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ARA POUTAMA AOTEAROA

Contact details

Practice: The New Zealand Corrections Journal
Department of Corrections / Ara Poutama Aotearoa
Private Box 1206, Wellington, New Zealand

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Editorial

Welcome to our issue on collaboration and partnerships

The Government's Better Public Services targets require government agencies to collaborate better than they have in the past in order to meet the needs of the citizen. To support this collaboration, the State Services Commission has made achieving a 'collective impact' one of its three key strategic portfolios.

This edition of the Practice Journal celebrates examples of the type of collaboration that the Government is pursuing. The articles reflect some of the many levels at which collaboration can occur. They highlight that the challenge is not in bringing different people together around a shared purpose; the challenge lies in getting them to operate effectively when they do, without creating dependency. As Charles Darwin put it, "it is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed".

This edition opens with an article on the collaboration taking place at the front-line in prisons that is critical in striking the balance between maintaining public safety and supporting rehabilitation. Tangihaere Walker's article on the work to achieve more joined-up health services, as well as the Youth Crime Action Plan and Gang Strategy articles, emphasise how shared strategic priorities across Government agencies have helped to turn good intentions into action. To collaborate and build an effective partnership, all sides need a stake, not just good will.

A key aspect of collaboration that comes through in several of the articles is the importance of giving people a voice. The Practice Note on Road Safety from one of our Gold Make a Difference Award winners, shows how collaboration can build from the ground up with multiple stakeholders, so long as everyone understands the expectations of the endeavour. Similarly, the article on the Public Private Partnership with SecureFuture reveals how that 'voice' has been built into the contract: the contract sets out the what, not the how. The review of the Department's new Out of Gate service highlights the potential for providers to evolve the extent of their collaboration over time, as trust grows with increased understanding.

The Frontline Flagships article builds on the theme of collective impact. It ends with an outline of the five key conditions of collective success and a toolkit to support collaboration. Professor Chris Marshall discusses the unique arrangement that has seen several government agencies, along with a private charitable trust, fund a dedicated senior academic post in restorative justice.

The edition ends with an intriguing article written by Marcus Smith on the 'nudge' phenomenon, arguing that we should develop our approach by collaborating with those in other countries who are already experimenting.

All the articles in this edition reinforce the notion that, "the secret is to gang up on the problem, rather than each other" (Thomas Stallkamp). To frame the challenge of collaboration according to the nudge principles: almost everyone is doing it – why not you?

Ben Clark

Assistant General Manager Programme & Implementation, Department of Corrections



Custodial / case management practice collaboration in a custodial environment

Sarah Symonds

Director Case Management, Department of Corrections

Neil Beales

Chief Custodial Officer, Department of Corrections

Author biographies:

Sarah Symonds started with the Department of Corrections in 2007 with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Psychology. Sarah began her career with the Department as a probation officer and then progressed through the roles of senior probation officer, practice leader, and senior practice adviser in the chief probation officer's team before taking on the Director Case Management role in 2013.

Neil Beales is the Chief Custodial Officer (CCO) at the Department of Corrections. He joined the English & Welsh Prison Service 23 years ago starting as an officer and then progressing up through the ranks to operational manager and deputy governor. Neil moved to New Zealand in 2009 where he took up the role of prison manager of Auckland Prison, a position he held until November 2012 at which time he accepted the role of CCO.

The Department of Corrections' goal is to reduce re-offending by 25 percent by 2017 and our vision is to create lasting change by breaking the cycle of re-offending. This article outlines the broad concepts of what 'practice' looks like in a custodial environment by discussing custodial and case management practice and how the practices of the two staff groupings are, and have to be, intertwined through collaboration. By collaborating in practice, both custodial and case management staff play an integral role in enabling the Department to reach the goal and bring the vision to fruition.

Custodial practice

Core principles underpinning custodial practice can be stated as broad concepts such as; *prisoners have the right to be protected from violence and abuse, and prisoners should be placed in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their risk, need and security classification*. Specific approaches and techniques may also be described within a practice framework, including evidence-based approaches and/or recognised effective or best practice. This could even extend to simple expectations, for example Right Track¹ meetings should include staff from all disciplines within the custodial setting and accurate records of agreed decisions and actions must be kept.

There are also legislative obligations and requirements underpinning custodial practice such as the Corrections Regulations 2005 and the Corrections Act 2004.

¹ Right Track: an active management approach to daily interactions with offenders. Right Track supports staff to take the right action with offenders at the right time.

Additionally, staff have to be cognisant of other legislative or regulatory requirements such as (but not limited to):

- Criminal Procedures (Mentally Impaired Persons) Act 2003
- Immigration Act 1987
- Parole Act 2002
- Parole Regulations 2002
- Privacy Act 1993
- Sentencing Act 2002
- Sentencing Regulations 2002.

Custodial practice therefore could be described as the lawful, decent, humane and appropriate application of the law to ensure the safety of the public is paramount, and the provision of the best rehabilitative and re-integrative opportunities for offenders under our care.

Case management practice

Case management practice is underpinned by evidence, predominantly the Psychology of Criminal Conduct (Andrews and Bonta, 2010). The Psychology of Criminal Conduct is not based on the sole work of one person but rather it is a collection of evidence of what works with offenders. The Psychology of Criminal Conduct sets out the Risk, Need, Responsivity principles.

It is accepted across many different jurisdictions that evidence based practice is best practice. Research tells us that there are a number of dynamic factors which have strong empirical links to offending and re-offending. It is therefore an important aspect of case management practice to accurately identify which of

the number of dynamic factors pertain to the particular individual you are working with and have a strategy in place to manage / address the dynamic risk factors and build / enhance the protective factors.

The dynamic risk assessment tool used by case management staff is the Structured Assessment Case Management 21 item (SDAC-21) (Serrin and Wilson, 2012). This tool assesses the dynamic risk factors that are known to contribute to offending. SDAC-21 also assesses the protective factors which have been empirically linked to desistance from offending. The SDAC-21 assessment tool provides valuable information to aid in the professional decision-making of case management staff with regards to the appropriate interventions and the sequencing of the interventions. This information is contained within the individual's offender plan.

The risk assessment tool(s) used by custodial staff will vary according to the situation or factors being assessed; mostly these will relate to the operational environment. For example the Security Classification process assesses internal and external risks and will determine under what security conditions a prisoner will be held, and the New Arrival Risk Assessment will help staff identify whether a prisoner may be at risk of self-harm.

The value of the information obtained from a risk assessment can be linked to the accuracy of the information used to form the risk assessment. It is understood that self report from the prisoner should always be backed by other evidence, such as other Corrections employees' observations of the prisoner. There are also a number of other sources of information that should be included when undertaking a risk assessment of a prisoner, such as, previous Corrections records on the prisoner, information obtained from whānau / friends, and the Police Summary of Facts.

Collaboration in custody

'Collaboration' is not a word one automatically associates with prisons, which have traditionally been viewed as the sole domain of discipline and security focused prison officers, and managers whose word is law. The reality (as for many prison-based issues) is very different.

In a custodial setting the concept of a multi-disciplinary approach to achieve our desired outcomes has, for a long time, been accepted as best practice. It is the modern, pragmatic response to a prisoner population with ever-changing and complex needs.

We are witnessing an increasing appreciation of the benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach, and as we make good progress towards our target of reducing re-offending by 25 percent by 2017, we will need to continue to work ever more closely together to achieve this goal.

Collaboration in a custodial setting does not, however, come without its challenges as anyone who works in a custodial environment will attest. There is, always has been and always will be a fundamental tension between security and rehabilitation. This occurs in every custodial environment and is for the most part managed appropriately and considered part of the day-to-day business. This tension does not necessarily have to have a negative impact and is generally accepted as part of the complex operational challenge of trying to safely and securely manage the rehabilitative needs of the prisoner and the internal and external risks they present. Indeed it is widely accepted that prisons where prisoners are constructively engaged in employment, activities, interventions or programmes will see a corresponding compliance in security and good order. The prisons that are able to demonstrate this to best effect are those where a large effort and emphasis is placed on the value of good collaboration and a multi-disciplinary approach.

The balance between maintaining safety, security, order and control (all of which seem synonymous, but in fact must be addressed individually) as the bottom line, whilst striving to achieve the top line of rehabilitation and reducing re-offending upon release, is the reality and the ever-present challenge. This requires staff to draw on professional practice and is an area that requires further articulation in both the custodial and case management space.

Practice can be defined as the actual application of an idea or method. We can add to this definition that practice is also the usual, habitual or expected way of doing something. For our purposes it can be defined as the values, principles, relationships, approaches and techniques our staff use everyday in their work. It is important, therefore, that the practice of our custodial and case management staff is governed by core principles which enable staff and prisoners to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and reintegration within a safe, secure and humane environment.

Collaboration in practice

It is obvious that custodial and case management staff possess a large amount of information on prisoners. Many prisoners have previously been subject to a community-based sentence, if not a custodial sentence, and this itself provides a wealth of knowledge. It is not only common sense, therefore, to ensure this information is shared with those who need it, when they need it; it is a moral obligation.

In the joint practice sphere of custodial and case management, information sharing should always go both ways. Custodial staff have a lot of information that is gained dynamically through daily interactions and observing the behaviour of the prisoners, for example, who interacts with who and how they interact. Custodial

staff also overhear many topics of conversation, who is making phone calls, who is receiving visits, etc. This type of information is invaluable and should always be sought and included in the case management dynamic risk assessment. The risk scenarios created using SDAC-21 provide valuable insight into the management of the prisoner on the unit as well. As the SDAC-21 feeds directly into the creation of the offender plan it is also invaluable to share this information with the custodial staff interacting with the prisoner. There are many opportunities to share this information, some within a formal structure such as a specific group or team meeting or by ensuring that offender plans are available for access by those that need to see them. For other routine information sharing, simply by ensuring relevant information is recorded in existing systems provides staff the opportunity to access it.

It is important that custodial staff, in particular the prisoner's case officer, are fully aware of what factors have been assessed as directly contributing to the prisoner's offending and also what protective factors can be enhanced or need to be built up. Having this information also enables the case officer, and unit staff, to understand why certain interventions have been identified and scheduled in the prisoner's offender plan and enables them to help motivate the prisoner to attend and complete the interventions.

It is imperative that information sharing also happens with the assessments done by custodial staff. The reasons why someone has a certain security classification or has been over-ridden from one classification to another can give case management staff more information for their own risk assessment, but can also provide a greater understanding of some prisoners. Information about recent incidents or news that a prisoner has received should also be shared.

Good communication and a collaborative approach is essential to support staff safety. By working together we reduce the attempts by some prisoners to manipulate and divide staff. Often prisoners will identify weaknesses in teams and try and split staff by playing off one staff member against another. This can be a very destructive and dangerous tactic if successful and inevitably results in important information not being shared, a wide range of risks and issues going unchecked, and safety and security being undermined.

Release to Work applications are another good example of where information shared between custodial and case management is key to ensuring that risks to the public are mitigated and the right decision is made when considering releasing a prisoner.

This brings us back to the tension mentioned in the third paragraph. This can and does occur in the working relationships between custodial and case management staff. But only by working together, as one team, is this

tension effectively managed. Working together requires everyone to understand the others' perspectives and underlying drive for the work they do. Understanding others' perspectives requires good communication, transparency and a shared sense of purpose.

A good vehicle for this is Right Track meetings. The information about individual prisoners that both custodial and case management staff bring to Right Track meetings is essential to everyone being on the 'same page'. Only once all the information about the prisoner is shared can staff effectively maintain the balance between rehabilitation and safety and security.

A recent example of a Right Track meeting at Rimutaka Prison that was observed by one of the authors demonstrated just how valuable collaboration had been in respect of one particular prisoner. This prisoner had, for many years, been problematic and very challenging. However, since being inducted into a new unit where Right Track was embraced by all staff and a true multi-disciplinary approach was the norm, he had made huge progress in his behaviour and his attitude towards his offending. He had even rejected gang pressure and engaged in his work with vigour.

The Right Track meeting included staff from custody, case management, health, and offender employment and everybody had helpful contributions to make. Deep insights into the prisoner's concerns, hopes and fears were explored and clear plans were made about what next steps would be taken and what action was appropriate if he began to regress for any reason.

What was clearly evident to the observer was how comfortable the staff were in engaging with each other and even challenging each others' views and suggestions. The staff knew their prisoner and were aware of the issues without necessarily resorting to files – evidence of good custodial and case management practice.

