

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT ON SUICIDE
PREVENTION PRACTICES WITHIN THE MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION**

by

Lindsay M. Hayes

Project Director

National Center on Institutions and Alternatives

40 Lantern Lane

Mansfield, MA 02048

(508) 337-8806; e-mail: Lhayesta@msn.com

January 31, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	<u>Introduction</u>	1
B.	<u>Findings and Recommendations</u>	5
	1) Staff Training.....	6
	2) Identification/Screening.....	12
	3) Communication.....	19
	4) Housing.....	23
	5) Levels of Supervision.....	33
	6) Intervention.....	40
	7) Reporting.....	45
	8) Follow-up/Mortality Review.....	46
C.	<u>Summary of Recommendations</u>	49
D.	<u>Conclusion</u>	56

Appendices

February 1, 2007

Kathleen M. Dennehy, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Correction
50 Maple Street, Suite 3
Milford, MA 01757

RE: Suicide Prevention Consultation

Dear Commissioner Dennehy:

Please find enclosed my *Technical Assistance Report on Suicide Prevention Practices Within the Massachusetts Department of Corrections*. The report is based upon my suicide prevention assessment your agency from September 2006 thru January 2007. (I have separately attached a confidential key code that lists the inmate names referenced in the report.)

As referenced in the report, I met numerous DOC and UMCH officials and supervisors, as well as officers, nurses and clinicians, who were genuinely concerned about inmate suicide and committed to taking whatever actions were necessary to reduce the opportunity for such tragedy in the future. And based upon a pro-active approach and high caliber management and line staff, I am confident that implementation of the various recommendations contained within this report will result in successful efforts to reduce the likelihood of future inmate suicides within the Massachusetts Department of Correction.

I would like to thank you for providing me the opportunity to conduct this assessment, and would also thank Terre K. Marshall, Health Services Director, for her support in requesting this consultation. Special thanks goes to Lawrence Weiner, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coordinator, for his assistance in scheduling the tours and interviews, fulfilling document requests, and providing valuable insight to this assessment.

Should you and/or your staff have any questions or concerns regarding the enclosed report, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Lindsay M. Hayes
Project Director