

## Article 2

# What Works in Rehabilitative Security: Reducing Institutional Violence, Self-Harm Behavior and Staff Sick Leave



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### ***What Is Rehabilitative Security?***

***“Security and rehabilitation are most effective when they work together.*** When we have a secure prison where people feel safe, it gives them the headspace to make changes in their lives” (Bennett, 2021). On the other hand, persons in custody (PICs) with positive rehabilitative changes tend to follow prison rules. As such, security and rehabilitation are *enablers of each other.*

### ***Can Security and Rehabilitation Work in Parallel? Should Security Measures Make People Feel Punitive? Will A Rehabilitative Culture Be Too Soft?***

It is a myth that there is inherent conflict between security and rehabilitation. Security does not necessarily require a punitive approach with toughness and aggressiveness as this can create resistance and challenges that undermine security; and a rehabilitative culture does not mean being soft and indulgent. ***Rehabilitative security sets clear boundaries and maintains fair, respectful use of authority, thereby fostering cooperation, rule compliance, a sense of safety and rehabilitative changes among PICs.***

### ***Why Is Rehabilitative Security Important? What Research Tells Us?***

Rehabilitative security, which lays the foundation for a rehabilitative culture, can be a “tool” to achieve the departmental mission of “ensuring a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy custodial environment”. ***It benefits both staff and PICs who work and live in prison*** (Mann, Howard and Tew, 2018):

