

What Works News



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

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12/01 OASys UPDATE

Development of e-OASys is going well, with e-OASys Release 1 deployed in January. It is mandatory that all Areas take e-OASys Release 3, which will be ready in December 2003, but there is no requirement to take earlier Releases. In the event, almost all Areas have decided not to wait for Release 3.

Release 3 is important because it will allow electronic data exchange between Areas and between the NPS and the Prison Service.

The NPD OASys Team has begun to train Area trainers on e-OASys. A training schedule has been drawn up which sees training for trainers being delivered in about half of the Areas by the end of March. The intention is to train trainers in the remaining Areas by the end of September.

The OASys Team is about to issue Additional Operational Guidance which draws on experience from OASys implementation to date and complements the core OASys User Manual.

Contact: Jan Davis, OASys Implementation Manager
in NPD, ☎0207 217 0697
jan.davis@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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12/02 PROGRAMME MANUALS ON CD-ROM

NPD is phasing in the use of electronic versions of manuals for accredited Offending Behaviour Programmes this spring.

Probation Areas will be provided with CD-ROMs containing all the materials for the programmes they run. Areas will then be able to arrange printing as and when required - using either Oakfield Press (NPD's printing supplier), or a local company if preferred.

This new development, as well as giving Areas greater flexibility, should lead to increased efficiency and provide Areas with the ability to be responsive to local need.

NPD will be allocating funding to contribute to Areas' additional printing costs. The allocation has been calculated to take account of the relative caseload for different Areas.

Further details will be issued to Areas via the RWWM's and the Area Implementation Managers

Contact: Mark Slater ☎0207 217 0687
mark.slater@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12/03 CASE MANAGEMENT

An important 24 hour workshop towards the end of January marked the beginning of a project to get to grips with case management in the NPS.

Middle and senior managers from some 35 Areas, together with researchers and colleagues from the NPD, Prison Service and central Home Office, met at the Anstey hotel near Coventry to consider the principles, policies, roles and responsibilities and competencies that should apply in any case management model used in the NPS. Subject to polishing and further consultation, the aim is that these principles etc should be at the core of a new case management strategy for the Service. It is hoped that a strategy will be ready in the summer with pilots in a number of Areas commencing in the autumn.

Tony Grapes, currently an ACO in South Yorkshire, joins the NPD in March to take the project forward.

Contact: Richard Mason, Head of Offender Assessment and Case Management in NPD
☎ 0207 217 0727
richard.mason3@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12/04 THE INTENSIVE CONTROL AND CHANGE PROGRAMME

A new intensive community sentence is being piloted from April 2003 with the aim of providing better support for the 18-20 age group at risk of receiving custodial sentences of 12-months or less. These young adult offenders are least likely to receive rehabilitative services and often have some of the highest needs, particularly in relation to education.

The **Intensive Control and Change Programme (ICCP)** - formerly known as 'Programme X', was developed in response to Strand 10 of the Correctional Services Review, focusing on improving the use of community sentences, while maintaining the twin aims of rehabilitation and public protection.

ICCP will be delivered through a Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order and closely mirrors provisions that will be made available under the generic community sentence. The control element of the programme involves a curfew order with electronic monitoring. The police will have a role in information exchange and some case surveillance. The change element requires the offender to participate in a structured individualised programme of activities, the content of which will reflect their OASys assessment. Key partner agencies such as the Police, Job Centre plus and Connections will be involved in delivering some of the mainstream services.

ICCP will initially be piloted in 10 probation Areas across NPS - 5 Areas will commence in April 2003 with 5 starting in October 2003. The expected number of completions is 400 by December 2004.

A programme of communications activity will support Areas in targeting sentencers and further information materials are currently being prepared. These will include a series of NPD Briefings and pre-sentence report guidelines.

For more information about ICCP contact
Lisa Cox Programme Implementation Manager
☎ 020 7217 0683
lisa.cox2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12/05 WHAT WORKS ON SUNDAYS? A REPORT ON THE SUNDAY THINK FIRST PROGRAMME run by NPS – Humberside

A pilot initiative in the Humberside Area was launched last September in Grimsby. **The objective was to run a Think First Programme on Sundays for offenders unable to attend the weekday programmes.** The target groups were those with weekday employment, training, education or caring commitments. A team of three tutors delivered 2 sessions each Sunday for 12 weeks, and a total of 8 offenders completed the group work sessions.

Overall, the pilot was found to have been very successful. Attrition was within reasonable limits, with offenders closely tracked and supported through the pre-group work. This was enhanced through motivational work that took place both formally, at specified appointments with case managers, and informally, through subtle yet well targeted and positive encouragement from all staff members; especially reception and report centre staff. The offenders were made to feel that they were part of a purposeful, well researched and thoroughly organised programme. Transport to and from the probation office was provided for offenders who could not access public transport. Lunch was provided via a local sandwich shop.

