

Creating Effective Mental Health Provision for Offenders in the Community



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Dr Coral Sirdifield, Research Fellow, University of Lincoln

csirdifield@lincoln.ac.uk

Dr Rebecca Marples, Research Assistant, University of Lincoln

rmarples@lincoln.ac.uk

Introduction and Aims

- Overview of key issues in relation to offender mental health and access to healthcare in the UK
 - Group activity one
- Overview of organisations' roles and responsibilities within the UK
- Brief overview of our research
 - Group activity two

Overview of Key Issues

Health Needs

- There is a high complexity of health problems in the offender population
 - An estimated 39% of offenders experience a mental illness whilst on probation
 - Many offenders have (multiple) substance misuse problems
 - In the first two weeks after release, mortality rates are 12 times higher than for the general population (Binswanger et al., 2015)

Access to Healthcare

- There is disproportionately low access to healthcare for a variety of reasons
 - Many offenders are not registered with a GP
 - Often offenders only access services at crisis point
 - Recent Inspectorate reports show that there are problems with continuity of care
- Through the Gate*
- There are problems in terms of a lack of clarity around different organisations' responsibilities (*more on this later*)

Activity One

How do we ensure good continuity of mental health care when offenders leave prison?

Discuss for 10 minutes and feedback

- Areas for discussion could include:
 - Barriers and facilitators for continuity of care
 - Your experiences of facilitating access to mental health care for offenders
 - How criminal justice and mental health staff can work together
 - Ways of establishing good communication and referral processes between agencies
 - Models of good practice



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Feedback from the group

Activity One: Potential Solutions

- Consider offenders' mental health needs in service commissioning and provision
- Mental Health Trusts to proactively advertise services to Community Rehabilitation Companies and the National Probation Service
- Nominated staff to create/communicate standard referral procedures
- Try new ways of working -
 - e.g. co-locating services/staff can be effective
- Invest! -
 - increase investment in mental health services and try new models that have been shown to be effective elsewhere. Evaluate them and share best practice

Potential Solutions Continued

- **Improve computer systems. Meanwhile use simple systems for data exchange -**
 - long-term improve ICT, but in the meantime, have simple data exports, emails and phone calls to improve continuity of care
- **Give probation a voice on commissioning groups**
- **Co-locating services/staff -** does not have to be full-time, but is a structural opportunity to improve communication
- **Create a toolkit to support healthcare commissioners**

Overview of Organisations' Roles and Responsibilities Within the UK

- ▶ **Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs):**
should be commissioning healthcare for offenders in the community*
- ▶ **Health and Wellbeing Boards:**
should consider the needs of offenders in the community in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs)
- ▶ **National probation Service & Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs):**
should be assessing health as more than a 'tick-box' exercise - referrals need to be followed up and outcomes measured and recorded

* <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/hlth-justice-directions-v11.pdf> (p.9)
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/hlth-justice-frmwrk.pdf> (p11)

Brief Overview of Our Research

- ▶ Two year research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research, Research for Patient Benefit Programme
 - ▶ **Year One:** Systematic literature review to look at the most effective ways of providing healthcare and facilitating access to healthcare for offenders; national surveys to map healthcare provision for offenders on probation across England
 - ▶ **Year Two:** Case studies in six areas of the country; create a Toolkit for commissioners and practitioners

Activity Two

How would you define a toolkit?

If you were creating a toolkit for people commissioning mental health services for offenders, what would you include?

Discuss for 10 minutes and feedback





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Feedback from the group

Summary

- ▶ We have:
 - ▶ Explored some of the barriers and facilitators for creating effective mental health care for offenders in the community
 - ▶ Looked at how we can improve continuity of mental health care when offenders leave prison
 - ▶ Given you a brief overview of our research
 - ▶ Discussed the idea of a toolkit, and what could be included in a toolkit for those commissioning mental health services for offenders



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For more information about our project, please see <http://cahru.org.uk/2017/02/28/improving-healthcare-commissioning-for-probation-mapping-the-landscape/>

Thank you!