1. The Singapore Prison Service (SPS) is a key partner in the criminal justice system. As a correctional agency, SPS’s mandate lies in enforcing secure custody and rehabilitation for offenders. SPS holds the firm belief that offenders are capable of change and that change can be facilitated through rehabilitation and positive influence. In doing so, SPS contributes towards making Singapore a safe and secure home.

2. Singapore’s rehabilitation approach is based on evidence-informed practices in corrections literature, such as the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, the Good Lives Model and Desistance Theory, as depicted in Annex.

3. This rehabilitation approach is further supported with SPS’s concept of throughcare, where continuous, coordinated, and integrated efforts to address the risk and needs of offenders are followed through from prison into the community upon their release.

4. Singapore’s throughcare rehabilitation process for offenders is divided into 2 main phases: In-care (in prison) and Aftercare (in the community).

**In-Care Phase**

5. Upon admission into prison, offenders will undergo assessments to determine their risk and needs. Based on RNR principles, interventions are calibrated and charted to commensurate with the offender’s level of risk of re-offending and needs.

**Key Rehabilitative Interventions (In-Care)**

(i) *Rehabilitation Planning and Motivational Programmes*

My Action Plan (MAP) is a structured planning tool that guides offenders in charting their goals and journey of change through their incarceration. MAP encourages the offenders to take greater ownership of their rehabilitation, and complements prison officers’ efforts in facilitating offenders’ learning and change.

Newly admitted offenders also undergo motivational programmes which guide offenders to examine the reasons for their reoffending behaviors and strengthen their resolve for change. Facilitated by prison officers, it provides a structured and open platform for meaningful interactions between officers and offenders.

(ii) *Psychological-Based Programmes*

Psychology-based Correctional Programmes (PCPs) help offenders re-examine their life goals and allow them to learn new skills, enhance motivation, attitudes and thinking. These
interventions provide structured learning and application of pro-social skills to aid offenders in developing a reintegration plan that addresses their unique life situation, challenges, and goals. PCP topics include substance abuse, criminal thinking, sexual violence, and interpersonal violence.

(iii) Gender-Responsive Programmes

Singapore also recognises the need for gender-responsive rehabilitation. The PCPs for women offenders not only draw on evidence-informed practices in the corrections literature, but they were also designed based on gender-informed theories, such as relational theory and overseas and local research on women offending pathways to address specific issues leading to women offending. Family and parenting programmes that addresses the relational needs and parenting roles are also offered to female offenders.

(iv) Religious Services

Religious programmes offer offenders with spiritual and emotional support during their rehabilitation journey.

(v) Personal Development Initiatives

Personal development programmes, such as befriending, financial literacy, support groups and interest-based activities, are provided to offenders during their rehabilitation journey. These programmes allow them to inculcate valuable skills and pro-social behaviours.

(vi) Family Programmes

Good family support is essential to the rehabilitation of an offender. To address transitional issues (e.g., financial difficulties, adjustment problems, and childcare and parenting complications) for offenders and their families, structured family programmes are conducted in-care. These programmes help to increase offenders’ knowledge, skills, and confidence in maintaining ties and building stronger relationships with their family members.

Family programmes also aim to help offenders prepare for their reintegration by maintaining bonds with their families during incarceration so they can return to a supportive family network upon release.

(vii) Support and Services for Families

Interim support services are facilitated for offenders’ families, and these services connect offenders and their families to community resources by tapping on the national social support network, working closely with government agencies such as the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), as well as collaborating with other agencies specialising in family work.

The Yellow Ribbon Community Project (YRCP) is an initiative where grassroots volunteers visit families whose loved ones are incarcerated, to assess their needs and concerns and refers the family to community resources.
(viii) **Upskilling, Education, and Job Placement**

Vocational programmes, skills training, and education opportunities are provided to offenders, which aim to build their human capital and develop workplace-positive attitudes and mindsets. Such skills training includes workplace literacy, employability skills, logistics, culinary arts, precision engineering, digital media, and media production. Eligible offenders are can also undergo selected National Institute of Technical Education Certificate (NITEC), diploma and degree programmes.

The Yellow Ribbon Singapore (YRSG)\(^1\) assists offenders to secure jobs prior to their release. In Singapore, approximately 3,000 offenders are assisted each year.

