

The magazine of the Probation Institute

PROBATION

Issue 2 | Autumn 2014

Quarterly

PROF SHADD MARUNA

FEATURE INTERVIEW

"One key factor is belief in change."



**DESISTANCE AND
PEER MENTORING**

An in-depth look at projects that are turning desistance principles into practice

**HEALTH AND
RECOVERY**

Reducing reoffending by focussing peer support on drug and alcohol abusers

**MENTAL HEALTH
COURTS**

Learning lessons from the problem-solving courts of the USA and Canada

THE VALUES OF PROBATION

As the Institute publishes its Code of Ethics, leading academics discuss the values and ethics that underpin probation practice

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Autumn edition of Probation Quarterly, the magazine from the Probation Institute. As you can see from the cover of this issue of *Probation Quarterly*, we're going to be exploring the crucial role of values and ethics in probation practice. We have worked extensively with probation academics, our members and the wider probation community on the production of our Code of Ethics, which you can read on pp.13-14. We were delighted to have the opportunity to interview Professors Anne Worrall and Rob Canton on the opportunities and challenges facing these principles in the current environment. (pp.8-12) We are proud of the work we've achieved with our Code of Ethics to date, but we're aware there's more work to be done. See our 'News in Brief' on p.4 for details of how to get involved with our Ethics Committee.

One of the cornerstones of our work as an Institute will be the relationship between probation research and practice. For this issue, we focus on peer mentoring and its links with desistance principles. We hear from Prof Shadd Maruna for our feature interview on desistance theory and the ways in which this can be implemented. (p.15) Prof Maruna's research has inspired the work of probation practitioners from Solihull to West Yorkshire; South Yorkshire to Durham Tees Valley, which we show case in a thirteen page special from p.19.

We are also interested in reporting on international research that we think will be of interest to you, and are pleased to feature an article from Paula Reid on her Fellowship research on the lessons we can learn from Mental Health Courts in USA and Canada.

This is your magazine and we are always keen to hear your thoughts. What would you like to see in our winter issue? Which areas of practice would you like to see featured? We would love to hear from you. Equally, if you have any views on the articles and features in this issue that you would like to share, do get in touch and I will consider your views for publication in the next issue.



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To boldly go...by Steven Storey

I don't watch much Star Trek but I do recall more than one episode where the ship was besieged by overwhelming force, the shields were down and the future for the ship and its crew seemed uncertain.

In times like these, the Captain would turn to his crew, Scotty would tell Kirk that the engines were at maximum power, Mr Spock would offer situation reports on crew status, hull integrity and so on. After a split second of deliberation Kirk would instinctively prescribe the best course of action.

In recent weeks, this probation split has put me in mind of Kirk and his crew.

Like Kirk, my managers require timely and accurate information on which to base their decisions and, unsurprisingly, an organisation splitting into two generates a myriad of them. Here in Northumbria we turn to our systems because they produce the beating heart of our business intelligence, without a platform of robust data we can't make decisions and as a data analyst, (read researcher, information officer, data scientist) an awful lot has changed in recent weeks.

As one organisation, numbers of caseload, service user types, Commencements and Sentence

Components were my bread and butter. Now though, the sands have shifted, teams have changed, caseload and staff

have moved, we have introduced a new core programme, focus has redoubled on who manages the order and those responsible for managing each requirement. For the first time in years, I found myself unsure of the numbers. It's been a good time to take stock.

Thankfully the pre-split planning included time for data modelling which allowed me to appraise the steering group of what the new world might look like. Based on the understanding that there are no "future facts" and that intelligence can only hope to relieve the fog of uncertainty, I was tasked with the production of a data story showing probable caseload and commencement numbers. I was pleasantly surprised when the split happened and the numbers were close to where we thought they'd be. Now we're a few weeks in, regular data reports have begun to establish the new order of things and this is building a level of certainty around the caseload and commencement profile of the Northumbria CPA. The team has updated the management information reports giving managers and staff the information they need at the touch of a button.

There are still old issues to contend with.

As with any large data system the old adage "rubbish in rubbish out" is never far away and with new processes to contend with, it quickly became apparent that some of our data wasn't up to the job. To combat this, my manager instigated a series of data quality audits, tasking each of the team to investigate and report on an area of the case management system. Audits resulted in lists of cases containing spurious or missing information, the correction of

which required close stakeholder management but with frequent and appropriate communication we were able to re-iterate the importance of data integrity and its roll in planning. Data quality reports on new areas such as NSI's have now found their way into the monthly schedule.

In the days following the split, the allocation process seemed to grind to a halt causing some to proclaim a sudden hiatus in criminal activity. Court activity and commencement figures didn't support the view that work was melting away. It felt like the teams were responding to the shifting caseload with much the same uncertainty as I had when the split first happened. In time, cumulative data reports were able to present a picture of commencements in line with predictions; although there were a few fractious discussions and a couple of bottle necks to sort out along the way!

The Management Information System is really coming into its own and by providing a dashboard of current intelligence against specific requirements it allows our information officers the time to deliver a stronger ad hoc service to field teams. In a macro sense, the challenge ahead includes second guessing private sector management information, and providing a profile of "thru the gate" service users, this is proving difficult locally due to restrictive security models. We also have to scope and run data reports on the new processes such as the aforementioned NSI's. All things considered, it's a busy time for us information officers, but decisions need information, so like Kirk, our managers can plot a steady course to get beyond these uncertain times.



Steven Storey is a Data Analyst with Northumbria CRC

Ethical code is published

The Probation Institute's Code of Ethics was launched last month (*see the introduction opposite*). This is a statement that reflects our core values and ethical principles and serves to underpin the probation profession, helping to guide and support the work of our members.

The Code was developed following extensive consultation with our membership and with close support from academics and others with wide knowledge of probation work.

Further work, giving practical effect to the Code includes guidelines which examine how the

principles contained in the Code may interact with good probation practice.

For more details of the Code of Ethics, together with interviews with Professors Rob Canton and Anne Worrall on the importance of values and ethics to probation practice, read our feature articles on Ethics in Probation starting on p. 5.

The Institute's Code of Ethics can be downloaded from our website: www.probation-institute.org/code-ethics/

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Institute has begun the development of a voluntary practice register, with the aim of starting implementation from April 2015.

The register will become a cornerstone of our work and will help to maintain professional standards in probation. The register will also support the development of qualifications, training and professional development at all levels.

We are committed to broad consultation with those in the probation community throughout the register's development.

We welcome your views and comments. Please contact us at admin@probation-institute.org for more details.

As *Probation Quarterly* was going to press, a conference on personality disorder and offending behaviour was being hosted by the Institute in Liverpool.

The conference will explore different perspectives and emerging practice for assessing and addressing personality disorder and offending behaviour, as well as draw on regional initiatives tackling PD and the national Offender Personality Disorder Programme.

Lord Bradley will open the event, and contributing organisations include Resettle, Beacon, St Andrews Healthcare, NOMs and NHS England.

The next issue of *PQ* will feature a full report on the event.

Probation excellence on show in December

The Probation Institute, in partnership with the Alliance for Useful Evidence (A4UE) will host a 'Centre of Excellence' Conference on 10 December, providing a forum to discuss how effective practice can be identified, shared and spread. The event will be held at Nesta's London offices: 1 Plough Place, EC4A 1DE.

The conference will bring together practitioners, service providers, policy makers, and the research community from across the country, and will provide an excellent opportunity to showcase projects on multidisciplinary approaches helping to tackle offending, meet the needs of offenders and lead to better outcomes.

If you or your organisation would like to attend then we would be very interested to hear from you.

If you would like to find out more about our 'Centre of Excellence' conference, including details of how to apply for a position, please contact Ben Ritchie at ben@probation-institute.org

Putting values and ethics into practice



A greater understanding of a profession's core values and ethics can enrich professional practice. **Ben Ritchie** (left) looks back at the keynote speeches on values and ethics which Professor Rob Canton

from DeMontfort University made at the Institute's summer conferences.

Interviews with Prof Canton and fellow probation academic Professor Anne Worrall, of Keele University, follow on pages 7-10.

Leading community justice academic, Professor Rob Canton, has passionately put forward the case for professional ethics and values to consciously guide the practice, policy and institutions which deliver criminal justice.

Through having an understanding of 'what's right' in doing justice, Professor Canton argued this gives meaning and purpose to social-minded professions such as probation, and intrinsically lends itself to new, positive and effective ways of working.

What then may probation professionals believe 'doing justice' includes? Professor Canton gave his own view of "giving people genuine chances to change, which involves fair access to resources that all others enjoy (social inclusion), and that professional relationships can contribute powerfully to guidance and motivation."

Yet affirming a profession's ethics and values should arguably be much more than simply listing a set of beliefs.

The values held by a profession will have an influence on the realisation of actions, consequences

and expectations of how to practice. When framing such principles we therefore need to carefully consider how they would translate into practice and the sorts of behaviour that may follow.

This can be more complex than first seems. In particular circumstances, values which on paper look complementary, may turn out in practice to lead to the dilemma of competing courses of action. If one particular principle takes precedence above all others, this may risk leading in a one-way direction that becomes detached from a more practical and balanced path of action.

Important questions over how different values fit together, and whether some are more fundamental than others, will always need to consider the anticipated interaction with professional practice.

Professor Canton also debated where we obtain our values from, and the grounds for affirming particular principles for the profession. Whilst some values may seem reasonably self-evident, others are arguably much less so.

As society, circumstance and

practice change in the future, there may also be cases for adding new values or challenging principles which now appear out dated. Keeping an understanding of the two-way interaction between principles and professional practice, and how they emerge from one another, is therefore critical.

