of the City's efforts to transform the criminal justice system, CHS has collaborated with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and other stakeholders to secure an enlarged footprint for these units in the design of the new borough-based jails.



Not waiting for the new jails, CHS secured approval and funding to build Outposted Therapeutic Housing Units at Bellevue and Woodhull. This pioneering concept will improve access to, and quality and dignity of care for incarcerated individuals with complex medical, mental health, and substance use needs, helping to bridge the gap in the correctional health care continuum between jail-based care and inpatient hospitalization - with a focus on individual treatment plans and reentry services.

Telehealth

CHS' telehealth services served an important role in 2020, providing connections among the jails and with hospital clinics and emergency departments to allow for urgent, specialty, and routine consultations without needing to transport patients between facilities. Recent telehealth expansions have enabled CHS to conduct more medical and mental health encounters from multiple housing areas, including the infirmary and substance-use units. In addition to provider-to-patient encounters, telehealth enables provider-to-provider consultations, both of which proved vital throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from using telehealth between and within jails, the technology facilitates access to services ranging from housing applications to health care placements upon discharge from custody.



CHS was the first division within NYC Health + Hospitals to improve access to care through telehealth, beginning in May 2016 at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue.

System Improvements



CHS built out its Patient Relations and IT Quality Control teams in order to strengthen the system's medical records and pharmacy operations and to, ultimately, better serve CHS patients. Improvements to the Finance division have strengthened CHS' strategic fiscal planning, budget development and monitoring, and procurement and contracting. CHS established additional systems to improve the accountability and performance of vendors and staff.

Civic Engagement

CHS staff have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to supporting their patients' agency and self determination. In addition to the expansion and enhancement of clinical services, 2020 brought increased civic engagement to the jails. CHS partnered with the Department of Correction (DOC) and leveraged its relationship with its patients to help them:



Complete the census



Register to vote



Request absentee ballots



Vote in the 2020 elections

700

patients registered to vote and/or
requested absentee ballots

CHS was also able to help patients apply for the Coronavirus Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act payments.



In 2020, CHS also held its first-ever book drive to collect book donations for the New York Public Library's Correctional Services program. CHS collected more than **2,000 books** from DOC and CHS staff, non-profit organizations, and local elected officials to provide to readers at DOC facilities and New York City reentry hotels.

CHS is committed to providing the highest quality care to its patients – many of whom present complex needs and require intensive services. This would not be possible without the strategic investments made by the City over the last five years. The CHS 2020 achievements are a testament to this commitment to the health and wellbeing of people in the care and custody of the City. As the City continues to advance criminal justice reforms, CHS will continue to provide innovative health care services in the jails will remain.

Thanks to each and every person in the CHS community for their heartfelt commitment and unwavering dedication throughout our first five years with NYC Health + Hospitals. We look forward with excitement to achieving new milestones.

