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MEDIA RELEASE

PRISON DRUG PROGRAM CHANGING INMATES LIVES

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A Sydney prison's drug-treatment program is having a significant impact on improving inmates' behaviour, which can reduce their chances of reoffending, according to a new report.

The study by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research found that male inmates' in-prison infractions fell by about 73 per cent after participating in the Intensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program at John Morony Correctional Complex.

Minister for Corrections Anthony Roberts said the NSW Government was committed to reducing reoffending and this includes ensuring more inmates participate in programs to address their offending behaviour.

"We want to build safer and stronger communities, and to do that we need to ensure inmates are getting the assistance they need to address their offending behaviour, reintegrate into society and stay out of prison," Mr Roberts said.

"Offenders have to want to change their behaviour and we have to give them the right programs to help them reach that point in their lives - IDATP is now proven to work."

IDATP is an intensive drug-and-alcohol treatment program delivered by Corrective Services NSW, for male and female inmates whose drug taking is linked to their offending behaviour.

The six to eight-month program includes therapy programs, health interventions and pre-release interventions aimed at addressing substance-dependence and offending behaviour. Participants must also engage in education or employment.

The program incorporates post-release reintegration support and access to a recovery maintenance group in the community.

CSNSW Assistant Commissioner, Offender Services and Programs, Anne Marie Martin, welcomed the BOCSAR findings showing improvements in inmate behaviour.

"Inmates in the IDATP undertake cognitive-behaviour therapy, group support, education and vocational training, and are assisted to resettle in the community," Dr Martin said.

“The program provides them with an insight into their substance abuse and dependencies and provides the practical support to help them live a life free of drugs and crime.”

The 12-month study looked at male IDATP offenders since 2012 and compared the rate of their prison misconducts before participating in the program, to the rate committed after.