Collaboration in a custodial setting is essential. It is only through a culture that embraces a collegiate approach, such as the example above, that we will reap the rewards and ensure that we meet our vision and goal as an organisation, keep each other safe and provide the best opportunities for offenders to address their offending.

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Collaborating at the frontline – the Frontline Flagships Programme

Karin Schofield

Chief Adviser, Ministry of Justice

Author biography:

Karin Schofield is Sector Group's Frontline Chief Adviser. She has 16 years' experience supporting the improvement of justice and social outcomes in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

Executive summary

The Frontline Flagships Programme supports justice sector managers to collaborate to improve the justice system and reduce crime. The programme was first implemented in the Hutt Valley, and is now being trialled in three further locations with relatively high levels of crime – Papakura, Hamilton City and the East Coast of the North Island. Justice sector area managers in these four Flagship areas are meeting regularly to collectively develop and deliver a programme of initiatives to tackle crime in their community and to improve local justice services.

The programme is demonstrating the value of justice sector agencies working together to deliver a collective impact for their shared community. The programme is also having a positive impact on day-to-day operational activities as a result of the better connections and increased trust between local area managers.

Through the development and implementation of the programme it has become apparent that certain conditions need to be in place to achieve 'collective impact' – a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, mutually reinforcing activities and backbone support – this has been supported by wider international evidence (Kania and Kramer, 2011). Further, a clear mandate from justice sector agency leaders, good problem definition, connectivity with agency national offices in Wellington, and effective and active Flagship chairs have been important to the success of the Flagship projects.

Introduction

The Government has set the justice sector ambitious 'Better Public Services' targets¹ to reduce crime and re-offending by 2017, as well as mandating more collective action to deliver results. Increased collaboration at a national level between the Department of Corrections, the Ministry of Justice and NZ Police has led to excellent progress against these targets, and has highlighted the mutual benefits

to agencies of working together to address crime and support victims.

The justice sector Leadership Board², wishing to extend collaborative working and foster innovation at the frontline, established the Frontline Flagships Programme. They have mandated probation district managers, Corrections lead service managers, Police area commanders and Ministry of Justice service delivery managers in selected local areas, to work together to achieve a collective impact on their local community and justice system.

The first Flagship project was established in 2012 in the Hutt Valley (the Hutt Valley Innovation Project). Strong collaborative relationships were established amongst frontline managers who collectively delivered ten initiatives to improve service delivery, enhance support for victims and reduce crime in the Hutt Valley. Following the success of the Hutt Valley Flagship, the justice sector Leadership Board endorsed the Flagship Programme in three new areas: Papakura, Hamilton and the East Coast of the North Island. These three areas were selected because they have relatively high crime rates and similar agency boundaries.

Each Flagship team was asked to develop a work programme that would make a difference to local services or their community, and help the justice sector achieve its Better Public Services targets. A project manager, based in the Ministry of Justice's Sector Group, was also appointed to support the project teams. Each Flagship team agreed their approach to implementing the programme. The project teams all agreed to meet regularly (initially fortnightly) and develop a work programme of seven to ten initiatives.

Each Flagship area was established with support from the Ministry of Justice's Sector Group for six to nine months, after which the Flagships were expected to continue with less involvement and support from Sector Group.

Whilst the programme focuses on the frontline area, with managers from the three justice sector agencies

working collectively, the Flagship project teams have identified opportunities to invite staff from other organisations to join their teams, including Ministry of Education, regional transport agencies and the local councils.

The Flagship model is still being tested, with only the Hutt Valley Flagship completed. This paper focuses on the value of collaborating with sector colleagues at the frontline and includes some example initiatives being tested by the Flagships. It also reflects on the lessons emerging and factors critical to achieving collective impact. At the end of the article we provide details of resources that can support collaboration amongst sector colleagues outside of the Flagship areas.

The value of collaborating

The Frontline Flagships Programme reflects the justice sector's shared goals, and that at the frontline we are working with the same communities and often the same people. It also recognises that the criminal justice system operates as a 'pipeline'. The actions and decisions made by one agency can often impact on other agencies.

The Frontline Flagships Programme requires the development of collaborative relationships at the frontline to establish a joint approach to achieving the justice sector's goals at a local level. A key feature is that frontline managers are asked to collectively identify and deliver initiatives that will make a difference to their local community. This collective focus on developing and delivering a joint work programme has ensured the Flagships did not just become another 'talking-shop'.

The requirement to identify initiatives to deliver collectively has required frontline managers to share their professional experiences and challenges with their sector colleagues, as well as the challenges and opportunities they see for their communities. Sharing different operational perspectives has enabled the creation of a useful 'whole of system picture', from which the frontline managers can collectively identify the priority areas to focus on.

Creating a 'whole of system picture' has given frontline managers greater visibility of the criminal justice pipeline and improved their understanding of their colleagues' respective roles, challenges and priorities. This has enabled frontline managers to identify ways their staff can perform their roles that have positive impacts on their sector colleagues.

The programme has also increased trust amongst frontline managers. Managers were already aware of their sector colleagues and had transactional relationships with them. However the programme has strengthened these relationships, with managers

reporting that they are more likely to pick up the telephone and resolve arising operational issues together quickly, and subsequently jointly develop agreed processes for similar future issues.

Example initiatives being tested in the Flagship areas

The Flagships are testing innovative ideas and solutions at the local level. Many of these have merit and applicability for other areas. Examples of the ideas being trialled are:

- **Scheduling gangs to appear in court on different days:** The Hutt Valley District Court staff were experiencing lots of problems with rival gangs creating tension at Court. Police, Courts and the prison agreed to plan hearings for different gangs on different days of the week. This immediately made the Court a calmer and safer place.
- **Supporting offenders to access services:** The Hamilton Flagship project is helping offenders soon to be released from prison prepare for accessing the services they will need to meet their basic needs after release, for example, arranging a bank account, obtaining a driver licence or reinstating a driver licence, or accessing a numeracy and literacy programme. In some cases this could mean helping offenders obtain photographic ID.
- **Better Public Servants:** In the East Coast Flagship area, justice sector staff are being offered opportunities to learn about sector colleagues' roles. For example, Work and Income work brokers have shadowed probation officers for a day or two, and vice versa. These shadowing opportunities enable staff to understand why the other agency does things a certain way, and builds local relationships. It is hoped that the shadowing may also enable staff to see areas where they can work together more efficiently and effectively.

Achieving collective impact

It is essential that the justice sector agencies work together to achieve their shared targets of reducing crime, youth crime, violent crime and re-offending. No single agency, however innovative, could achieve the targets on their own. Instead, the justice sector agencies recognise that they need to collaborate to improve the way the criminal justice system reduces and responds to crime.

This collective impact model, used world-wide to effect social change, is at the heart of the Frontline Flagships Programme. Kania and Kramer (2011) have identified five conditions of collective success that together produce true alignment and lead to powerful results. These are outlined below and the way in which the conditions are reflected in the Frontline Flagships Programme is described.

1. ***Common agenda: Collective impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed actions.***

The shared justice sector Better Public Services targets have created a common agenda for the Flagship project teams. The targets provide a coherent narrative for frontline staff around why they need to work together more closely. The non-justice sector organisations who have chosen to join the Flagship teams may not share responsibility for these targets, but they want similar outcomes.

The Flagship teams have further developed a common agenda by sharing the challenges in their community and the way their local criminal justice system is operating.

Once they have a shared perspective of the challenges, they can work together to develop solutions. Then they decide which initiatives take priority and deliver them collectively.

2. ***Shared measurement systems: Agreement on a common agenda also requires agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported.***

Establishing a robust system to measure the impact of the Frontline Flagships Programme has been challenging.

At a macro-level the justice sector's Better Public Services targets of reducing crime (including youth crime and violent crime) and reducing re-offending, are being used to measure the success of the Frontline Flagships Programme. Whilst the justice sector is on track to achieve its targets, the Hutt Valley, with the support of the Hutt Valley Innovation Project, has exceeded what the justice sector has achieved nationally and has already surpassed the 2017 crime rate target. While it is not possible to precisely determine the impact of the Flagship on this achievement, it is likely that collaborative leadership of frontline managers to address crime in the Hutt Valley has contributed to the falling crime rate.

At a micro-level it has been challenging to measure the success of the initiatives because they are generally small-scale and targeted to small, specific population groups. The initiatives are also very varied in approach, so it has not been possible to combine datasets to be able to detect change.

Recognising the challenges with measuring success quantitatively, and the importance of understanding the impact of the programme qualitatively, the Hutt Valley project team members were surveyed about the nature and quality of their relationships and collaboration with sector colleagues both before and after the project. It was apparent that the Hutt Valley project had delivered a positive change in the level of collaboration between the managers and their operational staff. They recognised that they have delivered worthwhile change to local services and for their local community. Managers

also reported that their closer relationships with their sector colleagues, attributed to their involvement in the Flagship, had saved significant time in the resolution of day-to-day operational issues, which has also reduced operational risk and risk to their community.

“The shared justice sector Better Public Services targets have created a common agenda for the Flagships project teams.”

3. ***Mutually reinforcing activities: Collective impact initiatives should be characterised by a diverse group of stakeholders working together, with each undertaking specific individual activities that co-ordinate with the actions of others.***

The members of the Flagship project teams used their skills, knowledge and agency perspectives to identify and deliver a programme of seven to ten initiatives. They delivered the initiatives by allocating tasks to the individuals with the requisite skills or levers to ensure success.

For a small number of initiatives, the Flagship team sought, via the project manager, the appropriate skills, knowledge and levers from other agencies (such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women's Affairs) or from within their own agencies' national offices.

4. ***Continuous communication: Collective impact initiatives are dependent on trust among stakeholders. They need to meet regularly to build experience of one another to recognise and appreciate the common motivation behind their efforts.***

The programme of initiatives developed by the Flagship projects, and the contribution of a range of individuals to delivering the programme, has necessitated regular meetings. Without the focus and recognised value of the initiatives, frontline managers would not be able to justify taking time away from their usual activities to meet with their sector colleagues so regularly.

For the first six to eight months the Flagship teams met fortnightly, which helped build momentum. When the project teams felt it was appropriate they reduced their meeting frequency to monthly. Further, because most of the initiatives required shared delivery, team members have had to communicate outside of the regular meetings.

The frontline managers report that the meetings and the focus on jointly delivered initiatives have helped them develop trusting relationships.

5. ***Backbone support: Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organisation and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative.***

The Flagship projects are supported by a project manager at the Ministry of Justice's national office in Wellington. The project managers are part of the Flagship team, and attend or join the regular Flagship meetings by telephone conference. Their role is to provide project management support and broker access to advice, expertise and data available with the justice sector agencies' national offices. The project managers also maintain connectivity between the Flagship areas and the centre by reporting progress at sector governance groups.

This 'backbone' support recognises that Flagship project work is additional to team members' responsibilities as managers of busy frontline services.

Lessons observed from the Frontline Flagships Programme

In addition to the five conditions required to achieve collective impact, there have been other lessons observed by those implementing the Frontline Flagships Programme:

1. ***A clear mandate from justice sector leaders:*** The frontline managers have found the mandate from the Leadership Board helpful in enabling them to prioritise the Frontline Flagships Programme alongside their usual business. Their senior managers recognise the importance of their contribution to the Flagship and are supporting their involvement.
2. ***Ensuring connectivity and visibility between the Flagships and the centre:*** The project managers' reports to sector governance groups have enabled ongoing visibility of the Flagship projects' activities amongst senior justice sector leaders and ministers. This visibility and support has been useful to quickly break down any barriers the Flagships have experienced. Further, knowing that the work and the success of the Flagship projects is receiving active attention from the Leadership Board and

justice sector ministers has been motivating for the frontline managers involved.

3. ***Effective and active chairs:*** The role of the Flagship chair is critical to ensuring the Flagship project meetings are focused to maintain progress. The chair needs to champion the work of the Flagship and drive progress. It is important to appoint a chair who is enthusiastic about the Programme and has the capacity to lead the Flagship project team's delivery of the Leadership Board's vision.
4. ***Problem definition:*** The Flagships have learnt the importance of defining problems carefully so the initiative developed is appropriately targeted. It is important to invest in problem definition before moving to solution finding. Flagships have been given access to data and experts that have enabled them to define the problems they have observed more clearly, often leading to different solutions to what they had previously envisaged.