Whilst there may be disagreement about what constitutes 'right' in justice, there is quite often more consensus on what a grievous injustice looks like.

Values can often be framed in opposition to other views, and Professor Canton suggested that a helpful question to consider is what does the value rule out? For instance, a probation practitioner may object to the view that 'offenders are evil and can never change', which may affirm a 'belief in the possibility of change' as a core principle for the profession. In turn this principle would be realised in probation practice through rehabilitative work and not giving up on people.

A profession's values and ethics should be articulated in a common language, be justiciable and defensible.

Code results from consultation with delegates and members

Delegates in London and York discussed ethics in probation with Prof Canton and panel members Nick Smart (Chief Executive of London CRC), Sue Hall (Institute Director and Chair of the Probation Chiefs Association), Lol Burke (Senior Lecturer in Criminal Justice at Liverpool John Moores University) and Savas Hadjipavlou (Interim Chief Executive of the Probation Institute).

Between April and August the Probation Institute consulted on a draft Code of Ethics which aimed to identify core values and associated ethical principles of the probation profession and which every member of the Institute must accept as a condition of their membership. Having collated and considered the feedback received on the draft, the Probation Institute has now published its final version of the code.

To help give practical effect to the Code there is further work to do. The Probation Institute plans to develop more detailed guidelines which examine how the principles contained in the Code may translate and interact with good probation practice.

Get involved:

We would like to invite members to contribute to the development of these more detailed guidelines.

If this is an area of Institute work which you would be interested in becoming involved, please contact Ben Ritchie at ben@probation-institute.org.



London speech: Prof Canton delivers his address to delegates in the capital (inset left).

Main picture: Delegates at the York conference listen closely.

York audience: Delegates in a plenary session during the summer conference at the Royal York Hotel

INTEGRITY



THE MORAL COMPASS



Editor **Catherine Sinclair-Jones** asked probation academics Prof Rob Canton, of De Montfort University, and Prof Anne Worrall, of Keele University, what they believe to be the values and ethics of probation practice.

ILLUSTRATION ©iStock.com/kchungtw

PQ: *What do you feel is the importance of commonly held values for probation?*

Rob Canton: I think the expression that I've heard used sometimes is a 'moral compass,' something which helps us to work out in a principled way how policies and practices should develop, but also something that announces to the public what they can reasonably expect of probation

work. So I think it has more than one audience. It guides the profession but it also in the process makes an important statement to the public about what matters and why we're attempting to do what we are doing.

Anne Worrall: Commonly held values are one of the defining features of an organizational or occupational culture. They contribute to a sense of 'how

things are done around here,' including the rituals of daily routine, the work atmosphere and shared systems of meaning that are accepted, internalized and acted upon. They are reflected in shared experiences, training and mutual support. They affect how practitioners perceive the Probation Service. Without some kind of anchor that keeps workers grounded and motivated, and gives them a sense of belonging



Prof Anne Worrall

to an 'honourable profession', there is a danger that they will be taken over by the values of the particular host organization in which they work. Of course, some of the values of those organizations will be perfectly compatible with probation work, but some won't be and will need to be resisted or challenged. That's where an explicit code of ethics can be so important.

What would you recognise then as the key ethics and values of probation?

Rob Canton: I think the first thing to say about them, as a preliminary observation, is that we shouldn't have express values that are too abstract and too pious; people should know what those values amount to in practice. So for me one of them is the belief in the possibility that people can change, and the way in which that would be expressed is by a resolute refusal to give up on people – you don't ever say about anybody "there's no opportunity for you, you're done, that's your destiny." I think another one that's very important is the belief that getting out of offending is achieved through social inclusion, recognising that criminal justice is not just about crime and punishment but also includes dimensions of social justice, giving people fair opportunities to live lives in which offending has no place. And I suppose another one that's important to me is that 'everybody is more than the worst thing they've

ever done,' said by a very eloquent speaker called Ryan Stevenson in the United States. We talk about offenders, but none of us I think, if we reflect on our own histories, think on the things that we've done that were mistakes or worse, bad things, none of us I think would like that to celebrate on our tombstones defining our lives, and similarly even people who've done very bad things – everybody is more than that bad thing that they've done. Those are for me the most important.

Anne Worrall: I am probably being rather pedantic but I think there is a difference between ethics and values. Values are the beliefs that we consider most important in our personal or professional life – and other people may agree or disagree

None of us would like (the worst thing we've ever done) on our tombstone defining our lives and, similarly, people who've done very bad things - everybody is more than that bad thing that they've done.

with our values. Ethics are more concerned with how we decide to apply our values in practice, especially when we are faced with conflicts of interest. There are two broad ways of looking at ethics. Firstly we can consider outcomes or consequences – what actions bring about the most good (or harm), what 'works' and so on. The means are justified by the ends –

payment by results, for example. The second approach is more about obligations, duties and rights. We act in a certain way because it is 'right', it is our 'duty' and we recognize other people's rights to be treated in a certain way, regardless of the outcomes or consequences. In criminal justice work, most of what we do can be justified by either approach but sometimes it is helpful to think about which approach we are using in any given situation. Over the past couple of decades, there has been a greater emphasis on outcomes and consequences, to the extent that there is a danger that we forget that acting ethically may mean that ends cannot always justify means. For example, we might say that payment by results conflicts with our duty not to treat offenders as sources of profit. Again, a code of ethics can help with that. I'm not suggesting there is a simple solution to these ethical dilemmas but we shouldn't avoid trying to think them through.

Writing a code of ethics is not easy. Everyone who has written about 'probation values' makes the point that trying to make a list of values that are universally agreed is neither desirable nor possible. Yet it is also impossible not to try! I suppose an overarching value would be a belief that justice for offenders and victims involves, among other things, a commitment to social inclusion. But that has several components. I think it would be very hard to do probation work if you did not believe that it is possible for people to change for the better – and to sustain that belief even in the face of evidence to the contrary. I don't mean that one should adopt a naïve Pollyanna outlook on life but being able to cope with a degree of disappointment without losing faith in people is part and parcel of the work. As a probation worker, you also need to have the self-confidence to believe that you can

play a part in the change – even if only a small and unquantifiable part. Respect is also a core value. Treating offenders with respect is not always intuitive and is certainly not simple. It involves a professionalism that values equality and diversity but even more difficult is respecting an offender regardless of their offence – as an end in themselves (with inalienable rights) even when the consequences of their actions may have been undeniably harmful. In other words, the relationship between worker and client/ offender is of central importance. Respect also involves giving the best and most professional service to everyone, including victims, and being accountable for that service. Wanting to be properly trained for the level and complexity of the work and developing one's knowledge and skills through research are also important values in delivering the best possible service.

What are the main current challenges with taking these forward?

Rob Canton: One problem is that the probation profession is in such a difficult place in its contemporary history, and I think there is a generation of practitioners, most of whom are now in the NPS and still in the CRCs, who have had a sufficiently common professional education to take for granted some of the things that I've been talking about in terms of values and their importance, and I should add here diversity commitment, which I see as an aspect of justice – giving everybody the best service that you're able to give is I think one good way of beginning to

understand the questions of diversity. You then need to move to find out why it is that we fail to do that because that sounds like the right thing to be doing – you need to look at the detail. But to return to the question I think that at the moment there is a sufficient homogeneity – people understand those values, but as the profession diversifies as different sectors become involved, it's hard to know whether they'll be able to hold on to some of that – it won't be familiar to them, it won't be taken for granted – and although some of these values I think emerge from doing the job well, there will be some people who set different priorities for them. We don't yet know what they are, but we do know that they are keen to save money in all kinds of ways and to interpret the job in a particular way and that could lead to a change in practice and consequently a change in values because in a sense the values of a profession are not just your aspiration but what you actually do, so if a profession says it values justice but behaves unjustly, well, it doesn't value justice. So I think that the biggest challenge is precisely that, that and the political volatility because probation has always been used by governments to achieve certain agendas and had its values set for it.

Anne Worrall: I have already alluded to some of these but perhaps I should be more explicit. The greatest challenge is the fragmentation of probation work and the dispersal of probation workers to a variety of organizations

from across the public, private and voluntary sectors. It isn't so much that these new arrivals on the probation scene will automatically hold values that are incompatible with traditional probation values, but rather that it will be difficult to retain a probation culture and identity within a host organization that has its own cultures and values. So the need to retain an identity that is independent of the immediate working environment could become really important.

A further challenge could be persuading probation workers that a code of ethics is the right way to ensure this continuing identity. Unlike some professions, probation workers haven't experienced a specific code of ethics before and some may feel that it is divisive rather than supportive. There has already been



Prof Rob Canton

consultation about the PI code but this should not be a one-off. As more work is done on the translation of the code into practice guidelines, that consultation should continue, with the involvement of as wide a variety of workers as possible.

Finally, there is a danger that the code might be seen by some as a political smoke-screen to impose certain values and practices on workers. However, if one reads the content of the PI code of ethics, I think it is difficult to sustain that argument. On the contrary, it gives a reassurance that the PI is not merely the sugar coating on the pill of Transforming Rehabilitation.

In your recent presentation at our Probation Institute conferences, you talked about practice based on 'what's right' as well as 'what works.' Could you expand on this for us now, on how these two practices might work together?

