

Interventions News

Issue 26 – May 2007



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first issue of Interventions News from the new Ministry of Justice.

Much has changed structurally since our last issue. On 1 April, the National Probation Directorate ceased to be and the former NPD units were absorbed within NOMS (National Offender Management Service) headquarters. The twenty members of the former (Prisons) Drugs Strategy Unit have joined the unit to create the new *Interventions and Substance Abuse Unit* which in turn now forms part of the new NOMS *Commissioning and Partnerships Directorate*. The unit also took on responsibility for the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel and for the Effective Interventions Board. This is a logical step on the road to providing more joined up work across Prisons and Probation. And of course from 9 May NOMS itself was integrated with the Department of Constitutional Affairs and the Office of Criminal Justice Reform to form the new *Ministry of Justice*.

While change has happened all around us we have continued an energetic programme of modernising and updating our interventions.

26/01: NOMS INTERVENTIONS & SUBSTANCE ABUSE UNIT CONTACT DETAILS

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The results from the Home Office Statistical Bulletin in March 2007 that reported on the re-offending rates of the 2004 adult cohort were especially gratifying. We cannot, of course, link the reductions in re-offending (actual rate for community sentences 50.5%; predicted rate 54.1%) directly with the roll out of evidence based practice but the direction of travel is very encouraging.

I would also draw your attention to the Community Sentences Digest published on 9 May by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies at Kings College London. It summarises much useful data about interventions.

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/ccjs/community-sentences-2007.pdf>

I hope that this issue will be of interest to all probation staff and if you too have a story to tell why not share it with the rest of us by writing an article for this newsletter. Contact details for the editor, John MacGregor:

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26/02: UPDATE ON PS PLUS

Funded until June 2008, PS Plus is a part ESF funded project that provides individually tailored support to offenders, identifying and addressing personal barriers to employment, so that they can make a difference to themselves and their communities.

The project represents a partnership between 15 Probation Areas and the Prison Service.

15 Areas participating:

Northumbria	Warwickshire
Cambridgeshire	North Yorkshire
West Mercia	Norfolk
West Yorkshire	Lincolnshire
Hertfordshire	Greater Manchester
Leicestershire	London
Cheshire	Bedfordshire
Dorset	

It will deliver over 5000 employment outcomes between April 2006 and June 2008. In total over 45000 skills and employment outcomes will be achieved.

Key statistics:	
Timescale:	Project runs from April 06 to June 08
Probation Areas involved:	15
Budget:	£29.3m including £13.1m match
No. of beneficiaries:	29015 (23563 male and 5452 female)
No. of employment outcomes:	5320
No. of other positive outcomes:	28267
No. of beneficiaries expecting a qualification:	11464

Each Area has designed its own project model, but all offer a comprehensive assessment, personal plan, advice, guidance and referral to employment related support. The approach is holistic with financial, accommodation and motivational advice/support provided alongside practical help with accessing the job market.

PS Plus is more than a project, it is also an organisation established within the Prison Service and now working across NOMS to provide support services to the individual projects including procurement, finance, performance management and a case management system, CATS. This means that locally managed/ commissioned projects have the benefit of a national infrastructure which is a useful model for the future delivery of skills and employment services.

By the beginning of March 2007, over 5500



North Yorkshire beneficiaries receiving NOCN Progression Awards. As part of the 'Preparing for Work and Life' programme, courses included 'Introduction to Food, Drink and Cooking' and 'Developing Cooking Skills'.

offenders had become 'beneficiaries' by enrolling on the project.

<i>Position as at early March 07:</i>	
Starts:	5544
Early leavers:	174
Completers:	223

Projects went 'live' progressively from April 06 and only since January 2007 have all 15 been active.

There is a range of innovative practice being developed including the targeting of difficult cases such as PPOs; 'through the gate' work that builds on work done by PS Plus contractors within custody; peer mentoring; secondment of probation staff to manage employees from voluntary sector partners; joint delivery with other agencies such as Job Centre+; self funding café; links with employers through Business In The Community etc. Critical though, is the engagement of and close relationship with Offender Managers, achieved through the local management and commissioning of delivery. Such involvement ranges from regular referral and oversight, building PS Plus sessions into National Standard contacts through to OMs actually undertaking the assessments.

Over the next year, we will highlight specific elements of the project in more detail. But to begin, a selection of case material can be found on the NPS Intranet. This provides examples of the work undertaken by colleagues and the impact that this 'holistic' approach appears to have on offender motivation and potential for reducing re-offending.

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26/03: ALCOHOL PROJECTS IN 2006-07, AN INTERIM REPORT

Representatives from the seven probation Areas that were successful in the bidding process initiated by PC 31/2006 and their partner agencies, met on 14th February 2007 to provide interim reports on their respective projects.

Details of the successful bids are given below but the projects include:

- Production of a comprehensive targeting matrix for alcohol provision and programmes.
- Piloting of an alcohol screening tool, a brief intervention and a programme of one to one and group interventions.
- Development and piloting of a training package and guidance to enable NPS staff to undertake initial screening, provide advice and intervention and refer for full assessment, where appropriate.
- Production of training material and a best practice manual for working with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Copies of the presentations given on the day and written progress reports can be found at:

http://npsintranet.probation.gsi.gov.uk/index/service_delivery/interventions/noms_probation_interventions_and_substance_abuse_unit/intensive_interventions_team.htm

A further event is being organised later in May to enable the Areas to present final reports.

