



NATIONAL COMMISSION  
ON CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE

# FOCUS

2024

ANNUAL  
REPORT

Outcomes  
Leadership  
Education

# FOCUS

Credibility  
Quality  
Solutions  
Opportunity  
Recognition

## NCCHC MISSION

The mission of the National Commission on Correctional Health Care is to improve the quality of health care in jails, prisons, and juvenile confinement facilities.

# ...on 2024



Dear Colleagues:

As I reflect on 2024, I am amazed at the tremendous growth NCCHC has experienced across every sector of our work. Facilities are increasingly seeking accreditation, attendance at our conferences and webinars continues to rise, professionals are earning certification at a record pace, clients are turning to NCCHC Resources for guidance, and volunteer engagement with the NCCHC Foundation is expanding.

We have responded with focus, creativity, and agility – strengthening partnerships with key allies, streamlining processes, growing our team of surveyors and consultants, expanding training and testing opportunities, enhancing educational offerings, and developing new programming for students and early-career professionals.

Through it all, our focus remains on our core organizational values – trust, commitment, innovation, and collaboration – guided by our strategic priorities: collaboration and leadership, education, advocacy, and innovation and growth.

One thing is clear: NCCHC accreditation benefits both patients and staff. This annual report highlights the NCCHC-Harvard study, which confirms what we have long believed: accreditation improves and saves lives.

I am confident that our mission will continue to thrive in the years ahead. With a focus on our goals, NCCHC is well-positioned to drive meaningful impact, regardless of the challenges in the world. Enjoy this snapshot of our year, and thank you for your dedication and focus on correctional health care.

Deborah A. Ross, CCHP  
Chief Executive Officer





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**“The jails in the study didn’t hire more staff, change health care providers, or buy new equipment – but still saw lower death rates than the facilities that did not seek accreditation.”**

—LA Times



A recent study by researchers at Harvard University reveals that NCCHC accreditation saves lives, improves health care quality, reduces recidivism, and enhances coordination between custody and health staff.



## ...on Outcomes

Harvard researchers completed a multiyear study with 44 small to medium-sized U.S. jails to evaluate how accreditation affects quality of care and mortality. Using a variety of survey instruments and spanning four years, they found that completing NCCHC's accreditation process has "statistically significant and economically meaningful effects on a range of outcomes," including improved collaboration between health and custody staff, staff preparation, and compliance with quality standards – without additional staff or large capital investments.

Notably, the accreditation process led to an 86% decrease in mortality as measured by deaths per month. That translates into nearly 20 lives over the course of the study. Researchers surmise this is due to a closer alignment between custody and health staff in terms of processing and screening individuals, particularly in the first days of incarceration, when mortality tends to be the highest.

The researchers also found evidence to suggest that accreditation impacts recidivism, showcasing the societal benefits of better health care during incarceration. Individuals released from accredited facilities were 54% less likely to return to the same jail within six months relative to control facilities.

Cost-effectiveness analysis suggests that accreditation generates \$59 million in benefits per jail per year. "Ultimately, our study shows that accreditation can improve health care and save lives in U.S. jails," the researchers, Marcella Alsan, MD, PhD, MPH, from Harvard Kennedy School, and Crystal Yang, PhD, JD, from Harvard Law School, concluded.



*Scan to read the study.*



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As one of the nation's preeminent voices advocating for those in correctional health care, NCCHC strengthened its leadership in 2024 through action on Capitol Hill and collaboration with national industry partners.



## ...on Leadership

In Washington, NCCHC supported measures aimed at ensuring Medicaid and Medicare coverage for those transitioning out of incarceration, improving conditions for incarcerated populations, addressing substance use disorder treatment, and supporting reentry.

Advocacy continued in support of the bipartisan Reentry Act, which would restart benefits for Medicaid-eligible individuals reentering society after incarceration and make it easier for states to provide addiction treatment and services, and for the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act and the Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act, which would expand access to methadone.

Responding to a changing world and new challenges in corrections, new position statements were adopted:

**Care for Aging Patients** provides guidance for addressing the health needs of the “graying” incarcerated population and recommends an evidence-based framework widely used in geriatric medicine.

**Climate Control for Extreme Temperatures** urges carceral facilities to implement standards to minimize extreme temperature exposures and to adopt prevention and mitigation steps.

**Diagnosis and Management of Hepatitis C** recommends that jails and prisons provide

opt-out HCV testing and education for all newly admitted individuals and curative treatment with direct-acting antivirals for those with HCV.

The American Jail Association and NCCHC joined forces to present a two-day interdisciplinary virtual conference featuring educational sessions on many of the ways health care and custody professionals intersect. Nearly 300 participants joined online.

NCCHC Resources' leadership shared their expertise through articles in the AJA magazine, American Jails, and the NSA magazine, Sheriff & Deputy. NCCHC also maintains a presence on the boards and committees of those partner organizations.