Rob Canton: I think they can and should work together, because one of the most fundamental rights that all people should enjoy is a right to go about their lives in peace and to pursue their own projects without being offended against. So if something works, and reduces the incidences of crime, to that extent it does enhance the rights and liberties of individuals so that's good I don't want to set up a contrast. But for many years now, we've begun by the research question, working out policy and practice to go with what works and I think actually some of the research findings of that have been a little disappointing and inconclusive and if you begin there and somebody comes up and makes a moral objection to what you're doing, there's a risk that you just regard that as some sort of a nuisance, an impediment, an afterthought that gets in the way of your relentless pursuit of trying

to reduce reconviction. I think if you begin sometimes with 'what's right' and consider the entitlements of the victims, members of the community, the personnel, the service users, the rights of all those people because all of them are part of that calculus, you end up with a different perspective and you may end up also actually, oddly, achieving the goals that probation sets for itself in terms of reoffending, public

As the profession diversifies it's hard to know whether they'll be able to hold on to some of these values - they won't be familiar; they won't be taken for granted - and although some of these values emerge from doing the job well, there will be some people who will set different priorities.

protection and the rest. So I think there's definitely a synergy between those two things, but I do think that sometimes you might do better to begin with the ethical question rather than the practical one.

How do you feel the changing occupational cultures of probation practitioners affect the ability of the profession to create and maintain a shared code of ethics?

Anne Worrall: When I trained to become a probation officer in the 1970s, common values were very important but they were taken for granted and there was a broad

consensus. Although the Probation Service had chosen not to join the new Social Services Departments in England and Wales, probation officers were still very much social workers and embraced social work values. Probably the most well-known articulation of those values – and their application in practice – could be found in Biestek's book, *The Casework Relationship*. His principles of individualization, purposeful expression of emotions, controlled emotional environment, acceptance, non-judgemental attitude, client self-determination and confidentiality may sound quaint nowadays but were embedded in our training and provided a common language that we all understood.

By the 1980s and 1990s, when I was responsible for qualifying education for Home Office sponsored students at two universities, that consensus was challenged in at least three ways: by managerialism with its focus on performance and accountability; by anti-discriminatory practice with its focus on equality and diversity; and by victims' rights awareness. In 1995, Brian Williams edited a book called *Probation Values* in which he captured these changes and debates. Much of that book, and particularly the introduction, remain relevant today. But despite much debate and controversy, the values discourse of probation was enriched, rather than diminished, by these challenges and has remained remarkably universal. In our recent research on probation occupational cultures, Rob Mawby and I found that the values discourse underpinning the work of probation was surprisingly consistent, regardless of a worker's age, training regime or position within the organization.

On the surface, probation values may have changed over the

decades but if one looks deeper, it is perhaps the terminology that has changed more than the value itself. For example, 'acceptance', 'non-judgemental attitude' and 'client self-determination' are archaic phrases but they are not a million miles away from what we know about desistance and how it is achieved. For me, there is only one core historic value that I think has changed beyond recognition and that is 'confidentiality'. Although it was never an absolute right, even in the hey-day of social work, I doubt if many probation workers would consider confidentiality to be a core value at all nowadays. On the contrary, willingness to exchange information with colleagues and other relevant agencies, in the name of public protection, is arguably a value in itself. Conflicts of interest between offenders, victims and the wider public are clearly demonstrated when it comes to deciding who has the right to what information about whom. Perhaps that is the biggest cultural challenge - a recognition that justice is a multi-agency enterprise - that affects the creation and maintenance of a code of ethics. But that realization means that it is exactly the right moment now to try and capture 'probation values' in an ever-changing work environment.

Finally, what role do you think the Probation Institute should have in promoting ethics, values and principles?

Rob Canton: It's a very important role indeed, because who else is going to be doing that? As I've said it's about guiding the profession but also about telling the public about what they can expect of the profession, and I'm not sure who else might be doing that. So the government might have a particular vision, but government statements about that are inevitably tainted

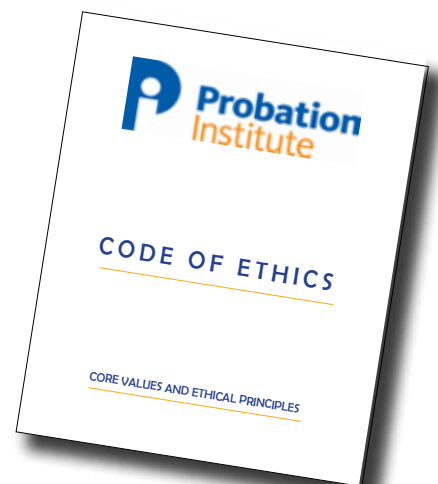
with the priorities of the day. So when it was Mr Kenneth Clarke as Minister of Justice and it was Transforming Rehabilitation and putting rehabilitation at the centre that was one vision for it, and then it became Mr Grayling and he has a different kind of vision for it. I think that governments are not the right people to be articulating the values of the profession, and there is therefore a void which the Probation Institute is admirably equipped to fill, which says yes, these are the

On the surface, probation values may have changed over the decades but if one looks deeper, it is perhaps the terminology that has changed more than the value itself.

values that we hold. But in order to do that of course it has to engage with all the probation agencies and over time that's going to become a diverse collection of people.

Anne Worrall: It is very important that one of the first things the Probation Institute has done is to establish a code of ethics. Of course, there is much more work to be done on how to apply the code in practice but the PI has now set out the parameters of its value base. This means that potential members - whether individuals or organizations - can judge whether or not they wish to be associated with it. Inevitably, some will decide that the value base does not reflect what they consider to be the most important aspects of their work. Personally, I think that is sad, but

PI membership is voluntary and nobody is forced to join. In these turbulent times, it is important for probation workers to have an option to join an organization that offers them support, collegiality and development opportunities based on their identity as probation workers, rather than as employees of particular organizations. Signing up to the PI code of ethics is one way in which they can retain that identity and feel less isolated as probation work becomes increasingly fragmented. It is also a way in which organizations can demonstrate their commitment to particular values and thus attract the best probation workers. To go back to the two justifications of actions that I talked about earlier, having a code of ethics is the 'right' thing for the PI but it would also be nice to think that the consequences of having it are to make probation workers and their employers feel supported and affirmed in difficult times.



The Institute's Code of Ethics can be downloaded from our website: www.probation-institute.org/code-ethics/. Turn over for a further preview.

The Probation Institute's eight core values and ethical principles (*from the Code of Ethics*):

CORE VALUES & ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

1. We believe in the ability of people who have offended to change for the better and become responsible members of society.

1.1 Desistance from offending is a process that may take time, requiring a level of patience, tenacity, care and proactive engagement on the part of probation workers

2. We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of the individual.

2.1 Interventions must show due regard to the dignity, health, safety and well-being of service users

3. We are committed to promoting social justice, social inclusion, equality and diversity

3.1 People who have offended should receive fair, impartial and just treatment throughout all phases of the system and discrimination should be challenged

3.2 Diversity and difference is viewed with positive regard

3.3 Human rights and equality will be upheld and promoted

3.4 Service users should have a voice in the planning of services

4. We believe in the worth of probation supervision in the community, based on establishing positive relationships with service users, to promote their rehabilitation

4.1 Effective supervision relies on setting an environment in which sensitive issues can be explored whilst maintaining appropriate role boundaries

4.2 Meeting the needs of service users will frequently involve working in partnership with other agencies and organisations in the community

4.3 The most appropriate use of custodial sentences is for serious or persistent offending. Community sentences are more effective in supporting rehabilitation than short custodial sentences

5. We recognise that full consideration should be given to the rights and needs of victims when planning how a service user's sentence will be managed.

5.1 Responses to the needs of service users must take account of their assessed level of risk of causing harm to victims and future potential victims

5.2 Restorative justice in its various forms can be a useful intervention with both crime victims who want to understand the harm done to them, and perpetrators who feel the need to apologise and, if possible, to make amends

5.3 Restorative justice interventions must safeguard against the secondary or repeat victimisation of victims

6. We recognise the importance of training for identified levels of competence and of continuing professional development

6.1 Initial qualifying and continuing training must be of a length and quality appropriate to the level and complexity of the work to be undertaken

6.2 Individual workers are accountable for the quality of their work and for maintaining and improving their professional practice, whilst recognising that the employer also has a responsibility to enable this

7. We are committed to the development of knowledge, through research, to inform probation policy and practice

7.1 Methods of working with service users vary according to their different risks and needs and their social contexts

7.2 The effectiveness of different interventions should be judged on the basis of evaluation and research that can be widely disseminated and scrutinised

7.3 Supporting and contributing to research is essential for the development of good practice

8. We are committed to acting with professional integrity

8.1 The values and principles of the profession are upheld and all work will be conducted in a reliable, honest and trustworthy manner

8.2 Appropriate boundaries must be established in relationships with service users and colleagues

8.3 Judgements should be based on balanced and considered reasoning. Members should maintain awareness of the impact of their own values, prejudices and conflicts of interest on their practice and on other people

8.4 Equality and diversity will be actively promoted

8.5 Staff should account for and justify their judgements and actions to service users, to employers and to the general public

8.6 Record keeping must be accurate and professional

What makes desistance unique as a research approach?

Most research on rehabilitation begins with asking “what works” or how effective different interventions are at reducing recidivism on the aggregate for treated groups versus control groups. Desistance research on the other hand starts with the question of “how”: how people are able to move away from crime and rebuild their lives after prison. This different lens leads to very different implications for policy and practice.

What impact does probation supervision have on desistance, both in the short term and long term?

The research is still coming in on this, but of course there is never going to be a singular answer to this, because there is no singular thing that is “probation supervision”. The bigger question (or perhaps the smaller one) is not to ask how probation affects desistance, but rather what micro-level aspects of the relationships between probation staff and probationers contribute to desistance. One key factor that emerged in my own research is belief in change. When key individuals in our lives (these could be professionals or non-professionals like family and friends) believe that we have the ability to change and convey these beliefs to us in various ways, we start to internalize these self-beliefs ourselves. When key others convey the opposite through stigmatizing and demeaning treatment, these have the opposite effect, convincing us to give up on the hard work involved in desistance.