Maintaining collective impact

The Hutt Valley Project closed at the end of 2013 following the completion of their programme of initiatives. Those involved acknowledged that the project led to strong relationships being established at the local management level. These relationships enabled them to work smarter: improving the speed of services/response, collective problem-solving, and sharing information and tactics. They also established new ways of delivering justice services in the Hutt Valley, including multi-agency planning for high-risk families, alternative resolution iwi panels, and a justice sector mobile office.

The project team expressed their commitment to the Flagship model and have decided to continue to meet through 2014 and develop a new programme of work to deliver collectively. They also plan to strengthen relationships with partners in the community and social sector focused on broadening the scope of collective action.

Do you want to make a collective impact?

The Leadership Board encourages all justice sector frontline managers to consider how they can collaborate with sector colleagues to deliver a collective impact in their community. Many frontline managers have attended a series of 'Collective Impact Workshops' to hear about successful collaboration in different parts of the country, and it is hoped this has inspired them to look for opportunities to work with their sector colleagues.

The Collective Impact Toolbox has been developed as a resource to support frontline managers to achieve the justice sector's Better Public Services targets.

The toolbox was developed in collaboration with the frontline through workshops and feedback sessions. The toolbox includes:

- Tools and techniques to support the frontline to work collectively
- Case studies that describe the innovative solutions the Flagship Projects have implemented to address problems in their local communities
- Templates to support frontline collaboration and development of multi-agency groups.

The Collective Impact Toolbox is available to Department of Corrections' staff on Corernet and can be requested by others by contacting the Ministry of Justice's Sector Group justiceinfo@justice.govt.nz. It includes information on stakeholder management, information sharing and project management plans. New materials for the Collective Impact Toolbox became available in November 2014.

References

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(Endnotes)

1. The Better Public Services Programme was launched by Prime Minister John Key on 15 March 2012. Ten targets were established for the Public Service to achieve better results and services. The justice sector's targets are to:
 - a. Reduce the crime rate by 15% by 2017
 - b. Reduce the violent crime rate by 20% by 2017
 - c. Reduce the youth crime rate by 5% by 2017
 - d. Reduce re-offending by 25% by 2017.
2. The justice sector Leadership Board members are the Secretary for Justice, Andrew Bridgman, Police Commissioner Mike Bush and Department of Corrections' Chief Executive, Ray Smith.



Addressing the Drivers of Crime – increasing access to alcohol and drug treatment for community offenders

Tangihaere Walker

Principal Adviser Drugs and Alcohol, Department of Corrections

Author biography:

Tangihaere has worked for the Department since November 2011 and in the social service sector his entire working life. Previous roles include working in workforce development for the addiction treatment sector, homeless services, men's stopping violence programmes and social policy research.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a major driver of crime. Two-thirds of New Zealand prisoners have substance abuse problems and over 50 percent of crime is committed by people under the influence of alcohol and other drugs (AOD).

To reduce the impact of alcohol and other drugs, a balanced continuum of services is needed to address the high volume of people with AOD problems and develop a broader focus that includes prevention and early intervention.

As part of the New Zealand Government's Drivers of Crime work programme, since 2012 \$10 million each year, taken from the alcohol excise revenue, has been used to fund a package of effective and affordable interventions that enables much better access to AOD interventions for hazardous drinkers, young people, drink drivers and offenders who have mild to moderate AOD issues.

Prior to Drivers of Crime, the majority of Ministry of Health and Corrections funded AOD services were focused on meeting the needs of people with the most severe addiction issues. The consequence of this focus was that significant numbers of people were missing out on receiving suitable interventions as their AOD issues were considered to be 'mild to moderate'. Often offenders' substance use falls into this category as they may have stopped taking substances due to being in prison or on abstinence conditions imposed by the court, but have not addressed the underlying issues that initially caused the substance use problems.

To fill this gap in interventions, a triage assessment and brief treatment model was proposed as most likely to address the needs of those currently missing out on services. The model would also minimise the risk of duplicating existing services. Overall the service model aimed to ensure:

- Brief assessments would be given to identify problematic use and recommend the most appropriate type of AOD treatment.
- Provision of a short-duration treatment programme with a strong motivational interviewing approach.
- A clear onward referral pathway to other AOD providers if further intervention support was required.

While individual agencies frequently design, purchase and implement programmes, in this instance there was a deliberate decision to maintain an interagency approach with the Ministry of Health and Corrections working in partnership. The rationale behind this collaboration was to support a single, integrated AOD sector for all those in the community (including offenders) and promote a seamless treatment pathway for clients referred from justice into health settings.

Effective working relationships are necessary to improve outcomes for clients both systems share (Johnson et al., 2003; Department of Health, 2005; Fletcher et al, 2009; VanderWaal et al, 2008;). While improving the co-ordination and collaboration between criminal justice and substance treatment systems has often been discussed, developing a nationally consistent approach has been difficult to achieve.

Being sensible isn't enough

Knowing and wanting to do the right thing is often not sufficient to take the next step into action. Research into 'helping behaviours' indicates that the situational context is at least as significant a determinant of behaviour as an individual's personality. In a study based on the parable of the Good Samaritan, Darley and Baston (1973) examined the influence of situational and personality variables on helping behaviour in an emergency situation. People going between two buildings to give a short talk on either the parable of the Good Samaritan or on a non-helping but relevant topic

encountered a shabbily dressed person slumped by the side of the road. The study found that whether or not the subject was in a hurry was the biggest determinant of whether they stopped. The topic of the short talk they were to give made no significant difference to the likelihood of their giving help.

At an organisational level, strategic priorities can have a moderating effect on behaviour, and help to turn good intention into action. The quality of collaboration around the community-based offender AOD strategy benefited from Corrections and Health having compatible strategic objectives, as well as a concrete deliverable that required both agencies' input for it to be achieved.

For Corrections the strategic objective is captured in our goal of reducing re-offending by 25 percent by 2017. The AOD triage service is expected to contribute to the target of increasing access to treatment for an additional 6,000 community offenders.

For the Ministry of Health (2012) their strategic plan for mental health and addictions aims to deliver increased access to services for adults with high-prevalence conditions, in particular those with low to moderate problematic substance use. Responsiveness of specialist addiction services to justice services is also an expected outcome.

Developing a working relationship

Inter-organisational relationships, like personal relationships, are developed over time, based on trust, reciprocal dependency on each other's ability to deliver, and goodwill (Ganesan, 1994; Zhong et al., 2014).

The groundwork for developing the triage services was laid in 2008. The Effective Interventions First Step programme, the precursor to Drivers of Crime, looked to support the AOD sector to better respond to clients with past or present experience of the justice system. As a result of this programme, AOD treatment services gained a better understanding of the justice system and the experience of clients that were involved with it. This contributed to addiction services being more open and willing to engage not just with offenders, but also with a sector that was a source of a significant number of referrals.

Significant changes to community probation practice; for example the development of the Integrated Practice Framework and dynamic risk assessment tools, have demonstrated the Department's commitment

to rehabilitation to address re-offending. Workforce development activities to strengthen motivational interviewing approaches and AOD brief interventions by staff are evidence that the Department is willing to invest resources to improve responses to address the substance use problems of offenders.

We need each other

Both Corrections and Health stakeholders involved in the implementation of the triage services had something they needed from the other, creating a certain level of dependency – an important

feature of long-term interagency relationships (Ganesan, 1994).

The addiction sector had the expertise and ability to address the substance problems of offenders, Corrections very much wants access to. For the addiction sector, Corrections had the ability to address some of the frustrations they experience in their work –

DNA's (Did Not Attend), unclear referrals and improved after-care.

In some treatment services it is not uncommon for over 10 percent of all appointments made to consist of DNA's. Corrections may be able to reduce DNA's by mandating treatment and following up on whether offenders attend. For some offenders, this can be a significant motivator to attend appointments.

The justice sector currently refers significant numbers of people to addiction treatment. Estimates suggest that up to 41 percent of all people accessing addiction treatment come from the justice sector (Matua Raki, 2011). With probation improving their screening and brief intervention practice, and motivational interviewing, there are opportunities to improve the accuracy and targeting of referrals. Time on waitlists is a performance indicator for health services, so ensuring referrals are accurate and appropriate is a good way for Corrections to reciprocate for the health services offenders receive, which support our objectives.

A final challenge for many treatment services is providing suitable after-care, as once treatment is complete clients are rarely motivated to maintain contact and check-in with services. While we want people to move on, if problems do arise in the future it can be a challenge for someone to re-engage and access support before relapse. Corrections' engagement with offenders in the community, often for years, provides an opportunity for on-

“The quality of collaboration around the community-based offender AOD strategy benefited from Corrections and Health having compatible strategic objectives...”

going maintenance and after-care support. The Department has taken advantage of this opportunity by developing staff knowledge and capability around relapse prevention.

Where we are at now

Six districts were prioritised for implementation, or expansion, of the triage services based on their high volumes of offenders with substance use problems. These regions were metro-Auckland (Auckland, Waitemata & Counties-Manukau districts), Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Manawatu/Horowhenua, Wellington and Canterbury. As of May 2014 all services were operational and had started receiving referrals.

While services have commenced there is still plenty to do and many opportunities to further test this developing relationship between Corrections and Health.

Drivers of Crime funding for the triage services has now been fully committed. To expand these services to further districts will require a reconfiguration of current spending on mental health and addiction services to keep within current funding baselines – something Health has indicated is a strategic priority. Corrections will need to work alongside Health to ensure our referral pathways are as clear as possible to minimise disruption and tension as reconfiguration occurs.

The current success of this partnership has also created further opportunities for both organisations to work together for our mutual benefit. Corrections clients often have significant health issues beyond those experienced by the population at large. Being sent to prison might be the first opportunity in years that some people have to get a comprehensive health assessment. Hearing problems, eyesight concerns, high prevalence of head injuries, poorer mental health, and high rates of smoking are just a few of the health concerns that affect those entering the prison system (Ministry of Health, 2006). Improved access to Health services will improve offenders' chances of re-engaging with society and making a positive contribution. It is also an opportunity to minimise the future burden on high-intensity health services if they can address health concerns at an earlier stage than currently occurs.

For Health, offenders make up a very small proportion of the population. However, they make up a disproportionate number of the target populations included in their strategic priorities. This includes:

- increasing infant immunisation and reducing rheumatic fever
- supporting vulnerable children
- whānau ora
- youth mental health

- building mental health and addiction resilience and recovery for Māori and Pacific people.

Many of the people these initiatives target are from 'hard-to-reach' populations that agencies struggle to engage in services. However, members of these hard-to-reach groups make up a significant number of Corrections' workload, and we know where they are, especially those in prison and on electronic monitoring. The Department has the potential to facilitate other agencies' access to these hard-to-reach groups, either through referral or by enabling health services to deliver in our Community Corrections and prison facilities.

It may be a cliché but the possibilities truly are endless.

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The Youth Crime Action Plan – the evolution of a successful approach

Megan Davis

Senior Advisor, Reducing Crime Policy Team, Criminal Justice Policy, DDI +64 4 496 3367

Ministry of Justice/Tāhū o te Ture, Vogel Centre, Kate Sheppard Place, SX10088, Wellington, NZ

Author biography:

Megan Davis practiced as a social worker and social service manager before more recently enjoying a number of different project manager and senior policy advisor roles at the Ministry of Justice. She is currently responsible for programme management of the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) at the Ministry of Justice.

Introduction

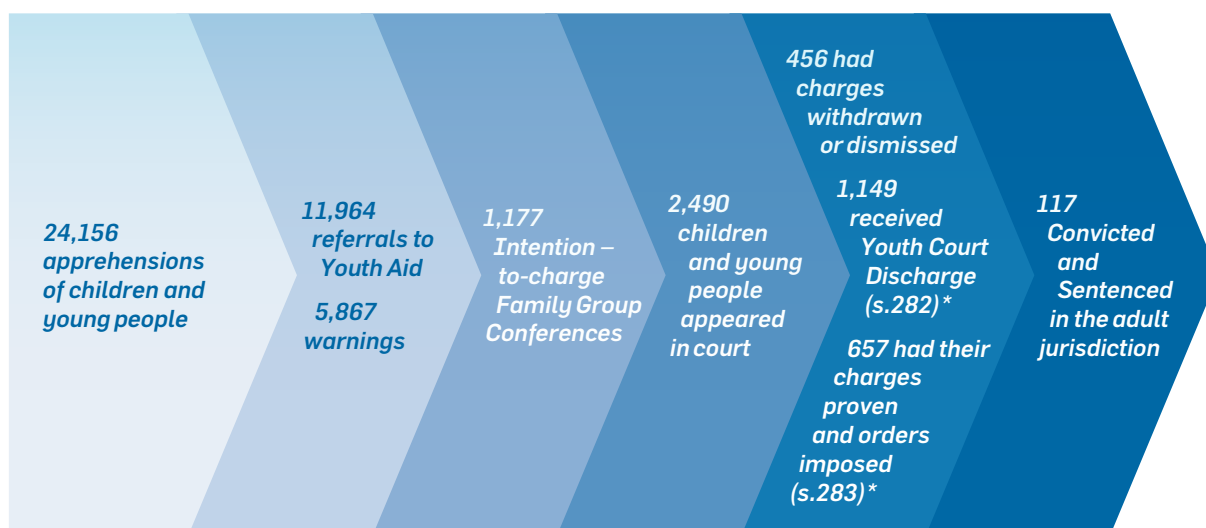
New Zealand has a world leading approach for responding to offending by youth. Our system, mandated by the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 (CYPF Act), recognises young people who offend (10 to 16 year olds inclusive) need to be held to account in a way that acknowledges their needs and vulnerability. It promotes restorative processes that involve families/whānau and wider support networks in the task of helping young people who offend to become positive contributing members of their communities.