Details of successful bids on page 7 and 8.

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AREA	PROJECT SUMMARY	LEAD CONTACT
Avon & Somerset	To work with three VCS partner agencies to develop a training package and guidance and promotional materials to enable NPS staff to undertake initial screening, provide advice and intervention and refer for full assessment, where appropriate. The package will be piloted in 3 sites during 2006-07, revised in light of feedback and then rolled-out across the area from 1 April 2007.	John Wiseman, ACO Tel: 01934 528712 Mobile: 07711 089745 john.wiseman@avon-somerset.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Gloucestershire	Analysis to assess how well need, as identified by OASys, is presently being met in terms of nos. receiving a brief intervention (BI); development of a training package for staff to deliver a 3 session BI based upon that used in the United Kingdom Alcohol Treatment Trial (UKATT); integration of the BI within whole treatment system planning and creation of a project plan for delivery of BI post April 2007.	Garry Holden, ACO Tel. 01452 426250 Mobile: 07909 686470 garry.holden@gloucestershire.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Greater Manchester	To lay the foundations for an ATR pilot in Salford from 1 April through the appointment of an alcohol worker providing continuity with the local arrest referral scheme and specialist alcohol training to the offender management unit (OMU).	Barbara Bate, ACO Tel: 0161 8724802 barbara.bate@manchester.probation.gsi.gov.uk
North East Region	To plan, hold and evaluate a regional one day conference, engaging voluntary and community sector providers, to develop shared agendas for improving provision and a shared understanding of desired outcomes.	Kevin Parry, SPO Tel: 01642 247438 kevin.parry@teesside.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Northamptonshire	To run a pilot with Aquarius to implement an alcohol screening tool to be used by staff where OASys has identified an alcohol need and for the Alcohol Liaison Worker to deliver a pilot programme of one to one and group interventions.	Kirstie Murray – Drug and Alcohol Requirements Team Unit Manager Tel: 01933 303680 Mobile: 07717 766215 kirstie.murray@northamptonshire.probation.gsi.gov.uk

<p>Thames Valley</p>	<p>To part fund the half-time post of AA Development Worker for an initial period of one year to extend the roll-out of the Thames Valley Probation/AA Liaison Model across the whole of the area. The work will involve production of training material and a practice manual.</p>	<p>Steve Czajewski, ACO Tel: 01869 328500 steve.czajewski@thamesvalley.probation.gsi.gov.uk</p>
<p>North Wales</p>	<p>To produce a comprehensive targeting matrix for alcohol provision and programmes and deliver staff training in the use of the matrdevelop, deliver and test a supporting brief intervention linked to piloting the roll-out of conditional caution in North Wales.</p>	<p>Stephen Ray, ACO Tel: 01492 513413 Mobile: 07799 697501 stephen.ray@north-wales.probation.gsi.gov.uk</p>

26/04: EVALUATING WHAT WORKS IN NOMS

Previous research

Historically, the evaluations designed to assess the impact of correctional services interventions on reducing re-offending have produced inconclusive results (see HORS 291 for a review of the evidence). In some cases, it has also been difficult to generalise findings to populations beyond the study samples and results have had to be heavily caveated, thus limiting their use to policy and practitioners.

Previous research has often relied on comparisons of offenders before and after the intervention (pre and post designs), or analysis of treatment groups against comparison groups (using aggregated not individually matched data). For example, with a pre and post design, offenders may reduce their re-offending just because they are getting older (maturation) and this may have happened regardless of what treatment they received. Or, ‘regression to the mean’ may occur where, in the case of a pre-test/post-test evaluation design where offenders possess extreme characteristics (for example, high reconviction rates), particularly high or particularly low scores tend, on re-test, to move or regress toward the average.

Similarly, with poorly matched comparison groups any differences in outcomes between the treatment and comparison group may be due to important differences which existed between the two groups at the outset and that meant that one group was biased from the beginning to do better or worse. Research designs that compare groups of individuals who received the intervention with those who remain unexposed cannot control for selection effects completely so can give less conclusive (and hence less useful) results than RCTs, which is why RCTs are the preferred design for answering what works.

Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and the challenges they pose

Where possible, the RCT design should be applied to outcome research. In an RCT, offenders are allocated randomly to the treatment group or the control group. The control group either receive a different treatment or treatment as usual (TAU). This approach minimises the chances that the treated and control groups differ from each other and therefore allows any outcomes to be attributable to the treatment itself.

There are, however, difficulties with conducting randomised controlled trials within the criminal justice system and recent small-scale feasibility

studies commissioned by RDS NOMS have highlighted some of the challenges which need to be overcome. For example, one recent study assessed the feasibility of conducting an RCT to evaluate an Offending Behaviour Programme (OBP) in prison or in the community (see some of the key findings in the box below.)