What circumstances help a service user on the path to desistance?

We know that the stronger and broader that someone’s support network is, the more

FEATURE INTERVIEW PROF SHADD MARUNA

CEASE AND DESIST

In recent years, desistance theory has helped to explain how and why people stop offending and has pointed the way towards more effective criminal justice practices. **Catherine Sinclair-Jones** asks one of its leading proponents, Shadd Maruna, Dean of Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, New Jersey, and formerly Director of the Institute of Criminology at Queen’s University, Belfast, about the “path to desistance” and what practitioners can learn from it.



likely they will be able to desist. This is the simple idea behind the old notion of reintegration and social inclusion, that if we want to encourage individuals to obey society's laws, they need to feel like they are a part of that society; they need something to lose if they break those rules, and they need support and connections to help them succeed in prosocial ways. For many of us, those networks are organic - we have family, friends and colleagues who provide the web of support that keeps us in line and picks us up when we find ourselves in times of need. For others, these ties may not exist and may need supported and encouraged.

In the course of your research, what key factors have you found to be most important in turning service users from crime?

Sometimes my research is summarized as saying that desistance is all about having 'hope'. Sometimes this is seen as naïve. What good is hope in the face of things like addiction, homelessness, poverty, stigma and lives of abuse? But, if you have to put a body of research into a one-word nutshell, then "hope" is as good as any as far as I'm concerned. After all, for all of its connotations of hollowness and falsehood, genuine hope is impossible without jobs, without opportunities, without support and equality. Show me a group of former prisoners who have genuine hope that they will be able to succeed and you can be guaranteed that they already have a strong foundation of support and social capital.

Would you say that there are any particular circumstances that hinder the path to desistance?

It is important to remember that, even though, ultimately, desistance is

a normative pathway - that is, most so-called 'offenders' do eventually 'go straight' eventually - that it is definitely not the default pathway for those caught up in lives of crime and punishment. This is to say that most circumstances faced by ex-prisoners hinder the path to desistance. By this, I mean, desistance involves very much swimming against a very strong current in the other direction and requires both commitment and care. That said, in terms of roadblocks to desistance, the heavier the stigma an individual faces, the more likely they are to turn back to criminality - after all, what do they have to lose by doing so? So, if you want to create more recidivism, the easiest way to do that is to deny ex-prisoners opportunities to succeed at every turn, but ensure that they are welcomed with open arms back into the underground economy.

In terms of roadblocks to desistance, the heavier the stigma an individual faces, the more likely they are to turn back to criminality - after all, what do they have to lose by doing so?

How could probation organisations look at desistance and adapt key findings into practice?

If probation is only about surveillance, about measuring risk, detecting criminality, and returning individuals back to prison for various rule infractions, then

desistance research is not terribly important. However, if the point of probation is to help people change their lives, if there is any reality behind the rhetoric of the "rehabilitation revolution", then it makes perfect sense to incorporate education into the change process into probation officer training and practice. Indeed, it could be argued that change science is even more important than the science of risk assessment in such circumstances. The good news is that the science of individual change is not nearly as complicated. There are very basic factors identified time and again both in creating criminality (e.g. social exclusion, stigmatization, labelling, deflating of prosocial expectations) and likewise in supporting desistance (e.g. social inclusion, positive re-labelling, motivation and role modelling).

What may come on a service user's journey after desistance on the road to re-integration?

Well, there is no "after desistance" in a sense. That is, one hopes that desistance persists for years and decades after a person's last crime, and it requires constant "care and feeding" by the individual and his/her supporters. Still, I understand the question. After a person moves away from crime, hopefully all sorts of new opportunities become available to contribute to society. Our research has found that one of the most rewarding of these is the opportunity to "give something back" in the role of "wounded healer" or "professional ex-". These are former prisoners who draw upon their past life experiences to help others avoid making the mistakes that they did in their lives. Such roles serve the dual function of both acting as a role model to others and also providing the professional a positive prosocial role that can solidify and sustain his or her desistance process.

Prof Shadd Maruna: Profile



Shadd Maruna became Dean of Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, New Jersey - one of the oldest and largest programmes on criminology in the United States - on September 1, this year.

He is an internationally known criminologist whose first book, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (2001), is considered a definitive statement and an enduring contribution to the field. The book was awarded Book of the Year by the American Society of Criminology in the year of its publication.

During his career he has received many awards and honours, including being named an H.F. Guggenheim Fellow, a Soros Justice Fellow and a Fulbright Scholar. He received the Michael J. Hindelang Award for Most Outstanding Contribution to Criminology in 2001, the Howard League Research medal and, most recently, the Hans W. Mattick Award for Distinguished Contribution to Criminology.

Dr Maruna serves as as editor of the American Psychological Association's book series, *Psychology, Crime and Justice* and has held offices in professional organisations such as the British Society for Criminology, the Correctional Services Advisory and Accreditation Panel, the Scottish Advisory Panel for Offender Rehabilitation and Oxford's Centre for Criminology.

Dr Maruna has also worked at Queen's University Belfast, Cambridge University and the University at Albany, State University of New York.

He is the author of several books and more than 80 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and reveiws. His research has been cited around 5,000 times.

His other books include: *Rehabilitation: Beyond the Risk Paradigm* (2007); *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Ex-Offender Reintegration* (2004); *The Effects of Imprisonment* (2005); *Fifty Key Thinkers in Criminology* (2010) and *Escape Routes* (2011).

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PROBATION OFFICER?

Challenging

Listening

UNDERSTANDING

Helpful

Friendly

Being positive

DESISTANCE PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

Over the next 12 pages *PQ* takes an in-depth look at probation schemes around the country involving peer mentoring, citizenship and desistance principles and considers their impact. Firstly, **Amarjit Kaur** of Revolving Doors, (right) reports on the charity's work to involve service users in probation work in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire - which included asking the question: What makes a good Probation Officer?



There is a growing recognition that, because of their direct experiences, service users have a unique insight into what works, which can be used to improve services.

In the criminal justice system, involvement has another crucial role to play, as a mechanism to support desistance by giving people an opportunity to become active citizens, to gain skills and a sense of self-worth.

Knowing what we do about the benefits, how do we move beyond tokenism when involving service users in probation services? Between 2102 and 2014 the Revolving Doors Agency worked with users of probation services in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire to try an address this question.

Professionals often see the main challenge to service user involvement as being getting service users on board. In my experience service users will get involved if the right incentives and support structures are in place.

Similarly, senior staff will see the benefits of involving people with direct experience. The challenge is how to get frontline staff engaged. There can be a sense of 'why should we listen to them when no-one listens to us?'

The first stage of the project was about listening to these concerns and involving staff from the outset. This was done through a series of workshops and setting up a project team that included frontline and senior staff.

We then wanted to find out how people on probation felt about the service and how they wanted to be involved in decision making. With the support of probation staff and through advertising in LDU's we recruited service users to train as researchers.

There are some classic criticisms of involvement that peer research can help to overcome. Things like



Award ceremony: Service users with their Certificates of Achievement

'it's just the same people who get involved' or 'it's just an excuse for a rant'. By training a small group (9 people in Hertfordshire and 6 in Bedfordshire) in research skills and getting them to conduct research with other service users and with staff, the project was able to go beyond 'the usual suspects' and talk to a range of clients and staff, and produce high quality information to be used for business purposes.

In Bedfordshire the researchers decided after speaking to staff and discussing their own experiences to look into the following subjects; what makes a good probation officer; sentence planning and

how the service people received in reception affected them.

The service user researchers devised a research methodology that involved focus groups with service users and with staff, interviews and also asking both groups to write their views on the question: "What makes a good probation officer?" onto a 'stick person' image. There were common themes. Listening, understanding, challenging, being friendly and human, being positive about situations and clients, and being respectful appeared in both top tens, but there were also difference with staff seeing 'listening' as being most important while

service users had 'helpful/makes a difference' at the top. The findings from the research were incorporated into recruitment processes and led to a review of information to service users about what they could expect from probation officers. The researchers also made a film that incorporated their findings on what makes a good probation officer which has been very well received and used in SEEDS training.

Sentence planning

Bedfordshire had scored lower than expected in the annual offender survey on the question about clients

understanding of their sentence plan. Having interviewed staff and other service users the peer researchers found that probation officers rarely used the term sentence plan, and when explained to service users they did recognize the concept.

As a result of their findings the peer research team decided to produce a leaflet for service users about how to get the best out of probation, that featured a 'jargon buster'.

In Hertfordshire the peer research team decided to look into access to housing, employment and training interventions and the relationship with probation officers.

In both areas senior management were asked to respond to the recommendations in the research reports and to work with the researchers to implement the findings. In Bedfordshire the report was presented at the staff conference and all staff asked to say what they saw as the key points and what would change about their practice as a result of the research findings.

Comments included:

'Engaging more in conversation about my motivations and background to 'break the ice' and get clients to see me as 'human' and approachable.'

'I will be more aware at the beginning of someone's order/licence how daunting it can be and I will take more time to look at sentence plan aims – re-capping, having the person as involved as possible.'

'Hearing service users perspectives and how I agree with them (we aren't that different after all).'

'It's so easy to forget we are seen as powerful and services users can be afraid.'

'Peer research group are so motivated to make this work, demonstrating to us that service users should be listened to and used in research.'

