

**Title:** A narrative inquiry study into the experiences of transitions into and out of correctional facilities in Alberta for people living with HIV

**Background:** Transitions into *and* out of correctional facilities are complex and require the intersection and cooperation of social, health, and justice systems. Transitions between correctional facilities and communities are difficult; avoidance of crime is often a reduced priority for individuals (Visher & Travis, 2003). Instead, barriers to reintegration into the community, such as stigma, housing, employment, as well as mental health issues and addictions are prevalent (Baillargeon, Erlenbusch, & Moran, 2008; Baron et al., 2008; Gojkovic, Mills, & Meek, 2012; Metcalf, Anderson, & Rolfe, 2001; Pager, 2003). Many of these barriers are encountered by people living with HIV (PLWH); as well as HIV creates additional challenges. The prevalence of HIV among incarcerated populations is disproportionately higher than the general Canadian population (Subramanian et al., 2016).

Traditionally, ‘successful’ transitions between correctional facilities and communities for PLWH are measured in improving CD4 counts, maintaining anti-retroviral therapy adherence, reducing HIV viral loads, and adhering to the HIV care cascade (Government of Canada, 2017; Subramanian et al., 2016). However, there is a lack of knowledge surrounding the experience of HIV-related stigma for those with a history of incarceration (Swan, 2016). Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge about the experiences of transitions into *and* out of correctional facilities for PLWH and how this may affect inequities and access to care.

**Research Purpose:** The purpose of my research is to explore the experiences of transitions into *and* out of provincial correctional centres for PLWH.

**Methodology:** Narrative inquiry is a research methodology that focuses on the experiences of people, including personal and social interactions, the continuities of experiences, and how place intersects with these (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This study will be conducted over a two-year period, within Edmonton, Alberta. I will work with 3 to 5 participants recruited by engaging with the community, healthcare providers, and caseworkers familiar to them. Data collection will involve meeting with participants at least 16 to 24 times over a two-year period. Data analysis will begin by reading and rereading field texts. I will then create interim research texts, which will be shared with participants, ensuring that they see themselves, and the relationship I hold with them, represented (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Research texts will ensure that meaning, social significance, and purpose are explicit, while remaining attuned to the relational responsibility that I hold to participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Throughout these stages, I will be constructing meaning alongside participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

**Knowledge Mobilization:** Because the focus within narrative inquiry is on the process of inquiry, knowledge mobilization will be integrated throughout this research. An advisory committee composed of Indigenous and non-Indigenous PLWH, provincial correctional service members, an Indigenous knowledge keeper, and HIV stakeholders will guide the project.



**Significance:** The study's significance is its ability to provide insight into the experiences of people who have experienced significant inequities and advance understandings of transitions from a life-course perspective. Furthermore, this study will inform decision-making within provincial and federal correctional services, including health services and community support programs that support PLWH who are or have experienced incarceration.