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Citation

Pasma, A. J. (2023, October 11). *Re-entry support from prison-based and community-based professionals*. Meijers-reeks. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3643716>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Re-entry support from prison-based and community- based professionals

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To ensure a smooth and safe transition from prison to free society, it is important that prisoners are well-prepared for release. Yet, it is known that prisoners often face re-entry challenges regarding employment, housing, financial situation, healthcare, and valid identity documentation. Both prison-based (e.g., case managers) and community-based professionals (e.g., parole officers and municipal officers) are expected to help overcome these issues. Remarkably, empirical research on reintegration support from prison-based and community-based professionals is scarce. Therefore, the current dissertation aims to improve our understanding of in-prison professional support, by examining the prevalence of support, the factors that determine whether there is support, and the role of support in preparing prisoners for release.

The current dissertation reveals that professional support can make an important contribution to preparing prisoners for release. It underscores the relevance of providing support early-on, especially to prisoners who already had problems prior to imprisonment. Although community-based professionals play vital roles in providing instrumental support, their in-prison involvement appears limited. Both prison-based professionals, who are in close contact to prisoners, and community-based professionals, who can provide specialised care and support, are encouraged to cooperate in a timely and coherent manner in preparing prisoners for release.

This is a volume in the series of the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School of the Leiden Law School of Leiden University. This study is part of the Law School's research programme 'Criminal Justice: Legitimacy, Accountability and Effectivity'.