

Abolitionist Principles for Healthcare Workers in #CopsOutOfCare

IC INTERRUPTING
CRIMINALIZATION

Purpose

To develop a set of Abolitionist Principles for Healthcare Worker Organizing, to ensure that we're in alignment around a shared vision, and how we get there. This is a vision that we are working towards. These principles can help inform tactics and strategies towards dismantling policing in healthcare, including base-building, consciousness-raising, narrative shifts, policy shifts, and mutual aid projects as organizing interventions. We encourage #CopsOutOfCare organizers to review these principles in crafting their campaigns.

Abolition

PIC abolition is a political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment... Abolition isn't just about getting rid of buildings full of cages. It's also about undoing the society we live in because the PIC both feeds on and maintains oppression and inequalities through punishment, violence, and controls millions of people. Because the PIC is not an isolated system, abolition is a broad strategy. An abolitionist vision means that we must build models today that can represent how we want to live in the future. It means developing practical strategies for taking small steps that move us toward making our dreams real and that lead us all to believe that things really could be different. It means living this vision in our daily lives. Abolition is both a practical organizing tool and a long-term goal (Critical Resistance).

We Believe in Healing

Healing includes having a strong sense of cultural belonging and celebration of one's culture, agency over one's life, which includes decision-making and bodily autonomy, having hope, meaning, purpose in life and transformative, nurturing relationships.

We Respect Bodily Autonomy and Self-Determination

All bodies have inherent dignity that must be respected. This means radical consent - there can be no care in coercive situations. Forced choice is not a choice. People should be free to seek care and free to leave.

Our Bodies are Whole, it is Systems that Oppress Us

We uplift [the principles of Disability Justice](#). We challenge systems and practices that pathologize marginalized groups, medicalize non-normative behaviors, and blame 'at risk populations' while obscuring the upstream systems that oppress us.

The Medical Industrial Complex has Harmed People

In this work it is important to be reflective of the ways that medicine has participated in colonialism, eugenics, ableism, scientific racism, experimentation, policing, incarceration, and population control. Healthcare workers have a history of working with the state and extending the carceral state by upholding race, class and other hierarchies through medical racism and pathologization - for more information please check out the [Medical Industrial Complex Visual](#).



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We Believe in People Over Profit

We believe in universal healthcare. We believe that healthcare should not be a site of profit and that all should have access to the same resources. We must move away from a market-based system to one driven by a societal commitment to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

We Believe in Abolition

The system is not broken, it is working exactly as intended. Abolition is a politic rooted in the notion that we need to cultivate new ways of caring for one another while tearing down oppressive systems. We believe in **abolitionist reforms** not reformist reforms – this necessitates no co-response/collaborations/ presentations etc. with cops as this will expand and legitimize that which we are trying to dismantle.

We Demand #CopsOutOfCare

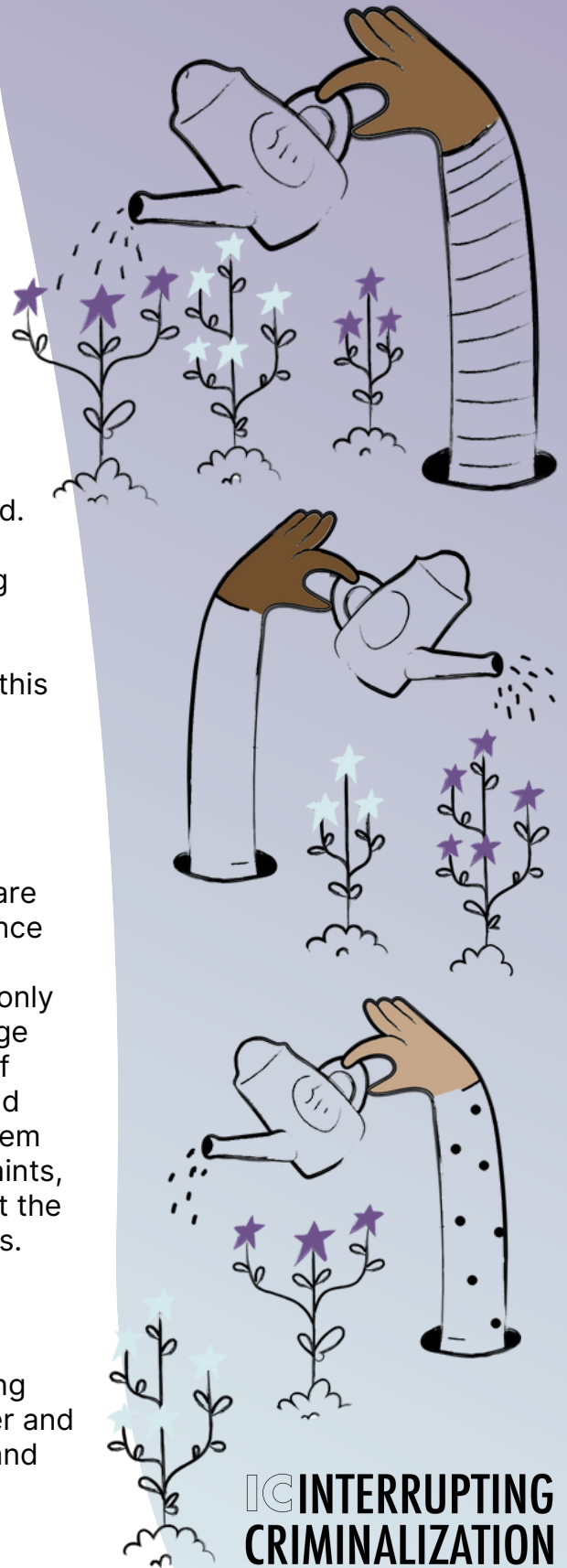
Police and hospital security are antithetical to care and healing and should never be part of a care team. Healthcare providers should be wary of documentation and surveillance as well as the limits of confidentiality and confidentiality rights. As abolitionist healthcare workers we need to not only be critical of the criminal punishment system, but challenge the ways our own professions engage in ongoing forms of policing, incarceration, and punishment of our patients and their families. We don't want to replace one coercive system with another (replacing incarceration with chemical restraints, involuntary holds, etc.). For more on this please check out the Interrupting Criminalization Beyond Do No Harm Principles.

We Value Community Knowledge

People have their own healing knowledge developed in communities and all people have the capacity to be healing caregivers. Healthcare workers don't need to usurp power and control over what is going to work for someone's safety and health.

Healthcare Workers Must Collectively Uplift Movement Demands

Abolition cannot be achieved individually. It is a process that must be engaged collectively and in community. We're not here to "reform/ legitimize" healthcare systems. We serve the people!



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