

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Segregation Intervention Initiative: An Examination of the Impact on Offender Outcomes

Participation in the Segregation Intervention associated with greater engagement in offenders' correctional plans.

Why we did this study

The Segregation Intervention (SI) initiative was implemented in 2011 across seven federal maximum-security institutions in Canada. The intent of SI is to motivate and support offenders in administrative segregation to change their problematic behaviour and successfully reintegrate back into the general offender population where they can work on their Correctional Plan.

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationships between participation in SI and outcomes following release from segregation.

What we did

Participants in SI who met the study criteria were compared to a matched historical comparison group on several outcomes for a 6-month fixed period of time following release from administrative segregation. Specifically, the SI group (N = 292) included offenders who had participated in the SI for a period of 6 days or more in the institutions offering the SI between November 1, 2011 and April 1, 2014, while the Comparison group (N = 292) included a matched group of offenders who spent at least 6 days in administrative segregation in the same institutions between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2011. Outcome measures examined included disciplinary charges, institutional incidents, return to segregation, participation in correctional programs or institutional employment, as well as time to, and duration of, segregation placement (among returns).

What we found

Overall, offenders who participated in the SI were found to be two times more likely to have participated in, and to have completed, one or more correctional programs and were 1.5 times more likely to be employed in the institution within six months of being released from administrative segregation than those in the Comparison group. However, the SI and Comparison groups did not differ in terms of institutional incidents, disciplinary charges, or returns to segregation. They also did not differ in the timing of their return to segregation or length of the segregation period when they did return.

We found that offenders in the SI group were more likely to be placed in segregation for their own safety whereas those in the comparison group were more likely to be segregated for the safety of the institution. The reason for segregation placement was found to be significantly related to measures of disciplinary charges as well as the time to return to segregation, whereas participation in the SI was not related. Further, there was a significant moderating effect of reason for segregation wherein it influenced the relationship between the groups and the presence of serious charges.

What it means

The results of this study revealed that the SI Initiative had no substantive impact on disciplinary charges or returns to segregation. The goal of changing problematic behaviour appears to have not been achieved. The positive results related to correctional programs and employment suggests that offenders were more engaged in their correctional plans after participating in the SI. However, these results may have been tempered by the fact that SI participants and the comparison group differed with respect to why they were placed in segregation. Taken together, the SI initiative does not appear to have achieved its intended purpose.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: S. Johnson, E. Talisman, & J. Weekes

