

TJC Leadership Profile: Ross Buitendorp



Ross Buitendorp is a contract manager with Network180, which manages the public mental health and substance use disorder services within Kent County Michigan. Ross received his bachelor's degree from Calvin College and his Masters of Public Administration from DePaul University. Ross has worked in the substance abuse and mental health field for 15 years, many of those years was in collaboration with the criminal justice system in different capacities, both as a provider and manager of services. Currently he is on the steering committee for the Kent County

Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) and manages the contract for the MPRI mental health program in Kent County.

What makes a successful TJC leader?

A successful TJC leader must have an understanding of the multiple systems that must work together with a united goal of successful community reintegration. This means that not only must that leader know the systems involved but they also must understand the many different bio-psycho-social issues that confront individuals returning to their communities. The TJC leader will be able to show how all systems need to respond to a client's needs and the overall benefits that a unified reentry system provides the client and community.

What are your tips for getting support from system stakeholders for the TJC Initiative?

In order to get support from system stakeholders there needs to be support for TJC within leadership of the jail at a minimum. Without jail support TJC will not be successful. Once there is that base support of the jail, use data provided through research that is already out there to show key stakeholders the overall benefit for community safety, client well being, and costs savings.