

Internal Memorandum to

CSLT

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| Date: | 15 September 2021 | | | | |
| Title: | Dyslexia Screening Update | | | | |
| Author: | Mereanna Ormond & Belinda Dawson | | | | |
| Group/Service: | Education Programmes, Integrated Practice | | | | |
| Noting | X | Approval | | Endorsement | Discussion |

| Author Sign-off: | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Name | Mereanna Ormond | Title | Senior Adviser Education Programmes |
| | Belinda Dawson | | Principal Adviser Education Programmes |
| Signature | | Date | 15/09/21 |

| Sponsoring GM Sign-off: | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|------------------------|
| Name | Sarah Symonds | Title | GM Integrated Practice |
| Signature |  | Date | 15/9/2021 |

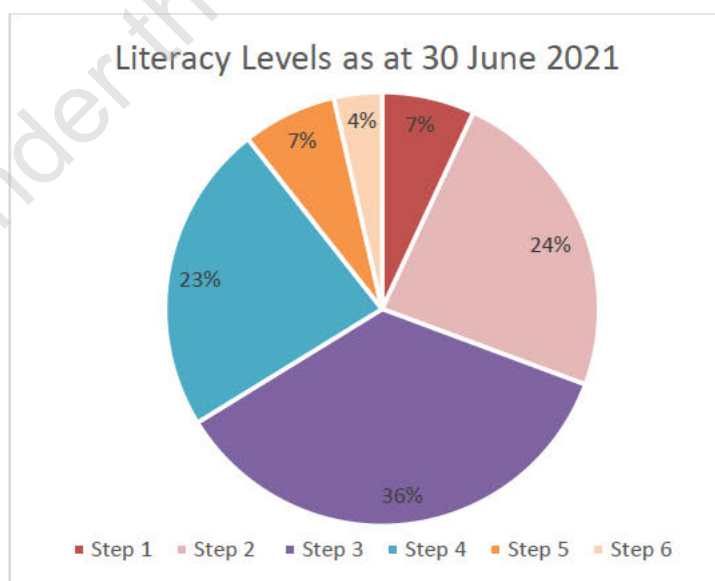
| Recommendations: | |
|---|-----------------|
| It is recommended that the CSLT | |
| a) Note the progress of the Dyslexia screening programme | Yes / No |

PURPOSE

1. This memorandum provides an update on the dyslexia screening programme conducted by the Education Programmes team.

BACKGROUND TO THE DYSPLEXIA SCREENING PROGRAMME

2. Dyslexia is a common type of neurodiversity that makes reading and writing a challenge for learners. Dyslexia is not an indicator of intellectual disability but rather a different way the brain processes information. Individuals with dyslexia have brains that process auditory and/or visual information differently from those with neurotypical brains.
3. Dyslexia affects approximately 10% of the general population across all languages, cultures and ethnicities, and up to 30-50% of people in the prison population worldwide.
4. Dyslexia is linked to poor educational achievement, low self-esteem and feelings of frustration.
 - Dyslexic people are five times more likely to be unemployed than those without dyslexia¹
 - 35% of dyslexic people leave school early²
5. Education Tutors on sites conduct Learning Pathway conversations with the people in our care early into their stay with us. Many of these learners self report as having left school at an early age, or not being able to engage successfully at school.
6. As part of the Learning Pathway conversations, Education Tutors conduct literacy and numeracy skills assessments using the Literacy and Numeracy Adult Assessment Tool (LNAAT). Approximately 3500 assessments are carried out each year. At any given time approximately 30% of the prison population are assessed as having literacy at Step 1 or Step 2, a level of literacy previously known as functional illiteracy, that equates to a reading level of Year 8 or below. Another third are at Step 3, equivalent to a Year 10 reading age.



¹ http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_162169/lang--en/index.htm

² http://www.ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_162169/lang--en/index.htm

INITIAL SCREENING ROLLOUT

7. The dyslexia screening programme was a response to the suggestion that the low literacy levels and poor schooling background of many of our learners may be related to learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
8. In 2018 there was an initial screening trial (conducted by external dyslexia expert Mike Styles) in the Lower North region of 120 learners who were step 3 or below on the LNAAT tool. This screening showed that 60% of those screened showed indications of dyslexia.
9. As a result of this initial trial, CSLT approved the development and rollout of an estate wide dyslexia screening programme. This would be administered as part of the quality learning pathway conversation that Education Tutors have with people shortly after entering our care.
10. During the learning pathway conversation, the Education Tutor conducts a pre-screening checklist with the learner, which triages those learners that would benefit from a full dyslexia screening. At the same time, learners are also screened for Irlen's syndrome (a visual stress syndrome that makes reading difficult), and where appropriate, learners are issued an Irlen's overlay.
11. To conduct the screenings, Ara Poutama purchased Lucid LADS Plus software (licensed from September 2019 to 30 September 2022), which is a screening tool suitable for adults. One laptop was purchased per prison site to contain the screening software. The total cost to Ara Poutama was approximately S 9(2)(b) .
12. Of note, the programme is to screen for the possibility of dyslexia, rather than to diagnose, as diagnosis requires the administering person to have a particular qualification that our staff do not have, similar to the qualifications that clinical psychologists require to administer their diagnostic tools. Therefore the tool provides a probability that someone is likely to be dyslexic, rather than a definitive diagnostic result.
13. An external dyslexia expert (Sarah Sharpe) was engaged to help produce resources and training material for staff.
14. New sections were developed in IOMS to record referrals for dyslexia screening, and the results of dyslexia and Irlens screenings.
15. The Education programmes team created guidelines and resources for staff, the people in our care, and their whānau, to support awareness and understanding of the dyslexia screening and its implications for the people in our care.
16. Training to all sites was initiated in March 2020, shortly after the IOMS panels were completed. The Education programmes team, alongside the external expert, delivered training to selected education tutors from each prison site on when to screen for dyslexia, how to screen, how to record the data, and how to work with learners who may be dyslexic.
17. The Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 impacted the training rollout. Only half of the estate was trained prior to the initial lockdown occurring. Once lockdown was

