

Wiltshire Probation Evaluation

Interim Report

Analysis and issues arising from the first phase of the
evaluation

Unit for Evaluation and Public Value
University of the West of England, Bristol

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Authors:

Saville Kushner (Ed.)
John Davies
Barry Kushner
Kathryn Last
Kieran McCartan
Nikki McKenzie
Paul Redford
Phil Rumney

Acknowledgement:

All evaluation depends wholly upon the quality of engagement with those being evaluated. In this evaluation we have come across a notable openness and transparency, a willingness and a courage to subject cherished practices to external scrutiny. We respect that and accept the obligation it places on us for fairness. Many people are clearly identifiable in this report and so we make no attempt to hide them. Many tutors will find their work subject to scrutiny and critique. We do this, however, in a spirit of support and affirmation that what Wiltshire Probation is attempting to accomplish with the initiative we observe is justifiable and valuable. Where we are critical it is because we honour the urgency to 'get it right', and we offer that critique in a spirit of constructive engagement – what people sometimes refer to as 'critical friendship'. We have no 'good' or 'bad' judgement to make of the work represented here, just critical analysis. There are places where we fall short of accuracy and fairness and we subject this report, thereby, to the judgement of those who feature in it. We seek out amendment and improvement.

PREAMBLE

Society's ambivalence about how to treat those who break its laws is visited on the Probation Service¹. One eye sees them as 'offenders' – i.e. having broken a law, being 'offensive' to the moral order, and having to be defended from, ultimately having a debt to be repaid to society. Whereas the other eye sees them as victims of circumstances from which they need rescuing (redeeming), and still a citizen with rights. Is the ideal probation officer part of the punishment and control regime? Or part of the effort to realise the offender's rights? NOMS says that offenders are among the most excluded groups in society: *"The challenge is to transform the offender into the citizen."*²

There is no avoiding either agenda, and the pragmatic solution is to marry both so as to reduce the social cost of persistent offending, and to give the offender access to a more secure and stable life. The dilemma and its solution are to be found in the education and rehabilitation programmes operated by probation services, simultaneously part of the control regime and its redemptive counterpart. Psychology provides a view of the 'offender' that accomplishes this marriage. On these programmes, the criminal is defined as someone with aberrant behaviours – culpable and redeemable in equal measure, culpable in the sense that they have faced the same circumstances as [non-criminals?] but responded to them in wayward fashion. They are people who have made wrong choices – and in new market economies, 'choice' is a skill all citizens have to master. But they are redeemable in that ways of thinking that give rise to inappropriate choices can be reformed.

However, the 'third way' presents a significant challenge in seeking to re-engineer people's behaviours. Behaviour modification programmes have, at best, a chequered history, as we will see, and they are expensive and long-term. Indeed, Wiltshire Probation Trust is sceptical of the efficacy of the nationally prescribed Accredited Programmes and their Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach in reducing rates of reoffending. In any event, with its new found trust status Accredited Programmes would be expensive in a competitive commercial context. This interplay between behavioural change theory and economics lies at the heart of Wiltshire Probation Trust's initiative to develop its own suite of rehabilitation programmes that realign the balance between theory and economics. The programmes are called Supervision and Resource Centre (SaRC) and the title itself betrays the attempted equilibrium. These programmes are a means to solve both the resource pressures and the rehabilitation challenge.

The attack on resources is two-pronged: first, SaRCs are shorter and less frequent than Accredited Programmes; second, they take the place of multiple one-to-one sessions each participant would otherwise have with their Offender Manager. The adaptation of theory is less clear in that there is no clean break with the psychological approach – one senior manager who designed the SaRC programmes talked of 'filling a gap' between Accredited Programmes and Offender Management – even suggesting that SaRCs were not a replacement for Accredited Programmes. But there was an intention to create learning/behaviour-change environments that are more flexible and responsive to need – and what is thought to be 'low dosage', i.e. less intensive intervention. The senior manager who designed the SaRCs had a background as a primary teacher and there was an expectation and a perception that this would generate a more 'educational' (pedagogical) approach to rehabilitation programmes. For others, including tutors who teach SaRCs, these are, indeed, a continuing attempt to reduce reoffending, and the views of tutors are mixed with some retaining allegiance to Accredited Programmes. There is, however, a common awareness that SaRCs are not 'evidence-based' – i.e. supported by theory and/or research trials, and so are vulnerable and provisional. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has given its imprimatur for the use

¹ See <http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/Page427.asp>

² http://www.noms.homeoffice.gov.uk/managing-offenders/reducing_re-offending/

of these in-house programmes but needs to be formally persuaded of their effectiveness in reducing re-offending. Hence, this evaluation.

Structure of this report

1. Introduction: The policy context
2. Accredited Programmes, SaRCs and Psychology
3. Understanding CBT as an approach
4. What is an educational approach?
5. The trained tutor as a resource
6. SaRCS observed
7. Evaluation, its themes and next steps

1. The policy context

Wiltshire Probation is launching as a Trust in July. The launch was delayed while the General Election was taking place, but this will be the first probation service in the country to achieve Trust status. This was mainly due to Wiltshire securing approval on the first application whereas several other areas applied at the same time and were refused, and had to reapply: all have now been approved. If Wiltshire had not applied in its own right, the service would have been amalgamated with Gloucestershire or Dorset Probation Services. By gaining trust status the local service has been preserved and Wiltshire Probation is offered a degree of independence.

Initially the Trust contract will run for four years and puts Wiltshire Probation in a position of commissioner and bidder in competitive tendering for their services. At present the service is going through Specification Benchmarking and Costing exercises (SBC) for NOMS for each area of work that they do.

This level of independence has allowed Wiltshire Probation to create a series of local initiatives designed to meet the needs of its offenders and help reduce the case loads of individual probation officers. These Supervision and Resource Centre (SaRC) packages are not seen by all in Wiltshire as replacing the national probation courses (Accredited Programmes - AP) but to replace the one-to-one supervision by probation officers of certain offenders. However, the purpose of SaRCs varies depending on who is commenting on them from within the Wiltshire Probation Service – interpretations include:

- Reduce reoffending
- Take pressure off supervision and case management
- Give Wiltshire probation a competitive edge once it becomes a trust
- Provide a laboratory for discovering alternative approaches to reducing reoffending
- Serve as a 'half-way-house' between APs and supervision

Of course, the purpose of SaRCs might embrace all of these.

The programmes are designed to be suitable for those at low/medium risk of reoffending/harm and whose offence is appropriate to the SaRC. For example the Alcohol Education Programme is for those whose offence had alcohol as a contributory factor whether it is drink-driving or domestic

abuse. The General Offending Behaviour Programme is for those whose offence 'identifies a deficiency in problem solving skills' (Court Handbook, July 2009). An offender can be sent on one or several of the SaRC programmes depending on the offence and the perceived needs/deficiencies of the offender. They are most suited to those whose licence or order did not permit a longer intervention or for whom this intervention complemented other current work. One of the differences between AP and SaRCs is that a breach of an AP sees the offender returned immediately to prison or to court, whereas due to the lower risk category for those on SaRC packages they are returned to court for 'breach' action to be taken, though this is not likely. SaRCs were developed in negotiation with local Magistrates to ensure their place in sentencing practices.

SaRCs are designed to be run as group supervision sessions – initially, with the tutors working alongside Offender Managers - to deliver the programme. Offenders sent by the courts to complete a SaRC programme will not, while they are on SaRC, see their case manager. The reason for this is to reduce the case loads of managers, in turn cutting costs. The subsequent decision to take Offender Managers off SaRC programmes was to protect the Tutor resource that is threatened by tightening budgets.

The government have recently introduced cash-linked incentives to probation services to reduce reoffending rates. If SaRCs are found to be successful it is thought that Wiltshire Probation Trust could benefit financially from running the SaRC programmes with savings both in terms of the cost of one-to-one supervision and in terms of reducing reoffending.

2. Accredited Programmes, SaRCs and Psychology

Accredited and SaRC programmes are operational versions of behavioural change theory. One theoretical source is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) - a form of psychological therapy directed to modifying the behaviour of an individual through changing the cognitive processing of information (Howitt, 2009). However, as in all educational programmes other theories come into play in determining practical outcomes in the classroom. These include the personal pedagogical theories of the Tutor and the world-view of the participant ('offenders'). Whatever theoretical purposes drive the curriculum they have to be mediated through these local realities. The result is often a complex mix of theory, aspiration, and experience all subjected to what is sometimes called '*curriculum negotiation*' – i.e. an often informal process of mutual accommodation allowing for degrees of flexibility – 'give and take'. However prescribed a classroom intervention is, what is observed to happen in the classroom will not reflect it in its pure form. This report will focus on this mediating milieu as well as on the curriculum as given.

Accredited Programmes have been validated against national and international norms³ derived from research studies – often international studies. These are expected to apply irrespective of local context and notwithstanding the diversity of individual need among offenders. Tutors are video-taped as they teach to a manual to ensure compliance and to provide a reference point for pedagogical improvement. This is equivalent to what is sometimes called a 'teacher-proof curriculum' – i.e. a curriculum whose integrity is not affected by the context of its delivery or by teachers, and whose value system the teacher is required to adopt. Teacher-proof curriculum is an alternative to models which allow for degrees of teacher-autonomy.

³ Veronica Hollis (2007) *Reconviction Analysis of Programme Data using Interim Accredited Programmes Software, NOMS/RDS*

Accredited Programmes are defined by NOMS as: *'courses that tackle the offender's lack of ability to plan and consider the consequences of his or her actions.'*⁴

They are skills- and behaviour-based (rather than needs-based, values-based or experiential – see below) and they are framed in terms of 'deficit' in the offender. They promote a particular view of remediation of the 'back-on-track' or 'make better choices' form⁵, focusing on cognitive processes as manifest in skills and behaviours rather than on values, beliefs and dispositions of the offender (i.e. what underpins skills and behaviours). The underlying assumption is that an offender presents with behaviours which can be modified through cognitive conditioning.