A second Sunday programme is now underway. The success of this initiative seems closely related to the enthusiasm and determination of the staff team.

Contact:
Dan Grant,
SPO Think First Programme Manager,
NPS Humberside
☎ 01472 357454
dan.grant@humberside.probation.gsx.gov.uk

**12/06 FOCUS ON NPD
MARTIN COPSEY
HEAD OF COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION**

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Martin Copsey joined the Probation Service in the mid-1980's. He has worked in a variety of Probation Areas, most recently as ACO in Bedfordshire. He has had experience in most fields of probation work, and also spent a while lecturing in probation studies at the University of Hull. He moved to HM Inspectorate of Probation in 2000, and joined NPD two years later. Here, Martin tells us about the challenges facing the Probation Service over the next 12 months.

"The Community Reintegration strand of What Works aims to reduce re-offending by tackling offending-related needs; literacy, numeracy, employment, accommodation, financial issues etc. It also encompasses Community Punishment, which will be a major focus of NPD's work in 2003. **It is intended that all Probation Areas will be running Enhanced Community Punishment by October 2003.** The Probation Service has been set a target of 25,000 commencements of ECP in 2003/04, feeding into a target for 2004/05 of 30,000 completions.

What are the opportunities offered by ECP?

The roll out of ECP provides the first opportunity to develop a national model of delivery based on WW principles, using the experience and approaches of staff in the pathfinder Areas. It is very much a "home grown" product and places us at the front of international development on community service type programmes. The introduction of ECP will provide existing and new staff with a comprehensive training and development programme that will enable them to build and improve upon their existing skills and competencies. The new programme identifies a clear set of tasks to be delivered by staff. This makes it possible for individuals, where appropriate, to combine roles – for example as Case Manager and Placement Manager. Through the development of competencies linked to effective practice it also opens up real opportunities for staff to combine involvement in ECP with aspects of What Works, thereby fully integrating CP staff into the delivery of

community sentences. This is particularly significant in the light of forthcoming legislative changes and the introduction of "custody minus", "custody plus" and a single generic community sentence.

CP not only introduces a consistent model of delivery, but also has built into the scheme a **quality assurance framework**. This is an exciting development, as it enables staff to assess and review their own performance and use this information to drive delivery and continuous improvement.

What will NPD be doing to support Areas introduce ECP?

NPD will be providing guidance on all aspects of the implementation of ECP including IT and Human Resources. The NPD will co-ordinate national delivery of the training programme, through the creation of a national training team and the development of training materials. NPD will also provide briefing on the use of Assessment Centres. A major aspect of successful implementation will be engagement with sentencers and to help with this NPD will be providing a range of promotional materials including a video, briefings and other documentation.

Basic Skills is another key challenge for community reintegration. The targets for 2002/03 are 6000 commencements and 1000 awards. Progress to date by Areas on commencements is very encouraging. Awards present a more complex picture, and progress here is less promising. We are working closely with the national and local Learning & Skills Councils and basic skills providers, **but a lot still has to be done to enable offenders to access relevant provision which successfully engages and maintains offender motivation. Next year will see a real step change, as we have an increased target of 12000 awards.** NPD has provided national cascade training on screening for basic skills needs, and Areas need to ensure that offenders are referred for more detailed initial and diagnostic assessments where appropriate. **I would see The Probation Service's role as acting as broker between the offender and the basic skills provider. We have a significant role to play in screening, assessment and referring offenders to community based provision.** At the end of January as a step toward improving this partnership approach we launched the first national protocol between NPS and the National Learning and Skills Council. **The challenge now is to develop partnerships at a local level between Probation Areas and the 47 local LSCs.**

Approved premises also have an important part to play in managing risk and reintegrating offenders into the community, and we need to develop evidence-based regimes for residents. Eight hostels are involved in the pathfinder project

that we started towards the end of last year. The training and regime developments at the core of the pathfinder have been well received by staff in the hostels. I am very excited by this initiative. It represents a significant, and some would say overdue, investment into maximising the potential of hostels to have an increased impact and focus on reducing the reoffending of residents.

On employment, we are developing a range of interventions. **Research shows that finding and maintaining employment can have a significant impact on reducing reoffending.**

We remain committed to developing a range of other interventions across the spectrum of community reintegration; later this year we hope to start looking at money and debt issues as well as the wider accommodation needs of offenders.