The majority of children and young people are effectively diverted away from formal justice processes, as illustrated in Figure 1, below. This is important as research demonstrates that diversionary interventions reduce the chances of young people re-offending (for example, McLaren, 2011).

Youth crime in New Zealand is trending down when adjusted for changes in the youth population. For example, the number of young people facing court charges in 2013 is the lowest it has been since records began more than 20 years ago. Figure 2 illustrates this trend.

Figure 1:

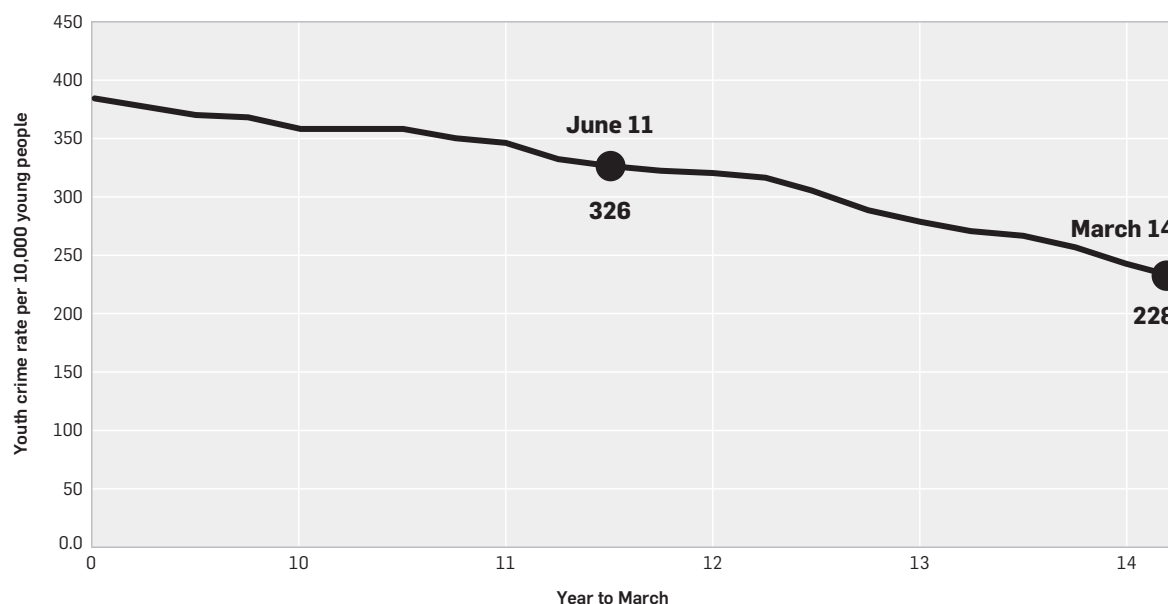
How children & young people were dealt with in the youth justice system by volume in 2013.



**of the 'Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989'*

Figure 2:

Rate of youth crime as represented by Youth Court appearances per 10,000 young people.



Building on our success to date, opportunities created by the fall in offending rates, and ongoing work by agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people who offend, government initiated a project to review current youth justice strategies. This project culminated in the launch, by then Associate Justice Minister Chester Borrows in October 2013, of the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP). This plan sets the agenda for youth justice policy and practice for the next ten years.

Youth Crime Action Plan

YCAP was developed after extensive public consultation, which began in August 2012. This consultation revealed considerable support for the principles embodied in the CYPF Act, although it also highlighted some systemic and practice issues requiring improvement.

As a consequence, YCAP does not fundamentally change New Zealand's approach to youth crime. Rather, it builds on approaches that have been shown to succeed, aligns youth justice work with linked government initiatives, and focuses on increasing effort in areas where clear gaps in the response to youth crime remain.

YCAP is centred around three overarching strategies, three key building blocks, and 30 practical actions. It also includes useful 'best practice' guidelines for frontline staff and information resources for the public.

The three strategies that inform approaches to youth crime in YCAP are:

- Partnering with communities – improving the way government agencies engage with and support communities to prevent offending and re-offending
- Reducing escalation – ensuring children and young people are dealt with at the lowest appropriate level of the youth justice system
- Early and sustainable exits – providing young people who offend with the best type of intervention at the right time.

The YCAP's three key building blocks are, 'governance', 'workforce' and 'information sharing', which are necessary to ensure essential support is provided to frontline workers. These building blocks are to help ensure YCAP strategies can be successfully implemented. They focus on strengthening leadership and co-ordination, and improving youth justice information (including data collection, statistical analysis and interagency arrangements about information sharing).

The 30 practical actions, each supporting a YCAP strategy or building block, are a 'to-do list' of initiatives and milestones government agencies are tasked to implement. They make up the YCAP work programme in the first two years of the plan's 10-year lifespan. Every two years this work programme will be refreshed to keep up the plan's forward momentum and relevance.

Key areas of focus

June 2014 marked a significant milestone in the life of YCAP with a number of actions scheduled for completion. Reflecting on this milestone and the first eight months of the plan, then Associate Justice Minister Chester Borrows praised progress (Borrows, 2014). The Minister's comments reflect a range of specific and important achievements to date, including, among other things:

- An increasing number of communities developing local action plans to address local youth crime issues
- New practice standards for Family Group Conferences (FGCs), new specialist positions to coach, support and mentor FGC co-ordinators, and a pilot in Gisborne where Child, Youth and Family (CYF) and Ngāti Porou co-ordinators jointly facilitate FGCs
- New tools to aid decision making and improve consistency in how agencies (primarily Police and CYF) deal with children and young people who are apprehended
- More specialist youth forensic clinicians working in the youth justice system.

Three themes respectively representing an opportunity, a challenge and an achievement can be highlighted from this progress.

Cross-agency collaboration – an opportunity

In total, eight agencies have been given responsibility for YCAP: Child Youth and Family (CYF), Department of Corrections, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, and New Zealand Police. A Deputy Secretaries' Governance Group, with members drawn from each of these agencies, is responsible for ensuring they are aligned and appropriately engaged to deliver YCAP. An Implementation Steering Group, also with members drawn from these agencies, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of YCAP actions, and a range of cross-agency teams focussed on delivering YCAP actions are working at both head office and community level.

YCAP therefore reflects the growing recognition (and central principal of government's Better Public Services (BPS) Programme (State Services Commission, 2012)) that complex social problems, such as youth crime, cannot be solved by individual agencies working in siloed hierarchical structures. Rather, agencies need to work (more) collaboratively, drawing on each other's different strengths and insights to discover innovative solutions to problems (Rennie, 2014). After all, many of the young people YCAP is focussed on helping will have had experiences with several of the different YCAP agencies. If YCAP is to achieve its potential,

a culture of collaboration among its participants at all levels must be nurtured; including at head office, among practitioners in the field, and within communities themselves.

Collaboration can be challenging as it requires people to work together in relationships; communicating clearly and honestly, sharing resources, respecting and trusting each other to deliver towards a shared goal. Nevertheless, collaboration is an imperative. YCAP provides opportunities for leaders modelling good collaborative practice to emerge and examples of this are becoming evident. There can consequently be justifiable optimism that YCAP can and will make a difference for young people, their families, and communities.

Māori in the youth justice system – a challenge

Young Māori are significantly over-represented in the youth justice system. Apprehension rates are higher for Māori than for non-Māori, and outcomes for Māori are also more serious compared to non-Māori. This is illustrated in Figure 3, opposite.

Agencies have at times focussed on reducing the over-representation of Māori in the youth justice system, recognising serious negative long-term consequences for both individuals' and New Zealand's social and economic well-being. However, these efforts have had limited effect; a co-ordinated cross-agency approach is required.

YCAP was therefore developed with a focus on Māori and states explicitly:

"The overall success of the Youth Crime Action Plan can be measured by the continued reduction in the gap between Māori and non-Māori." (Ministry of Justice, 2014)

YCAP builds on the strengths of programmes already in place to strengthen the response to Māori, including Police's 'The Turning of the Tide' prevention strategy (NZ Police, 2014), the Department of Corrections' Youth Strategy and its focus on young Māori who offend, and CYF's Ma Matou, Ma Tatou strategy¹. YCAP initiatives to further strengthen this response include:

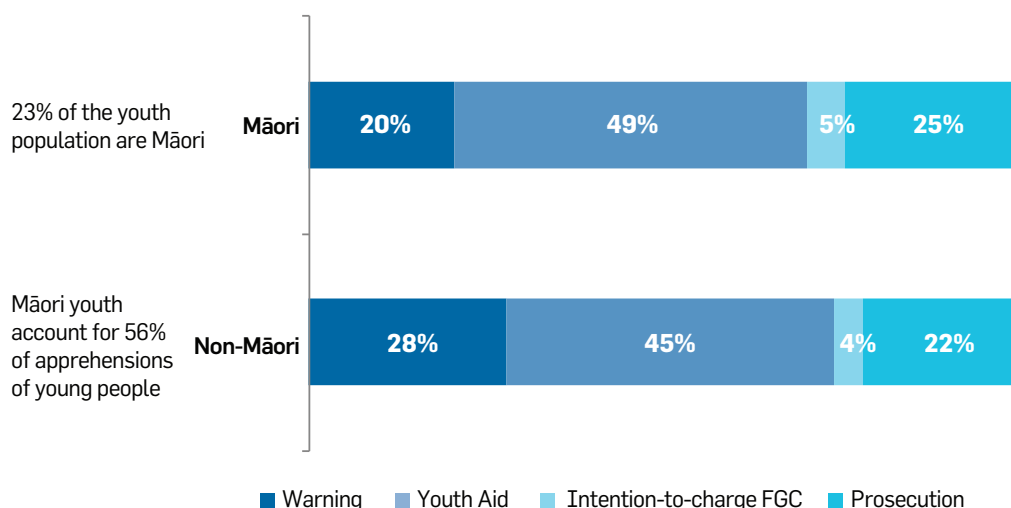
- 'Partnering with communities' actions that encourage service providers to engage and collaborate with Māori
- 'Workforce' actions to improve the cultural competency of the youth justice workforce
- 'Information sharing' actions to improve what is understood about what is happening for Māori youth.

¹ Ma Matou Ma Tatou, is a three-year strategy to address the needs of vulnerable children that has, as its core focus, the theme "We, and all of us together – are changing young lives".

Nevertheless, the issues are complex and challenging and it is likely to take the full ten years of the life of the YCAP (and possibly longer) to achieve the lasting change that we want to see. It will also require an active and ongoing focus on this issue and the application of a wider whānau-based approach to interventions with young Māori.

Figure 3:

*Māori in the youth justice system, 2013**



* Other outcomes account for less than one percent of outcomes for each ethnic group.

Improvements in information – an achievement

YCAP notes good information is required for a cohesive and effective youth justice system (Ministry of Justice, 2014). At a national and district level, aggregate data and trend analysis can help agencies make better decisions about where to intervene, what works and how to allocate resources. At a local level, better (and appropriate) sharing of case-related information assists delivering more effective interventions. However, barriers including inconsistent reporting practices across different agencies and siloed data systems have restricted access to a comprehensive source of good reliable youth justice information.

In the eight months since YCAP was launched, progress to improve youth justice information has been significant. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for the youth justice sector, drawing on data from each of the key YCAP agencies, have been developed. These KPIs will be available in a bi-annual report from October 2014, and will be disaggregated where appropriate (for example by age, ethnicity, gender and location)².