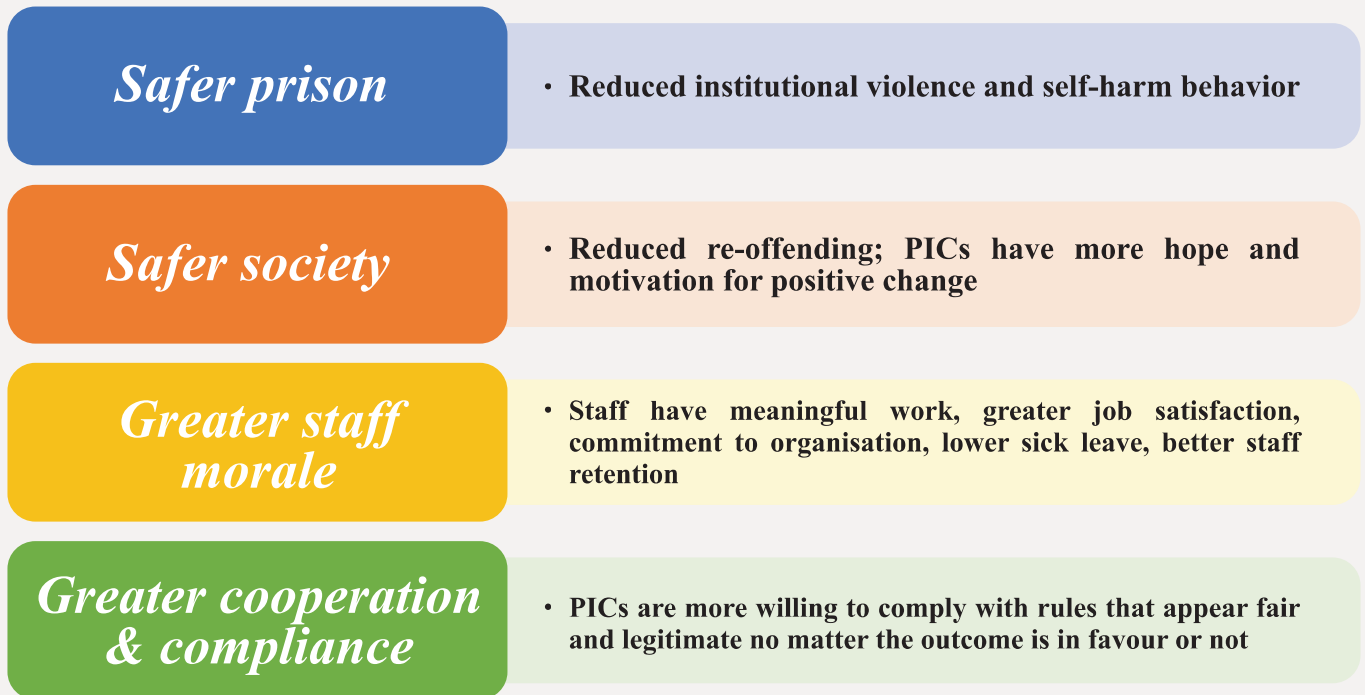


Figure 1. Importance of rehabilitative security

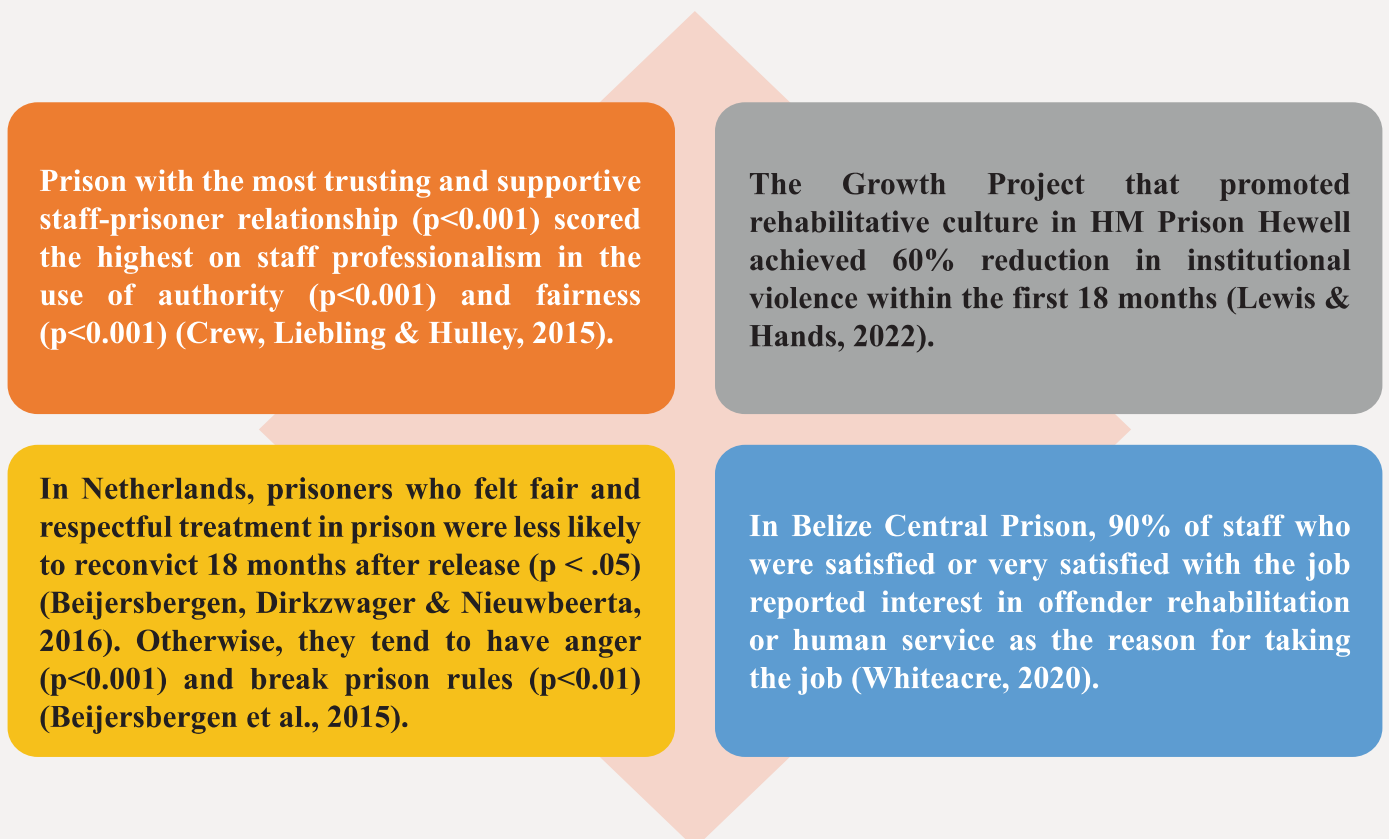


Figure 2. Effectiveness of rehabilitative security

## ***How to Practise Rehabilitative Security in Daily Work? (UNODC, 2015)***

The following three dimensions of security work together to balance security measures and rehabilitative efforts in correctional institutions:



Physical security utilises locks, gates, fences, surveillance cameras, etc. to ensure safety.



Procedural security involves rules, procedures and protocols like background checks, inmate counts and risk categorisation to guide prison operation.



Dynamic security emphasises staff-inmate interaction that promotes professional and positive relationships, as well as a regime engaged with purposeful, rehabilitative activities as a way to create an environment where safety is maintained through cooperation and trust with minimum tension and idleness in correctional institutions.

## ***How Does Staff Training Promote Rehabilitative Security?***

The following two training areas equip staff with the core evidence-based ‘tools’ or ‘skills’ to promote rehabilitative security (HMPPS, 2022):



***Procedural Justice*** (PJ) is about *how authority is used and decisions are made, with the goal of ensuring fairness to be felt*. Following the four PJ principles namely neutrality, voice, respect and trust, staff practising PJ will explain why the cells are being searched, treat every PIC consistently without bias, listen to and allow PICs to “tell their stories”, explain the principles of incentives schemes and reasons for disciplinary reports, etc. When ***PICs*** feel that decisions are made in a fair and just way, they ***are more likely to respect and cooperate with authority figures, and comply with the rules***.



***Five-Minute Intervention*** (FMI) enables correctional staff to ***transform the often-brief everyday conversations with PICs into rehabilitative opportunities to encourage changes or growth***, boosting the outcome of rehabilitative activities. FMI is not about having more conversations; it is about making those conversations more purposeful and effective. Having equipped with the 10 FMI skills, staff will ask thought-provoking questions like “what will happen if you do not proceed to the classroom”, tell PICs “you have the strengths to overcome challenges”, etc., thereby helping PICs to reflect on themselves, learn from experience and empower for positive change.