In both areas the probation service now had a group of highly informed service users. The Revolving Doors approach was not to bring in a prescribed structure for involvement but to support organisations and their service users to develop it

in partnership. In Bedfordshire the peer researchers joined the staff project group to become a joint implementation team and in Hertfordshire they joined the current service user group who worked with staff to take forward the research recommendations. In both areas Revolving Doors trained staff to be able to repeat the process. Taking part in the research had a profound effect on those who took part as demonstrated by this quote:

'The peer research group has enabled me to practice life skills, and has increased my confidence no end. Although I have had the ability to speak in a group, I sometimes lacked the courage of my convictions. So the group structure of the project was a massive boost for anyone who is trying to gain full time employment. I can look back in years to come with fondness, knowing that, even if only in a very small way, we have changed some people's lives for the better.'

Revolving Doors is producing toolkits to support probation services to involve service users in all aspects of their work.

Voice For Change: Service users in South Yorkshire are empowering themselves and improving practice

The peer mentoring scheme in South Yorkshire, now known as the Peer Partnership, was conceived via the Voice For Change Hub (VFCH) - a Forum designed by service users for service users. The development and co-ordination of both projects has been facilitated by Fiona Miller South Yorkshire CRC

Service User Involvement Officer.

Since August 2013 Voice For Change Hub sessions have been taking place once per month in all four of the South Yorkshire divisions. This provides service users with space to be an influential voice, having direct impact on what the organisation does, as well as providing a forum for service users

to progress into either of the three "Voice member" roles or mentoring positions.

Each involves a different level of commitment and encompasses the diversity and circumstance of the service user stage of change, which builds on motivation and enthusiasm developed from their interests.

Voice members successfully walked through the TR process with the service and continue to creatively implement voice ideas into the organisation, particularly contributing to the development of the Peer Partnership scheme.

Voice members designed their own logo to complement their work which also contributed to the production of the voice member and Peer Partnership mission statement and code of conduct. This built foundations for them to embark on a journey of actively working on a newsletter and a personalised service user pack.

They also participated in canvassing sessions to recruit new members and developed work around the twelve criminogenic needs.

In addition they also develop ways to implement their voice through in-service training sessions and in-service meetings. In preparation for mentoring Voice members support mentors actively working in the field by way of skills sharing.

Since January 2014 the project is proud to have recruited and trained 22 mentors. Some have moved



Voices for change: Members of the South Yorkshire mentoring team

on into employment while others remain and continue to give time to support service users and assist staff in reducing reoffending.

Mentors now facilitate the VFCH sessions and work with Voice members to creatively implement their voiced ideas into the organisation.

Mentors are currently working cases, on a one-to-one basis, and as part of their mentoring experience they have chosen one of the twelve criminogenic needs as a specialist area.

The one-to-one work focusses on the specific need of the mentee and is tailored to offering assistance to case managers working on sentence plan objectives

Mentors and Voice members have developed their ability to work with service users via established requirements attached to orders.

Group programmes: Mentors work with selected groups to encourage motivation and increase engagement.

Women's Project: Female mentors have assisted in cooking, crafts

and group sessions offering female service users the opportunity to engage with the service in a way which offers a fun and safe environment (*see photo, left*).

Mentors have extended their work in the community upon suggestion by those in the VFCH and made links with the football clubs and housing projects.

It was felt that football was a sport commonly known interest to most and a vessel easy to engage others.

Voice members and mentors also identified accommodation as a key issue for a majority of service users so felt that this should take priority and have currently developed a project to work with housing provisions in assisting Service Users with such difficulties.

Mentors have delivered workshops in the community to deter those in the community at risk of re-offending and have participated at conferences sharing their experience and journey into mentoring and undertaken briefings. The project is still in progress.



Cooking session: Women are mentored to develop culinary skills

From Research to Practice:

Challenges and opportunities for evidence-based supervision



Forensic psychologist **Dr Dominic Pearson** reports on the evaluation of a "Citizenship programme" that has reduced

reoffending in the North East and considers the practical lessons for those wishing to replicate its success.

Unlike at any other time, probation services in the UK are under pressure to be cost-effective.

Community Rehabilitation Companies have been set up to work with lower risk offenders under 'payment by results' contracts. The pressure is on, therefore, to produce results i.e., to reduce reoffending.

This article traces the development and independent evaluations of a supervision programme that was designed to achieve this. As a forensic psychologist with a probation background I have always been keen that probation work is informed by research on effective practice, and here I aim to discuss the issues for those wishing to take forward evidence-based probation supervision.

What comes through is the importance of commitment and leadership at all organisational levels, including at Board level and particularly at Chief Executive level.¹

Internationally there has been limited research on what comprises probation supervision: it has generally been left to evolve into a combination of approaches,

lacking in structure or any coherent theoretical rationale, thus limiting the possibility of research and development.

The UK is a case in point, with calls for probation supervision to be made more purposeful for offenders than merely 'reporting to the probation office'.

It is regrettable, given what is known about effective practice, that probation supervision should be left in the background to other programming such as offending behaviour group-work. Group-work interventions are relatively short-lived, yet costly, and not suitable for all offenders.

The initiative here described therefore sought to design and evaluate a one-to-one supervision programme that was consistent with effective practice yet was suitable for all offenders subject to probation supervision. Since the programme aimed to reduce reoffending and promote community re-integration it was named 'Citizenship'

Programme Development

To develop Citizenship a working group was formed comprising

practitioners and managers at each grade of the then National Probation Service in County Durham. Importantly the group was under the guidance of a respected forensic psychologist, Clive Hollin, as this ensured that the programme drew upon the available international evidence regarding best practice in reducing reoffending.

Key elements of this were that the intensity of the programme should correspond to risk assessed by a validated measure (OASys); that the content should explicitly focus on reducing identified criminogenic needs; and that it should provide opportunities to practice new ways of thinking and behaving in a motivational environment in which the offender is likely to be responsive.

It was also necessary that the programme be subject to monitoring and evaluation, to assure programme integrity. These are the core Risk, Need, Responsivity (R-N-R) and Programme Integrity principles of effective programmes.

The concept of Citizenship also incorporated access to community-based services to promote

¹ The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the role of Russell Bruce, former Chief Executive of Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust. We believe that the widespread take-up of Citizenship in County Durham probation area and its adoption in Teesside was strongly related to his commitment to it during his time as Assistant Chief and later as Chief Executive.

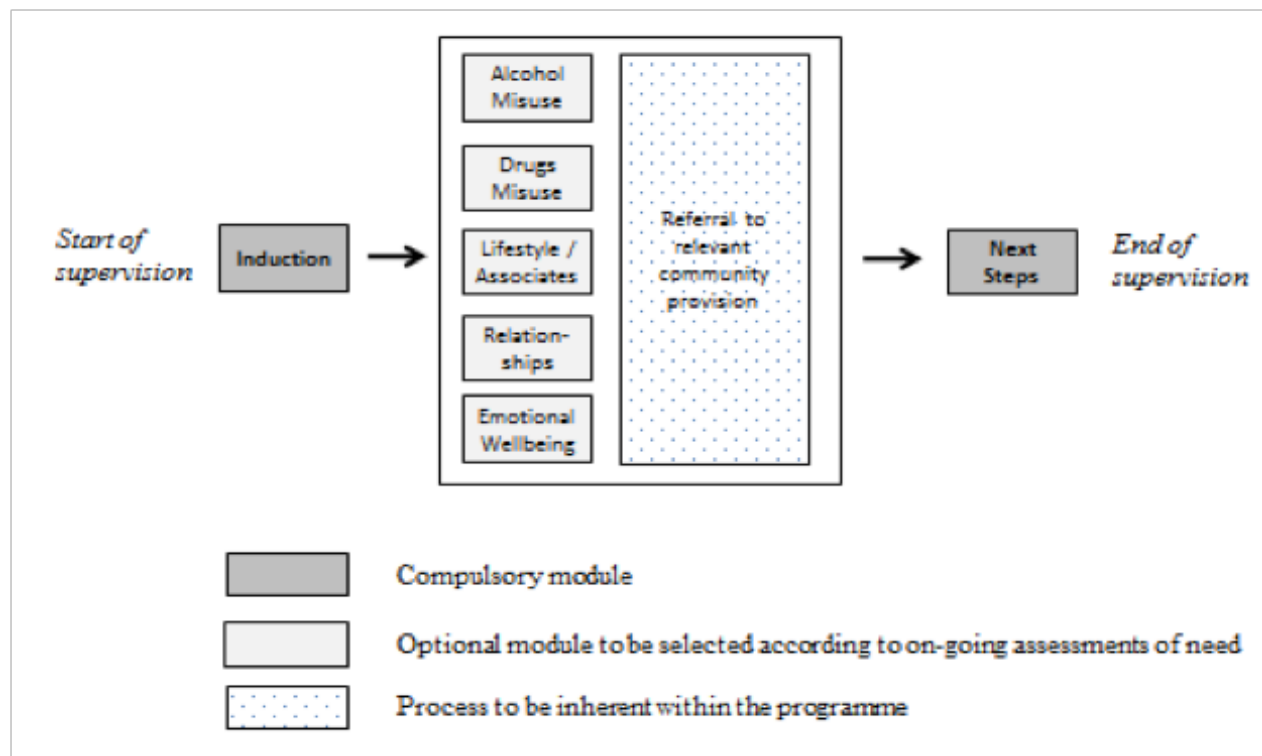


Figure 1: Citizenship pathway model

opportunities for longer-term change and re-integration.

Programme modules were therefore developed that corresponded with the local area's priority needs from its OASys data. This exercise highlighted the prevalence of criminogenic needs in Thinking & Behaviour and in Education & Employability, which is consistent with the criminological literature suggesting that cognitive skills deficits often underpin poor self-regulation and the development of anti-social attitudes.

Consequently a core module was developed named Induction that aimed to be educational and motivational but took a problem-solving approach to addressing offending behaviour.² In addition, external agency links were formed for need areas that were outside probation expertise, such as

accommodation and financial management.