Work is also underway to clarify mechanisms for sharing information at an individual level. It is widely

acknowledged that appropriate information sharing at this level is essential to enable early intervention and preventative work. It is crucial for the delivery of better services and improved outcomes, including greater public safety.

While youth justice workers are generally aware of the importance of information sharing, there is often a degree of uncertainty about when this can be done lawfully, and what the appropriate mechanisms are. Guidance is therefore being developed to support good information sharing practice. This is likely to include developing an Approved Information Sharing Agreement (AISA)³.

Information is a powerful enabler of effective decision making and service delivery. Achievements in this area are therefore significant. However, it is worth noting these achievements will only be fully realised when youth justice practitioners and policy makers routinely use it to inform their practice and decision making.

Conclusion

The then Associate Justice Minister Borrows has described YCAP as the next step on the journey in the evolution of New Zealand's response to offending by youth (Ministry of Justice, 2014). Building on the

² Not all supporting contextual measures for the agreed headline KPI measures are currently available. However, interim measures will be reported until the additional data becomes available from late 2015.

³ Approved Information Sharing Agreements (AISAs) are a mechanism in the Privacy Act 1993 that allows information sharing between and within agencies to deliver public services.

success of our current models, YCAP has set some ambitious goals, particularly in relation to Māori. Achievement of these goals will require continued collaboration amongst agencies around the shared goal of reduced youth crime so that more young people can realise their potential. The YCAP programme of work provides a foundation that allows for optimism over the next ten years of youth justice policy and practice in New Zealand. This may be underlined by government's July 2014 announcement (Collins, 2014) that its BPS Target⁴ of a reduction in offending by young people by 25 percent by 2017, had already been exceeded; the rate is currently 30 percent lower than in 2011.

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⁴ BPS targets set for the justice sector include: reduce overall crime by 15%, violent crime by 20%, youth crime by 25%, and re-offending by 25% by June 2017.



New Zealand Gangs: A collaborative approach to reducing re-offending and the harms caused by gangs

Jeanette Schlemmer

Gangs Programme Manager, Department of Corrections

Author biography:

Jeanette has a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration (Public Policy), and has worked in senior management roles in the Health and Education sectors since 1995, with a focus on public safety. She joined the Department of Corrections in December 2013, and has worked closely with Corrections staff, Police, other government agencies, community providers and gang/ex-gang members in the development of the Gangs Action Plan. She is currently managing the Gangs Programme of work.

New Zealand has a complex gang problem that spans social, economic and justice issues. New Zealand Adult Gangs (NZAGs) and transnational criminal groups create disproportionate harm in New Zealand.

There are three main categories of NZAGs: ethnic gangs of New Zealand origin, outlaw motorcycle gangs and transnational criminal groups. NZAGs vary in levels of sophistication and collaboration, ranging from intergenerational structures with overt offending and domestic focus, to entrepreneurial structures with covert offending and an international focus. There are 32 NZAGs comprising approximately 4,000 known patched members and prospects who represent 0.1 percent of the population aged 17 years and above¹.

The New Zealand Government has set ambitious Better Public Services targets for the justice sector to reduce overall crime by 15 percent; violent crime by 20 percent; youth crime by 25 percent; and re-offending by 25 percent by June 2017. Re-offending is measured by reimprisonment within 12 months of release from prison, or reconviction within 12 months of commencing a community sentence. Since June 2011, the crime rate has reduced by 16 percent; violent crime has reduced by 11 percent; and youth crime has reduced by 30 percent (State Services Commission, 2013). For the year ended March 2014, the re-offending rate reduced by 12.2 percent (Department of Corrections, 2013).

The problem

In contrast to the downward trend of offending, serious offending² by NZAG patched members and prospects increased by 15 percent in 2013, with almost half of the serious offences being family violence related (NZ Police 2013).

The harms caused by gang offenders are significant and increasing. The 'Top 50' NZAG members and prospects (highest number of charges) charged by Police with offences averaged 229 charges each (NZ Police, 2013).

To illustrate the wider influence of NZAG patched members and prospects, an analysis of charges was undertaken. This analysis identified NZAG members and prospects, and the individuals who:

- were charged together with an NZAG member/s or prospect for the same identified offence (co-offenders);
- had an identified familial tie to an NZAG member/s or prospect/s
- had an identified connection to a New Zealand adult gang member/s.

This analysis identified that NZAG members and prospects, and the individuals connected to these gang members as identified above, were responsible for 25 percent of homicide charges laid in 2013 and for the first quarter of 2014 had been charged with:

- 34 percent of class A/B drug offences (principally methamphetamine)

¹ NZAG statistics come from Police District and National intelligence units. New Zealand Police focused solely on the identified New Zealand patched members and prospects of New Zealand adult gangs for the whole of government action plan on tackling gangs.

² The serious offending code group charges (punishable by ten years or more imprisonment) are Aggravated Burglary/Burglary and Fraud, Arson and Property Damage, Class A/B Illicit Drugs, Family Violence (Assault on Child under 14 years, Assault by Male on Female), Money Laundering, Serious Violence and Sexual. The Serious Violence code class charges include Aggravated Robbery/Robbery, Grievous Assaults, Homicides and Kidnapping and Abduction.

- 36 percent of kidnapping and abduction offences
- 25 percent of aggravated robbery / robbery offences
- 26 percent of grievous assault offences.

Gang offenders re-offend at twice the rate of non-gang offenders and with increasing seriousness (Department of Corrections, 2013). They are disproportionately represented in prison violence, and their intimidation and recruitment methods have a negative impact on prisoners' rehabilitation. Gang membership is the number one predictor of re-offending.

Eighty percent of gang offenders have a RoC*RoI (Risk of Conviction/Risk of Imprisonment) score of 0.5 and over. This means that most gang offenders have a 50 percent or higher probability of being re-imprisoned within five years (Department of Corrections, 2013).

The average proportion of gang members across prisons rose from 15 percent in 2007 to 28 percent in 2013 (Department of Corrections, 2013).³ Forty six percent of youth under 19 years of age in prison have gang affiliations (Department of Corrections, 2013).

The reasons for people joining gangs are wide-ranging and include the influence of family members and the sense of identity and protection gang membership provides. Gangs offer a way to make money and use networks to facilitate crime.

Many of the risk factors that contribute to re-offending in the general population also contribute to ethnic gang membership, such as a lack of skills and employment opportunities, dysfunctional family environment, insufficient positive support and lack of pro-social influence.

The Department of Corrections' (the Department) rehabilitation and reintegration programmes have proved effective in reducing re-offending in the general offender population. Gang offenders who have attended programmes still re-offend at a rate much higher than non-gang offenders who have not participated in programmes (Department of Corrections, 2013).

Historical responses to dealing with NZAGs have been focussed on criminal offending or social harms. Agencies have not been joined up to deliver a comprehensive programme that involves both social and law enforcement approaches. While individual agency interventions have succeeded in some areas, social harms have increased as gangs continue to grow.

Cross agency collaboration

In 2013, the justice sector, social sector, border control and tax agencies, led by Police, investigated ways to address the offending rates and the social harms caused by NZAGs. We have considered alternative

approaches to traditional interventions, and agreed that a new whole of government collaborative approach addressing poor socio-economic outcomes, as well as crimes that are associated with NZAGs, is necessary.

This is much wider than a law and order issue. This whole of government approach will ensure that Police and other agencies have the tools they need to hold gangs to account, while breaking the cycle of offending by preventing young people from joining these organisations, and helping current members to exit gang life.

The whole of government approach includes providing support, coordination, and referrals to ensure vulnerable children, youth at risk of joining gangs, and families of NZAGs receive social service support, and that NZAG offenders have increased access to rehabilitative and reintegrative interventions to reduce recidivism and facilitate a crime-free life.

The Department of Corrections Gangs Action Plan contributes to, and supports the whole of government approach by focussing on targeted interventions that meet the needs of gang offenders.

The Department of Corrections' Gangs Action Plan to reduce gang offenders' recidivism rates

The Department has worked closely with Police to develop its Gangs Action Plan. This plan focusses on providing wrap-around support for gang offenders to ensure a smooth transition from the time the offender is convicted until they are reintegrated into a crime-free lifestyle. Police was represented on the project board, quality assurance, and as members of the project team to develop the action plan, and is now represented on the Gangs Programme Board.

The Department will target gang offenders by strengthening and extending rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, and will research ways to improve programme effectiveness for them. There are initiatives to strengthen the reintegration of young Māori offenders serving community sentences and orders which currently include, but can be further extended, to target gang offenders. As over 71 percent of gang offenders in prison are Māori, we will embed across the Department cultural frameworks for the inclusion of family and whānau in the prisoner's journey, and for stakeholder engagement with 'hard-to-reach' communities.

The Department's reducing re-offending efforts work in collaboration with a number of agencies and service providers to reduce re-offending. We will strengthen this collaboration to ensure gang offenders have wrap-around support; a continuum of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, including drug, alcohol, and family violence interventions that continue in the

³ Corrections data counts the prison population individuals in youth gangs and those who self-identify as gang-affiliated.

community on their release from prison. Safety plans will be put in place for gang women prisoners at risk of violence on release from prison, and interagency services will be linked to improve outcomes for children of gang prisoners.

Gang affiliated offenders are involved in approximately 70 percent of prisoner on prisoner violence in prisons. Based on the statistical model developed (Department of Corrections, 2009), if a prisoner is a gang member he/she is 3.6 times more likely to be a perpetrator of an incident than a non gang affiliated prisoner. We will focus on reducing gang violence and intimidation in prison to protect offenders who wish to turn their lives around.

The whole of government Gangs Action Plan includes the establishment of a Gang Intelligence Centre. For cross-agency interventions to succeed, we need to accurately identify gang members, their families and particularly those who are at risk of harm or vulnerable to gang intimidation. We will work with Police to ensure the information held about offenders' gang affiliations is consistent, verified and reliable to inform timely interventions.

Conclusion

The whole of government collaborative approach will result in increased interactions with NZAGs to achieve

improved outcomes for all, including increasing public safety. Successful collaboration will contribute directly to the achievement of the Better Public Services targets to boost skills and employment, support vulnerable children, and reduce crime. It can create lasting change in the lives of gang offenders, their families and whānau.

The increasing seriousness of re-offending by the NZAG cohort means that success in reducing their re-offending will contribute significantly to reducing societal harms, and the Department will work closely with other agencies to achieve this.

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The whole of government action plan addresses the issue through four initiatives:

- A multi-agency **Gang Intelligence Centre** led by Police to collect and combine intelligence on real-time gang activity to support investigation, prevention and enforcement, while also identifying vulnerable children and family members who may need social service support. It will also identify young people at risk of joining gangs, so that agencies can target interventions to help steer them away from gang life.
- **Start at Home:** a programme of work to refocus existing social initiatives, and develop some new programmes, to address the intergenerational nature of gang life. The programme will support families and members to turn away from the gang lifestyle, and to help support communities where there is a large gang presence, by reducing gang tension. It will also include enhanced prisoner reintegration and rehabilitation programmes by Corrections targeted at gang members, with access to violence and addiction services and support to access training, education, employment and housing, possibly in new locations away from gang life. Safety planning and support will also be provided to women with gang connections at risk of family violence on release from prison.
- Two multi-agency dedicated enforcement taskforces will be established. The **Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Border Protection Taskforce** will target drug trafficking networks to disrupt new gangs attempting to enter New Zealand and restrict and monitor international gang travel. The **Criminal Asset Confiscation Taskforce** will strengthen asset recovery efforts, prevent financing of crime and target profits received from crime.
- **Strengthen legislation:** The Sentencing Act will be amended to allow courts to stipulate 24-hour GPS monitoring of high risk gang affiliates and high risk domestic violence offenders, following release from a prison sentence of two years or less, as part of their conditions of release or sentence. This will prevent them from associating with other members at gang headquarters or places where gangs congregate. It will also provide intelligence on their activities. Other legislation will also be reviewed, including firearm prohibition orders, interim freezing orders and the use of drug detector dogs at key domestic ports (maritime and air).

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/whole-government-action-plan-tackling-gangs>



The Chair in Restorative Justice at Victoria University of Wellington: An exercise in inter-agency collaboration

Professor Chris Marshall

The Diana Unwin Chair in Restorative Justice School of Government

Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Author biography:

Dr Chris Marshall is the inaugural Professor of Restorative Justice at Victoria University. He has published extensively on restorative justice theory and practice, especially its theological dimensions, and has worked as a restorative justice facilitator over the past 15 years.