## *Which Leadership Style Promotes Rehabilitative Security? What is the Experience in Hong Kong?*

A total of 16 Retreat Workshops for institutions for young PICs involving 168 correctional staff were jointly conducted by Clinical Psychologist (Staff Service), Rehabilitation Units 1 and 2 in March and April 2024. The interactive and lively workshops featured with games, self-reflection exercises, relaxation practice



and mutual sharing in pursuit of self-improvement at work and in personal life have enabled the staff to widen their perspectives on job satisfaction and mental well-being, as well as learn and experience psychological self-care tips in a relaxed and mutually supportive atmosphere. With senior managers' *sharing, modelling, connection and co-creation with staff of all*

*levels*, the top three characteristics of “ideal institutions for young PICs” co-created by all the participating staff are “a safe, decent and human workplace with sufficient manpower” (28.5%), “cross-level and cross-institution communication” (13.8%), “a positive, supportive and collaborative culture” (13.4%). Other characteristics include “care for and transform young offenders that can take pride of”, “good balance of rehabilitation and supervision” and “work-life balance”.

## *Insights*

1

Rehabilitative security which effectively balances rehabilitation and security measures helps reduce institutional and self-directed violence, staff sick leave and PICs' re-offending, benefiting correctional staff, PICs and society as a whole.

2

For staff professionalism, staff training on “procedural justice” and “five-minute intervention” facilitates the practice of rehabilitative security in daily operation.

3

Leadership style that facilitates sharing, communication, connection and co-creation benefits correctional staff and PICs who work and live in correctional institutions.

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