'The Post Programme Report cannot make a full assessment of risk: this is the duty of the offender manager, using OASys and other risk/needs assessment tools. The report feeds into this process by providing evidence of deficits prior to the programme, skills developed during the programme and an account of progress made. It must also identify remaining areas of skill deficit that could contribute to an increase in the risk of reoffending. It should do this by indicating the likely scenarios for relapse and by proposing what steps could be taken to overcome these. The report must link to the OASys planning and review process.' [source: see footnote 2]

The claim made by Wiltshire Probation is that Accredited Programmes have unknown validity in the particular context of Wiltshire (demographic data on reoffending among Accredited Programme graduates is not yet available). However, (a) they are expensive and already under review, and (b) felt unlikely to meet the individual needs of offenders and, thereby, may prove ineffective in reducing offending among the target population. In fact, the NOMS own study of the impact of Accredited Programmes was tentative at best in ascribing impact:

Although the report cannot conclude that the interventions directly caused the reductions in re-offending (owing to the lack of a comparison group) it provides an indication that the re-offending rates of offenders that took part in programmes and community sentences in 2004 were lower than expected. Unfortunately a substantial amount of IAPS data could not be used because records were not of sufficient quality. [Hollis, footnote 1]

Previous studies have raised questions about the effectiveness of cognitive behavioural approaches in producing desired behaviour change. A Home Office/RDS study (2006)⁶ on the impact of cognitive skills programmes on women's reconviction questioned the very basis of behavioural adaptation programmes:

'There is no clear evidence that the cognitive deficits with which many female offenders present are causally linked to their offending.'

Certainly, there is insufficient reliable data to support the claim made by NOMS that, *"There is considerable evidence for the effectiveness of cognitive skills programmes in rehabilitating offenders."*⁷ In fact, there is no demographic evidence on the impact of APs in Wiltshire, in that police crime data does not include information on previous experience with offender-reduction

⁴ PC09/2007 definition of programme completions for accredited offending behaviour programmes, NPS Circular, May

⁵ For example, not acknowledging that for some people an offence was the rational solution to a problem or the best available form of action

⁶ Home Office (Jenny Cann, Author) (2006) *Cognitive skills programmes: impact on reducing reconviction among a sample of female prisoners*, Findings 276

⁷ http://www.noms.homeoffice.gov.uk/managing-offenders/reducing_re-offending/reducing_re-offending_pathways/attitudes/

programmes. Data on APs/SaRCs does not enter the Police National Computer – though this may be solved with the placing by Wiltshire Police of a police computer in the probation offices.

Porporino (2009) also challenges the foundations of the behavioural adaptation approach:

'...when we look at offenders who are desisting, they seem to be doing so without any fundamental change in their so-called anti-social personality traits and/or attitudes...Change in conception of self is...both partly cause and partly consequence...'

We will look, in a moment, at the leanings and assumptions of the cognitive approach as a prelude to an educational analysis of offender education.

Wiltshire's response to this situation has been to create its own suite of offender education programmes – SaRCs. These are shorter than Accredited Programmes, linked closely to offender management, fewer in the number of sessions, more flexible and designed around in-house preferences. They draw from the same skills base as Accredited Programmes, and their content is prescribed, but Tutors see the challenge of the two in different terms. SaRCs follow a similar psychological/behavioural change approach, and they are designed (as with Accredited Programmes) in categories of 'offence' – i.e. using 'offence' as a category of (criminogenic) behaviour – rather than categories of offender characteristics or needs. There is an implicit assumption that offender needs (and rights) can be subsumed under categories of offence.

There are, then, a number of differences between Accredited Programmes and SaRCs. However, the two approaches share a strategic and philosophical commitment to Psychology – and especially behavioural psychology – as a foundation for an intervention strategy. Session Tutors are, as it were, clinical practitioners. We will look now at the characteristics of this philosophy and at its positioning within a broader analysis of curriculum and pedagogy. The central positioning of CBT and its domination of education and rehabilitation programmes justify a comprehensive treatment of the subject, and what follows is an extended analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach.

3. Understanding CBT as an approach

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a behaviour modification approach that applies a (psychological) treatment to stimulate desirable traits in the subject. It was developed and is largely practised in the context of severe mental illness and psychological disorders. CBT draws from two distinct traditions within psychology: behaviourism and cognitivism. Behaviourism developed from early conditioning work from pioneers such as Pavlov and Watson. This work demonstrated that behaviour can be changed through conditioning processes that were observable and repeatable. Importantly, the explanation for change did not require attention to internal mental processes.

Both Behaviourist and Cognitivist therapeutic approaches have a number of similarities, such as the importance of practice and exposure. These approaches were eventually blended, despite their seemingly disparate beginnings. Cognitive therapies became more behavioural and behavioural therapies more cognitive until the term Cognitive-Behavioural encompassed a technique incorporating elements of both. Many realised that each system (mental and behavioural) could serve to reinforce the other.

The CBT approach uses two key techniques, 1) cognitive restructuring (the re-interpretation of events, focusing on automatic thoughts, beliefs and assumptions) and 2) skills training (social and interpersonal, focusing on communication, aggression, relationships, etc.). CBT is a manualised, time-limited, explicit, technique driven process. It is often valued as it is somewhat 'trainer independent' ('teacher-proof'), in that anyone can be trained to follow the specific programme and is not so heavily reliant on 'expertise' in terms of experience and skills of the trainers. It is also a very specific, usually relatively short process. Both the reduction in skill of the trainer and the standardised method of delivery make it an economically attractive solution.

An underlying assumption in using cognitive behavioural therapy for offenders is the belief that the foundations for criminal activity are in faulty, dysfunctional or distorted cognitions (ways of thinking) - such as self-justificatory thinking, misinterpretation of social cues, displacement of blame, schemas of dominance or entitlement, etc. It follows therefore that altering this dysfunctional thinking through the process of re-interpreting events and situations will modify behaviours and therefore decrease criminal activity. The approach frequently focuses on 'faulty' thoughts, choices and attitudes that are associated with offending behaviour. This approach therefore assumes that 'non-offenders' have the correct thought processes, and that this is the reason for their non-offending (or the skills of not getting caught?). Alternative – non-cognitive – approaches might focus on crime arising out of an 'opportunity structure'; crime as a rational and informed choice; crime as a response to limited options; and crime as an expression of personal need.

Porporino (2010) suggests that the reasons that some individuals do not re-offend is not solely due to their thinking or cognitive skills. Other more subtle influences such as personal/phenomological, relational and structural issues seem to underpin successful desistance in re-offending.

It is important to understand that different psychological approaches have different assumptions concerning the underlying causes of offender behaviours and change. For example Social Identity Theory has demonstrated the importance of 'identities' in capacity to change (Iyer et al., 2009), and that it may not be 'faulty' thinking that underpins anti-social behaviour but rational virtuous thinking (Reicher et al., 2008). Unlike a CBT approach, the recent emergence of positive psychology focuses not on recitfying so called 'faulty' cognitions or 'deficits', but on understanding strengths, resources and motives available to individuals. Moreover this approach uses these strengths to help in terms of well-being and fulfilment. This serves as an alternative psychological model for change (Ward & Brown, 2004). Furthermore, the CBT approach is an individualised approach which finds other alternative - social oriented - psychological approaches such as those from a Vygotskian tradition (e.g. Constructivism).

CBT approaches fit neatly into both economic and medical based models. The so called 'drug metaphor' where 'treatment success' and 'treatment cost' can be easily calculated, and the treatment itself standardised through the use of specific training programmes dominates both clinical and offender 'treatment' programmes⁸. However, this analogy can be potentially damaging. The success of a psychological as opposed to medical programme or intervention relies on an interrelationship between social actors, not biological entities. This relationship may not easily be reduced to a set of prescribed 'techniques'. As Holmes (2002) argues, there is compelling and robust evidence that regardless of approach the key to successful psychological intervention is a strong therapeutic alliance. In other words the relationship between the client (or offender in this case) and therapist (or trainer) is key, where factors such as the communication of genuine warmth and empathy is essential to a successful process. (We will see the importance of relationships even during a CBT process in a later section when we come to look at SaRC in action.)

⁸ In Wiltshire Probation the language of 'dosage' is applied to the intensity of an intervention

CBT primarily focuses on 'symptom change'. In re-offending terms this is operationalised as 'reoffending rates' Again this model draws from a medical (and pharmacological) model. Evaluating symptom change, in both psychotherapy and offender populations is easier than establishing and evaluating 'relationship change', which is one aspect of psychological 'treatment' (Hinshelwood, 2002). CBT deals in surrogates.

EFFECTIVENESS of CBT

Much of the potential success of contemporary rehabilitation programmes rests upon the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in modifying offending behaviour. Some meta-analyses of CBT interventions suggest an overall treatment effect⁹ - especially with severe mental illness, where CBT is thought to be most successful. However, these are aggregated results and may not reflect the effectiveness of specific programmes in given contexts – in any event, CBT is designed and mostly use for people with emotional and mental disorders. In fact, leading figures in the development of 'trait-treatment interaction' have renounced its effectiveness at all, pointing to the overwhelming impact of local contexts. "*Generalisations decay*," wrote Cronbach (1969) – i.e. what is true 'here' may not be true 'there', and what is true 'today' may not be true 'tomorrow'. Also effectiveness is often focused on short-term rather than long term changes (Hollin & Palmer, 2009), especially significant here since there is an acknowledged 'maturation' effect – offending tails off with age as an apparently natural process. In Education it is known that learning gains secured from trait-treatment interactions tend to have a 'short half-life' (Cronbach, *ibid*). Even the focus on short term process changes (e.g. problem solving skills etc.) show only modest success (Hollin & Palmer, 2009) and limited sustainability. In terms of reoffending there have been positive results in terms of short term reoffending for people who complete CBT programmes, but these are restricted to around 10% of populations studied, and some longer term (2 year) follow-up data do not provide support for the effectiveness of the programmes (Cann et al, 2003).