Snapshot of key findings from 2006 RCT feasibility study on evaluating OBPs:

Although the study outlined a framework for developing an RCT, and there was support for the need to evaluate programme effectiveness robustly, the feasibility study identified a number of challenges which need to be overcome for an RCT to take place. Some of these challenges are outlined below.

Practitioner support

The feasibility study found that practitioners were particularly concerned about ethical issues surrounding the randomisation of offenders to receive an OBP or to receive something else. Practitioners felt strongly about the effectiveness of OBPs and argued that the 50% of people who would be randomised into a 'control group' would effectively be denied treatment. This is likely to cause problems with randomisation integrity in any future RCT, as practitioners might choose to 'overcompensate' with the control group, thus reducing the validity of the trial.

Support from other stakeholders

The feasibility study found that an RCT could also be affected by a number of other stakeholders.

- Parole Board decisions were found to be influenced by programme completion. This means that any control group who

were prevented from completing an OBP could be disadvantaged in terms of their likelihood of gaining parole.

- With programmes being specified at the point of sentence for offenders in the community, randomisation would need to occur before sentencing. This could be perceived as reducing sentencer autonomy and could be difficult to gain agreement for.

Current and future RDS NOMS work on RCTs

Many of the challenges that affect the use of RCTs can be overcome by communicating with stakeholders on the issues surrounding RCTs and their importance in answering 'what works' questions. It is also important to take lessons forward from the two RCTs which RDS NOMS has commissioned and which are currently running successfully.

Recent RDS NOMS RCT success stories:

1) The Treatment Change Project has been running for the past 18 months in ten prisons across the UK. The project is using psychometrics, behavioural and attitudinal measures, and psycholinguistics to evaluate the short-term effectiveness of Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS). It aims to identify factors most associated with change in offenders and will report in summer 2007.

The reason why an RCT has been feasible in this situation is that the study randomised offenders to either a) a treatment group (where they received ETS immediately) or, b) a control group (where they received ETS after a period of time on a waiting list). As all offenders received the programme eventually, there were no concerns over denial of

treatment. However, the disadvantage of this method of using a 'waiting list control' is that we are only able to examine short-term measures of change. This design cannot be used when assessing future re-offending as all offenders will have received the treatment before they leave prison.

2) Restorative justice schemes have run in three areas in England and Wales over the last few years. An RCT has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the restorative justice projects. Reports have been published on the implementation and delivery of the schemes. Results will also be available in 2007 on victim and offender views as well as results on reconviction rates, and on cost-effectiveness.

The reason why an RCT has been feasible in this situation is that no-one is currently entitled to restorative justice and therefore there is no feeling amongst practitioners that those in the control group are being 'denied' a service that they should get. The key issue is that if we're not sure about its effects, how do we know if the offender is being given (or denied) access to an intervention that actually works? This is why it is important to evaluate what works using the most robust research design possible.

In terms of future research using RCTs, RDS NOMS currently has plans to evaluate the resettlement programme (FOR A Change) and is exploring the feasibility of testing the use of polygraphs using an RCT. Both of these are 'candidates' for future use of an RCT and we will need to examine the details over the next few months to ensure they are feasible.

If we do not use RCTs to evaluate the two programmes mentioned above, then we will use the 'next best' outcome evaluation design, which

is a quasi-experimental design with a high quality matching procedure, such as 'Propensity Score Matching' (PSM) or equivalent multi-variate model, which we plan to use to evaluate the effectiveness of the anger management programme, CALM.

One other piece of relevant work in this area is a project to examine whether a special unit or other supporting infrastructure is needed to support policy evaluation. The idea of such an infrastructure is to ensure that policy evaluations in the future are supported through advice, training, expertise, etc. not only in RCTs, but also in other forms of evaluation from process studies to quasi-experimental designs, ensuring that all research commissioned and conducted is of the highest quality. The Home Office Strategic Advisory Group on Experimental Methods (SAGEM) together with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Government Social Research Unit (GSRU) has commissioned research to investigate the potential for such an infrastructure and to identify needs, demands and the potential structure of such a unit. This study has just been completed and the findings will be disseminated shortly.

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26/05: UPDATE ON CSAP AND EIB

Carole Wham joined NOMS Interventions and Substance Abuse Unit at the end of January 2007 and brought with her the work of the Effective Interventions Board (EIB) and the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (CSAP). This work was previously the responsibility of the NOMS Strategy and Assurance Directorate which was disbanded following the establishment of NOMS Commissioning and Partnerships. For those who you who are not already familiar with these two bodies, a brief summary of their composition and functions are given below:

- **The Correctional Services Accreditation Panel** is an advisory non-departmental public body made up international experts. It has 12 appointed members who are mostly psychologists or criminologists. Professor Friedrich Losel, Director of the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University chairs the Panel. Its main work is to accredit programmes for offenders which are designed to reduce re-offending but it also oversees the systems of audit and monitoring of programmes and gives advice on strategic issues relating to offender behaviour programmes. The Panel, established in 1999 has considered over 100 submissions from providers for accreditation, guidance and review. It publishes an annual report summarising its work.
- **The Effective Interventions Board** was established in 2005. Its main aims are to help to define and develop the portfolio of effective interventions to be commissioned by ROMs is to review the portfolio and propose interventions or activities to be commissioned, to meet identified gaps in provision. The Board has a wide ranging membership including representatives from HMPS, contracted prisons, CSAP and the Youth Justice Board. It meets three times a year and the next meeting will be held on 24 September 2007.

