

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Comparing Indigenous Gender Diverse Offenders with the General Indigenous Offender Population

Indigenous gender diverse offenders account for about half of all gender diverse offenders; a greater proportion of Indigenous gender diverse offenders participated in Indigenous specific interventions compared to the other two study groups.

Why we did this study

Recent research conducted by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) showed that almost half of self-disclosed gender diverse offenders were Indigenous.¹ This study compares the characteristics, sentence/offence information, and criminogenic risk and need profile of Indigenous gender diverse offenders with the general population in men's and women's institutions.

What we did

Indigenous gender diverse [GD] offenders accounted for 48% ($n = 74$) of the 155 gender diverse offenders identified from the Offender Management System during the study period (December 2017 to September 2021); 61% were transgender women, 23% were transgender men, and 16% identified as "other" gender diverse offenders.² Indigenous gender diverse offenders were compared to Indigenous offenders at men's (M; $n = 3,801$; 32% of in-custody population) and women's (W; $n = 248$; 46% of in-custody population) institutions.

What we found

On average, Indigenous gender diverse offenders were older than Indigenous offenders in women's institutions (38 versus 33 years old), but were close in age to Indigenous offenders in men's institutions (36 years old). Indigenous gender diverse offenders were most likely to be single (72%) compared to 57% and 68% of Indigenous offenders at men's and women's institutions, respectively. Although offenders in all three groups were most likely to be in the Prairie region during the study period, a lower proportion of Indigenous gender diverse offenders were in that region compared to the other two groups (45%_[GD], 69%_[W] and 61%_[M]).

In comparison to the other two study groups, Indigenous gender diverse offenders were also most likely to be serving a second or subsequent sentence (42%_[GD], 15%_[W], and 38%_[M]). They were also more likely to be serving a sentence of 10 years or more (including indeterminate sentences; 47%_[GD], 18%_[W], and 33%_[M]), and to have committed a violent offence (87%_[GD], 74%_[W], and 82%_[M]).

Examination of criminogenic risk and need information indicated that Indigenous gender diverse offenders were more likely to be classified as maximum security at admission (38%_[GD], 20%_[W], and 30%_[M]). However, they were similar to offenders in men's institutions with respect to dynamic need (90%_[GD] to 90%_[M] high need at intake), reintegration potential (RP; 70%_[M]-72%_[GD] low RP at intake), and correctional plan engagement (73%_[M] to 75%_[GD] engaged). Indigenous gender diverse offenders were more likely than offenders in men's institutions to have responsivity issues, but Indigenous gender diverse offenders were comparable to offenders in women's institutions (40%_[GD], 38%_[W], and 31%_[M]).

Indigenous specific interventions, such as Pathways (27%_[GD] and 19%_[W] to 19%_[M]), transfers to healing lodges (16%_[GD], 13%_[W], 9%_[M]), and Elder progress reviews (55%_[GD], 40%_[W], 29%_[M]) were most common for the Indigenous gender diverse group. Institutional guilty charges for Indigenous offenders were similar for gender diverse offenders (61%) and offenders in women's institutions (59%) but higher than for offenders in men's institutions (52%). They were also most likely to commit institutional incidents (76%_[GD] and 67%_[W] to 67%_[M]), and as likely as offenders in women's institutions to have an institutional transfer (41%_[W] and 42%_[GD]), to complete correctional programming (85%_[W] to 86%_[GD]) and to participate in education programming (61%_[W] to 62%_[GD]).

What it means

Although Indigenous gender diverse offenders have similar criminogenic risk and need profiles to offenders in men's institutions, their participation in correctional interventions or services is comparable to offenders in women's institutions. Participation in Indigenous specific interventions was most likely for gender diverse offenders.

For more information

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

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¹ Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., Garrel, S., & Derksen, D. (2022). *Examination of gender diverse offenders* (R-442). Ottawa, ON: CSC.

² "Other" gender diverse offender category includes: non-binary, gender non-conforming, gender fluid, two-spirited, intersex, or unspecified.