lifted, the remaining sites were trained. Due to alert level restrictions, some of this training occurred virtually rather than in person, which has potentially had an impact on the confidence of staff in those sites to conduct the screening process.

18. ASCF was also provided the training material and information about the screening programme, so that they could carry out something similar in their site, and they would also have an understanding of transferring prisoners who may have a dyslexia result recorded in IOMS.

UPTAKE OF THE SCREENING PROCESS

19. As the assessment is needs based, no targets were set for sites in terms of numbers of screenings required to be conducted.
20. There has been a mixed level of uptake on sites, with some sites not using the screening tool and process, for example in cases where staff turnover has left the site without a fully trained education tutor capable of carrying out the screening.
21. In the Northern region, time constraints by Education tutors have led the regional Practice Manager Education and Training to agree to a modified process, where the pre-screening checklist is completed, but rather than proceed to actual screening, all those who would be eligible for a screening are treated as if they may be dyslexic and receive educational interventions (e.g. printed materials following dyslexic guidelines) accordingly.
22. In March 2021, the reporting team finished development of a Cobra dashboard (2.41 Education>Learning Differences), enabling the education team to view the screening process information entered into Refer Online and IOMS.
23. As at 15 September 2021, there are 500 referrals for dyslexia screening recorded from Refer Online, 209 dyslexia screenings recorded in IOMS (with 65% showing as moderate to high probability of dyslexic), and 473 Irlens screenings have been carried out, with 59% of these resulting in a learner needing an Irlens overlay to read.

REVIEW OF THE PROCESS WITH SITES

24. From March to May 2021, the prison sites were contacted by the Education programmes team to review the dyslexia screening process, to identify any site issues, and any further support needed with the screening process.
25. The review identified a need for some policy and process reminders, so an updated version of the administration guide was sent out to sites highlighting key practice areas to focus on, and including FAQs.
26. Many sites commented that the screening process (which takes two sessions of 1-1.5 hours) was quite time consuming and hard to fit in around already existing workload. Sites have been advised that for additional resourcing there needs to be an identified need, for example there are more people being referred for screening than the site has time and resourcing to screen.

27. Screening for maximum security prisoners using non-contact booths was identified as simply not viable because the prisoners are not able to use the computer through the booth screen, therefore maximum security prisoners are not being screened.

28. 9(2)(g)(i)

NEXT STEPS

29. **Online Training Modules for Staff.** The Education Programmes team is actively planning with the Learning and Development team to create three online training modules for staff to understand what dyslexia is and how we can support learners with dyslexia. We are yet to confirm the date of completion for these modules:
- a. **An awareness raising module for all staff** to be included in staff induction. This module covers learning differences such as dyslexia, the impacts of learning differences on a person's life, and how staff can be aware of and support people with learning differences.
 - b. **A training module for new Education Tutors** that details how to administer the dyslexia screening process, including how to conduct the conversations with the learner, how to administer the software, and data entry protocols. This will supplement the existing administration guide by providing role-play videos, and opportunities to discuss best practice.
 - c. **An online resource for staff (including Educators, Case Managers and Programme Facilitators)** that provides strategies and tools for working with dyslexic learners. This will expand the current Educators Guide by making use of the wide variety of online videos and websites designed to help neurodiverse learners.
30. **Screening Tool update.** The current screening software allows us to run an offline assessment, however the software license will expire in September 2022. We are currently considering options for dyslexia screening in future. The full range of options are yet to be explored, but could include (a) moving to an online screening tool, (b) continuing the pre-screening checklist but removing full screening, (c) conducting full screening but only for a sample of the population each year.
31. **Embedding neurodiversity responsiveness into education programmes.** The majority of education programmes are delivered by external providers. Our contracts with these providers are being updated to include clauses requiring their education provision to be responsive to neurodiverse learners. In 2022, we will be procuring for provision of new literacy and numeracy support services for learners and responsiveness to neurodiversity will be embedded as a procurement requirement.