Following an extended period of consultation and fundraising, in late 2013 Victoria University established a Chair in Restorative Justice, located in its School of Government. The aim of the Chair is to serve as a catalyst for collaborative, interdisciplinary research and teaching on a subject of growing international importance. I was fortunate enough to be appointed as the inaugural Professor of Restorative Justice, taking up the position in early 2014. The Chair's formal launch was timed to coincide with my inaugural professorial lecture, delivered to a packed auditorium of 300 people, itself a testimony to the high level of public interest in the subject.

The new Chair in Restorative Justice is, to the best of my knowledge, the only one of its kind in the world. Certainly there are numerous academics around the globe who specialise in restorative justice research and teaching, and several who hold the title of Professor (or Director) of Restorative Justice. But, as far as I can tell, there are no cases elsewhere of multiple government agencies combining their resources, in conjunction with a private charitable trust, to fund a dedicated senior academic post in restorative justice. The Chair is a remarkable example of public and private sector collaboration in shared outcomes; it is also a sign of Victoria University's continuing commitment to public and civic engagement.

Background

New Zealand has long been regarded internationally as a trailblazer in restorative justice practice, especially with respect to the use of family group conferencing in the youth justice jurisdiction following passage of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act in 1989. By the mid-1990s, restorative justice conferencing had also spread into the adult jurisdiction, championed by community volunteers and supported by sympathetic judges and lawyers. Within a short period of time,

provider groups of restorative justice facilitators had sprung up all around the country and soon began agitating for a larger role in the justice system.

In response to this groundswell of community activism, in 2001 the Government launched a four-year long pilot scheme for court-referred, pre-sentence restorative justice conferencing in four district courts around the land. Involvement in the pilot gave the restorative justice community a considerable boost, though in the years following the end of the pilot, progress and innovation seemed to plateau and government support remained relatively modest.

A concern began to grow in several quarters that New Zealand's international leadership in the restorative justice arena was beginning to falter, at a time when other countries were steaming ahead. Arguably one of the reasons for this was our relative lack of investment in developing the conceptual foundations and research base of restorative justice theory and practice. While individual academics, like Alison Morris and Gabriele Maxwell, had done important scholarly work early on, aside from a short-lived initiative at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), 25 years after the introduction of restorative justice conferencing in the youth justice domain, New Zealand still had no dedicated centre of teaching and research excellence in restorative justice.

Following a trip to New Zealand, one international commentator observed in an email to Judge Sir David Carruthers, then Chair of the Parole Board, that while New Zealand had done much to engage civil society with restorative justice approaches, significant gaps remained.

One central element missing for me was the lack of a widely based academic support base that sustained innovative practitioners with theoretical perspectives and models; that developed critical reflection across the sectors and that developed and integrated different

research elements that would be drivers for civil society advocacy and evidence bases for making policy and practice recommendations. That is not to undervalue the work of individual academics – that was evident. Rather, for me, it was the apparent lack of a specifically dedicated academic platform across disciplines that acted as a pulse for the wider movement; an academic platform committed to diverse and inter-linked areas of research, teaching and developmental practice, located in one place and resourced across a number of disciplines.

To help address this need, Judge Carruthers approached the Vice Chancellor of Victoria University to see whether the University would be prepared to create a dedicated position in restorative justice if external funding were to be provided. The University already had a handful of externally 'sponsored Chairs' in areas of national concern, and indicated its willingness to add another in restorative justice should sufficient funding be assured for an initial period of at least four years.

It took nearly two years of work to secure the necessary resources. A small group of fundraisers made approaches to several individual philanthropists and well-known charitable trusts, but none proved fruitful. Several government departments were also approached, this time with more success. The first to agree to contribute was the Ministry of Justice, the principal sponsor of court-referred restorative justice services, and was soon followed by the New Zealand Police and the Department of Corrections. These three Justice sector agencies are currently seeking to work in a more collaborative and integrative way, which is demonstrated by their common commitment to the restorative justice project at Victoria University.

Next on board was the Ministry of Education, reflecting its support for strengthening the use of restorative practices in New Zealand schools. The Ministry of Social Development also agreed to contribute in light of its statutory responsibility for family group conferencing in the youth justice and child protection arenas. An approach was also made to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which, although unable to directly fund projects in New Zealand, registered its strong interest in supporting any future outreach the Chair may have in the Pacific. The New Zealand Defence Force was next to sign on, reflecting its appreciation of the potential of restorative practices in peacekeeping work and in military disciplinary procedures, as well as in responding to cases of personal injury and death of those on duty.

The seventh party to contribute was a small family trust that had hitherto donated mainly to community-based organisations and social justice programmes and peace work. In consultation with the settlor of the trust – an elderly woman with a extraordinary history of

personal philanthropy and a keen interest in restorative justice – the trustees decided to invest for the first time in an academic position in the hope it could help to make a lasting difference to the way issues of crime and punishment are addressed in this country. The donor insisted on remaining anonymous, but it was agreed that when she passed away the Chair would be named after her. She died on July 2, 2014, and, with the agreement of the other sponsors, the Chair became 'The Diana Unwin Chair in Restorative Justice' in August.

Shortly after the Chair was launched, two other public agencies – the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) and the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) – confirmed their financial involvement in the project. The former did so because it recognised the potential of restorative justice approaches for dealing with 'sensitive claims' and for assisting in the rehabilitation and return to work of victims of serious accidents, and the latter because it recognised the promise of restorative processes in addressing workplace conflict and in enhancing health and safety regimes.

Goals of the Chair

The founding of the Chair in Restorative Justice is a powerful expression of cross-sector collaboration. A concern for collaboration is also evident in the goals of the Chair specified in the Funding Agreement with the sponsors. Collaboration is expected to occur at several levels.

One level is collaboration between academics, social researchers, teachers, students, practitioners, community workers and policy-makers working in the field. Restorative justice is an inherently interdisciplinary endeavour, requiring insights from the full range of the human and social sciences, as well from the experience of those engaged at the coalface. The Chair will have an important role in encouraging and facilitating such multi-party interaction.

A second level of collaboration is between New Zealand scholars and practitioners and their counterparts overseas. Restorative justice is now widely recognised as an international social movement of historic significance. Its pursuit has been endorsed by important multinational organisations, such as the United Nations and the European Union, and its practice is embedded in the legislation of several jurisdictions. It is estimated that there are restorative justice programmes operating in over a hundred countries around the world, with governments everywhere taking increasing interest in it. The Chair at Victoria University is therefore required to forge linkages with leading restorative justice thinkers and research centres elsewhere in the world. One means of doing this is by hosting visiting fellows who can come to New Zealand

to share their experience and expertise with local scholars, policy-makers and practitioners. Another is by attracting international postgraduate students to work alongside domestic students on issues of importance.

A third level of collaboration is between the various public sector bodies in New Zealand that have a stake in restorative justice, and between public agencies and community groups and NGOs. It is expected the Chair will “contribute to policy debate and development in relevant areas of public policy, and facilitate constructive dialogue between public sector and civil society agencies”. It is here that universities have a distinctive role to play. In addition to academic expertise, they offer a neutral space for cross-sector discussion and debate and a venue for bringing policy-makers and justice professionals into direct contact with community providers and practitioners.

In all these respects, the mission of the Chair is to foster inter-agency discussion and cooperation on the development and evaluation of restorative justice practice in New Zealand. This commitment to cross-sector engagement is not only for strategic reasons. It is also because the principles of democratic participation, respectful dialogue and inclusive decision-making lie at the very heart of the restorative justice vision itself. The goals of the Restorative Justice Chair must be pursued in a restorative way.

As it enters its second generation, restorative justice in New Zealand is poised for a ‘great leap forward’. Government has expressed its support for increasing the reach of restorative interventions and the practitioner community is steadily expanding and diversifying. The new Chair at Victoria University, made possible by an internationally unique exercise in public sector collaboration, will hopefully play a pivotal role in carrying this momentum forward in an academically credible and practice-focused way.

Partnering for results: Designing a custodial public private partnership (PPP)

Karen Mitchell

PPP Programme Manager, Department of Corrections

Rachael Cole

Assistant Director Reducing Re-offending, Serco New Zealand

Author biographies:

Karen Mitchell has a wide range of management experience and since 2010 has worked on a number of major PPP projects within New Zealand. Karen recently re-joined the Department as PPP Programme Manager having previously worked as PPP Project Manager for the Department. In between these roles, Karen was PPP Project Manager on Transmission Gully working for the New Zealand Transport Agency.

Rachael Cole co-authored the article while working as PPP Service Design and Delivery Manager with the Department. Rachael was with the Department for three years, working within the PPP programme as Operations Work stream Lead. Rachael has recently taken up the position of Assistant Director: Reducing Re-offending with Serco at Auckland South Corrections Facility.

What is a PPP?

A public private partnership (PPP) is a venture which is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more private sector companies. The partnership for Auckland South Corrections Facility is between the Department and SecureFuture. SecureFuture is a consortium of companies that are collectively responsible for financing, designing and building (Fletcher Construction), operating (Serco) and maintaining (Spotless) the new prison for 25 years.

Introduction

The Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF) in Wiri will receive its first prisoners in May 2015. As the first major PPP venture in New Zealand, this article explores what this means for the Department and what is on offer via its partnership with SecureFuture.

The PPP contract for the new prison is fundamentally different from the more traditional contracts. This contract has outcomes at its heart. It has been designed around the requirement for SecureFuture to deliver better performance than the Department in reducing re-offending, while never compromising the bottom line of safety and security.

Traditionally most contracts are highly prescriptive in how services must be delivered, offering little opportunity for innovation or flexibility to the private provider. The outcomes that the Department is seeking from its partnership with SecureFuture require a flexible and mature approach to how services are specified. If we want SecureFuture to care about outcomes, we have to give them the ability to design, evaluate and re-design their services based on how they are performing. We have to give them the freedom to try new things and challenge perceived constraints. This means developing a framework of *what* must be delivered but not prescribing *how* it must be delivered.

Different methods or approaches are, however, unlikely to materialise unless the incentives favour it. These incentives are embodied in the PPP contract.

Improved performance

The delivery of better performance is being driven through a carefully balanced combination of incentives and penalties designed to focus SecureFuture, and Serco as the operator, on the things that are of the most value to the Department. With our challenge of reducing re-offending by 25 percent by 2017, it is no surprise that reducing the number of prisoners that return to custody is at the top of that list. We want Serco to be highly motivated to care about what happens to prisoners on release. It is not enough that prisoners are compliant and engaged in activities while in prison; we need to know it makes a difference when they return to the community. As a result, under the contract, SecureFuture has the ability to earn an incentive payment if fewer prisoners who have served their sentence at ASCF return to custody compared to prisoners leaving public prisons across New Zealand. In order to receive the incentive payment, at least 10 percent fewer prisoners from ASCF are to return to custody within two years of release when compared to prisoners from public prisons.

Benefits to the prison network

It is important to note that this contract is not about creating one exceptional prison in the network. The contract was designed with the intention of improving performance across all the prisons in New Zealand and it is jointly up to the Department and Serco to make sure that this happens. Under the contract, the Department has access to all the intellectual property in relation to ASCF and we can use that intellectual property however we want across the rest of the prison network. For example, if Serco develops a programme for young Pasifika men that reduces recidivism rates, then we can introduce that programme into any prison we choose.

The requirement to better the Department's performance in relation to prisoners returning to custody within two years remains even when our performance lifts as a result of our own innovations or as a direct result of adopting practice from Serco. This means that if we are proactive, whether in progressing our own innovations or in identifying and applying any of Serco's practice that has positive results, then Serco will be challenged to find new practices and innovations to keep ahead of the Department.

This 'competitive tension' will drive Serco to continuously strive for performance improvement, while placing a corresponding pressure on us to identify and adopt any transferable effective practice. Together it is hoped that this will create a cycle of continuous improvement across the entire prison network for the life of the contract leading to lower recidivism rates.

Ensuring safety and security

To ensure that Serco does not focus exclusively on recidivism at the expense of other key aspects of the service (such as ensuring that prisoners are accommodated safely, securely and humanely), the potential for reward through the incentive payment is balanced with a wide range of financial penalties if performance indicators are not achieved.

Before signing the contract, the Department looked at the performance of its prisons across a number of areas, including escapes, assaults and self-harm. Using this information, the Department identified what level of performance it was seeking that was equal or better than its own. A performance framework was developed based on this that incentivises Serco to perform at the identified level. If Serco does not meet the required level of performance it faces meaningful financial penalties.