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26/06: CHANGE CONTROL REPORT 2006

The most recent Change Control Report outlining the decisions made at the 26th October 2006 Board meeting will be sent to Chief Officers, Regional Managers, ROMs offices and HMPS in early June and will also be available on EPIC.

For further copies of the Report please contact:

JohnA.MacGregor@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

26/07: CHANGE CONTROL REVIEW 2006/07

In response to the transfer of the Regional What Works Managers to the ROMs offices it was agreed from 1st April 2007 that we would implement revised Change Control procedures, with the Effective Practice Training Managers being the link between the Programme Teams and NOMS.

The EPTMs and their Managers have ensured the changes can take place by agreeing to be fully involved in the drawing up of the revised procedures. A working group was created with the remit to formulate revised procedures. John Richards (EPTM Midlands) and Nigel Miller EPTM Wales and myself have devised a new procedure which takes into account the range of skills and knowledge available in Programme Teams and ensure that agreed Changes can be made earlier and suggestions of good practice are circulated on a regular basis. The Change Control Board will still meet to ratify changes and a Report will still be prepared however the revisions should allow for a more flexible approach while still maintaining the integrity of the Programmes.

Briefings for the revised procedures will be held regionally during the following few months and we envisage the revised procedures to come into use following each regional event.

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26/08: ACCREDITED PROGRAMME AUDIT

Many staff will be aware that there has been no formal accredited programme audit since 2004; consequently there is an urgent need to address the audit process and framework. Work is currently being developed on an audit framework which covers all accredited programmes across Probation and Prisons and this work is due for completion in 2007/08.

Following discussions between NOMS Attitude, Thinking and Behaviour Team (formerly NPD Offending Behaviour Team) and Regions and Performance Unit we have agreed an interim approach which will ask probation Areas to evaluate current performance and identify areas for improvement. There are two persuasive arguments for this approach:

1) Robust and credible information is central to the planned mock contestability of programmes in 2007/08.

2) ROMs will only commission effective programmes. This audit document demonstrates programme integrity which is crucial to an effective programme. Ultimately a weak programme which is unable to demonstrate the standards will undermine integrity and impact on completions.

This audit will establish the critical factors in delivering quality programmes and it should be

noted that they are primarily intended as improvement standards and will not provide a comprehensive audit tool for all aspects of accredited programmes. The audit aims is that of a 'light' touch with the themes being based on the critical factors that research supports for delivering effective programmes.

A Probation Circular will be published in due course giving further information on the audit process and relevant timelines.

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26/09: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMMES

There has been a great deal of comment, in recent months, regarding the "waiting Lists" for both IDAP and CDVP. The aim of both Programmes is to provide an intervention that is integrated with other forms of supervision, monitoring and control. While we need to ensure places for Domestic Violence Offenders are available in the group work element it is important to remember that while someone is subject to Community Supervision he is subject to statutory supervision and Woman Safety Worker involvement.

There are a number of initiatives that we are considering that will assist Areas to manage the numbers of offenders waiting to attend the group work element of their orders:

- The recently re issued implementation questionnaire will be written up and will form the basis of a process and evaluation study.
- Randall Kropp will lead on a validation exercise and an inter-rater reliability of the SARA assessment measure.

- Amendments have been made to the IDAP manual which will improve the catch up rules and the number of sessions a group member is expected to attend in a week.
- The CDVP designer is researching the feasibility of converting the CDVP to a rolling programme.
- A One to One Programme is to be developed.
- Two Practice Development Days have been arranged:
 - 14th June in York
 - 21st June in London

Other key issues which indicate the Domestic Violence Programmes are progressing well include:

- The national completion target was achieved for 2006/07.
- The training for Women Safety Workers is to be rolled out following the successful pilot events in the last year.
- The development of a joint IDAP/CDVP/HRP (Prison Programme) assessment centre.
- The development of closer working relationships between the public protection unit, Home Office Domestic Violence Strategy unit and RESPECT.
- The planning of a National Domestic Violence Conference due to be held in September 2007.

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26/10: COMMUNITY PAYBACK – MAYORAL UNPAID WORK PROJECTS

Home Secretary John Reid announced the Mayoral Unpaid Work initiative during a visit to an unpaid work project in Nottinghamshire in January. The initiative is intended to reinforce links between probation areas and local councils by encouraging newly elected mayors to adopt and support an unpaid work project during their year of office. This is a continuation and development of Community Payback which is intended to raise the visibility of unpaid work, engage local communities and increase public confidence in community sentences.

It is anticipated that all 42 probation areas will participate in the initiative. Most areas will identify one mayor elect and local authority to work in partnership with during the year. Some larger areas have decided to target more than one mayor elect, with the result that there are likely to be between 50 and 60 mayoral projects across England and Wales.