However, evaluations of CBT programmes are often (though not always) compared to 'no treatment' conditions rather than to other interventions, which may be equally or more effective. Meta-analyses have demonstrated large variations between studies, suggesting that there are many mediating and moderating factors which influence the effectiveness of the training, suggesting that standardisation of approach may be inappropriate and interventions need vary with context. CBT appears therefore to benefit *some* offenders, *some* of the time. Factors that influence the success of CBT are issues such as attendance, number of convictions, age. The results also show that effectiveness rates are much lower in practice than in demonstration trials.

Hollin et al. (2008) found that there was a positive effect of completion of the programmes on reconviction rate, when compared to no-treatment controls. However, non-completers (those who had begun but not finished the intervention programmes) had *higher* conviction rates than no-treatment controls. They suggest that there are differences between completers and non-completers in both their demographics and in their reactions to the intervention process. In comparison to non-completers, completers had achieved higher academically, were more likely to have had full-time employment prior to imprisonment, were at a lower risk of recidivism, had higher cognitive skills, were less violent, and were older (Van Voorhis et al., 2004; Wormith & Olver, 2002). McMurrin and McCulloch (2007) argue that the perceptions of the programme are also different between completers and non-completers: non-completers perceive the material as being too slow, too patronizing or too demanding.

⁹ e.g. A. C. Butler, J. E. Chapman, E. M. Forman and A. T. Beck (2006) The empirical status of cognitive-behavioral therapy: A review of meta-analyses, *Clinical Psychology Review* 26(1) pp. 17-31

As suggested above, people who begin treatment but do not complete (non-completers) may actually increase their likelihood of reoffending (Hollins, et al. 2008; McMurrin & Theodosi, 2007). McMurrin & Theodosi (2007) performed a systematic review of 16 relevant studies found that failing to complete the cognitive-behavioural intervention treatments is associated with elevated risk of re-offending (though causality can go both ways). This effect is also more pronounced in community than institutional samples.

Hollins et al. (2008) examined 2,186 offenders with a probation order who were allocated to an offender behaviour programme. The completion rates on these programmes were low (around 20-30%). Similar rates were shown for non-completion of the programmes, with the largest group being categorised as non-starters. Non completers and non-starters differed from the completers by being younger, higher risk, and had more previous non-convictions.

'The interaction between the individual and the programme environment moves the issue away from explanations such as motivation, that imply that the locus of change lies within the offender. As Warmith and Olver (2002) suggested, there is a need to consider responsivity: that is, the interaction between the content and delivery of the programme and individual offender characteristics that serves to engage the offender, increase completion, and reduce offending' (Hollin, et al., 2009: 281)

Hollin et al. argue that the key feature in the non-success of programmes on some participants is due to differences in what they call 'readiness to change'. This concept includes issues of selection, motivation, programme effects and differences between completers and non-completers. Hollins et al. conclude that *'Increased understanding of readiness to change and the characteristics of dropouts through conducting in-depth qualitative research will inform program selection and the preparation of offenders to take part in offending behaviour programmes'*. However, this implies a focus on the offenders rather than on the programmes themselves.

Although CBT programmes have been shown to be successful in *some* situations with *some* clients, it is difficult to attribute the success to the 'intervention programme', as it may be some other factor involved in CBT which allows the practitioner to develop a strong alliance with some offenders, or some factor associated with the offender which makes them ready to change. Certainly, our evidence suggests that the quality of pedagogical relationships is an important variable. Moreover, the medical model ignores the developmental trajectory or offender 'pathways' which includes both early experiences and current situations. A good programme is one which can allow issues that arise from this journey to be captured and explored. As Holmes (2002) suggests regarding CBT in therapy *'We need a psychotherapy that is sophisticated enough to take into account and to capture the often unexpected 'emergent meanings' that arise in therapy - the antithesis of the predetermined narrowly technical approach with which cognitive behaviour therapy is sometimes identified'* (p. 290). It is arguable that this is even more important in offender populations. Following rigid guidelines is at the expense of the judgements and professional expertise to deal with the varying needs and demands of the participants on the programmes (Clark et al., 2004).

CBT relies on a successful relationship between practitioner and client, and one of the reasons behind its so called success in psychotherapeutic interventions for certain issues is that clients can and do engage in the process. As Hinshelwood (2002) argues CBT is ineffective in non-compliant clients, which as shown above characterises the majority in offending populations. Moreover, compliance itself may only be superficial rather than genuine engagement, which again undermines the process. Where CBT may be seen as effective in offender populations may not be due to CBT at all, but due to certain offenders genuinely engaging, being ready to change and forging a strong alliance with the trainer and have very little to do with the structure or content of the programmes. As Clark et al. (2004) conclude some programmes may work not because they have some *'built in*

quality which elicits conditioned responses from participants' (p. 40), but work 'if participants choose to make them work and are placed in the right conditions to allow them to do so' (Pawson & Tilley (1994: 294).

4. What is an Educational approach?

The Porporino article takes us to a certain point in considering the nature and quality of appropriate interventions to support offenders.

'The desistance paradigm suggests that we might be better off if we allowed offenders to guide us instead, listened to what they think might best fit their individual struggles out of crime, rather than continue to insist that our solutions are their salvation.'

He goes on to redefine the 'what works' agendas in terms of process rather than prescription – i.e. he concludes by focusing not on the outcomes of educational programmes in terms of changed behaviours, but on principles of procedure to make Tutors and their pedagogy more responsive to the particularities and experiences of offenders. He sets out eight new orientations for pedagogy (paraphrased):

1. Encouraging offenders to arrive at their own conclusions through self-reflection
2. Providing 'critical and problem-solving advice' grounded in 'demonstrated understanding of the offender's situation'
3. Sensitivity and appreciation of the offender's viewpoints
4. Ability to negotiate active participation
5. Understanding of how/why an offender might reject an intervention
6. Talk in an authentic way about alternatives to offending
7. Authentic encouragement
8. Promotion of self-determination

In educational terms these suggest a coherent programme (perhaps with the exception of No. 6 which seems to be at odds with 1, 5 and 8). They define a mix of a 'process curriculum' (Stenouse, 1975) and a 'constructivist curriculum' (von Glasarsfeld, 1984), principally in the underlying implication that the learner takes responsibility for their learning outcomes, and that learning is rooted in experience (rather than in theory). The key difference between the clinical psychological and the educational approaches is that the former sees the offender as a 'patient' presenting for treatment; whereas an educational approach sees the offender as a proactive learner.

Process Curriculum: This shifts attention from learning outcomes to learning quality. It is evidence-based and the content is constructed, not from pre-specified schemes of work, but from the evidence – evidence is made up materials that help the learner to reflect critically on their experience and on their beliefs and values. An important element of this is learning alongside others whose views and experiences become part of the discussion and offer alternative 'takes'. Learning outcomes in a process curriculum are essentially unpredictable – i.e. they are personalised and tailor-made to fit circumstances and they cannot be pre-specified. The teacher is a Tutor whose principal responsibility is to ensure high-quality and relevant learning encounters and interchanges. What guides a process curriculum are not theories or targets but *principles of procedure* (an example of a principle of procedure might be that '*any view that is expressed has to be balanced by an alternative view*' – and another, '*the Tutor has no right to express an opinion of their own*').

Stenhouse said, in proposing this approach: *“The major weakness of the process model [is that] it rests upon the quality of the teacher. This is also its greatest strength.....”*

Constructivist curriculum: Constructivism says that everyone has a theory of how the world works, and their actions find a ‘functional fit’ with that view of the world (e.g. *‘I need this, therefore I have a right to it – I don’t have the money to pay for it so I’ll take it – it’s not theft, it’s individual rights’*). Any teaching proposes a change in the person’s action-frame – do different, or think different. This, too, has to find ‘functional fit’ or else it will not be assimilated – it may be reproduced to create an impression of acceptance, but this is not sustainable. Teaching, therefore, will be more effective where it starts with the individual’s world-view and builds on that. One popular approach to social constructivism suggests that learning is ineffective where it is individualised – that learning is essentially cultural and is more effective where it is shared and supported by a ‘community of learners’¹⁰.

Both approaches are rooted in Psychology, but a version of psychology that acknowledges the challenge of learning that reaches down to the determinants of behaviour and does not stick with behaviour itself – i.e. learning as personal change that works on pre-cognitive conditions such as beliefs, values, dispositions and habits – and which takes the social context of learning into account.

Educational approaches implied by the Porporino critique (and by the aims of policy towards reducing recidivism) emphasise the skills of the Tutor more than the content of the curriculum. These are alternatives to the ‘teacher-proof curriculum’ of Accredited Programmes, some of which transfer into SaRC programmes. Both a Process Curriculum and a Constructivist approach imply the need to generate learning materials in the classroom setting (mostly through reflection on experience), and the need to allow for the spontaneous management of interactions. These cannot be pre-specified. Here lies the source of Stenhouse’s focus on the quality of the teacher: indeed, he argued that any intervention by a teacher is a ‘hypothesis’ to be tested in interaction. The process curriculum was the foundation for the teacher-action research movement which treats practice as a process of critical enquiry in itself – i.e. the teacher both teaching and reviewing the impact of teaching at the same time, looking for quality and relevance. In the context of SaRC programmes this approach to teaching and curriculum would create a resource for continuous learning and development of working with offenders to reduce reoffending.

Both a process curriculum and a constructivist approach require teaching and learning to be a collaborative act between teacher and learner, and imply the active and autonomous engagement of the teacher in constructing the curriculum in terms of content and experience. We turn, therefore, to the training and preparation of Tutors in order better to understand the resource and the pedagogical challenge.