**Aftercare Phase**

6. The Aftercare phase consists of 2 stages – Halfway care and Reintegration.

- During the **Halfway Care stage**, suitable offenders may be emplaced on Community-Based Programmes (CBP) during the tail-end of their sentence, where they either reside at home or at approved residential facilities such as halfway houses or the work release camp, under SPS’s supervision. This structured and gradual reintegration process allows them to serve the tail-end of their sentence in the community under supervision.

- The **Reintegration stage** is the period where the offender is no longer under prison custody. During this stage, ex-offenders are still given necessary support and access to services by social service agencies (SSAs) in the community to help in their reintegration.

**Key Rehabilitative Interventions (Aftercare)**

(i) **Community-based Programmes (CBPs)**

These programmes aim to promote the reintegration of suitable offenders into society with the support of the community. These supervisees will be subjected to various conditions such as curfew hours, mandatory reporting and could also be electronically monitored.

During their CBPs, supervisees are supported by caseworkers, YRSG career coaches and SPS’s Reintegration Officers and Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists, as well as various community partners, to transit back to community. Supervisees may also be subjected to various conditions such as curfew hours, mandatory reporting and could also be electronically monitored.

Over the years, more ex-offenders have been placed on community corrections to facilitate their smooth reintegration into the community. Results from community corrections have been encouraging, with high completion rates observed in the various community corrections regimes. In 2021, 94% of penal offenders and 85.4% of drug abusers who were emplaced on CBPs had successfully completed their programme.

\(^1\) Yellow Ribbon Singapore (YRSG) is a statutory board under Singapore’s Ministry of Home Affairs. It aims to galvanise society to uplift offenders through skills and career development and co-create opportunities for their successful reintegration and contribution back to society.
(ii) Mandatory Aftercare Scheme

The Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (MAS) is a structured aftercare regime that provides enhanced community support, counselling, and case management with close supervision for a selected group of ex-offenders at greater risk of re-offending, and also those who need more support in reintegration into society. It aims to support ex-offenders in staying crime-free and deter them from re-offending. The scheme consists of supervision and restrictions such as curfew hours and electronic monitoring, as well as counselling and case management.

Community Support for Ex-offenders

7. Collaboration with community partners and the larger community, including employers, religious organisations, and grassroots constituencies, play such a crucial role in creating an ecosystem of stable support to prevent re-offending over the longer term.

8. The Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-offenders (CARE) Network was formed in 2000 to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of the rehabilitative efforts for ex-offenders throughout Singapore. CARE Network comprises 9 core agencies and more than 100 other partner agencies (e.g., social service agencies, religious organisations, grassroots organisations, community groups and Government agencies).

Examples of Community Initiatives

(i) Befriending Programme Project

The Befriending Programme is conducted by trained volunteers to give inmates support and guidance before and after their release, which includes the inmate’s community supervision phase. The befrienders either visit or engage the inmates via electronic letter correspondences and phone calls during their incarceration and continue to be a source of prosocial support for them after release, helping in their reintegration into the community.

(ii) Yellow Ribbon Project

One of the initiatives spearheaded under the CARE Network is the ‘Yellow Ribbon Project’ (YRP). The YRP was initiated in 2004 and its purpose is to generate awareness of the difficulties ex-offenders face after release, encourage acceptance of their return to society, and inspire public action to support their reintegration.

(iii) Yellow Ribbon Community Project

The Yellow Ribbon Community Project (YRCP) taps on grassroots volunteers to reach out to families of inmates to ensure that their basic needs are addressed through financial, education, housing, and employment assistance.

Volunteers with the YRCP are trained to identify children of inmates who may require support in their studies or counselling and connect them with suitable dedicated community programmes for children run by various Social Service Agencies.

Through the YRCP’s strong support, families are strengthened and are connected to the wider networks of resources and prosocial support in the community.
Conclusion

9. Singapore regularly reviews and evaluate its programmes to ensure that its rehabilitation approach remains effective. Evaluation studies revealed that a selected group of offenders who went through throughcare rehabilitation regimes had lower two-year recidivism rates as compared to offenders who did not undergo the same regime. Additionally, these offenders showed a reduction in criminal attitudes, reduction in attitudes supportive of drug misuse, improvements in psychosocial functioning and displayed a greater potential to reintegrate successfully into the community. Singapore’s overall two-year recidivism rate had dropped from 44.4% for the 1998 release cohort to 20.0% for the 2019 release cohort. These results highlight the effectiveness of adopting a throughcare rehabilitation approach.