In most authorities mayors elect assume their mayoral responsibilities in May. At this point or shortly after, the mayor will announce the Mayoral Unpaid Work project. Many areas have already made contact with mayors elect and potential projects have been identified. The final choice of the project may involve offenders working on a project associated with a charity or voluntary organisation chosen by the mayor, or one which is identified from a shortlist by means of a public vote. Many of the proposed projects reflect existing links with crime and disorder reduction partnerships, while others have a strong community safety component.

The Mayoral Unpaid Work projects should generate considerable local publicity during the year. It is planned that mayors will visit projects at commencement, when there are significant points of progress and at completion. On each occasion

there is likely to be local media interest. This will raise the profile of unpaid work and provide tangible evidence of its benefits to the public. In addition it may encourage a wide range of community groups and other organisations to engage with Community Payback and the wider community justice agenda. There is also potential for wider regional or national publicity, since this is a national initiative in the centenary year of the Probation Service.

It is hoped that the Mayoral Unpaid Work projects will be an annual event, providing opportunities for areas to work with different local authorities in future years.

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26/11: OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

In PC 10/2006, NOMS surveyed the extent of current arrangements for engagement with offenders, in order to identify best practice and to consider how to share it. Most areas gave some examples of how they obtained offenders' views but few considered they were doing enough to integrate offender feedback into their work. Areas considered that knowing about practices in other areas would be helpful hence the production of the Offender Engagement Good Practice Guide.

This guide was developed by the Offender Engagement Reference Group. This Reference Group consisted of representatives from the National Probation Service and the NOMS headquarters. The project was monitored by a Project Board. It was reviewed and assessed by the HMP Altcourse Service User Group and the North Wales based Channel Service User Group.

Their feedback was influential in the shape, format and content of the guide.

In addition to examples drawn from probation areas, this document includes some examples of service user engagement by external agencies. Probation areas may want to contact these agencies for additional information on specific projects.

This work links to the broader NOMS and Youth Justice Board (YJB) 'Approach to Communities and Civil Renewal', launched in November 2005. This aims to promote the role of communities in offender management, through regional reducing re-offending action plans and local plans. It also addresses the role of offenders as 'responsible citizens', supporting others in prison and the community and contributing to consultations or advisory bodies.

Offender engagement also links to work strands which aim to find out more about the difficulties faced by offenders in accessing mainstream and specialist provision whilst under supervision and beyond. Three Reducing Re-offending Alliances – Corporate, Civic Society and Faith and Voluntary Sector – were launched by Baroness Scotland in November 2005 and are being taken forward as part of the National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan to promote and encourage greater involvement from employers, local authorities, local people and voluntary and faith organisations in our work to reduce re-offending. The Civic Society Alliance (CSA) aims to ensure ex-offenders have equality of access to mainstream services such as accommodation and health as well as to leisure facilities – sport, arts and music – to help keep them engaged in purposeful activities.

The aim of this document is to help areas improve offender retention and to prepare for contestability by:

- Giving examples of good practice in obtaining and using offender feedback.
- Encouraging probation areas to use this document as a template to develop their own strategies for obtaining and using feedback from service users.

Areas may wish to work collaboratively in producing their own strategies for offender engagement.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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26/12: INTRODUCTION OF A NEW SKILLS SCREENING TOOL: FIRST MOVE, INITIAL SKILLS CHECKER

First Move, the new initial skills screening tool, will be issued to probation areas shortly. This new tool (which has been designed specifically for use by the probation service) will replace Fast Track 20 Questions and introduce some consistency (as many probation areas are currently using a variety of skills screening tools) in our approach to skills screening at the report stage.

First Move will assist in the completion of reports by providing a short set of structured interview questions and a scoring grid which will enable probation staff to make professional judgments about an offender's current skills, employment/training history and needs. Apart from asking the interviewee to write down their name and address, the tool will continue to be completed by probation staff based on responses from the interviewee and should take no more than 5 minutes to complete.

The tool requires no formal training to use and should be used as part of any general interview

process being undertaken. Probation staff will need to apply their professional judgement when scoring the responses and interpreting the total score. First Move will **not** identify specific skills needs or current skills levels; it is providing a broad understanding of likely skills needs and the employment and training background of the offender only. Further in depth work will be undertaken to identify potential skills gaps by the providers (using an approved assessment tool) should the offender be referred on to LSC led provision.

The score from First Move will also help to inform the OASys assessment (if applicable) although assessors should also take into account all other relevant information available to them. The score from First Move should be entered into the text box in OASys 2, Section 4 "Education, Training and Employability" and be used when considering the scoring of OASys question 4.7. A copy of the completed tool should also be retained ready for onward transmission to local providers as this information can be used by them as an initial first step in determining and refining the educational and skills offer to the offender.

