



Research in Brief

Older Offenders in the Custody of the Correctional Service of Canada

KEY WORDS: *older offenders, health care, population profile*

What it means

The proportion of offenders over age 50 in the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has increased sharply since 2006 and, based on these projections, is expected to increase further in the next 5 years. This research indicates that the increase will be concentrated among non-Aboriginal men aged 50-64. Health services pressures will increase for this group.

What we found

Approximately 24% of federal offenders in custody are over the age of 50; only 4% are aged 65 or older. In comparison, recent census data indicate that 15% of the Canadian public are over 65 years of age. Offenders 50 years and over are less likely to be housed in a maximum security. Very few men, and no women, over 80 years are currently incarcerated in CSC.

Percentage of the Aging Offenders by Security Level

Level of security	Age		
	50-64	65-79	80+
Minimum	26	32	89
Medium	52	45	--
Maximum	7	5	--
Multi	15	18	11

A smaller proportion of women offenders are 50 years or older (17%) compared to men (24%). Likewise, fewer offenders of Aboriginal ancestry are over age 50 (15%) than non-Aboriginal offenders (26%). Regionally, Quebec has the highest proportion of offenders between ages 50 and 64 (26%), while the population in the Prairies region is considerably younger than other regions, with only 13% of incarcerated offenders between ages 50 and 64.

Growth in the older offender population has been largely due to an increase among non-Aboriginal men in CSC custody. Projections based on population modeling suggest that in the next five years, the greatest growth is expected for non-Aboriginal men aged 50 to 64. Projections suggest that Aboriginal offenders and women offenders in CSC will continue

to represent a lower proportion of offenders over 50 years old. In addition, it is anticipated that the current low proportion of the population comprised of offenders over 80 years of age will remain stable in the next five years. These findings, however, should be interpreted with caution given restrictions in the modeling due to limited historical data.

Why we did this study

Previous research has indicated that older offenders in CSC experience more chronic health conditions than younger offenders. CSC requires information on the number of aging offenders currently under supervision and projections for the future to assist in resource allocation and planning for health service delivery and population management strategies.

What we did

For a projected five-year period from 2014 to 2019 population size estimates were developed using annual population counts of incarcerated aging offenders by Aboriginal ancestry from January 1996 to January 2014. Time-series analysis was used to produce population size projections with 95% confidence intervals. Results reflect the most conservative projections based on population counts over these years.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the website for a full list of research publications.

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