**3**

in-person  
conferences

**18**

webinars

**6,700**

conference/  
webinar registrants

**4**

virtual  
conferences

**171**

CE hours offered

# FOCUS

**"I can get my clinical  
education anywhere.  
It's the intersection  
with corrections that  
I value most about  
this conference."**

—2024 National Conference  
attendee



In 2024 NCCHC sharpened its focus on providing the most comprehensive, expert, and up-to-the-minute correctional health care education to include more flexibility, more virtual options, and more continuing education credits.

## ...on Education

Building on a reputation as the preeminent provider of education and professional development for correctional health professionals, NCCHC zeroed in on ways to make it even more versatile to accommodate a variety of learning styles, experience levels, and circumstances.

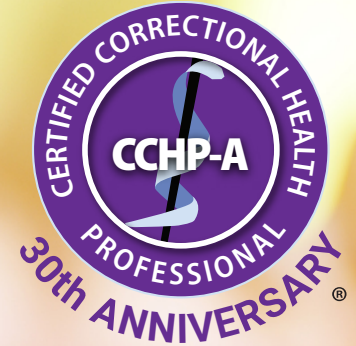
Attendees traveled to St. Louis and Las Vegas for learning, networking, and connecting at NCCHC's popular Spring and National conferences, where new double sessions and lightning sessions provided even more learning opportunities. At the first-ever Caribbean Correctional Mental Health Care Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, nearly 400 people enjoyed the tropical location, local flavor, and excellent educational offerings.

Closer to home, the year saw a 125% increase in the number of webinars offered, contributing to a 33% increase in the number of CE hours available. Webinars included a three-part series on coordination of care and another on caring for special populations (transgender people, aging populations,

and women), a pair of webinars on MAT/ MOUD, and several free programs made possible through educational grants from Pfizer, Gilead Sciences, and the NCCHC Foundation.

These expanded educational offerings address the growing need for training among health care professionals, custody staff, and leadership in corrections. In this complex environment, collaboration between health care and custody is essential to improving outcomes, ensuring safety, and achieving shared goals.





# FOCUS

**"I like being part of a select group of peers who have dedicated their life's work to the specialized niche of correctional health care. It is a unique group of individuals who bring so much to the table."**

Clarence Cryer, MPH, CCHP-A, executive director, Correctional Health Operations, JPS Health Network



The Certified Correctional Health Care Professional program saw record recertifications and increased participation from custody staff and administrators, strengthening the connection between health care and corrections.

## ...on Credibility



The CCHP program had another stellar year, with near-record numbers of applicants and newly certified correctional health professionals.

These new CCHPs include a growing number of custody staff and correctional administrators as the importance of collaboration between custody and health care becomes clearer than ever. Reflecting that, NCCHC offered the CCHP exam at the American Jail Association's Partnership Saturday, part of its annual conference and jail expo.

At the National Conference on Correctional Health Care, CCHP-As and CCHP-MHs celebrated the 10th and 30th anniversaries of those programs, which have continued to grow throughout the years and decades.

Also in 2024, research published in *Corrections: Policy, Practice, and Research* explored the personal and professional value the CCHP credential

offers to those who hold it. Based on interviews with 33 CCHPs, researchers identified two main benefits: external legitimacy – certification's value in counteracting the stigma associated with working in corrections and providing validation of correctional health workers as legitimate members of the broader health care field – and workplace credibility.

The CCHPs interviewed reported that certification's power as a source of professional authority and influence – workplace credibility – helped them navigate interactions with custody staff, advocate for best practices, and build trust with both peers and patients, in addition to opening career opportunities and helping them advance.

Another value that many respondents attribute to certification: simply being good at their jobs.



# FOCUS

**“I can’t overstate the sense of pride that being accredited has given our health care and custody staff. Even our relationships with the public and the advocacy community have improved.”**

—Oscar Aviles, CJM, CCHP, deputy county administrator,  
Hudson County (NJ)



Through the lens of NCCHC accreditation, 2024 was an exceptionally successful year, highlighted by a national study verifying what accredited facilities have always known: accreditation improves health care quality.

**20%**  
increase in  
accredited  
facilities since  
2019

## ...on Quality

Since the organization's beginnings almost 50 years ago, NCCHC's focus has been on one thing: the quality of health care delivered in the nation's jails, prisons, and juvenile facilities. And since that time, one of the most trusted methods for achieving and maintaining quality health care services has been earning accreditation by demonstrating compliance with NCCHC's rigorous standards.

A recent Harvard University study, the first of its kind to focus on U.S. jails, found that NCCHC accreditation plays a vital role in saving lives, improving the quality of care, reducing recidivism, and strengthening collaboration between custody and health staff (see page 5 for more information).

Today, there are accredited facilities in 48 states as well as Puerto Rico, including several state systems. Growth has rapidly accelerated over the past five years, particularly in the number of accredited opioid treatment programs – a 264% increase – and the number of facilities accredited for

mental health services, which skyrocketed 1,100%. That dramatic increase reflects the ongoing challenges of caring for patients with substance use and mental health issues, and growing awareness that accreditation can help with those challenges.