Copies of First Move will not be distributed centrally but will be downloadable from EPIC using the pathway:

http://npsintranet.probation.gsi.gov.uk/index/service_delivery/interventions/noms_probation_interventions_and_substance_abuse_unit/community_reintegration_team.htm

Smart Move

In addition to the First Move tool (which has been developed for probation use only) the *Skills for Life Strategy Unit* at the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) have developed and published a more comprehensive assessment tool entitled "Smart Move" This tool has been designed to be used by a range of organisations (both public and

private) and takes about 15 minutes to complete. It is made up of a small number of literacy and numeracy questions that increase in difficulty from Entry Level 1 to Level 2 of the Adult National Standards. Smart Move differs from the First Move tool as it is completed by the user and then scored. Smart Move does not need to be administered by educational professionals and can be used as a quick, first step to help users to understand the skills they have, the approximate level they are working at and allow the user to begin planning the next steps of learning support. If probation areas want to use this tool in addition to First Move at the report stage then they must ensure that it does not duplicate any of the professional assessments undertaken by providers.

Smart Move is available in both a paper and a computer based format and can be downloaded (along with full guidance) from www.toolslibrary.co.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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26/13: UPDATE ON PROLIFIC AND OTHER PRIORITY OFFENDERS

Good Practice

Items of good practice are still a welcome addition to the PPO Toolkit due to be updated on EPIC shortly. We want to know how NPS areas have staffed their PPO teams, sought funding and shared information effectively amongst other things – please let us have an insight into your good practice.

Regional Workshops

The main aim of these events is to share and celebrate good practice surrounding the management of PPO’s. London, the West Midlands and the North East have all held their events and have received very positive feedback from all those involved. The events have a mixture of input on strategy from the Home Office and NOMS; findings from research; and plenty of reports of excellent hands-on practice with PPOs.

NPS Region	Date	Contact
North West	23/04/07	Nigel.Bennett@gonw.gsi.gov.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	26/04/07	Peterg.Wright@humberside.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Wales	23/05/07	Granville.Brunt@south-wales.probation.gsi.gov.uk
South East	06/06/07	Andrea.Sauders@sussex.probation.gsi.gov.uk
East of England	02/07/07	Julia.Sharp@suffolk.probation.gsi.gov.uk
South West	tbc	Andrew.Minett@gloucestershire.probation.gsi.gov.uk
East Midlands	tbc	Hardyal.Dhinsa@nottinghamshire.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Forthcoming Probation Circular

We are due to address various performance issues (such as under-reporting of cases in NSmart, and the level of drug-testing on licence) through a series of visits to NPS areas. We hope to be in the position to contact areas to arrange these visits as from April 2007. The PC will also reiterate good practice in PSR writing on PPOs and address other key issues relating to PPOs.

Drug testing

The forthcoming PC announces £1.8m funding for 07/08 for drug testing of PPOs and in Approved Premises. Areas will be asked to put in place arrangements to account for how this money is spent. The national framework contracts are due to expire in July 2007. A 'lessons learned' exercise will be undertaken. We will send consulting Areas on their experience of using (or not using) the framework contracts. We are intending to seek further economies of scale by joining further procurement with other users in the Home Office.

National evaluation published

The Home Office published the national evaluation of the PPO Programme on 20 February. *An Impact Assessment of the Prolific and other Priority Offender Programme* shows that conviction rates for 7,800 offenders who had been through an intensive programme of supervision fell by 62 per cent after 17 months of the scheme.

Home Office Minister Tony McNulty said: "This targeted approach to tackling crime and re-offending among prolific offenders works. Drug treatment, where required, helps individuals and protects the public by cutting crime. The results of this evaluation are very impressive and show that if we can focus on dealing with the small number

of most problematic offenders, including problematic drug addicts, who are responsible for large amounts of crime, we can improve the quality of life for communities.

We are investing record sums in tackling drugs – £7.5 billion in the last six years – and I am delighted it is paying off. Acquisitive crime fell by almost a fifth between 2004 and 2006 and record numbers of people are entering and staying in drug treatment."

The report (which is not published as hard copy) is available to download from the Crime Reduction website:

<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/ppo/ppominisite09.htm>

DIP/PPO alignment

The Home Office published *Rebalancing the criminal justice system in favour of the law-abiding majority* in July 2006. One of the commitments was to re-align the Drug Interventions Programme with the PPO Programme. Six key features have been identified which it is hoped will deliver:

- a more routine cross-referencing of the local PPO list against the DIP caseload;
- an ability to move offenders between the two schemes, as appropriate, to reflect their offending profile and compliance behaviour;
- clearer expectations about the de-selection of PPOs from the PPO programme – priority offenders (whether identified through DIP or PPO) should remain on the DIP/PPO list until the risk of re-offending is reduced;
- an presumption that those PPOs who test positive gain swift access to treatment, where appropriate.

The key features are:

Closer alignment of PPO and CJIT teams at the local level

Improved day-to-day communication between the schemes at local level, to ensure the most effective management of offenders on the PPO/CJIT caseloads; either co-location of PPO and CJIT teams (not possible everywhere) or “virtual” team arrangements which allow for daily discussion between CJIT and PPO teams.

Effective information-sharing between CJIT and PPO teams

Sharing of information about who is on the PPO list and the CJIT/CARATs caseload; and effective case management of individuals on either the PPO list or CJIT caseload, or both.