¹⁰ Frequently sourced to Lev Vygotsky but this has a long tradition reaching back to Joh Dewey in the USA at the turn of the 20th Century

5. The trained Tutor as a resource

PROBATION TRAINING IN CONTEXT

Prior to 1998 Probation officer training had been part of generic social work training, under the auspices of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (created in 1971 and abolished in 2002). The inability of the Social Work training to deal effectively with the growing view that probation work should be about 'punishment in the community' was raised by the Home Office and started a debate about how probation officers should be trained and in what environment this should be done (Hong Chui and Nellis, 2003). Notwithstanding the view of some academics and practitioners that probation work was, in any event, moving away from a social work foundation, there was some objection to a new form of training (Aldridge, 1999). *'The fear was that the proposed new training would be too rigid, too functionalist, and too narrow in its focus to produce critical thinkers who would engage in thoughtful and anti-oppressive probation practice'* (Gregory, 2007:53). However, under a New Labour government who had adopted much of the Conservatives' law and order rhetoric, and who were intending to move probation away from social work into a modernisation and 'joined-up-government' through the implementation of National Probation Service (Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000), the latter was preserved and a new qualification delivered through Higher Education was implemented.

DIPLOMA IN PROBATION STUDIES (1998 – 2010)

The new qualification, a Diploma in Probation Studies, (DipPS) was comprised of an undergraduate degree in community justice and a level 4 National Vocational Qualification in Community Justice (NVQ). To be licensed to practice as a Probation Officer, trainees must achieve both the degree and the NVQ. The two-year full-time training for the qualification was managed across England and Wales through nine consortia of Probation areas working with higher education institutions and NVQ assessment centres. The training programme was a mixture of academic work and experience in Probation practice that equipped the trainee with the necessary knowledge, skills, values and competences required by the degree and the NVQ that constitute the DipPS. The total programme had two main parts to it.

Phase One, which was the Foundation Practice phase, lasted for six months and was assessed via the Foundation Practice learning outcomes evidence which was compiled in a portfolio.

Phase Two contained NVQ level 4 Community Justice (Working with Offending Behaviour) and trainees obtained the underpinning knowledge for the NVQ through university modules and assignments. Monthly workshops delivered by Tutors also played a key role in the learning opportunities provided, emphasising the links between theoretical underpinning knowledge and practice. One (among 18) of the NVQ optional units was *Unit ED4 Deliver Accredited Programmes*.

The weight of the programme (see Appendix for an example) was theoretical and dominated by academic values. This might have been an appropriate vehicle for producing '*critical thinkers*'. A substantial element of the academic view is given by a commitment to Psychology and behavioural understanding.

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The Diploma route is, however, is no longer available as it was felt that it was *'no longer fit for purpose in isolation and, critically, does not meet the training needs of Probation Service Officers (PSOs) who are an increasing proportion of the workforce and need to be competent to manage the appropriate level of risk for the work they undertake'* (National Offender Management Services, 2009:3). Practical, professional values were being asserted over academic study.

The design of the new programme began in 2007, and has been underpinned by a number of key principles which are, stated in the abstract, little different to those underpinning the Diploma – particularly in that it involves both theoretical and practice-based learning. A key difference, however, is that the starting point is practice:

- *The qualification for Probation Officers would remain at Honours Degree level*
- *The framework must provide a pathway for PSOs to progress according to their capability, career aspirations and business need*
- *There will be a minimum, accredited qualification for new PSOs*
- *The methodology must be one of combining academic and experiential learning*
- *The work based learning should be accredited through Vocational Qualification level 3 (NVQ) for PSOs and NVQ level 4 (equivalent) for POs*
- *Both vocational and academic learning must be based on a model curriculum, owned by NOMS and which would need to be regularly updated to reflect developments in research and practice.*

(National Offender Management Services, 2009)

From April 2010 the training of probation officers will be through the Probation Qualification Framework. It is now the case that the first step to becoming a probation officer is to join the service as an unqualified PSO at one of the specified entry points and follow the framework in order to gain the appropriate qualifications. Local Probation Trusts are responsible for recruitment depending upon their individual demands.

The key shift, here, is the socialisation of the probation officer into the practice culture prior to possible socialisation into theoretical (critical?) worlds. Previous and related approaches to professional training have taken account of the tension between practice and theory and their corresponding cultures. A recent reform of national police training, for example, instituted a modular system in which the police recruit moved iteratively between classroom and street, each time pre-empting premature socialisation into either, and using each setting as a place to reflect critically on the other (HMSO, 1986).

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE TUTOR

The question for this evaluation which arises out of this brief analysis is what is the appropriate preparation for a Tutor on Accredited and SaRC programmes. Training as a Probation Officer in itself prepares the individual for a role in offender management. We need not assume that the skills underpinning this role translate into the pedagogical skills required for successful delivery of a SaRC programme – even though both Tutor and Offender management roles are focused on reducing reoffending. The professional and the pedagogical are two discrete methodologies for working towards the same goal.

The approaches taken to training probation officers is focused on the professional role and not on the pedagogical role. Tutors are trained in group facilitation within the parameters of the Accredited Programmes, but not in broader, more flexible pedagogical roles of the sort that would be required to manage process-based or constructivist curriculum. In the sphere of professional action and professional development these pedagogical roles have tended to fall within the rubric of 'Reflective Practice' which is prominent in related areas of professional action including social work, policing, teaching and nursing. 'Reflective practice' is an approach which combines and does not separate knowledge and action: in particular, day-to-day practice (here, SaRC tutoring) is seen as a place where professional knowledge is generated through continuing experimentation and review by the practitioner and, sometimes, with their peers (Schon, 1987; Elliot, 1998). Interactions with offenders both through offender management and SaRC programmes would be learning encounters for the case manager/Tutor as well as for the offender, and over time knowledge and understanding of offending and reduction in offending would develop and be fed back into the reshaping of the practice.

Reflective Practice was developed by Donald Schon as a form of pragmatic rationality underpinning professional practice that was an alternative what he called 'technical rationality'. The latter is characterised by following formulas and rules with "selective inattention" paid to complexities and dilemmas that crop up – "*instrumental problem-solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory*". This characterisation would apply to CBT, as we have seen, in that it is 'manualised' – taught to a formula. It also applies, however, to a competency-based approach to professional training as enshrined in NVQs. The NVQ approach is to break down a practice into its component parts, associate practical skills and dispositions with each component, and assume that the learning of them 'reassembles' the practice. There are three key issues raised by such an approach – especially at Levels 4 and above where we are concerned with professional action:

- (i) It has proven difficult to 'componentise' (define in skills terms) those aspects of practice that make for 'quality' – e.g. independent judgement, discernment, situational understanding, self-knowledge, dealing with uncertainty;
- (ii) Competency defines a point on a continuum from 'novice' to 'expert' – i.e. it falls short of measuring 'excellence' in practice;
- (iii) Many important aspects of a practice cannot be assumed to be 'mastered' ('ticked-off') – rather, they require frequent revisiting and reflection, sometimes at levels of greater sophistication.

Reflective Practice involves reflecting on action in its moment and, particularly, confronting rather than trying to overwhelm uncertainty and context. This is done on the basis of the professional (e.g. the SaRC Tutor) accumulating a repertoire of experience at handling cases and developing the skills of situation analysis, independent judgement, discrimination, discernment and pattern-identification – but principally, understanding the relationship between context and action. Each practitioner works within what Schon has called a 'personal design world' in which challenges and problems present themselves constantly and to resolve them the practitioner needs to understand them in the context of the here and now – i.e. at this particular time with these particular people. Reviewing accumulated experience provides a personal (but shared with peers, too) evidence-base on which to make judgements about appropriate actions and interventions.

This is not to promote Reflective Practice, in itself – rather, the aim is to highlight the pedagogical challenge involved in departing from a pre-specified, formulaic methodology, and to focus on one proposition as an example.

This is an appropriate moment in this report to move to looking in some detail at the nature of that challenge. The following section presents a slice out of the evidence base developed through direct observation and interviewing of SaRCs, Tutors and Probation Service managers. It is important to reiterate at this point that we have no judgements to make of any individual whose work or thoughts are represented here and we certainly do not make any claims as to the success or otherwise of individuals or groups. What is represented here is the struggle involved with making work a system designed elsewhere and with a logic that, whatever its merits, may not reflect the particular demands of the moment being observed. Some Tutors and managers are comfortable with Accredited Programmes and/or SaRCs, others are not. There are different and sometimes competing views of their underlying purposes – especially SaRCs. We are aware of this and sensitive to its implications. What is under scrutiny here is not the individual or the group, but the curriculum.

6. SaRCs Observed

We return, in this Section, to an observation we made at the very opening of this report. Whatever theory or approach underpins an educational practice, dissolves in classroom experience. Other realities take over, personal theories and dispositions, relationships, local circumstances. There is too much contingency to allow for the pure expression of an idea. What we will see in this section are many of the issues raised earlier as they are played out in practice. In particular, we see the tension between prescribed action and Tutor independence, between a curriculum that is pre-specified and one that is responsive to need. To reiterate, we have no conception here of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ practice: only one of the struggle everyone has to make sense of highly complex challenges.

THEORIES OF CHANGE

Although Tutors and Managers accept the difficulty in making behavioural change in short courses, there is less a consensus about what the courses can actually achieve.

Some see SaRCs providing advice and information, as one Tutor did in introducing the AEP programme to her group, *‘you’re not going to change drinking habits, so do you know what I mean, we can offer you advice to choose a different spirit, reducing your drinks, drinking smaller drinks, but it’s your choice if you want to take the advice, alright.’*

Other Tutors talk about *‘raising awareness’* and for Marilyn, who designed the Conflict Resolution course, sees the SaRCs leaning towards an educational approach, although even here the dominant assumption is one of behaviour modification:

‘I expected there to be a change, you know, that there were learning points that people would have to learn. ...So you could assess what they knew at the beginning and assess what they knew at the end, and you would want to change... it was about attitudes and behaviour. ‘It’s not my fault I get angry, it’s the other people who wind me up’ now usually at the beginning they’re going to say that. My hope would be at the end that they no longer think that way.’