For higher risk offenders requiring greater levels of intervention, a menu of additional modules was developed. This flexible modular structure is shown in Figure 1 (above).

Offender progress including their ongoing referral to relevant agencies could be monitored case-by-case in the final review module called Next Steps, and across the caseload.

Moreover, the integration of monitoring data enabled organisational inspection of targeting, attendance, and completion.

Programme evaluation

After the programme had been implemented an internal pilot study was conducted on the one-year reconvictions of the first 100 cases

supervised by a core set of trained staff, compared with a matched group of 100 cases supervised by the same staff but terminating before Citizenship implementation.

This showed that nearly one-half had completed the required modules in their individual plans, and nearly three-quarters had been referred to external support agencies.

One-year reconvictions were lower in the Citizenship group than in the prior practice group, with offenders being nearly twice as likely to desist under Citizenship. The promising results made the case for a wider evaluation.

Due to the cultivation of academic-practice links between Durham probation and the University of York, a full independent evaluation then followed.

This compared reconvictions of

² Much of this was based, with permission, on the Priestley One-to-One programme.

a total cohort of 3,819 Citizenship cases over two years against those of a total cohort of 2,110 prior practice cases from the previous year.

Results were clear-cut and showed that proportionally fewer offenders had re-offended, both after one- and after two-years, compared to prior practice.

Using a time-to-offence analysis, controlling for age, risk scores, and opportunity to offend, the proportion reconvicted was reduced by 30% under Citizenship. This staggering effect was achieved with medium- and lower risk offenders because when levels of risk were examined it showed that high-risk offenders did not show any reduction.

This was not altogether surprising: the greater emphasis on control than on rehabilitation and social inclusion may have compromised effectiveness with this sub-group.

The first evaluation was very encouraging but it was limited by the groups being run in different times.

Since the sentencing or policing environment may be different, the best way to control for this is to use a randomised trial in which at any one time all offenders have equal chances of being in either Citizenship or practice-as-usual.

There was an opportunity to do this 'gold standard' evaluation in a neighbouring probation area that was interested in the programme.

The senior management team there was open to it because it could be incorporated with a staggered implementation plan, which was appealing logistically.³

We therefore conducted a second independent evaluation. This compared 1,091 offenders on supervision randomly allocated to Citizenship or practice-as-usual depending on the office to which they reported during a one year period.

Only medium- and high-risk cases were included; prioritisation consistent with the risk principle of effective practice where there are insufficient resources to deliver service-wide.

Given the harder-to-reach

group, we expected a lesser effect of Citizenship to be achieved compared to the previous evaluation.

Results showed that there was an overall non-significant 20% reduction in reconvictions under Citizenship compared to practice-as-usual. However, this was achieved despite only a minority of the Citizenship cases receiving the programme (38%).

Furthermore, the risk analysis showed that this overall reduction masked a difference by OGRS risk profile: high-risk offenders showed a 34% decrease in reconviction risk, while the larger group of medium-risk cases showed no real change.

This was surprising until we saw that more of the higher risk cases were in the 38% exposed to Citizenship sessions. Thus officers appeared to be delivering Citizenship sessions more consistently with offenders at high-risk of re-offending than with medium-risk offenders, although take-up of the programme overall was low.

³ This also ended up producing financial savings by avoiding the need for a re-launch as occurred with a big bang implementation in another area (Pearson, Torgerson, McDougall, & Bowles, 2010).

Citizenship: The challenges and the opportunities of implementation

What practical lessons can be taken from this experience of transferring research evidence to practice with offenders?

First of all, compared to practice-as-usual the use of a structured one-to-one programme that helps the offender to understand his/her own criminogenic needs can reduce the risk of reoffending by an appreciable magnitude.⁴

The core part of Citizenship is educational and motivational and puts the officer in a facilitator role, rather than acting as a 'fire-fighter' solving problems for the offender.

This is sensible on a number of levels, not least because offence-related problems cannot always wait until the next appointment. Our results suggest that Citizenship can be effective

(cont. on p.27)

⁴ The results in this article have been across all eligible offenders, regardless of completion. Results are greater still if one just considers the programme completers. This has not been presented as it offers an unrealistic picture, as we know that completers are not randomly allocated, i.e., they may have done better regardless of the programme.

(cont. from p.26)

with offenders at each level of risk, subject to appropriate (minimal) intensity at the lower risk levels.

The first evaluation showed better results with medium-low risk offenders; a group capable of responding to brief intervention in treating their offending behaviour as a problem, and following sign-posts to external provision.

The second evaluation showed that the structured approach was beneficial with high-risk offenders, who are likely to be particularly lacking in problem-solving and self-control skills and therefore need longer-term treatment and support addressing the relevant (criminogenic) needs.

Lastly it was clear that the implementation of a structured programme, albeit one that is highly individualised, was not readily accepted by all practitioners or managers.

⁵ On top of standard officer training, including OASys

Those officers that did deliver Citizenship deserve credit for the results achieved, but we are left wondering if a better result would have been available with greater commitment across the staff group.

Citizenship training was inexpensive at one-half of a day⁵, and this may have been insufficient.

Action-research in Canada has shown that officers receiving thorough intervention skills training reduced reoffending significantly compared to officers receiving briefings only.

However, training is only one part of the programme integrity principle, which also requires sustained monitoring and clinical support for delivery staff. The first evaluation had greater commitment at senior management level than we saw in the second evaluation, with more investment in internal inspections of delivery and associated action.

Further Reading:

Pearson, D., McDougall, C., Kanaan, M., Torgerson, D., & Bowles, R. (2014). Evaluation of the Citizenship evidence-based probation supervision programme using a stepped-wedge cluster randomised controlled trial. *Crime & Delinquency*. Advance online publication. Full text available from <http://eprints.port.ac.uk/14623/>

Pearson, D., McDougall, C., Kanaan, M., Bowles,

R., & Torgerson, D. (2011). Reducing criminal recidivism: Evaluation of Citizenship, an evidence-based probation supervision process. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 7 (1), 73-102. Full text available from <http://eprints.port.ac.uk/9362/>

Pearson, D., Torgerson, D., McDougall, C., & Bowles, R. (2010). Parable of two agencies, one of which randomizes. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 628, 11-29. Full text available from <http://eprints.port.ac.uk/9360/>

Comment: Russell Bruce



Russell Bruce was a champion of the Citizenship Programme during his time as Assistant Chief Executive, and later Chief Executive, of Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust.

Dominic's short, powerful article provides a description of Durham Tees Valley's long term initiative to manage offenders in ways best able to reduce reconviction rates of those under its supervision.

It sets out a single initiative which was originally deployed in two probation areas, targeting different offender groups and was evaluated to different standards, peer reviewed and published.

The research showed positive outcomes,

specifically the reduced numbers of those reconvicted compared with prior practice.

For those tempted to see this as a dry, academic exercise: please don't! It is a very particular way of working and represents an opportunity for others to build on.

Citizenship was a distinct, Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust (DTVPT) Offender Management 'specification', capable of complementing and

(cont. p.28)

adding to the effectiveness of other interventions, which reflected and addressed local crime-related need and risk.

Offending is a global challenge, but driven by different things to different degrees in different localities. Through the project, we aimed to harness local community resources to compliment the statutory supervision process, which was:

- A fully costed, 'instead of', rather than an 'in addition to' approach
- Relatively cheap (compared to other Trusts)
- Supported by over 150 trained and accredited probation volunteers from the local community
- Monitored, with the outcomes evaluated

Crucially, the project was also evolving, with a clear understanding of the crime related need and risk characteristics of reoffenders (compared to those who did not reoffend) and a commitment to change our management of them in ways which reflected their difference.

This is an approach capable of adaption to meet the crime-related need and risks of any area...assuming it is known what these are.

The quality of the method enjoys the endorsement of HMI Probation. It commanded the confidence and respect of local partners, including sentencers. The evidence is robust, staff increasingly bought into it and the outcomes are compelling. As we move to the new structures borne of Transforming Rehabilitation, those commissioning services, as well as leaders, managers and practitioners involved in delivery, should take notice of the possibilities arising from the Durham Tees Valley experience. I sincerely hope that they do.

Desistance at scale

by *Helen Collins, John Graham, Lindy Madgin-Ellison, Val Docherty* and North Durham Peer Mentors and service users

As a solution to ever-decreasing staff numbers in the Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust (DTVPT) in 2011, the Citizenship Programme was developed. Research (see above) had shown the programme to be effective in reducing reoffending. Once the programme was completed, those assessed as suitable were passed to the newly formed Community Supervision Service (CSS). Suitability was defined by risk levels and complexity of need, the premise being that the majority of the old Tier 2 and 3 cases would transition to the CSS on completion of the relevant Citizenship modules.

The CSS was run by existing

members of staff who would deliver the second part of the service user's supervision. This would be a more forward-looking approach based on desistance principles such as: integrating offenders into their local community; providing opportunities for change and focussing on individual strengths. Delivery would involve a greater use of volunteers and increased involvement of partnership agencies.

Gallant projects arose from a need to delivery services to large numbers of service users while providing these opportunities. The name derives from a long-serving staff member and was chosen so as not to link to offenders or offending - again utilising desistance principles. The projects were led by PSO staff with, initially, one middle manager providing oversight and direction in

12 locations throughout the trust. The broad idea was that CSS staff would instruct 30-40 service users to report during a two-hour slot where agencies would be available to assist with problems such as housing or employment.

The Gallant projects quickly developed a life of their own and grew rapidly, particularly where staff enjoyed additional responsibility. The sites required a large communal space and facilities to provide refreshments. CSS staff began identifying and negotiating the use of community buildings and recruited agencies who could provide support and assistance or help to link offenders into their local communities. In addition to the more traditional types of support around housing and employment, other agencies were brought in.