CJIT involvement in selecting PPOs

To ensure that the most prolific drug misusing offenders, and in particular those who are not responsive to the DIP programme, are considered for adoption as PPOs;

Arrangements to allow for the “de-escalation” of compliant PPOs for lead management by CJIT as part of their exit strategy from the PPO scheme, where there is history of drugs misuse or risk of relapse.

Co-ordinated offender/case management arrangements

Shared offender/case management processes in place to decide, and keep under review, the day to day management of those who are being managed by either the CJIT or PPO team, or both.

Priority access to CJIT caseload

All PPOs with drugs misuse issues should be prioritised for treatment through the CJIT (for

example, if they test positive); PPOs entering custody to gain access to CARATs team, and be prioritised for on-going treatment in the community on release where appropriate; “de-selected” PPOs with a continuing drugs problem or in need of support to be managed by the CJIT team until no longer a risk.

Co-ordinated performance management

Aligned schemes to bring together current PPO and DIP performance management arrangements to enable them:

- to keep track of the progress of individual offenders through JTrack and DIRWEB; and
- to monitor the effectiveness (and added value) of alignment, including crime reduction/reduced re-offending outcomes wherever possible.

The Home Office’s PPO Programme Team has been working on a detailed guide which is now available via the website.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Corinna Griggs, NOMS Interventions & Substance Abuse Unit

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26/14: UPDATE ON THE NEW GENERATION PROGRAMME

The renewal project is making good progress. We have outlined the terms of reference of the project to staff at the recent Treatment Manager Conference, contacted areas through the EPIC system and held focus groups. We have held a development workshop which allowed the programme designers to present their work to a range of senior programme managers from the Probation and Prison Services.

We are moving into a key period of time for the project with the following events due to take place:

- Probation and Prison staff who expressed an interest to be involved in a reference group will be contacted to view sections of the Programme and give comment.
- The designers will have to have papers into The Panel by the 1st June for an advice meeting arranged on the 29th June.
- The Senior User Group will meet to review the Programme.
- Two pilot programmes will be delivered in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region between August and October.
- Results from the pilots to be collated and incorporated to the final submission to the Panel with the aim to have the Programme fully accredited by March 2008.

If you would like to contact the Design Team with a suggested name for the Programme please email: Letts.Natalie2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION (about the Programme):

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26/15: KENYA BICYCLE PROJECT

A TYPICAL weekday morning in Doncaster:

“Good Morning, Doncaster Unpaid Work Unit.”

“Hello! This is Pastor Brian Jones from the New Testament Ministries. Could I speak to someone to arrange for the Probation Service to assist us with re-furbishing bicycles that we are having donated by various police forces in the region. These will be utilised in our work in Kenya.”

“Yes of course! I will put you through to one of our Project Officers who I am sure will be able to assist you in some way. Just hold the line please....”

This is a transcript of the telephone conversation relating to the Kenya bicycle project that took place recently, and is typical of many enquiries we receive weekly at the Unpaid Work units in South Yorkshire. Pastor Jones was aware of the work that had been completed by the Rotherham UPW unit in changing an old disused cellar in the Pentecostal Church in Rotherham, into a ‘drop in’ youth centre. During discussions with Pastor Willie Watt at Rotherham, Pastor Jones saw an opportunity for the Probation Service to work alongside his church in the project hence his call to the unit.

Bicycles are the main form of transport in the mountainous areas of Kenya. They are used as single-seater taxis and for the majority of transport between the villages. The terrain is unsuitable for most vehicles with the exception of large four wheel drive trucks. These are in short supply and the mechanic who repairs the few vehicles that they do have in the villages, either walks or cycles the many miles between repair jobs.

The Project involves collection of bicycles that have been recovered by the police and then

subsequently not reclaimed by their owners, or any bikes that would be normally disposed of by large companies such as the Post Office. These bikes will then be fully cleaned and refurbished by teams of offenders supervised by Unpaid Work Supervisors in the workshop at the Bentley Unpaid Work Unit in Doncaster. All refurbishment costs will be met by the church. When completed at least 50 bikes will be packed into a container and then shipped to Kenya, where Pastor Jones will be waiting with open arms for the delivery.

At the same time the offenders will also be cleaning and packing 24 computers, 12 sewing machines, four typewriters and three knitting machines all of which have been donated from local companies, to ensure that they can all be shipped at the same time.

It is hoped that all of this work will be completed before the end of 2007. Later this year Pastor Jones has offered to give a talk and slide show of the work he undertakes in Kenya and especially in relation to the shipment of the bikes and other equipment. We will let you know when so you can find out more!

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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**26/16: TRAVELLER DAY AT HMP
FULL SUTTON**

On the 11th May 2007 the first event of its kind at HMP Full Sutton was held in the Chaplaincy. It represented the culmination of two years' work by the prisoners with input from Chaplaincy and Probation Service staff.



The day was opened by the Governor and attended by many governor grade officers from Full Sutton and beyond. Amongst the invited guests were members of the Local Magistrates including the Chair and Vice Chair, diversity officers from the Police Service, diversity officers from the Probation Service, the Prison Service Area Diversity Manager, Manchester University Romani Project students, and many other interested parties.