10. Singapore will continue to work closely with community partners, organisations, and individuals to build a sustainable structure of eco-support system to facilitate the seamless reintegration of ex-offenders into the community.

SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE
## ANNEX: Rehabilitation Theories and Principles

| Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model | The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) has been widely researched upon and have significant findings regarding rehabilitation. According to research evidence, adherence to RNR principles was found to be more effective than those who did not. In addition, targeting the risk factors was associated with a significant reduction in recidivism rates (Dowden & Andrews, 2004). The RNR research has also guided development of risk screening and assessment tools, and the information from the risk assessments serves to inform on programming and policy matters.  

The Risk principle states that offender recidivism can be reduced if the level of intervention services provided to the offender is proportional to the offender's risk to re-offend. Offenders with greater risk to re-offend will be provided with a higher-intensity intervention.  

The second principle of Needs postulates that the programme should target known criminogenic needs that have been found to be directly linked to offending behaviours, namely antisocial thinking, substance use, antisocial personality pattern, antisocial associates, family, education and employment, and leisure.  

The third principle of Responsivity guides us in how to go about managing the offenders either through general or specific strategies. General responsivity refers to cognitive social learning interventions as the most effective way to teach people new behaviours regardless of the type of behaviour. Specific responsivity calls for interventions to consider personal strengths and other personality factors, tailoring the interventions to the learning styles, motivation level, abilities, and strengths of the offender. Specific responsivity also acknowledges that non-criminogenic needs (e.g., motivation level) may help or hinder the provision of and response to treatment, thus they need to be addressed in order to maximise reoffending reduction. |
| Good Lives Model (GLM) | Tony Ward and colleagues proposed the Good Lives Model (GLM) as a more holistic approach to working with offenders (Ward & Mann, 2004; Ward & Stewart, 2003). The principal assumption behind GLM is that offenders, like all humans, are goal directed beings who are predisposed to seek a number of primary goods. Primary goods are defined as “actions, states of affairs, characteristics, experiences, and states of mind that are intrinsically beneficial to human beings and therefore sought for their own sake rather than as means to more fundamental ends.” The instrumental means... |
used to achieve these primary goods are then known as secondary goods. According to this model, offending behaviours are secondary goods that offenders use to attain these primary goods. Criminogenic needs can thus be construed as internal or external obstacles that prevent the fulfilment of the primary goods in an optimal, socially acceptable manner. Hence, offending occurs when individuals pursue their goals through inappropriate strategies to achieve their goals primary goods.

GLM serves to give the offender the reason that compels them to stop offending. For example, it provides him a better understanding why he should embark on the rehabilitation journey to change, and the model motivates the offender by giving them the ‘why’ to engage in rehabilitation. GLM not only enhances motivation in the short term but also pushes the offender to think about their future, life goals and dreams as things that would anchor him and sustain him in staying crime-free after release.

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Desistance is a theory that focuses on positive human change and development and asks the critical question of what helps people move away from a previous lifestyle. Desistance refers to the long-term abstinence from criminal behaviour. It looks at why people stop offending and goes beyond to consider how to prevent recidivism itself.

Based on the literature, there are three outcomes in the process of Desistance (Maruna & Farall, 2004; McNeill, 2016):

a) Primary/Act (the achievement of an offence-free period)

b) Secondary/Identity (an underlying change in self-identity wherein the ex-offender labels him or herself as such)

c) Tertiary/Relational (gains recognition from others that one has changed and the development of a sense of belonging)

The desistance process comprises persisting through multiple attempts of failures and successes. This is especially so for drug abusers, whose path away from drugs can be long and arduous. However, the individual who eventually desists from drug abuse experiences a fundamental shift in identity from ‘criminal’ to ‘prosocial citizen’, and that is a very powerful transformation.

During the process of desistance, several conditions need to be present for change processes to occur. Firstly, offenders need to have the capacities/skills to live differently. Secondly, they require motivation to live differently, and
lastly, they require opportunities to find and sustain a different life.

Considering the outcomes of desistance and the conditions essential for change processes to occur, the following principles were proposed to support desistance:

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<td>a)</td>
<td>Support compliance</td>
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<td>c)</td>
<td>Enable self-determination</td>
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<td>d)</td>
<td>Work with social relations, supports and resources</td>
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<td>e)</td>
<td>Provide practical support</td>
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<td>Recognise and celebrate change</td>
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