I have heard it said that the development of What Works is too heavily biased towards offending behaviour programmes. I don't think that is true. Through the work of the community reintegration unit, the NPD is developing projects which will provide us with a range of interventions which target both offending behaviour and offending-related needs. I certainly don't see these two as exclusive or conflicting; rather they complement each other. **Only by tackling offenders' behaviour directly and by aiding their rehabilitation into the community will we be able to meet our objective of a 5% reduction in reoffending by 2004.**"

Contact: Martin Copsey, Head of Community Reintegration ☎0207 217 8076
Martin.copsey@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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12/07 CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ACCREDITATION PANEL

The Home Secretary has appointed for a three-year period, thirteen independent experts and three nominated members to the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (formerly known as the Joint Prison/Probation Accreditation Panel).

The Panel appointments have been made to provide expertise covering six specific areas: sex offending, drugs treatment, therapeutic communities, cognitive behavioural treatment, programme audit and integrated systems/inter-agency service delivery. The three nominated members represent the National Probation Service, the Prison Service and the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate of the Home Office.

The new Panel will continue to accredit programmes, but now has broader terms of reference and will increasingly be looking at accrediting integrated systems. It will also:

- receive reports on the impact and effectiveness of accredited programmes and advise the Services on the implications;
- conduct an annual review of the developments in the evidence base and advise the Services on curriculum development accordingly;
- ensure diversity issues are taken into account in the development, accreditation and implementation of all offender programmes.

Appointments to the Panel will be announced shortly.

Contact: John Lympany, CSAP Deputy Secretary, ☎020 7217 8546
john.lympany@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12/08 A ROUND UP ON THE WHAT WORKS CLANS

The Assessment & Case Management CLAN and the Interventions Strategy Board met in November, and the other WW CLAN Boards met in January.

Interventions Strategy Board

The **Diversity Review** of the four general offending behaviour programmes had been received positively at the September meeting of the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (CSAP). Over the coming year, a further series of programmes will be the subject of a diversity review.

The **Interventions Business Plan** is now in an advanced stage of development.

Responsibilities within the Interventions team have been reorganised. Chris Johnson now has responsibility for the short-term resettlement agenda, and Richard Mason has resumed responsibility for case management development.

Community Punishment

The three launch events for ECP held prior to Christmas went very well. There was a universal

commitment and enthusiasm to implement ECP successfully. Action following these events included circulation of an edited video of Eithne Wallis' keynote speech to Chiefs, Chairs and Regional What Works Managers. RWWMs are now equipped to support Area staff in giving local briefings on ECP. A standard presentation and briefing document has been issued; further copies are available from the ECP team.

Discussions have been held with the OASys team and ITG concerning the development of an IT platform for ECP. Additionally, a free standing placement database using Lotus Notes might be developed as an interim solution.

Indicative, illustrative costings for ECP implementation have been produced, using a standard template, and are available to Areas from RWWM's on request.

A video about ECP, with sentencers as the target audience, will be ready for circulation to Areas in April.

A business case is being developed. The Management Summary will be circulated to Chairs and Chiefs.

Community Reintegration

Persistent Offenders: Three national development meetings will be held in 2003 for staff involved in the pathfinders, the first to be held on 2 April. J-Track, an electronic tracking system, will be a very important tool in tracking a case's progress across separate agencies. The possibility of linking J-Track to OASys was being explored. J-Track will also be used to monitor Street Crime cases.

Resettlement: The CSAP had encouraged further development of FOR...a Change in the areas of case management, diversity and sustainable partnerships. A further submission to the CSAP will be made in October 2003. A joint board had been developed for both FOR...a Change and the MORE/START programme. A programme for short-term women prisoners is also being considered. An interim evaluation report, covering the first three years, is due in spring 2003. A further report, covering the extension period, will be produced later in the year.

Street Crime Initiative: The different inspectorate agencies have been inspecting components of the Street Crime initiative for which they have responsibility. HMIP will be conducting an inspection of NPS and the Street Crime Initiative shortly.

The **Employment project** needs to be re-scoped to take account of the new integrated systems criteria. It is intended that the re-scoped project will commence in the autumn. It will hopefully include shire Areas, as well as retaining sufficient urban Areas to identify issues relating to minority ethnic offenders.

Basic Skills: An initial report on the literacy demands of Offending Behaviour programmes is due in June.

A joint project with the Prisoners' Learning and Skills Unit is being developed to improve delivery on basic skills and this will include a focus on the exchange of information, in terms of the basic skills needs of offenders, between the Prison Service and community based agencies.

Work on **dyslexia screening** will be considered as part of the work programme for Basic Skills in 2003/04.

The **Approved Premises Pathfinder** will be submitted to the CSAP for advice in March 2003.

A Performance Breakthrough Feedback Report on the pathfinder had been commissioned. This analysed feedback from Areas on their views about NPD's management of the Approved Premises project. In general, feedback was very positive. There were, though, issues in relation to facilities management.

Young Adult Offenders

YJB/NPD Partnership: A Memorandum of Understanding will be developed jointly by the two agencies. The Memorandum will provide a framework for developing the large agenda of work involving both NPD and the YJB.