The accreditation team is keeping up with the increased demand for services with additional surveyors, expanded staff, improved processes and systems, and more flexibility.





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**“We received everything and can’t thank you enough for the work that you and your team have put into helping us move toward accreditation.”**

—Adam Rutherford, deputy director, Health and Rehabilitation Services,  
Alaska Department of Corrections

## **2024 NCCHC Resources Board of Directors**

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Backed by NCCHC's unmatched authority and expertise, NCCHC Resources' 2024 growth included more consultants, more projects, and more clients finding solutions from the most trusted name in correctional health care.

**41%**  
increase in  
project volume

## ...on Solutions

The mission of NCCHC's consulting subsidiary, NCCHC Resources, Inc., is to provide comprehensive customized consulting and technical assistance services that help to elevate the quality of correctional health care. The focus on that mission is sharper than ever: 2024 was NCCHC Resources' most productive, profitable, and positive year on record. The number of consulting projects was up 41% year over year.

Fueling this growth were ongoing challenges in corrections and increasing awareness of the critical role correctional health care plays in public

health. New projects reflected those challenges: a rise in comprehensive monitoring projects, which include fiscal and clinical oversight and bridge vendor–agency relationships; increased consulting on prevention of in-custody suicide, still the most common cause of death in jails; and multiple RFP assistance projects to help facilities with vendor requirements and selections.

Other large-scale projects included the first statewide system analysis of all types of care and preparation for NCCHC accreditation, and a statewide crisis intervention team (CIT)

training on effective ways to interact with people experiencing mental health and substance use challenges, designed to improve the safety of everyone involved.

NCCHC Resources responded to increased demand by increasing the number of expert consultants on the roster by 55%. The leadership team further contributed thought leadership through participation on national law-enforcement boards, articles in industry publications, and appearances at conferences and trade shows.





# FOCUS

**“This was such a great opportunity at a very important early time in my career to have access to this content and opportunities to talk with other folks in this space. Thank you! I feel very honored and privileged to be here.”**

—Nicole Schachman, APRN, MSN, CCHP  
NCCHC Foundation 2024 scholarship recipient





In 2024, the NCCHC Foundation expanded opportunities for correctional health care professionals, awarding scholarships, funding education, and supporting initiatives that strengthen the workforce and improve health outcomes.



## ...on Opportunity

Since its inception, the NCCHC Foundation has provided more than 200 opportunities for students and early-career professionals through scholarships for in-person and virtual conferences, webinars, and more. In 2024, the Foundation continued its mission to inspire philanthropy and advance correctional health care by increasing access to education and professional development, awarding 67 scholarships – the highest number yet.

Each year, the number of scholarships grows, reflecting a commitment to empowering the next generation of correctional health care leaders. The goal is to continue to provide

at least 50 scholarships annually, valued at approximately \$115,000, ensuring more professionals gain the tools and connections needed to thrive.

2024 also saw the launch of the NCCHC Career Center, a dedicated resource tailored to the correctional health care field. With free resume posting and paid job announcements, it not only supports the workforce but also generates vital funding to sustain the Foundation's mission.

The Foundation Board of Trustees established three committees in 2024 focused on key areas: reviewing scholarship applications, mentoring

newcomers to the field, fundraising to sustain scholarship programs, and designing a reentry toolkit to support justice-involved individuals transitioning back into society.

Thanks to its generous donors and dedicated volunteers, the NCCHC Foundation is building a strong correctional health care workforce, providing professionals with resources and opportunities, and empowering them to lead, innovate, and drive excellence.





# NATIONAL CONFERENCE

# FOCUS ...on Recognition




Members of Jim Voisard's family, including his wife, children, and grandchildren, were on hand to see the newly renamed Jim Voisard Surveyor of the Year Award presented in his memory to Doris Battle, MS, BSN, CCHP (in white, center).



# 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



  
**Pinnacle Recognition**  
*(awarded to facilities with NCCHC accreditation in three separate service areas)*  
 Middlesex County (NJ) Office of Adult Corrections  
 and Youth Services (left);  
 Washoe County (NV) Detention Facility



**Bernard P. Harrison Award of Merit**  
 Jeffrey J. Alvarez, MD, CCHP-CP,  
 CCHP-A (with NCCHC Board chair-elect  
 Patricia Blair, PhD, JD, CCHP-RN, CCHP-A)



**Edward A. Harrison Excellence in  
 Leadership Award**  
 Nancy Booth, MSN, RN, CCHP-RN



**Young Professional Award**  
 Heather Koroma, DDS, CCHP



**B. Jaye Anno Award of Excellence  
 in Communication**  
 Carolyn Sufrin, MD, PhD, CCHP

**Jim Voisard Surveyor of the Year Award**  
 Doris Battle, MS, BSN, CCHP (with Jim  
 Voisard's wife, Barbara)



**R. Scott Chavez Program of the Year**  
 El Paso Service Processing Center



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Currently no donors at this level

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