Facilities at ASCF

This contractual approach has resulted in a prison that will be different from other prisons in the network. It is certainly not going to be unrecognisable as a New Zealand prison as there is a huge wealth of excellent practice across New Zealand that Serco has recognised and adopted. ASCF will share the open campus style of our newest prisons. Freedom of movement across the prison will be considerable – even for high security prisoners – with no covered walkways. This will be supported by a state-of-the-art electronic security system.

ASCF will have a Fale Pasifika like Spring Hill Corrections Facility, and will replicate the welcoming visitors' centres that we have provided outside of the gate to reflect our values of aroha and manaakitanga. In addition to cultural facilities inside the gate, there will also be a Māori cultural centre outside the prison to support the planned kaitiakitanga programme to regenerate the immediate natural landscape in which the prison sits.

Like many of our prisons, ASCF will have self-care accommodation, but as a point of difference, self-care will make up 25 percent of the beds in the prison, providing accommodation for 240 prisoners. The cells in the house blocks will be different too, with in-cell telephones and computers. Prisoners will have basic computer access to improve their IT skills, access educational programmes, take courses and gain qualifications that directly aid in rehabilitation. The secure system will not provide access to the internet, but prisoners will be able to continue their study into the evening. Cells will include basic telephone handsets which will permit paid outgoing calls to pre-approved numbers only, improving contact with whānau. Prisoner telephone calls can be monitored as they can be in all of our prisons.

Conclusion

Whether these differences or any others employed by Serco once the prison opens have the impact on re-offending that is hoped for is yet to be seen. What is clear though is that the maturity of the partnership between the Department and Serco, as demonstrated through the contract, has laid the foundation needed to give the prison the best chance of success.



'Out of Gate': Collaboration supports reintegration

Grace Smit

National Manager Community Partnerships, Department of Corrections

Maree O'Regan

Senior Adviser, Department of Corrections

Marianne Bevan

Research Advisor, Department of Corrections

Author biographies:

Grace Smit is the National Manager Community Partnerships. She was involved in the design and led the implementation of Out of Gate and currently manages the contracts for the Out of Gate services. For the past ten years she has worked within Corrections, her previous roles including national manager reintegration and education, prison manager and probation district manager.

Maree O'Regan is a Senior Adviser in the Community Partnerships Team. She was involved in the design and implementation of Out of Gate and currently manages the Department's relationships with the five Out of Gate providers. For the past five years she has worked on offender reintegration-related projects at national office. Her previous roles include senior policy adviser, operations adviser and probation officer.

Marianne Bevan is a Research Advisor in the Research Analysis team. She started at Corrections in May 2014 and has been managing the Out of Gate evaluation. Prior to working at Corrections, she conducted research and implemented projects on gender and security sector reform in Timor-Leste, Togo, Ghana and Liberia.

Introduction

After release from prison at the end of a sentence, the days and weeks immediately following are the highest risk period for ex-prisoners, with relapse into criminal behaviour more likely than at any later stage. This problem is understood to reflect the fact that the person is not only likely to face a range of temptations (drugs, alcohol, former criminal associates), but can also include a number of stressors, such as loneliness, having nowhere suitable to live, being out of work, and having insufficient funds to re-establish their lives.

Prisoners released after serving shorter sentences tend to have higher rates of relapse than those exiting after longer terms (Office of the Auditor General, 2013). This may reflect the fact that longer-serving prisoners have had greater opportunity to develop good release plans, and are more prepared for the challenges they are likely to face.

Local experience and international research show that successfully reintegrating into the community is enhanced if offenders have suitable accommodation, employment, pro-social support from within the community, and assistance to deal with unexpected stresses (Office of the Auditor General, 2013; Davis et al., 2012). While a range of services has operated for many years to assist in these areas, including the

involvement of probation officers and other community agencies, some offenders need a higher level of support.

In November 2013, a new service known as 'Out of Gate' (OOG) was implemented across all prisons in New Zealand. OOG can be described as a 'navigation' service. Applied particularly to short-serving prisoners, and some released from remand, OOG involves the assignment of a support person, who works with the offender prior to release to identify the reintegration support they require, and then assists them to address their needs as they return to the community. OOG navigators work directly with offenders in the areas of employment, accommodation, education and training, oranga (health and wellbeing), life skills (managing household, financial and family/whānau commitments) and family/whānau and community support. Navigators encourage, guide and practically assist their clients to deal productively with any barriers faced, and to 'navigate' them towards appropriate social services and supports that help to address their needs.

This article gives an overview of the background and structure of the OOG service, along with an investigation of what role collaboration plays within the service. Using the feedback from navigators and participants, we discuss the important role that developing supportive and collaborative relationships between navigators and participants can have on

offenders' motivation and confidence levels, and their success in reintegrating to the community. This article draws on findings of a recent process evaluation of OOG, conducted over the first nine months of the new service's operation. The evaluation, and this article, do not therefore provide definitive outcome data relating to the overall success of OOG (i.e., in reducing re-offending rates). Instead, the focus of this article is to explore the role of agency collaboration in implementation of a new offender service. We do highlight, however, what the findings suggest with respect to how offender reintegration is best supported, in ways that are likely to promote reductions in re-offending.

Structure of the service

To launch the new OOG service, the Department contracted with five distinct community-based service providers¹ to deliver the service to a target of 4,300 prisoners over the life of the 21 month contract. The service includes a 'standard' service for short-serving (less than two years sentence) offenders who were assessed as having one or more reintegrative needs. An 'intensive' service was also implemented for those under 20, and those aged 20-24 years who have served at least one previous term of imprisonment. Both forms of service are targeted at offenders with a medium or high risk of re-offending, as measured by the Department's actuarial risk assessment tool RoC*RoI².

A few months after OOG went 'live', a 'high needs' service was also made available, for offenders aged over 25 with more complex and challenging reintegration needs. This high-needs service was initiated in April 2014 in response to perceptions amongst both providers and prison case managers that the standard service was not adequate for the difficulties presented by certain offenders. These include offenders with mental health problems, severe addiction histories, homelessness or transient lifestyles, and little or no family or other social supports.

Progress to date

As at 14 August 2014, just over 2000 referrals had been made to the OOG providers, and nearly 1,500 offenders had been released into the care of an OOG navigator. Offenders referred to the standard service are presenting with an average of three distinct needs at the time of their assessment. These primarily feature unemployment (including needs for further education and training), lack of suitable accommodation, and deficits in general skills for life. Those referred to the

intensive service are presenting on average with four needs, which include the same needs as above, but also lack of social or family support.

Amongst the younger offenders referred, mental health and addiction issues feature strongly. Seven percent of all offenders referred to OOG at the end of June 2014 were under 20 years old and these also account for 70 percent of referrals for the intensive service. A high proportion (68 percent) of this group are also Māori.

The process evaluation of the OOG service noted above was recently concluded and a report has been received. The evaluation involved over 100 interviews with providers' staff, prison case managers, probation officers, the current participants, 'disengaged' participants, offenders who declined to participate in the service, and participants who had re-offended and had been returned to prison. The following discussion presents a selection of findings from the evaluation, including aspects of the experiences of Corrections staff involved in facilitating the implementation of the OOG service.

Collaborative relationships between Corrections and providers

The implementation of a new service inevitably brings with it challenges and 'teething problems'. The need for collaborative relationships between Corrections and service providers was recognised from the outset and the overall view is that this has been successfully achieved. Good relationships have ensured issues in service implementation have been identified and promptly acted upon. Some of this has occurred at management level, such as work towards specific service improvements. Collaboration has meant that temporary lulls in uptake of the service at some locations have been quickly sorted out, and deficits in service design (e.g., such as identifying the need to create a more intensive 'high needs' service) have been addressed. While there was initially some confusion about how OOG fits with other services, in particular probation, efforts have been made to address this and include probation staff in the operation of OOG. For example, probation officers now attend operational/ interdisciplinary meetings with other Corrections staff and provider staff.

Prior to services being delivered, providers were brought together to plan how they would work together and how services would be delivered in practice. Since then, quarterly meetings have been held between Corrections staff at national office, and providers, as a mechanism for sorting out implementation problems, and ensuring that everyone has a shared understanding of processes. To an extent, each provider delivers the service in their own unique style, but a good level of collaboration has evolved between providers.

1 Presbyterian Support Northern, National Urban Māori Authority, Goodwood Park Healthcare Group, Healthcare New Zealand Ltd, CareNZ

2 RoC*RoI (Risk of reconviction/risk of imprisonment) refers to a tool used to predict the likelihood of an offender committing further offences.

For example, CareNZ recently invited Presbyterian Support Northern staff to attend some of their in-house training. Providers have also formed links with other reintegration services in their areas. Presbyterian Support Northern, for example, invited a number of social service support agencies helping offenders in Auckland (including the Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Society, the Salvation Army, and a literacy service) to meet and discuss the possibility of creating a local reintegration network.

Overall, the collaborative model developed between Corrections and providers, and among providers, has allowed challenges and issues to be brought into the open, resolved, and good practice to be shared. This mechanism appears to be supporting continuous improvement of the OOG service.

The navigator/participant relationship

The relationship which develops between navigator and participant is at the heart of the OOG service. Using feedback from navigators and participants, we explored the ways in which navigators were supporting participants to meet their reintegrative needs and motivating them to pursue an offence-free lifestyle.

Meeting needs

As identified above, OOG provides support to participants to resolve needs in areas such as accommodation, employment and/or further training and education, health and wellbeing, life skills, and obtaining the support of family/whānau and others in the community. Obviously, a great many practical challenges were encountered along the way as navigators and participants worked on these issues. However, the majority of participants who were engaged with the service reported that their needs were indeed being worked through and resolved with the navigator's support. As a Corrections case manager explained of one navigator, *"She was directly responsible for his safe reintegration – she engaged his family, and she found him appropriate accommodation. Without her he would have been homeless"*.

Case study:

A navigator accompanied a young offender to an agency to apply for a financial grant for clothes and transport to enable him to start in a job that had been arranged for him immediately after his release, but this was declined. His immediate reaction to the staff member was extreme anger and agitation. However, the navigator encouraged him to leave the office, calmed him, and then talked through alternative options. This resulted in him finding an alternative means of transport (a bicycle). He duly started work as planned, and spoke gratefully of the support received in helping him get there.

Building motivation

Research on desistance from crime has frequently highlighted the importance of offenders making a conscious decision to stop offending, and remaining committed and motivated to follow through on this decision (Giordano et al., 2002; Farrall 2002; Bottoms et al. 2004). Unsurprisingly, navigators frequently observed that offenders displaying higher levels of motivation were more accepting of practical support, and more willing to play an active role in dealing with issues. In cases where participants had less motivation, navigators learned to work more diligently to build rapport and commitment well before the release date. Literally meeting participants at the prison gate was seen as uniquely helpful in establishing a bond and subsequently keeping participants engaged with the process.

Participants described how the support and encouragement of their navigators contributed to a change in mindset for them. A participant described how *"she [navigator] told me I was too good for that [prison] – that I could do it on the outside"*. A number of participants reported not having had this type of immediate and hands-on support before. Navigators reported an obvious increase in participants' self-esteem and confidence as they worked with them on their release and reintegration process.

From the outset there were concerns that the type of personal support being offered risked participants becoming dependent on navigators. However, feedback from some participants showed that the process instead encouraged participants to be active in addressing their needs. A participant explained, *"he's [the navigator] already done everything for me and it's time to help myself. I'm feeling confident enough to sort accommodation...it's the support and mana that he gave me"*.

Existing research on offender reintegration has suggested that a combination of internal motivation and support from others (family, employment, etc) is desirable if offending risk is to be reduced (Giordano et al., 2002; Davis et al., 2012). These two sides of the coin can be mutually reinforcing, whereby "those who receive support are more likely to perceive that change is possible and to have the desire to change" (Davis et al., 2012, p. 463). Feedback from navigators suggests that the process of overcoming hurdles and resolving practical problems leads to increased motivation and confidence of participants. As one navigator observed, once plans are worked through to completion, "the change is dramatic and positive".

Participants' subjective sense of reintegrating to the community

The basic principle of OOG is that through identifying and resolving the obstacles newly released prisoners face, these offenders will have greater success in reintegrating to the community, and as a result be more likely to remain offence-free. Overwhelmingly, participants interviewed for the evaluation did indeed report a subjective sense of positivity about their process of transitioning between prison and the community. When asked about specific factors they thought were helping, most referred to the needs factors that OOG navigators particularly help with.

A participant described it thus: *"It's [OOG] been a big help for me to stay focused ... and setting me up to be a normal part of society again. I would never have gone into StudyLink, or to the Polytech in my life (before)"*.