Intensive Control & Change Programme: A full time project manager has been recruited to oversee the delivery of the ICCP communications strategy. NPD will provide Areas with materials, support, direction and advice to communicate with sentencers at a local level, with NPD briefing the higher levels of the judiciary at a few large events.

Offending Behaviour Programmes

The Cognitive Skills Booster Programme will be resubmitted to the CSAP in March with an action plan for its implementation as a pilot. The CSAP will be also be approached for advice on the adaptation for use in the community of CALM (Controlling Anger & Learning to Manage it; a violence programme currently accredited for use in custody). A second substance misuse programme, OSAP (Offenders' Substance Abuse Programme) will be rolled out to Areas where ASRO is not available.

NPD are reviewing the use of psychometric tests, as part of a longer-term strategy into deploying psychometric tests. Initial results suggest that some of the textual tests may not be very sensitive to measuring offender change and these may be removed from the current test battery. Advice will be sought from the CSAP about the best way to proceed.

Contact: Mark Slater ☎ 0207 217 0687
Mark.slater@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

12/09 FAQ'S: ENHANCED COMMUNITY PUNISHMENT

1. *Community Punishment is currently a credible and popular community sentence – why are we doing this?*

Yes – CP is a popular and credible sentence – current levels of usage, 52,000 plus CP orders in a year, show this to be the case. However, its popularity at the minute is mainly based, quite rightly, on its emphasis on punishment and deprivation of liberty – but we also need to unleash community punishment's potential to change offenders, improve their skills and through this bring about a reduction in reconviction rates. ECP does this through deploying a rigorous "What Works" approach in an area of our work that hitherto has received little attention.

2. *Enhanced Community Punishment is a major national implementation project. How are we supposed to implement it with no additional resources?*

It is not true to say that we have not had additional resources. The SR2000 settlement obtained additional cash for the implementation of ECP. This settlement gave an award of £6.6 million in 2002/03 and £9 million for a full year in 2003/04. The figures were originally agreed on the understanding that we would start implementing ECP this year and by 2003/04 would have achieved a target of 30,000 completions. However, full implementation has been deferred to October 2003, with a significant re-alignment in targets which move from completions to commencements only – 25,000 for 2003/04. The completions targets only come on stream in 2004/05. In addition to the £9 million for Areas we have also secured a considerable sum for the centre to provide support for implementation – amongst other things this will enable the directorate to meet much of the costs of the national and regional training teams.

3. *Will ECP come with full IT support?*

The development of SALSA, which is based on a modular approach, is very promising and the longer term solution for IT support for ECP will be developed through this programme. In the short term we are committed to producing a business case for IT support and this will include a thorough analysis of business requirements and priorities. The objective is to have interim IT support for roll out by October 2003.

4. *ECP appears potentially to have significant HR implications – can we expect to receive any help from the centre with these and if so when?*

Many of the changes in relation to the employment of CS supervisors represent good practice as a responsible employer and will, of course, bring with them great flexibility in terms of deployment and usage of this group of staff across the wider service. Outside of the developments proposed by ECP – European and UK

employment legislation requires us as responsible employers to end the practice of employing core staff on a casual, hourly basis – it is not fair to them and it does not help us as an employer to develop and retain a committed workforce.

NPD is seconding a HR specialist to the centre to provide advice to Areas. One of that person's tasks will be to produce a HR guide to assist Areas on implementation issues.

5. *Will all commencements count towards our target?*

Once each Area is ready, we will specify a date when the ECP scheme will be "signed off" by NPD and RWWMs as completed. From the date of "sign-off" all commencements will count towards the ECP target for 2003/04.

6. *I have heard that ECP requires staff to complete an assessment centre. What will happen to those staff who fail?*

The assessment centre process will only apply to some CP staff. The assessment system has been re-specified for ECP and will consist of the current semi-structured interview and a revised scripted interview developed for CP staff. There will be no requirement for a presentation. If staff fail, they will be given the opportunity to re-take the assessment centre.

7. *Many of our supervisors are part-time and only work at the weekend. How will we be able to put them through an apparently demanding and time consuming training programme?*

The training programme has been developed to be delivered on a modular ½ day basis. The training can be delivered on evenings and weekends as necessary. The training of CP staff can be timetabled flexibly with staff being trained within days, weeks or months. The training programmes aim to build upon staff competencies and skills, giving structure and codification to existing CP practice.

Contact: Laura Fairweather , National Implementation Manager, ☎0207 217 0680
laura.fairweather@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

A big thank you to this edition's contributors.
If you would like to submit articles for WW News (with a photograph if possible!) please contact Mark Slater (Communications Officer, NPD What Works Team, ☎020 7217 0687, e-mail: mark.slater@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)