This also partly depends on the programme. For example, Joe sees the AEP as an information/advice course, whereas as the Conflict Resolution is more offence-based and is aimed towards behavioural change. The GOBP and the Conflict Resolution programmes seem more geared to behavioural change and have an element of CBT running through them. For example exercises such as the 'Behaviour, Thoughts, Feeling Triangle' and the 'Anger Cues and Anger Reducers' are borrowed from the accredited Anger Resolution Therapy programme. *"It's not particularly based on a theory," Marilyn explains, "although it's using parts of it."* A Tutor brings this to life to her group, *"if we can change negative thoughts into positive thoughts we're going to start feeling a bit better about stuff."*

Lynne, senior manager in Offender Management, feels the SaRCs can nip offending in the bud, *"we do the Relationship Skills for Men, and that's for men that aren't, shouldn't go on the IDAP, shouldn't go on the domestic violence programme, because it's a long, lengthy, intensive programme. But this is for people, who may be swaying towards that type of offending, but needed just a short sharp intervention."*

Yet another view is that SaRC programmes are precursors or alternatives to *"scripted"* and inflexible Accredited Programmes, a programme that can be more tailored to specific needs and circumstances: *"it's good to have something else that might be more flexible in its approach...sometimes as an alternative, sometimes as an addition."* Even here, however, there may be a mismatch between the aim and the practice. Appendix Two has an outline of a Conflict Resolution session which is, itself, highly scripted.

None of the interviews have provided a consistent theoretical basis for SaRCs although, as Marilyn said, there is theory in there, and Joe talks about having a belief in CBT and that this should be reflected in the delivery of the SaRCs. Though there are divergent views of SaRC purposes, people tend to be clear in their minds about what these purposes are. However, identifying a purpose does not constitute elaborating a theory of change that can be tested out by practice.

"My goals or aims for that programme were to equip those offenders with – um – the ability to identify what made them angry and some strategies for managing it...which is about body language, non-verbal communication and understanding of social skills and conflict resolution – and so – but it was, kind of, educational. I think that's the point I'm trying to make – basically, it was teaching them some skills and giving them some awareness. It's not particularly based on a theory, although it's using part of it."

LEARNING THEORY IN PRACTICE

Tutors and Managers describe several key elements to the learning and delivery of SaRCs:

1. Relaxed atmosphere

[Extract from evaluation fieldnotes]

"One of the Tutors went to greet them at Reception and to escort them through the three locked doors leading to the room where the session was to be held. They entered the room talking freely to each other and expressing their feelings and opinions forcefully using strong language, but they quickly settled down, were keen and happy to start work. They seemed quite relaxed and happy to be at the session and obviously knew each other and the Tutor. They also demonstrated a comfortable level of respect for the two Tutors and this was reciprocated."

Tutors try to create a relaxed atmosphere with the Offenders. They call each other by first names, the sessions are informal, and Tutors make an effort not to be too demanding. Offenders, we spoke to, picked this up, as J describes to a Tutor, *“you make us feel comfortable when we come in. It’s not like you go ‘Sit down!’”* Indeed, the Tutors seem to be trying to create a learning rather than a probation/supervision environment. Offenders are thanked for their contributions, are awarded with certificates at the end of a programme, and one Tutor does not use the word Offender, *“I call them customers to their face, and I will probably use offender when talking to colleagues.”*

The small groups seem to help create a relaxed atmosphere. Most of the sessions we observed had four in a group, and this appealed to J, *“if there was like, I dunno, even 10 people I don’t think I’d like, talk as much as I do.”* Relaxation is, in pedagogical terms, functional – it allows certain things to happen and underpins relationships between participants and Tutors, as in this observation of a role play strategy.

“During this part of the session everyone was happy to take part. They were told not always to pick the female participant to play the female roles and as soon as this was said, Participant K (the man who joked with me at the start) was always picked to be the girl. After feigning being upset that he was being picked on he was happy to ham it up. They all took the role play seriously, but with humour.”

2. Scripted Sessions and Consistency in delivery

Relaxation as a pedagogical tool does not have to mean ‘undisciplined’ and many SaRC sessions are (as we have noted) carefully scripted and pre-specified. Session Plans provide a detailed description of how each session should be delivered and each SaRC has a similar format that includes key objectives for each session, and timed exercises and tasks that take the offenders step by step through learning points to realise the objectives.

Managers and Tutors feel that it is important that there is consistency to the structure and delivery of the SaRCs. This appears important for two reasons. Firstly, to provide an equitable service for offenders. Joe feels it is important that each offender is provided with the same delivery, *‘If an offender is going on a SaRC in Trowbridge, we should know that they are getting the same level of input as an offender going on a SaRC in Swindon.’*

Secondly the exercises need to be completed in the same way, so that the techniques and methods can be learnt by the offenders. Marilyn and other Tutors describe the sessions as ‘dosage’, a pharmacological metaphor which suggests that if participants did not receive the proper amount the ‘treatment’ would not be effective.

There was a similar format to each session observed that include the role of Tutors, the layout of the rooms and the delivery of the sessions. The rooms are typically laid out with 2 Tutor chairs at the front, next to a flip chart with the name and the objectives for the session. The offenders’ chairs are set out in a slight arc facing the Tutors.

Tutors lead the groups through the scripted session plans, and at times this can be pacy, to make sure that the material is delivered within the session time, although there were examples when two sessions were delivered within one hour, rather than the usual two. The lessons start with a recap of the previous session, then explaining the objectives of the session, followed by the delivery of the session exercises. In most cases the Tutors question Offenders to check that they have learnt the key elements of the session. In the following exchange, the Tutor of a Conflict Resolution session is looking for Offenders to come up with examples of where breathing is used as an anger reducer.

The Tutor asks the group to try a breathing exercise – as with the role play, she does not push them to do this in front of the class, but they are uncomfortable at doing this again. She explains how breathing can help to reduce anger, and then moves on. There is little feedback in this session. This section seems to lose interest, but it comes alive again, as an Offender remembers his girlfriend breathing deeply to stop herself getting angry.

Offender – I've used it

Tutor – You've used it? Tell us when.

Offender – when like recently, when, cos my missus she's pregnant yeh, and like she stresses well and she's pregnant yeh and like she's on my case, and you think [he takes in a deep breath] just walk away, just walk away [as he breathes out]

Tutor – Very good. That's it!

Here we see the participant subsumed within the pedagogical order that is imposed by the programme. The problem may be the 'anger' itself, or the relationship. What we see here is the experience of the participant 'fitting into' the logic of the programme; rather than evidence of the programme finding a fit with the participant's life. What is consistent in programme terms does not necessarily mean coherent in the life of the participant. Nor does it necessarily mean coherent in terms of the Tutors delivering the programmes themselves. Here is a further example, taken from a GOB session, where we see participants inducted into the vocabulary of the behaviour modification approach:

"The Tutor asked the group to think about what should be done, to which the response included a wide range of alternatives:

- *'better drug treatment – it's much quicker now and you can access it earlier'*
- *'The only thing that's stoppe me offending is my mum, my family. It upsets her if I get into trouble and it makes me think about it.'*

One member of the group disagreed vehemently with this and stated that he hates his mum and he wouldn't stop doing something because of her. The Tutor reminded him of the effect his father has on his behaviour, however. 'Yes, I'd stop doing it because of him.' Another participant interjected by addressing the Tutor (and the group as a whole) 'it would stop you, too, if you knew his dad – he's huge!'

The Tutor reinforced this part of the discussion by telling the group that, 'this is exactly what perspective taking is all about – this is what you have been doing!' "

This represents co-option of the participants into the methodology of behaviour modification, losing the opportunity we see here to capitalise on more subtle possibilities: for example, that the intimate knowledge participants have of each other serves as a 'Constructivist' resource in terms of social or collaborative learning – in this case, by comparing family relationships and their impact on offending. In fact, in that same session the issue of parental relationships surfaced again. One participant had responded to something his friend had done by being aggressive to his mother, prompting the Tutor to ask how he would feel if his mother had been treated that way. *"I don't care about my mum – I don't get on with her. I care about my dad though."* In terms of the participant's lives and ways of thinking there is continuity here that might provide a resource for learning or exploration – certainly for exchange among participants. In terms of the session methodology that

continuity –we might label it ‘learning continuity’ - is displaced by the technical continuity given by session objectives. One example of this is that the flow of interaction across the group – from participant to participant – is interrupted by the alternative flow from participant back to Tutor. The Tutor, that is to say, is the source of authority, not facilitation.

Some Tutors, however, do not always approve of the methodology of SaRC session plans and talk of their feeling disaffected from the pedagogical logic. *“It’s not seamless like the Accredited Programmes, where you do have a process – where everything does fit into place....there’s no kind of continuity or consistency...if you’re up there delivering these programmes you’re thinking, ‘what the f--- am I doing up here?’!”* Another Tutor claimed to be *“selling something you don’t believe in”*. SaRCs do not always come out well in comparison with Accredited Programmes:

“You couldn’t possibly change Accredited to SaRCs – SaRCs are incredibly diluted programmes – you know, there’s not enough – umph in it to change someone, you know? It can give them the ideas of changing – “

3. ‘Responsivity’

SaRCs were designed to be more flexible, for example than the Accredited Programmes, providing an opportunity for Offenders to contribute their own experience. Some Tutors and Managers refer to ‘responsivity’, as a contribution the Offenders make to a session. *‘They (SaRCs) are not set in stone,’* one Tutor explains, *‘you can add bits and do your own thing. And I think that because we run the ART programmes as well, we have a full knowledge of how that’s supposed to run. So we’re quite good at picking up on things they say and running with stuff they say.’*

In practice the contribution by participants is limited by the relevance it has to the objectives and structure of the sessions. Incident logs and the drink diaries are the clearest examples of how Offenders’ make a contribution and their examples are used as material to explore alcohol consumption and reaction to potential conflict. Even here, however, it proves hard for the programme to interact directly and meaningfully with the complexity of participant experience. In this Alcohol Education session, an offender, L, is talking about how she chooses to drink on one night of the week and how bad she feels the next day:

L – I’ve got my daughter and I am under some kind of – um – plan.