The Traveller Group runs at HMP Full Sutton on a weekly basis and caters for both the mains location prisoners and the VPs each attending either for a morning or afternoon session. For many of the prisoners this was the first time they had been involved in an awareness raising event and the first time their cultural heritage had been acknowledged in a pro social way. Some stood and spoke in public for the first time and the benefit to them in terms of raising self esteem and demonstrating ability has been significant.

Below are the thoughts of some of those involved and representative of all of those involved.

Father Ged Barry writes:

"After arriving at Full Sutton in the April of 2004, it became clear very quickly that the invisible prejudice faced by prisoners of a Traveller background was as deep-rooted in this

establishment as it was in Durham and, as is clear, throughout the prison system. Why do we need a Travellers' group?

When you are asked your religion or ethnic background, the usual response is to volunteer the information; this wasn't true of Travellers. When I recognised someone as being a Traveller and asked them about it there would usually be a suspicious reaction-an inbuilt distrust based on a lifetime of negative reaction from 'country people' (non-Travellers). A recognised place to mix has been a great way to begin to build trust and understanding and for the prison service to begin to recognise and respond to the needs of this much maligned and oppressed community.

With any group, the greatest need is the ability to be yourself, to be able to relax with members of your own community and not to have to be looking over your shoulder the whole time. Travelling people are amongst the most gregarious, family oriented and enthusiastic groups in society; all of these traits can be seen as troublesome in a controlled environment. The chance to meet socially with no need to constantly explain yourself is a great relief. Needless to say, it is also an opportunity to express concerns, complaints and generally let off frustration."

Rebecca Longstaff (Probation Services Officer) writes:

"The first time I met any Travellers or people with a Travelling background was at the Traveller Day, shortly after I joined the Probation team at HMP Full Sutton. This had been put together by Moira Baldwin, a Probation Officer in my team at HMP Full Sutton. I learnt in the time leading up to the day there was a Traveller and Gypsy group that met each week to discuss family members, associations and backgrounds, as well as current issues.

The event began with Father Ged and Moira introducing what the day was about and how long it had taken to prepare for and organise. Father Ged then handed over to the men to begin the presentations. Each appeared to have prepared something to say, or was clear about the points that he wanted to discuss and raise with people.

At this point, what really stood out for me was how nervous everyone seemed, and given that there were Magistrates, Probation Officers and other influential and important people from the community there, it's not surprising! However, once people got into the flow of what they wanted to say, nerves seemed to disappear and information poured out. Each person had obviously spent time thinking about what he wanted to tell people about and why it was important for him to do this. Something that really came across to me was just what an important opportunity this was for this group of people-it was a chance for them to challenge the stereotypes and myths people hold about Travellers and Gypsies, both in the community and in custody.

From my perspective this was an opportunity for me to learn something about what it means to be a Traveller or Gypsy, and about the traditions and history of the Travelling community. Having never had an experience with Travellers, this was a new world for me, and I was able to begin to appreciate what a negative impact the media has had on people in such a position, with horror stories about the effects Travelling groups have on local communities and so on. It also opened my eyes to the difficulties Travellers have with the Criminal Justice System in terms of not having a fixed address and how this can and does impact on how they are treated at court and sentencing. Reflecting now, I find it interesting that when I studied Criminal Justice System, ethnic minorities and their treatment was discussed, yet those with a Traveller or Gypsy background were not even mentioned once.

This was the first time they had held such an event; one that appeared to have been very successful on the day, and one to be proud of.”

One of the Traveller group prisoners (Rushie) writes:

“I am delighted to tell you about the success of a recent Traveller awareness day of which the lads and I have been fortunate enough to be involved in here at Full Sutton.

This has been the culmination of over two years work that has received contributions from well over thirty Travellers who have passed through and attended the Traveller group which is run by Father Ged Barry at the Chapel in conjunction with the prison Probation Service.

The overall aim of the day was, in essence, to raise awareness of the difficulties and prejudices Travellers have learnt and continue to live with albeit unhappily, as well as shedding clarity and sharing views with others who were to a certain extent ignorant to these issues.

In order to reach these objectives we invited a diverse range of people including; magistrates, police, area managers and governors, who were, in all fairness, refreshingly open and honest when expressing their views or indeed clarifying any points we had to make.

I can honestly say that at the end of it all I felt that all the work we had put in had been worthwhile. However I feel this is just a stepping stone in our quest for greater awareness surrounding Travellers, and that the initial work that we have carried out should not be curtailed as in my opinion the crux of this subject is spreading the awareness across and throughout the prison estate.”

It is the Traveller Group’s intention to build upon the success of the Day, and other events, as well as a monthly newsletter, will be forthcoming.

Moira Baldwin, Probation Officer

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Moira.Baldwin@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01759 475195

26/17: HELPDESK FOR OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMMES QUERIES

Please note that email address for the Helpdesk has been changed as is now:
noms.atb.helpdesk@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Thanks to all contributors to this edition of Interventions News.

If you have a story to tell about implementation of what works/ interventions, why not write an article, preferably with a photograph, and send to:

JohnA.MacGregor@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

