

Supporting offender mental health from prison to the community: Approaches and challenges from two UK studies

Tim Kirkpatrick & Lynne Callaghan



engager
healthy minds. healthy choices



STRENGTHEN
Firm foundations for Health
and Wellbeing

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Engager 2: Developing and evaluating a collaborative care intervention for prisoners with common mental health problems, near to and after release

- * 5 year project funded by National Institute for Health Research (Aug 2013 – July 2018, recently extended to October 2019).
- * Intervention was developed following realist review, case studies, focus groups, input from a ‘peer research group’, and expert opinion.
- * Intervention aims to overcome a set of challenges:
 - * Transition between prison and community (continuity of care)
 - * Fragmented services based on diagnosis (e.g. substance misuse, depression) and social problems (e.g. homelessness, unemployment) rather than the reality of people with multiple and complex needs
 - * Offenders’ reluctance to trust services (or see themselves as having mental health problems)
- * Intervention piloted Sept 2014 – May 2015 – and refined following formative process evaluation.
- * Full RCT commenced January 2016. 280 participants, with recruitment completed September 2017. Initial results of outcome data at 6 month post-release available at end of 2018.



The Engager Intervention

* Who is it for:

- * Men serving short (≤ 2 yrs) sentence, identified as having common mental health problems (current or likely on release), willing to engage with the research and intervention teams.
- * Exclusion criteria – serious mental illness, primary personality disorder.
- * Presenting a significant risk to research/practitioner teams
- * Being released to study area

* Delivered by:

- * A team comprising two full-time practitioners and a part time supervisor.
- * Practitioners seconded from other services, usually experienced support workers familiar with this population.
- * Supervisor is a senior mental health practitioner.
- * All received initial 3 days training to deliver intervention, with additional days as required.



The Engager Intervention

- * From 4-16 weeks pre-release, continuing for between 3 and 5 months post release.
- * Same practitioner works with offender in prison and community, emphasis on building trust.
- * Release day working.
- * Flexible, person centre-approach. Working in partnership to develop an action plan to achieve personalised goals.
- * Underpinned by a mentalisation based approach to support engagement and encourage reflection.
- * Emphasis on liaison with other services (setting up appointments, attending appointment with offender, providing advocacy) to support offender to achieve goals.



STRENGTHEN - Firm Foundations for Health and Wellbeing Improving health for those under community supervision, with the support of a Health Trainer

- NIHR PHR Grant: £708k, commencing January 2016 (24 months) + 8 month funded extension
- Intervention development & learning based on previous health trainer interventions & Engager; peer researcher group; qualitative interviews with Health Trainer & associated services.
- Rationale:
 - Those under community supervision (NPS/CRC) may be suitable for a high intensity health promotion intervention:
 - Often excluded from usual healthcare
 - Low levels of wellbeing and physical health means potentially large gains
 - Mandatory engagement with NPS/CRC means potential for sustained engagement
 - Being subject to community supervision often a time when individuals desire to make changes
- Two centred pilot randomised trial
 - 120 participants randomised 1:1 to intervention/control (target reached December 2017)
 - Primary outcome: Mental Wellbeing (WEMWBS)
 - Secondary outcomes: self reported smoking, alcohol use, diet, PA levels, s... use, quality of life
 - 3 and 6 month follow ups (follow up complete end May 2018)



The Strengthen Intervention

* Who is it for?:

- * Men and women 18+
- * Under community supervision/on community sentences with at least 7 months left to serve;
- * Prison release at least 2 months prior to recruitment (where applicable);
- * Do not present a significant risk to researchers/health trainers
- * Willingness to work towards improving one of the four target health improvement behaviours and/or mental wellbeing

* Delivered by:

- * 2 Health Trainers in each site, supervised by intervention lead
- * Health Trainers (HTs) offer peer type support for health improvement in a one to one format for disadvantaged groups
- * HTs have been introduced into a few probation settings with promising findings from low key evaluations



The Strengthen Intervention

Self Determined Behaviour

- Control/agency
- Competency
- Connectedness

Principles of Motivational Interviewing

- Express empathy
- Support self-efficacy
- Roll with resistance
- Develop discrepancy

4 Target Health Behaviours

1. Reducing smoking
2. Reducing alcohol consumption
3. Increasing physical activity
4. Improving healthy eating

Mental wellbeing

- Connect
- Keep Learning
- Be active
- Take notice
- Give

- One to one sessions in person/on telephone
- Up to 12 sessions over 14 weeks



Activity 1

Engager & Strengthen have found that there is a relationship/tension between basic needs and engagement with an intervention focussing on enhancing mental health/wellbeing and/or health behaviour change.

What is your experience of delivering health/mental health interventions

- (a) alongside meeting basic needs;**
- (b) when basic needs have not been met?**

Activity 2

Neither Engager nor Strengthen use diagnosis as an inclusion criterion, and deliberately avoid the use of diagnostic terminology.

In your context/area of work

- (a) what would be the advantages and disadvantages of this, and
- (b) what would be the main implementation issues?

Activity 3

Engager and Strengthen start at different stages (Engager in prison, Strengthen in the community), and vary in terms of the length of the intervention.

What do you think:

- a) When is the best time to start an intervention (e.g. in prison, on release, after release), and
- b) How long should it continue for / how should it end?

Thank you for taking part

Tim Kirkpatrick – tim.kirkpatrick@plymouth.ac.uk

Lynne Callaghan – lynne.callaghan@plymouth.ac.uk