V – right

L – basically, I can’t drink while she’s around, so on a Tuesday night is the only time I ain’t got her so I want to cane it that night for the whole week, basically.

V – Thank you very much for your honesty. This programme’s all about knowledge and passing on that knowledge to you. We’re not here to judge you, not here to say you should not have a drink – do you know what I mean?

L – I did think about what you’d said about, like, like about what we eat – blah blah – like even what we drink and that – and they just got to wait for it [hangover?] to pass –

The session continues discussing hang-overs with the Tutor trying to stick to the session outline.

L – I still want to feel young and get hammered. I can’t handle it. The truth.

L demonstrates what we may imagine to be considerable levels of self-discipline and capacity to sustain her relationship with her daughter under stress, a self-discipline made easier by the weekly release of ‘caneing it’ for a night. Alcohol is part of her strategy for having to confront an unpleasant

but ever-present truth. The Tutor's response following L's first invitation to engage with this is to foreclose on discussion – *'thank you...for your honesty'*. This is followed by a statement that the programme is about knowledge transfer from Tutor to offender – though what L is offering is a two-way exchange. In fact, the attempt at reassurance made by the Tutor – *'we're not here to judge you'* is, in a sense, pre-empted by L who is implicitly offering to judge herself. L goes on to show that she is engaged with the process – she reflected on what V had said previously about how to deal with the ill-effects of alcohol. Again, this is not picked up.

Offenders also present intimate examples of the complexity of their lives, but these are beyond the scope of the sessions. In most of the observations of SaRCs, Offenders have talked about their relationships with their partners, parents and children, about their drug-taking, violent incidents, employment, living conditions – contextual information about their lives. However the sessions do not appear easily to allow Tutors the scope or the resource to pursue these in depth – even where the offender is engaged with the process.

For example an offender in a Conflict Resolution session used the following anecdote to evidence his use of anger reduction. He explains that he was allowed out of jail on a tag, as long as lived at home. In the event he had an argument with his father, who threw him out of the house, and he ended up back in jail. The Tutor noted that he controlled his temper, thanked him for the example and moved on to another offender's example of anger reduction. There are also occasions where offenders present alternative theories and understanding, drawing on their own experiences, and challenging the examples of anger reducers or the usefulness in using them in spontaneous situations.

Discussion of these wider issues in a session however is limited, as Lynne explains, *'as much as I would expect some flexibility in that. I also think that by the end of that session, within time, they need to have achieved what they set out to achieve.'* This is what Joe talks of a balance, *'I think it's the balance between having that structure and being responsive to the group that you've got.'* 'Balance', however, conceals the common pedagogical challenge which is that there is a dynamic tension between 'order' and 'responsiveness', and achieving a balance inevitably involves violating one or the other. We see this in the next observation taken from a Conflict Resolution session:

Throughout the session the offenders seemed engaged and keen to contribute. It is a classroom situation (the Tutor doesn't really approve of that, as some individuals behave like they are in school, bringing in their negativity about that) and they feel like they are in a class and enjoy getting answers correct, remembering what was discussed in the previous 2 sessions. It almost feels like they are enjoying achieving in a classroom setting. The session is a Q&A-based recapitulation session – in terms of CBT, this is behavioural reinforcement. The Tutor is S.

S – can people remember the things that we talked about?

D – body language

S – yes, absolutely. And what was the point of talking about body language and an anger management programme?

D – learning to read other people's body language to see if they're angry or whatever

S – and how can that help D?

D – see how they react back to it

S – Yeh, absolutely. Because anger is very infectious isn't it? Someone else is angry it can make you angry as well, even if you weren't to start with. So if you can see that coming and something about it then you don't have to let it affect you.

There is relaxed atmosphere in the class, with jokes, all offenders making contributions and taking

the session seriously. S stops when a comment is made to respond and then moves on. The offenders remembered elements of the last session i.e. that people read 93% of body language in making communication judgements. They remembered the four communication styles. S put them on the flipchart and asked for them to define each style. She prompts answers.

D – I haven't smoked weed in a week and I can actually remember some of the stuff from last time.

[Laughter]

S – what does that tell ya?

D – don't smoke weed

[Laughter]

S – all joking aside that's quite an achievement. How did you manage that?

D – cos I've got no money

[Laughter]

S – That's what works! But it's interesting isn't it, because a lot of people who come on these groups say that they smoke cannabis because it helps them to stay calm. But actually it does have an effect on other things then doesn't it? On your memory etc. Are you feeling better for it D?

D – I'm remembering more stuff and that, but still finding it hard to control me anger without it.

The order of the session is given by the pedagogical demand for compliance. The Tutor repeats, “yes, absolutely” as a sign of closure, and the compliance-seeking question, “*anger is very infectious, isn't it?*”. There is a contrast between the style of exchange in the first set of interactions and that of the second set. In the second set the Tutor seeks to assert pedagogical control and to reassert the order of the session by turning D's revelation that he has not smoked ‘weed’ for a week into a re-enforcer – leading D to the conclusion that his memory is improved as a result. However, this is subverted by the complexity of D's responses – first, deflecting compliance with humour, and then accepting the memory point, but trumping it with his own. There is, that is to say, no simple division between ‘instructional’ and ‘process-based’ approaches to teaching. Each strives to surface, each is in contest with the other.

In the next observation we see pedagogy as a point of conflict, not transfer of knowledge or behavioural intervention. This is taken from an AEP session:

The Tutor asked the group members to tell the others what contact they had had with alcohol since the group last met – and how they had managed this. From the outset, several members again raised the point with the Tutors that they were not drinkers anyway and that they simply couldn't see the point of needing to be there, let alone in keeping and sharing a ‘Drinks Diary’ for their contact with alcohol throughout the previous week. *‘I don't need drink’*. Reluctantly however, one by one they were able to confirm the extent of their alcohol activities in general terms. A discussion was instigated by the Tutor about the effect of drink on wives and children and one of the group offered an example of how it had upset the family, especially when it resulted in aggression.

The Tutor questioned the drink dependent member, X, about how things were going with his meetings with the other agency. He responded aggressively *‘Which agency? I'm being seen by all of them Offending Manager, Probation Worker, Drink Advisor I've drunk since I was 16 on Smack from 22 but using it less now than I use to but I'm drinking a lot each day – to cope with stress, I'm going through a lot now’*.

The Tutor reassured him that he didn't need to go into his own problems if he didn't want to in front of the group. This interchange was followed by a session on alcohol and its effects. The Tutor

rehearsed a series of facts such as *'18 is the peak point for arrests for drunken behaviour'; 'People avoid areas known as drinking areas'; 'alcohol leads to violence'; 'There are 13,000 violent incidence per week around pubs in England'; '41% of all contact crime is committed by people who have been drinking'* etc.

The group grew restless and agitated as this went on, interjecting continuously and challenging many of the statistics. Eventually, X said *'We all know that alcohol fucks us up – reading that out to us is no fucking use at all.'*

The Tutor continued *'Nearly 50% of domestics*

X - *'That's a subject that really fucks me up! I'm always getting accused of domestic violence just because I'm drunk when the cops arrive..... we're not here to discuss Domestic Violence!'*

Tutor - *'How would you feel if your sister or mother were killed by a drunken driver?'*

X - *'It would be horrendous!'*

There is a contrast here between alcohol-based violence and the personal struggle with alcohol as presented in abstract terms, and as directly experienced by participants. The Tutor seeks refuge in the abstraction, but is repeatedly interrupted by the real experience which cannot easily be embraced S/he suggests that the participant *'didn't need to go into his own problems'* in the group, although X offers a lead into a reality-based discussion on at least three occasions.

NEED AND REFERRAL TO SaRC

Offenders are selected onto the programme, primarily as part of the sentence planning following an OASys assessment, and from interviews and observation, and developing programmes that address individual need is fundamental to the delivery of programmes. Lynne describes this in human rights terms, *'having made an assessment of an offender's needs, it would then be very unfair and almost immoral not to address those needs, because if you're looking at the needs of the offender and the reasons which underlie their offending behaviour, to make that assessment and then send them off, um, perhaps knowing that they've got those needs, but nobody's doing anything about them, um, you know, that's now what we're about.'*

'Need' itself is described as *'criminogenic need'*, as Simon Fairgrieve confirms, *'when we talk about need, we are talking about our assessment system, um, it's called OASys,'* and the OASys assessment translates this into a selection of prescribed social and personal factors that impact on an offender's likelihood to offend. Simon Fairgrieve conducts an analysis of all OASys assessments to produce a *'need profile'* of offenders that can be used to determine whether a new programme should be developed.

There is little questioning of OASys or of the definition of need, but it appears that need is defined more by the Offender Manager through assessment, than by the offender him or herself. As one Tutor put it, *'people are not just one thing they are a whole host of things'*, it is not clear whether the current definition of need, sufficiently captures this human complexity. And, too, need falls into a category of offence, not into the characteristics and circumstances of the individual offender. For example, an offender in an AEP session may have more in common with others in, say, a Conflict Resolution session than with others in that group. 'Type of offence' may be a dependent variable for

some cases but a mere administrative category for others. OASys as a basis for referral has variable relevance, therefore.