(cont. on p.29)

For example, Health Trainers were introduced to improve access to GPs and provide advice on matters such as stopping smoking. In another initiative, co-ordinators were invited from local volunteer bureaux, enabling service users to volunteer in their communities. The agencies attending Gallants did so free of charge and a frequent selling point for them was being able to meet some of the harder to reach clients, upon whom their funding was partially or wholly dependent, in one location.

Due to the large numbers attending, face-to-face work was primarily undertaken by volunteers and other agencies attending. The Trust needed to recruit and train large numbers of volunteers to support the Gallant and, as a legacy of this, the current CRC currently has upwards of 140 active volunteers. The projects aimed to provide a welcoming atmosphere, a place with a bit of a buzz where offenders felt comfortable and did not just drop in. Frequently comfortable seating areas were available with newspapers and refreshments available for those waiting. CSS staff undertook desistance training to enable them to develop projects with a forward-looking ethos.

The projects continued to develop to include the use of peer mentors, social action projects and activities. The use of volunteers was viewed with suspicion by some staff who felt their roles were under threat from free labour. The use of Peer Mentors caused further concern and their introduction was phased over a period of time, and in some locations is still to be introduced. Whilst some staff may have had concerns, the positive impact of peer mentors has been apparent. The belief and hope that some service users develop upon realising that the person they are talking to has recently been in the same situation is again linked

(cont. on p. 30)

Gallant: What service users and staff said...

Ruby (Service User)

When I got out from Low Newton, I was fragile, no confidence, and no hope. My Probation Officer is very helpful. She introduced me to the Gallant Project. In there I met a lot of organisations who help me find my feet and sort my life. I go there every two weeks and meet my peer mentor. I was introduced to the organisation Changing Lives who help me with my career. Foundation Trust have helped me to find accommodation and helped me to apply for housing benefit. I couldn't thank Gallant enough for the help they gave me.

Kevin (Service User)

I have been attending Gallant sessions for approximately one year. To begin with I attended as part of my probation order. It has proven to be of enormous benefit to me, not only from the point of view of a service-user, but also from my perspective as a peer mentor. As well as offering a range of practical help such as assisting with employment and benefits issues, they also provided me with a place where I could talk. To me the latter was of supreme importance as I was afforded the opportunity to discuss delicate matters which may otherwise have been ignored. I discovered an attitude for listening as well as talking, and once my order came to end, I trained as a peer mentor. During my time as a peer mentor I have realised at first hand on multiple occasions the excellent work they carry out at a Gallant projects. Most importantly I feel, the service users have engaged with Gallant sessions in a positive and constructive way - a mixture of highly trained and motivated staff and volunteers offer a first rate service which I recommend without hesitation.

Staff member

It is hoped that Gallant will have an impact on reducing reoffending and contribute positively to local communities by helping service-users reintegrate into their community. Gallant brings partnership agencies together under one roof, providing an holistic approach to supervision, allowing responsivity to individual needs. This is aided by the use of volunteer and peer mentor support, who bring to the Gallant a diverse knowledge allowing understanding and assisting service users to achieve desistance. Volunteers and Peer Mentors can offer the time and support to individuals that staff may not be able to offer.

closely to desistance theories.

By mid-2013 the Gallants were providing supervision to over half of the DTVPT caseload. Qualitative and quantitative research was undertaken yielding encouraging results. A sample of service users who attended Gallant and a sample of those who did not were matched, with the

result that the Gallant attendees committed, on average, two less offences per person in the follow-up period. The qualitative research showed an increased sense of self-determination and increased level of willingness to undertake activities that developed and supported others. The questionnaires completed by Gallant attendees also

showed that they felt that they were treated with respect and were able to shed the criminal or offender label when attending.

The research concluded that it was the marrying of cognitive behavioural methods and the desistance principles so evident in Gallant that was successful in reducing reoffending.

New Start ceremonies: Prof Shadd Maruna's ideas take root in Solihull



by **Paul Levy**
Head of Interventions
Staffordshire & West
Midlands CRC

This idea came about because myself and my team were determined to showcase how best our increasing knowledge and understanding of desistance research could be translated into improved support and outcomes for our clients.

One aspect of turning this theory into practice came after hearing Professor Shadd Maruna present his 'Rites of Passage' research, based initially on his Liverpool Desistance Study in his book *Making Good*, and later refined in his further academic articles.

This introduces the concept of a ritual or ceremony to formally announce a new non-offending identity, something his research indicates is very important for clients to support their longer term desistance from crime.

We call our redemption ceremony 'New Start'. Every client whose Order or Licence is ending is invited to one of these sessions for their last appointment. They are run twice per month and we have had around six or so clients at each event.

We make a big thing of the ceremony, in that they are hosted by the Head of Probation. Whilst we congratulate them for coming to the end of their Order, we want it to be seen as a significant life event to celebrate the fact they are now fully fledged members of their communities, with no legal requirement to atone for their past mistakes.

Prof. Maruna talks about this acceptance, this ritual, as crucial to increasing their self efficacy and affirming their self identity, thereby supporting their new non-offending lifestyle.

As part of the ceremony, we made sure they felt they could look forward with pride, hope and belief to their future, but also that support was available to help them do this.

We invited significant others and family members, as well as their Probation Officers, provided a small buffet, and marked the occasion with a formal element, presenting a certificate, which included a photo marking the first day of their individual 'New Start'.

The event kicks off with an introduction and enforces the significance of the day, but by far the most powerful part of the ceremony is where we ask a reformed offender from our Peer Mentoring

partnership agency, Changes UK, to share their own story and experiences of changing their lives.

This has been shown to resonate with our clients and has led to a lot of discussion and makes the day 'real' for them, demonstrating that others who have been faced with similar problems have themselves turned their lives around.

There is then a symbolic release of something from their old lives that contributed to their offending which they no longer wish to have in their lives. They are then each asked to choose something important to them, that they value and need to retain in their new non-offending lifestyle.

Overall, the events have been very positively received as you can see from the feedback below, although there was some initial concerns raised when the ideas were shared. They can be time-consuming to get off the ground, but once the momentum is there they can easily be replicated.

We are looking to evaluate this over the longer term to assess its effectiveness, but early indications are that it does indeed strengthen self identity and support clients to move forwards. I believe this has been a positive example of translating desistance theory into effective front line practice.

New start: What service users and staff said...

Service users:

- ➔ "I've made loads of changes - this is the affirmation I needed"
- ➔ "I've never had a certificate for anything before!"
- ➔ "I've hated being labelled an 'offender' - it's nice to be recognised as normal"
- ➔ "It's nice to hear someone say 'well done'"
- ➔ "It's helped me to focus on what I need to do to move my life forward"

Staff:

- ➔ "I thought the session was really good - I didn't expect it to be"
- ➔ "I thought it would be awkward and uncomfortable but it wasn't at all"
- ➔ "These sessions sum everything up - it's a good way to end the Order"
- ➔ "It not only recognises the changes they've made but what they need to do in the future to stay out of trouble"
- ➔ "I was really cynical about these sessions but once I saw it, I realised how important it is for clients"

Steven attended a New Start ceremony earlier this year:

I was lost in drug addiction for many years and my path led to jail. I was using heroin as a comfort blanket. It became my mother, my father, my sister and brother. Now I'm a peer mentor and doing recovery training with the NHS, and peer mentoring with the probation service. I've been visiting prisons, showing people there is a solution to a substance problem. Since the start of my recovery, I've done more things in the last twelve months than my whole life.



Steven with Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC staff

Life changing: Peer Recovery Support Worker Stephen Jamieson with a service user



HEALTH AND RECOVERY SUPPORT

Continuing our desistance theme, we report on two initiatives helping service users to stop committing crime through a focus on their health. First we look at a Northumbrian project which utilises peer recovery support workers to help service users tackle their alcohol and drug abuse.

Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company (Northumbria CRC) runs a recovery support service with its Newcastle IOM team which has shown great results

in its first year. There was a 37% reduction in crime during the first six months of engagement.

The recovery support service was commissioned in January 2013 and the contract was awarded to

Changing Lives, a national charity which provides specialist support services for vulnerable people. It is led by Stephen Jamieson, senior peer recovery support worker who is an ex-offender and has made excellent progress in his own recovery from alcohol and substance addiction.

Stephen engages with service users who have been involved in high levels of acquisitive crime and who have a history of alcohol or substance misuse. He builds positive relationships with individuals and introduces them to agencies and peer support networks which can help support them towards abstinence and rehabilitation.

Stephen speaks from the heart about his own experiences in a way which resonates with the people he is working with. He provides a positive example of an alternative lifestyle, and provides an insight that staff cannot replicate. His passion makes people sit up and listen to him about what it takes to succeed in recovery.

Stephen explains: "I work with people with really chaotic lifestyles who come from an environment where they take little or no responsibility for their actions.

"My first step is to help people to see their situation for what it is and how it has contributed to their life. Once they can see this, it nearly always ignites a desire to do something about it. Only then can they begin their journey of recovery and start making changes.

"I had one lad referred to me and I worked alongside his probation officer and a worker from Plummer Court (drug treatment provider). He had never worked with a male member of staff before and it was a huge obstacle for him to overcome. Over a period of time I made a connection with him, which was to do with the fact I'd been there and I could explain how it was for me.

"Once he started to trust me, his

barriers came down and he started to take responsibility for his actions. I worked with him for a number of months and got him in to Free The Way, a peer led rehab facility. He's been there five months now and his transformation is incredible.

