

Special recognition for health services staff on National Corrections Day

On today's National Corrections Day, staff delivering health services to prisoners are being particularly recognised after almost a year of additional responsibilities in managing the health risks of COVID-19.

The fourth annual National Corrections Day, themed *Working together to reduce reoffending*, highlights the important work of all correctional staff in ensuring prisoners have the skills and support they need to assist them with life post-release.

GEO Australia's General Manager of Fulham Correctional Centre, Natalie Greenfield, said: "Today we recognise the outstanding efforts of all of GEO's correctional staff who are working to make a difference in the community — supporting prisoners towards a better future and in helping keep the community safe."

Health Services Manager Julie Bond has worked at Fulham Correctional Centre since 2003 and said a dedicated team of professional health services staff — which includes doctors, nurses, a dentist, physiotherapist, podiatrist, psychiatrist, and optometrist — work around the clock to support prisoners' health and wellbeing.

"Many of the men entering prison are generally of poorer health, have more chronic illness, and are often from socially or financially disadvantaged backgrounds," Ms Bond said.

"By helping improve a prisoner's physical, mental and emotional health, we are giving them the best possible chance of leading a healthy and productive life when released."

"Research has shown that programs supporting prisoners with issues such as drug abuse and poor mental health can aid in the reduction of recidivism.

"In corrections, we can work with our patients for much more extended times than in other settings, often achieving great change with a long-lasting effect. Ultimately, it's about working with the prisoner to tailor the right solution to the individual.

"Having the ability to work with someone closely and watch their health improve can be incredibly rewarding and will benefit them into the future."

GEO's health services staff work closely with all areas of the prison delivering GEO's internationally recognised Continuum of Care model, which provides a holistic rehabilitation and reintegration service to prisoners from their arrival, and beyond their release.

A range of activities will be held at Fulham Correctional Centre to mark National Corrections Day, including an annual rose tree planting ceremony.

- *The GEO Group Australia is Australia's largest provider of private correctional services. Our focus is on rehabilitating prisoners and giving them the support and growth to become positive and productive contributors to our society.*
- *GEO Australia manages Fulham Correctional Centre on behalf of Corrections Victoria, with 390 staff and a capacity for over 1000 prisoners. Find out more at: geogroup.com.au*