Offenders appear to be referred onto programmes for four main reasons:

1. As a low tier offender on a Community Order to address the key reason for the offence i.e. a violent offenders referred onto the Conflict Resolution SaRC
2. Offenders, who may be on an Accredited Programme, are referred to a SaRC to address lower level underlying need
3. Offenders, who have not attended supervision or a SaRC programme are referred onto the MEAR programme
4. Offenders, who may wait 6-12 weeks to attend an accredited programme, who would benefit from an intervention. *'Better to give somebody something than nothing,'* as Simon suggests

It is also true that whatever the formal reason for assigning an offender to a SaRC programme they have their own reasons for attending – or not attending. The offenders on Conflict Resolution programmes that we observed, all had violent offences. However not all offenders understand, why they are on a SaRC. For example an offender on an AEP programme had not had a drink for several months, and another offender describes not really being bothered why he has been referred to a SaRC, *'we have to just turn up for these things. Most of the time, I don't pay attention to the letter, I just read the time and date. As long as I'm there, I'm fine.'* Tutors are accustomed to often volatile attendance rates: for some, completing a SaRC programme – even receiving a certificate – might be the only educational accomplishment they have experienced; others will be seasoned attendees on rehabilitation programmes and will deal with attendance as a gaming strategy.

IMPACT

With the theoretical basis laced into the delivery of the SaRCs, the key question is how does this combination impact on change in offending behaviour? Staff appear cautious about this, and a Tutor's explanation, tentatively searching for a clarity of purpose, is typical of the language used to describe the course, *'I would hope that he would have a better understanding of the fact that he's got a choice, and that he's already using choices to manage his anger. That's it's not inevitable that he's going to have to break a door or head but something or someone. And it will take time for him to stop punching doors etc. But I think he will, once he makes that connection, you know, that he can do something different and some of this stuff hopefully they'll try it, you know, and it work just a little but for them. That's all you can hope really, but changing behaviour for someone who's been like that for years, is you know, not an overnight job. But this might just be the first step in that process. That's my hope, but you never know. That's the thing. It would be nice to get them come back in 5 years and say 'yeh, fine I'm transformed' [she laughs] or even 5 months.'*

Here is evidence of an approach in which the SaRC experience *inducts* an offender into a way of reflecting on their life which they can then apply at another time and in another place. SaRC is a catalyst rather than a remediation in itself, and impact is too distant (geographically and chronologically) to make meaningful calculations of attribution.

That is not to say that SaRCs do not have an impact. In the limited opportunities, we have had to talk to offenders, there are examples, where of the SaRCs paying off. At a minimal level it provides an opportunity to discuss issues, as one offender affirms, *'it gives me a like a break in the week to think about things, you know,'* even though he was sceptical about attending, *'I thought at first if I don't go I'm only going to get into trouble, but I dunno, I am learning.'* One Offender has noticed a significant change in dealing with conflict, as Marilyn hoped for in her design, [quote] and a Tutor

relates a similar example, *'I had this guy in Chippenham...if it was 10 years ago he would have been a high-risk-er...he used to love violence, he used to say, 'I love it, I love it'...By the end of the programme – 10 weeks – he's shaking my hand, he said, 'this has really helped save me,' and I thought – wow!'*

Marilyn feels that the learning in the session can 'bump start' a change of behaviour later, *'they'll learn techniques for managing anger and then they will apply it to situations in their own life.'* Tutor feels that is more complex than that and depends on the Offender, *'if you can affect somebody's thoughts and feelings, then you can change their behaviour, if they want to make changes. They have to want to change. They have to have got to a point in their life, where they're recognising that the way they behave at the moment is bringing to consequences. For some of them they love the buzz. They love nicking cars and doing all those things and while they are in that frame of mind there's absolutely no point.'*

For Offenders, it is complex as well, as one tries to explain the difficulty in using the anger reduction methodology, *'you've really got to learn it, you so it you think about it before it even gets to that stage, erm, erm, with myself that's what I gotta do, you know. That's the only way I think it will work for me, you know, Its helping at the moment, but the things I'm worried about, as I say, is that something happens, you know that wasn't expected...that's when it will be hardest for me to sort of think about, 'hold on a minute, what am I going to do about this?'* Another offender agrees, *'I wouldn't pay too much attention to what I could do to stop it really, because you wouldn't have all these options to be able to think about.'* In the extreme, one offender commented *'I love being angry and violent in the moment. But after I hate it.'*

Tutors and Managers are realistic about the limits of the SaRCs. *'If we are honest,' Joe explains, 'most of us wouldn't pick up a massive amount in six sessions. We pick up what's relevant to us, actually what hits a nerve.'* The short nature of the course can be frustrating, *'we are really only scratching the surface,'* an experienced Tutor remarks, *'and some of the programmes we run touch deep seated issues and some of the things they were talking about in there earlier are huge problems people have in their lives etc. it's very difficult to know what to do about it. They need counsellors, therapists, but we don't have access really to anybody.'*

'END-TO-END' OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

The Managers would expect there to be seamless service from supervision to SaRCs. Marilyn and other Managers explain that the Offender comes onto the SaRC as part of the sentence planning process. They often count as supervision time, and ideally, an Offender Team Manager, feels that Offender Managers should prepare Offenders for SaRCs, so that they can see for themselves that it is important for them. In one Tutor's opinion *'the personal relationship of the offender manager and offender is absolutely key and where that's lost or its not established very strongly, we don't get an awful lot of commitment on the programmes.'*

Angela explains that offenders get leaflets about what the SaRC is about before they attend, and then, *'it's down to the offender manager to get that person motivated to start the SARC and likewise the accredited programme.'*

Once on the course Lynne, for example, expects the Offender Manager to stay abreast of what the offender is doing. *'It's good practice for the Offender Manager to see them at some times throughout the programme just to see how they're doing.'* She goes on to say that, *'they don't have to come in to do some formal work, but just to, almost to try and motivate them to continue going to the programme. That is good practice and I wouldn't sit here and say it always happens. There are*

some good Offender Managers, who do do that. But that is what we would expect, some, you know, even if it's telephone contact just to say 'how are you doing? Yeh, I've heard you're doing really well. The feedback's really good' And it just motivates them to attend.'

So although no-one expects the formality and intensity of reporting from the Accredited Programmes, there is an expectation from Managers that information should flow between Tutors and Offender Managers, particularly if an Offender raises a significant issue in a SaRC group. Lynne feels, *'good practice is that if, if the, um, Tutor found out that there are issues e-mailed the Offender Manager, I would then expect the Offender Manager to invite that person in for interview... I wouldn't expect the, er, person leading the SaRC programme to forget about those issues, to run through the programme and then feed that back at the end of the session, at the end of the um full sessions.'*

She would expect this to be communicated by e-mail or by phone. In practice, this does not always appear to be the case. Tutors complained that they do not receive any background information about Offenders attending their courses, and feel limited in what they can report from the sessions. One Tutor finds this frustrating, *'there's lots of stuff in this session that I would want to put on the computer, really good stuff, you know, too and poignant things that they said, all we've got is a tiny little paragraph to physically write and then one of admin puts it on.'* The information does get on to CRAMS, but there was little evidence of direct contact between the Tutors and the Offender Managers. Joe feels this is an area of work that needs to be developed

Offenders, we spoke to, do not meet Supervisors while they are on a SaRC, and told us, *'so far they have told me that because I come here, I don't have to see a probation officer.'* At the same time they are not always aware of why they have been asked to attend, *'it's quite confusing, cos we're all here for different things, so it's not like. I don't know how to explain really. I don't think like they singled us out to come here, obviously, we've all got something in common and all, perhaps even nothing in common.'* He was told to attend the SaRC, *'all he (Offender Manager) said was that it was to address your offending behaviour, but he didn't state specifically what it was about, so, you know, walking in blind.'*

Although both Supervision and SaRCs are about addressing individual needs, it is not clear whether there is a coherence in approach between the Treatment and Offender Manager teams, and a lack of clarity how SaRCs link into the supervision programme, and Joe suggested that, *'I don't know enough about supervision to know whether they take a cognitive behavioural approach, which I imagine a lot of it is.'*

A THEORETICAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

One way of identifying educational quality of SaRC programmes and their connection to offender management/supervision strategies is to think in terms of curriculum organisation. If we take curriculum as *whatever conditions we create for personal change to take place*, we focus on those conditions – i.e. not just on content and method. Tyler (1949) in a classic work proposed three key dimensions of curriculum: *continuity, sequence and integration*:

Continuity (noticing repeated emphasis – patterns in learning)

Sequence (applying these patterns to developing understanding – i.e. patterns do not just recur, but shift to higher levels of understanding)

Integration (making sense of the 'whole' – making continuity and sequence coherent in a way that guides action – i.e. integrated into life)

Tyler's suggestion is that curriculum cannot be *made* coherent by implementing these as part of a programme plan. Rather, they have to be in the mind of the learner. Repeated patterns may be presented to the participant (e.g. anger control measures), but if they do not see that pattern for themselves and in their own way it remains incoherent. Equally, if, each time the pattern is repeated, there is no development from one to another leading to better understanding – i.e. if each repetition of a behavioural 'tip' is just that – then no generic learning takes place. And if, finally, the learner goes through a meaningful sequence of events and suggestions but cannot 'integrate' them into a unified pattern of conduct in life, then the process remains theoretical and not constructive – there will be no personal change.

One of the claims of CBT is that previous studies and experiments have norm-referenced it such that these three dimensions are verified for all contexts, in such a way that behaviour-modification programmes can *predict* what will be in the mind of the learner. However, that is a *logical* not an *empirical* claim. The empirical reality is that contexts are diverse and key behavioural variables are unpredictable (one participant loves and respects his mother; another does not). Whether behavioural patterns (count to ten, breathe deeply, make better choices) can be linked together to make integrated sense in a life still depends on these dimensions being recognised by the learner as the logical superstructure of their learning (e.g. 'ah! I see what the point is – I can do that because....!'). In SaRC programmes, the logic, the superstructure is in the session plan and the participant is required to buy into it irrespective of what may be in their own mind and experience. The example is the participant who was easily provoked to anger by trivial conduct of his partner. Anger management techniques could prevent his anger rising, but did not address the underlying condition of the relationship and his psychological disposition which made him vulnerable to such a response.