His confidence and self-esteem have grown and he is now able to make plans for the future without being scared of the outcome. The service user said: 'I'm very grateful to probation, Stephen and Plummer Court. Because of the potential they saw in me I was able to believe and see the potential in myself'"

My first step is to help people to see their situation for what it is and how it has contributed to their life. Once they can see this, it nearly always ignites a desire to do something about it. Only then can they begin their journey of recovery...

Evaluation

The recovery support service was evaluated by Northumbria University after 12 months. The focus of the evaluation was the impact of the support received by service users from the peer recovery support worker, particularly a reduction in offending behaviour

Data for 25 service users accessing support from Stephen showed a 37% reduction in crime (from 95 to 60 arrests) during the first six months of engagement, compared to the previous six months.

Service users engaged voluntarily

with the recovery support service and welcomed the peer support. Many were looking for practical support with training and employment, but all who became involved were suffering from high levels of social exclusion, addiction problems, financial hardship, housing needs and poor physical or mental health.

Those who worked with Stephen found the support made a tangible difference to their self confidence, broadening the scope of their positive social networks and making it more likely they would remain in recovery. One person said: "He's been there and done it. He's in a good place now.... and that's where I want to be."

Sustaining the desistance and recovery are a challenge, and were linked to the ending of statutory support and exposure to negative social networks. Many of those who participated in the scheme saw the peer support as key to overcoming this, who help to bridge the gap into local communities.

Professor Michael Rowe, Northumbria University, explains: "The research evidence shows that desistance is a long term process. The peer recovery programme had a positive impact on offenders and this was associated with the positive relationship with the peer recovery support worker."

Moving forward

Following the success of the pilot, Northumbria CRC is keen to extend the service and involve more of its service users with experience of recovery in supporting others. To this end, Northumbria CRC has commissioned a female peer recovery support worker to work with women offenders in Newcastle.

A local recovery group is also being established, which commences in October 2014 and will meet for two hours each Friday. It will

include offenders who are in need of additional support, meeting with peer mentors who are also offenders but who have made sustained progress and are happy to share their experiences to help others. The

group will also work closely with drug and alcohol partner agencies to ensure the right external support and provision is in place.

Probation officers will identify offenders who have made a

considerable amount of progress and refer them to the peer mentor scheme. They will then complete an induction programme to develop their understanding of the role and establish their skills as a peer mentor.

Research paper: Breaking the link between alcohol and violent crime

A new research paper from the Medical Council on Alcohol explores the effectiveness of intervention strategies at reducing harmful drinking in the probation setting, through the use of a randomised control trial.

Below is an Abstract of the full article, which calls for more research to be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of brief interventions on this group of service users within probation.

The Council (which includes Prof. Jonathan Shepherd, left) illustrate the prevalence of hazardous and harmful drinking in connection with violent crime, whilst acknowledging the complexities of defining the relationship between the two, with wide range of contributing external factors that render addressing alcohol abuse problematic.

The article seeks to address the lack of evidence of the effectiveness of alcohol screening and brief interventions in the criminal justice setting, as opposed to the range of evidence available in the health field.

ABSTRACT

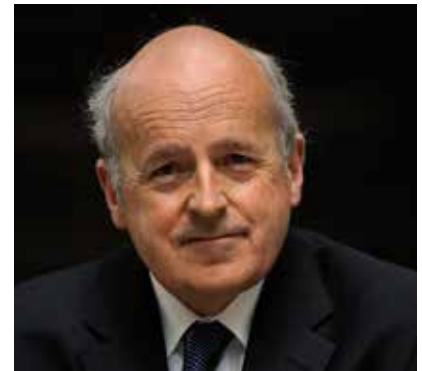
Aim: To evaluate the effectiveness of different brief intervention strategies at reducing hazardous or harmful drinking in the probation setting. Offender managers were randomised to three interventions,

each of which built on the previous one: feedback on screening outcome and a client information control group, 5 minutes of structured brief advice and 20 minutes of brief lifestyle counselling.

Methods: A pragmatic multicentre factorial cluster randomised control trial. The primary outcome was self-reported hazardous or harmful drinking status measured by Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) at 6 months (negative status was a score of <8). Secondary outcomes were AUDIT status at 12 months, experience of alcohol-related problems, health utility, service utilisation, readiness to change and reduction in conviction rates.

Results: Follow-up rates were 68% at 6 months and 60% at 12 months. At both time points, there was no significant advantage of more intensive interventions compared with the control group in terms of AUDIT status. Those in the brief advice and brief lifestyle counselling intervention groups were statistically significantly less likely to reoffend (36 and 38% respectively) than those in the client information leaflet group (50%) in the year following intervention.

Conclusion: Brief advice or brief lifestyle counselling provided no additional benefit in reducing hazardous or harmful drinking



Prof Jonathan Shepherd

compared with feedback on screening outcome and a client information leaflet. The impact of more intensive brief intervention on reoffending warrants further research.

The full article: "Alcohol Screening and Brief Interventions for Offenders in the Probation Setting (SIPS Trial): a Pragmatic Multicentre Cluster Randomized Control Trial" (D. Newbury-Birch et al., 2014) is available to download at <http://alcalc.oxfordjournals.org/> Contact Dorothy Newbury-Birch at Dorothy.newbury-birch@ncl.ac.uk for more information.



BETTER JUSTICE IN MENTAL HEALTH



Paula Reid was awarded a Fellowship from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust to travel to the USA and Canada to look at responses to mental illness in the criminal justice system. Her Fellowship report, including case studies from the USA, Canada and the UK, was published in July.

The response of the criminal justice system to people affected by mental illness has had a welcome focus in recent years. This group is disproportionately represented at all stages of the system, from the volume of mental health calls to police, to the statistics showing extremely high rates of mental illness in prisons.

Lord Bradley's seminal report on this issue in 2009 made a number of recommendations and there has been some significant progress.

Most recently there has been a Government commitment of extra funding to develop the national

liaison and diversion programme and the publication of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, to ensure a timely and appropriate response to people experiencing a mental health crisis rather than an over-reliance on the police to fulfil this role. However we still have a way to go.

It was against this background that I was awarded a Churchill Travelling Fellowship last year to look at how programmes in the USA and Canada were better supporting people affected by mental illness in contact with the criminal justice system. I visited a range of projects across policing,

prison, courts and community mental health services to see what could be learned and applied to a UK context.

Although the schemes varied significantly, the one key factor they all shared was a collaborative approach, pulling on a number of different local services and agencies. This allows communities to make the best use of limited resources and ensure that the right expertise and support are available at the appropriate time.

Mental health courts have been operating in the USA and Canada since the late 1990s. Although they vary in scope, their principal

aim is to divert people from prison sentences into community-based services and support.

The mental health court involves a number of different agencies within the criminal justice and mental health systems, including the judiciary, defence lawyers, the prosecution, probation staff, mental health service providers and more. All these agencies employ a problem-solving approach and work together with the mental health court participant to support them to engage with an individualised, holistic treatment plan.

These treatment plans are different from the Mental Health Treatment Requirement (MHTR) available as a component of community sentences in the UK. People enrol in mental health courts voluntarily and have to agree with the treatment plan, rather than it being mandated as part of a sentence. Many mental health courts work with people pre-prosecution, so there is no admission of guilt in enrolling in the programme. If people successfully complete the treatment programme set out by the mental health court, their charges can be dismissed completely or reduced to lesser charges, and a prison sentence is avoided.

One of the key strengths of the mental health court is its collaborative approach to supporting people going through the programme. Mental health court participants attend regular review meetings with the judge, prosecution and defence lawyers and their case managers. These are usually fairly informal and are an opportunity for any concerns or challenges around the treatment plan to be raised and resolved, with input from all the different agencies. The case manager will also work with other agencies outside the court, such as housing services or drug and alcohol services, to ensure a holistic support package is

available.

The problem-solving nature of the mental health court model means that there is a focus on trying to work out what extra support people might need in order for them to fulfil the court's requirements, rather than sanctions as a first response. Sanctions are used in mental health courts, but there is often flexibility and other options are explored before this step is taken. The various mental health court agencies also work together with the person to ensure that plans are in place for when the person completes, or 'graduates' from, the mental health court programme.

Mental health participants view the process as fair and impartial and value the opportunity that they are given to raise concerns and be involved in the process.

The mental health court model does have its critics, who feel that it can be paternalistic and that it keeps people in contact with the justice system longer than traditional processes. People might be in mental health court anywhere from a few months to two years, depending on the local set-up.

However current research also shows some really positive results from the programme. Mental health participants view the process as fair and impartial and value the opportunity that they are given to raise concerns and be involved in the process. In terms of criminal justice outcomes, reoffending is reduced and participants have

fewer prison days. These positive outcomes are still evident two years after successfully completing the programme.

Part of this success is due to the more collaborative approach of agencies around the court. By working together in a responsive and flexible way, they can not only offer a more comprehensive package of support for the person, but also ensure they are drawing on resources as and when they are needed.

Even without adopting a full mental health court model in the UK, there is a lot that can be taken from its problem-solving approach. In 2009, the Ministry of Justice ran a pilot mental health court scheme, the main aim of which was to deliver community sentences more effectively, rather than as a pre-sentencing diversion programme. The pilot found that the scheme led to really innovative multi-agency working and saw this as one of the key strengths of the approach.

We must ensure that existing barriers to collaborative working, particularly around information systems and data-sharing, are addressed so the collective skills, experience and passion of professionals across sectors can be best utilised. In a time of budget pressures and uncertainty, it is easy for organisations to turn their focus inwards. However this is one issue on which we cannot afford to isolate ourselves - the cost for people with mental illness is too great.

Paula is a Senior Policy Officer at national mental health charity Rethink Mental Illness and a Fellow at the RSA. You can download a copy of her report and find out more about her project at <http://atlanticdiversions.wordpress.com/>



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