The key point here is that curriculum organisation should follow the logic and the experience of the learner, not the logic and experience of the curriculum researcher or teacher. Otherwise we merely provoke what Bruner (1966) famously talked of as 'defence':

"a strategy whose objective is avoiding or escaping from problems for which we believe there is no solution that does not violate our integrity of functioning. Integrity of functioning is some required level of self-consistency or style, a need to solve problems in a manner consistent with our most valued life enterprises."

This is why the most successful reducer of reoffending is time and maturation. As our 'most valued life enterprises' shift with age and developing relationships, offending, for many, makes less and less sense. If behaviour modification were to be successful it might be in speeding up the process of personal change and maturation – but this merely takes it out of the realm of psychology and places it in the realm of education.

7. Evaluation, its themes and next steps

There are two dimensions to this evaluation: (i) issues concerning the effectiveness of the SaRC curriculum; (ii) issues concerning the organisational and resource implications of SaRC programmes. SaRC programmes, that is to say, can be evaluated for their effectiveness as a personal change strategy for offenders to reduce re-offending, but also for their potential for making the organisation of offender management more effective – and, in the current climate, 'leaner'. This report provides a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical observation to address these two dimensions. In order to move forward, we propose a set of questions to explore with Wiltshire Probation.

Questions concern whether personal change theories underpinning Accredited and SaRC programmes are appropriate to the challenges faced by offenders – are they realistic? Feasible? Pertinent? This itself has two key aspects: do these programmes connect with the way people think and act in the world? And are they offered in such a way as to respond to and realise the rights of participants? One prominent issue concerns the autonomy of the Tutor and their responsibilities in relation to curriculum design – how much of their experience is lost in prescriptive arrangements? One way of posing these overarching questions is to say that the current arrangements are preoccupied with how the offender is positioned in respect of programmes; whereas the question of effectiveness concerns how the programmes fit into the life of the offender/citizen.

The success of SaRC and AP programmes depends on their quality. An important question for Wiltshire Probation is how to determine quality. Even if (when) robust outcome data were available this would not be a good indicator of the quality of programmes. There are too many intervening variables, as we have seen (e.g. offender ‘readiness’, ‘game-playing’, the ‘maturation’ effect, changing personal circumstances, selection bias) which prevent us from working ‘backwards’ from an outcome to assumptions of programme quality. Outcomes themselves are subject to interpretation in context (is a success rate of 57% a lot or a little under the circumstances?). Complex interventions like these require direct observation of interactions and a great deal of circumspection in selecting criteria against which to measure quality.

If we set aside outcomes for a moment and focus on the quality of programmes we can address the following questions:

- What is the theory of change underpinning Accredited Programmes? What is the theory of change underpinning SaRCs? What is the shift?
- What evidence suggests these theories of change are effective – how do we derive criteria?
- Are these theories of change transparent to offenders and what do they think of them?
- Where are individual needs/circumstances of offenders positioned in these change theories?
- What correspondence is there between curriculum and pedagogy in SaRC programmes, on the one hand, and the change theory underpinning these programmes – i.e. do Tutors do what they are expected to do?
- What is the appropriate pedagogical knowledge required for successful offending reduction – knowledge of psychological/behaviour change theory? Knowledge of offender lives? Knowledge of classroom/pedagogical action? Knowledge of curriculum development?
- What role should tutors play in the design and content of programmes? How independent should they be?
- Do SaRC sessions reduce re-offending – or are these intended to ‘bump-start’ processes in the offender which take effect in the context of their daily life – i.e. is impact on re-offending designed to be direct or indirect?
- Is there variation of quality between SaRC programmes?
- How do SaRCs fit into an ‘end-to-end’ strategy for case management within a sentence?
- How are elements of the overall strategy for reduction of reoffending outsourced while retaining integrity of the overarching theory of change?
- What training is appropriate for tutors and what training roles are needed?

As a next step we propose to facilitate a workshop with Wiltshire Probation to critically review this report and these closing themes. That workshop would identify key issues and questions for the final phase of the evaluation.

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APPENDIX ONE

Level 4 NVQ in Community Justice: Work with Offending Behaviour

Qualification structure

Learners must choose all three mandatory units in Group 1, plus one unit from Group A, plus eight units from Group B (total 12 units)

New No.	Unit Title
AA1	Promote equality and value diversity
EA2	Process information relating to individuals offending behaviour
GB3	Enable individuals to understand and address their difficulties
Optional – Group A	
AF2	Protect yourself from the risk of violence at work
GC7*	Contribute to the prevention and management of abusive and aggressive behaviour
Optional – Group B	
EA3	Assess individuals offending behaviour and prepare reports
EB2	Plan, supervise, enforce and review sentences in the community
GC3	Assess and manage high risk of harm
EC7	Reinforce positive behavioural goals during relationships with individuals
ED4	Deliver Accredited Programmes
ED1	Plan, monitor and review, integrated packages of interventions and support to address individuals offending behaviour
GC2	Contribute to the protection of children from abuse
DA1	Provide and obtain information at courts and formal hearings
DA2	Represent the agency in courts and formal hearings
AB1	Communicate effectively with people
AC1	Contribute to the quality of team working
AD1	Develop and sustain effective working with staff in other agencies
AE1	Maintain and develop your own knowledge, skills and competence
AF1	Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety
AB2	Support individuals to communicate using interpreting and translation services
AF4	Conduct an assessment of risk in the workplace
GE1	Recognise indications of substance misuse and refer individuals to specialists
GE2	Assess and act upon immediate risk of danger to substance users

APPENDIX TWO

Conflict resolution session

Conflict Resolution: Session 10

Review Negotiation Skills

5 minutes

Ask the group to define the main principles of negotiation and what communication style needs to be used

Completing the Anger Control Sequence

20 minutes

Group leader uses the 'anger control sequence cards' to review the chain and show where social skills fit in. The six cards contain all the words used in the chain.

TRIGGERS	CUES	REMINDERS	ANGER REDUCERS 1,2,3 (anger reducer 4)
THINKING AHEAD (anger reducer 5)			SELF-EVALUATION

- Group leader holds the cards face down in their hand and asks participants to choose a card. (if there are more than 6 people put some into pairs)
- Ask each person to define the words on their card with examples. Make sure they give enough detail and ask prompt question to extract the information if necessary. E.g. what are the two types of triggers? Name the different sorts of consequences.
- When agreement is reached on the definitions, ask for volunteers to place their cards on a table or the floor in the position they think the word on their card falls in the anger control sequence. Encourage the whole group to be involved in the decision and try to end up with a consensus of the correct order.
- If the chain is not correctly laid out, point out why:

E.g. Reminders can't come before cues because at that stage you are not aware you are becoming angry

- Group leader holds up a card saying social skills and asks for a volunteer to place it where they think it belongs in the chain. Once again encourage group involvement and consensus.
- If placed incorrectly, explain why it is wrong (if placed correctly, ask why it should be there)

E.g. it can't come straight after cues because you are still suffering the physical affects of anger and would not be calm enough to perform the skill effectively.

10.2

** Reinforce the idea that the use of anger control techniques plus social skills makes participants much more likely to deal with a conflict successfully, without using aggressive behaviour.*

Modelling and Incident logs:

20 minutes

- Group leader models the sequence demonstrating the use of a social skill

External trigger – a friend has had a go at me for scratching their car when I had borrowed it for the day. I don't know anything about it.

Internal trigger – I don't deserve this, it's not fair

Cues – pounding heart, breathless, hot

Reminders – keep calm, there might be a mistake

Anger reducers – deep breathing, if I lose the rag, then I might say something I regret and I want to stay friends

Social Skill- 'Dealing with Conflict'– (show steps on OHP)

Self-evaluation – I really kept control/ I thought about the consequences before I spoke

- Group members take it in turns to describe the incident from their Log by walking along the stages; identifying all parts of the anger control sequence and what (if any) social skill was used. If no skill was used or it went wrong ask how the situation could have been handled differently.

Summary:

5 minutes

Ask for feedback on what offenders have learnt in the session. Make sure you cover the following learning points:

- a. Where Social skills fits into the anger control sequence
- b. How using the skills helps to resolve conflicts
- c. Why this is helpful in anger control

Conclusion

10 minutes

Group members fill in evaluation forms

Hand out completion certificates

APPENDIX THREE

Some evaluation questions used to guide the SaRC and AP observations

1. Is this a content-driven curriculum – or a process curriculum? Does it work through instruction/transmission or through reflection/deliberation? We will be able to see this in the session observations:

- Who determines the content – Tutor or participant (i.e. bringing their experience to bear – is it ‘provision-based’ or ‘needs-based’)?
- Does pedagogy open up or close down?
- What is the balance between instruction and discussion?
- Whose vocabulary structures conversation – Tutor (materials) or participant – i.e. the balance?
- What happens to contributions/suggestions/challenges from participants?

2. How does the curriculum relate to the participant and their life context?

- As an individual with individual needs? Or as a member of a group displaying group characteristics – or defined by the nature of their offence? (i.e. does CBT try to predict certain offender characteristics or does it merely provide the Tutor with procedural tools for them to explore unique characteristics in offenders?)
- Is learning expected to take place at the session – or is the session designed to stimulate learning in other life contexts (i.e. SaRC sessions may be shorter than Accredited Programmes but they may be extended by learning taking place elsewhere)?
- What use is made of Incident Logs – do they link SaRCs with life beyond? Do they become integrated into curriculum content?

3. What are the pedagogical skills and preferences of the Tutors?

- Are they skilled at handling content?
- Do they focus on procedures (i.e. content is less important than the quality of discussion and reflection)?
- Are they confident?
- Do they maintain the discipline of their chosen approach (e.g. ‘facilitation’ requires a sustained suspension of authority – do they manage this?)