While support with reintegration following release does not guarantee the cessation of further offending, a number of participants drew the link between staying crime-free and the help they received. Some mentioned how crucial it had been for them to receive assistance with quickly securing a benefit so they could pay rent and bills, while others spoke of the importance to them of re-establishing family links, and relationships with partners, which kept them from reverting to their old ways.

While this kind of qualitative data is indicative only concerning the effectiveness of OOG in reducing re-offending, it underlines a finding of the evaluation that the OOG service was found to be meaningful, useful, and worthwhile to the participants, many of whom credited it with their 'survival' in remaining crime-free.

Conclusion

While still at the early stage of implementation, experiences of those involved in OOG highlight several lessons for designing services to support offender reintegration. Drawing mostly on the perspectives of participants who engaged with OOG, it seems clear that a positive and collaborative relationship with a navigator can support participants' reintegration in a number of ways. Participants highlighted the role that navigators played in both supporting them in resolving practical problems, and increasing their confidence in their own abilities and their motivation to change. Both of these emerged as important in participants' commitment to living a crime-free lifestyle.

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Practice note: Road safety days for offenders – a case study of a collaborative project in Whanganui/Taranaki district

Annette Perrett

Service Manager, Department of Corrections

Author biography:

Service Manager Annette Perrett divides her time between the New Plymouth and Hawera offices. Her staff manage a full range of community-based sentences and orders. Annette has been with the Department since 2003. She started as an administration officer, progressed to a probation officer, and was appointed to her current role of service manager in 2009. Annette comes from a strong administration background.

Note: The author and Senior Community Work Supervisor Adele Wisnewski received a Department of Corrections Gold Award for their efforts in collaborating with the community to deliver work and living skills to offenders in Whanganui / Taranaki.

This year Whanganui / Taranaki probation district developed a road safety day, called 'The Big Day Out', for offenders from the district serving community work sentences. The day is an excellent model of collaboration between multiple agencies and the wider community. Driving offences account for 20 – 25 percent of all re-offending. The day was designed to help Corrections achieve the goal of reducing re-offending by 25 percent, but also has benefits for the other organisations involved.

Annette Perrett, Service Manager from New Plymouth, describes how it all came together:

The idea to hold a road safety day for offenders sprang from a conversation I had with Senior Community Work Supervisor Adele Wisnewski while travelling between the New Plymouth and Hawera Community Corrections. From this conversation the initiative evolved and has resulted in three successful road safety days in Whanganui and New Plymouth where sixty offenders per day and over a dozen organisations congregated for a day of education and promotion of road safety.

At the beginning, the seconded Work and Living Skills Co-ordinator Adele Wisnewski and I discussed the merits of a 'hub day', where banks, sporting entities, employers, counsellors and other community agencies would come together in one space; providing support and assistance to offenders.

Adele thought holding such a day, perhaps with a specific focus, could be developed into a work and living skills programme. We could involve the community to assist with ongoing support. The intention was to capture as many offenders in a short space of time without losing the impact of any messages. This was

an ambitious idea and not one that could be achieved alone. Collaboration was required and our external relationships would become vital to our success.

As mentioned, Adele, a Community Work Supervisor from New Plymouth, was seconded for twelve months into a Senior Community Work Supervisor role to focus on increasing our work and living skills programmes across the district. We had made some progress in initiating valuable learning opportunities for our community work offenders already. One of the successes was our 'Plant It, Grow It, Eat It' programme that Adele had developed and facilitated with her background and qualifications in horticulture. Adele's ambitious nature and creative thinking caught the attention of our district manager who felt her skills would be well suited to developing work and living skills programmes.

In all probation work we rely on other agencies to help us deliver programmes and provide support for offenders assessed as having skill or knowledge gaps. With the hub day concept in mind, we met with Roadsafes Whanganui/Rangitikei. The idea began to evolve into the development of a 'Big Day Out'. Roadsafes Whanganui/Rangitikei and Roadsafes Taranaki both agreed to take part.

Marion Webby, Road Safety Co-ordinator from Road Safe Taranaki, had initial concerns about how the days would be run with so many people involved. However, after seeing the results from a similar day held in Whanganui, she knew it was possible and was willing to be the Project Manager for a Taranaki Road Safety event.

Marion created a project plan including an outline of individual activities, a time sheet, a health and safety plan, potential risks and plans around mitigating these, and a list of all organisations, including names and contact details of all those involved in the day.

With Marion's help, we invited over a dozen agencies to participate in the proposed road safety day. Several meetings, emails and phone calls followed. At this point we had the following organisations working in partnership with us; Roadsafes Taranaki, Rock Up climbing wall, New Plymouth Injury Safe, Fire Service, Police, St John First Aid, a funeral director, Hawkes Bay Roadsafes and Horizon Regional Council.

A detailed project plan was developed with input from all agencies; it was crucial to have a mutual understanding of the expectations and requirements for the day. Each organisation had an agenda and their own desired outcomes. We had to work together to ensure these were met as well as not taking our eyes off the collective goal – reducing driving related offending and keeping road users safe.

Giving every agency a voice in the set up meant a solid collective engagement and a better understanding of the work we all do. This strengthened relationships between the organisations and these stronger ties will lead to ongoing support for each other in the future; a result above what was initially anticipated.

Marion said the response from the agencies was excellent:

"The replies were overwhelmingly in favour of the road safety day because it aimed to educate members of our society who don't engage with our sector often. All agencies had the same vision of being involved in an educational day that could potentially change the lives of many in all sorts of different ways.

The goal was to deliver behaviour-change education in a positive, friendly atmosphere without blame or threat. I am confident all the partners came away knowing we have helped people to make better decisions."

About two weeks after the event, we got together to debrief. We discussed what went well, what could be improved and 'where to from here' for future events.

While there were areas that could be improved, there was nothing significant as everyone had worked tirelessly and seamlessly together on the day which resulted in an incident-free, purposeful and educational day. Evaluation forms were given to all participants at the end of the day, and although some just ticked boxes, several took the time to provide additional comments.

Common themes were:

- They had received clear messages around the impacts of drinking and driving
- It was emotional to hear the funeral director talk about their role and the impact death has on so many people, especially when they discussed the impact of a horrific accident where the family are unable to view their loved ones.

Overall they felt the day was worthwhile and we should have more of them.

Not only were the people running the activities key in making this a successful day, we had a large venue, courtesy of the Pacific International Hotel Management School. As well as having plenty of space they had alternative areas in case of bad weather so there was a contingency plan. There was another win-win situation here; their hospitality students were able to provide a cooked lunch to a large group of people as part of their training.

The number of work and living skills hours attended was well over expected targets. Our partners for the day, Roadsafes Taranaki, Police, Fire, and St John First Aid were also able to have the event count towards their targets. Those not accountable to measurable outcomes, such as the Rock Up climbing wall, the funeral director, and New Plymouth Injury Safe made gains in making a difference and potentially saving lives.

We acknowledge those who willingly gave up their time, at no cost, to help us make this a successful day. It is important to mention the number of community probation staff who were involved; the community work supervisors, senior community work supervisors, probation officers, administration officers and service managers. But there were costs despite volunteers, and funding was required for some of the activities. We were fortunate that Roadsafes have an allocated budget for educational messaging, and we were able to provide some funding through the work and living skills budget.

The road safety day was reported in the local *Taranaki Daily News*, and with so many people involved, the events were spoken about in communities around Taranaki. Interestingly, I was later approached by a mother concerned about her 22-year-old son's driving behaviour and lack of care. He had been convicted twice for Excess Breath Alcohol and has been the driver of several minor car accidents as a result of excess speed. She wanted to know if we intended to run another road safety day. The intriguing point of this conversation is her son is not involved, nor has been, with Community Corrections as he has only received financial penalties.

The road safety day has highlighted what is possible in our district when engaging with the community. It has not only helped us think about what we could do in the future but is also helping us consider questions about the role Corrections plays in the wider community such as:

- Does this now become a full community responsibility which is not only being run by community probation for our offenders?
- Do we have an audience outside of this group, perhaps with our youth?
- Should we be looking at a proactive preventative approach, and not only targeting re-offending?

These points are well worth serious consideration – and of course we need to work collaboratively in seeking the answers to crime in the community.

I would encourage all probation districts to 'think big' about what can be achieved through collaboration with your community. As Chief Executive Ray Smith put it at the Leaders' Forum, "we can achieve our goals by helping others achieve theirs".



Nudge: A cause for international collaboration in public policy

Marcus Smith

Policy Adviser, Department of Corrections

Author biography:

Marcus Smith has worked in Policy at the Department of Corrections for more than two and a half years. He studied Philosophy at the University of Auckland, at honours level, and now studies Law part-time. Marcus has contributed to a variety of policy proposals, including advice on the GPS monitoring of offenders, the accommodation of transgender prisoners, and the prison television rental scheme.

Abstract

The bestselling book *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness* (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008) is having a noticeable effect on public policy-making. Based on recent findings in behavioural sciences, and the observation that choices can be improved by small changes in design, it suggests ways policy-makers can 'nudge' us to better act in our own best interests. These suggestions are being taken up by governments across the developed world, and at a rate that is alarming to critics of the approach. This article identifies some risks with attempting to nudge the public, but argues that nudges can, if used responsibly and based on the right evidence, occupy an important place in public policy. Government agencies in New Zealand could be left to decide independently to what extent their policy-making might benefit from these insights. This article makes the case, however, that these efforts in policy-development would be better informed through collaboration with countries that are already experimenting with nudge-inspired initiatives, exchanging ideas and sharing their findings.

The international popularity of Nudge

The behavioural sciences have for years been yielding observations that have implications for public policy. But it wasn't until 2008, when Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein published *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness*, that these observations really captured the imagination of policy-makers. David Cameron, early in his term as British Prime Minister (two years after the publication of *Nudge*), established a Behaviour Insights Team – informally known as a 'Nudge Unit' – to explore how the findings might usefully be applied in public policy. The inaugural Nudge Unit is thought to have saved millions of taxpayer dollars. Among its triumphs are the following initiatives (featured on its public website):

- Automatically enrolling individuals on to pension schemes has increased saving rates for those employed by large firms in the UK from 61 to 83%;
- Informing people who failed to pay their tax that most other people had already paid their tax, increased payment rates by over 5 percentage points;
- Encouraging job seekers to actively commit to undertaking job search activities increased their chance of finding a new job;
- Prompting people to join the Organ Donor Register using reciprocity messages ('if you needed an organ, would you take one?') adds 100,000 people to the register in one year.

Despite criticisms I'll canvass later in the article, this tradition of exploring how the behavioral sciences can be brought to bear on the State's interactions with the public is fast spreading to other parts of the developed world, including the United States, other European nations, and Australia. Countries are increasingly coming together to exchange ideas and share findings, through such channels, for example, as the 'European Nudge Network' – a conference held in June this year to take stock of progress in informing policy development and to disseminate information.

How it began: acknowledging the irrational

A great deal of public policy aims to influence the decisions people make towards a greater public good. Policy-makers therefore have a strong interest in understanding why people make the choices they do. Based on more traditional economic theories, we have tended to assume that, given complete information, people will generally behave rationally and respond predictably to incentives. According to this logic, people can be expected to make good decisions, for example about their health or their retirement, if they are fully informed that certain foods are unhealthy or that

starting saving early will make life more materially comfortable in the future.

This train of thought fails to account for the growing body of evidence that humans are often imperfect decision-makers, who operate under the influence of a wide range of seemingly irrational biases. Many of our decisions can be heavily influenced by factors that are not immediately obvious to us, and can easily be overlooked by policy-makers, including how our choices are framed, the behaviour of our peers, and our ability to balance our short and long-term interests.

This often neglected part of the story about human behaviour is developed by the authors of *Nudge* in ways that are potentially very helpful to policy-makers. In the following sections, I set out a few of the ideas that might be of particular interest to policy-makers.

Rules of thumb

The sciences are starting to tell us how a genius can forget where he or she parked the car. A distinction is made between two kinds of thinking: intuitive and reflective; automatic and rational; or, as in Kahneman's 2011 text, 'fast and slow'. It's the former kind of thinking, whatever we choose to call it, that is more likely to embarrass us. And it often does this by finding mental shortcuts, or adopting rules of thumb. The 'availability' heuristic, for example, might explain the public's sometimes disproportionate fear of becoming a victim of crime: we tend to calculate risks on the basis of how readily examples come to mind. This is apparently why people often believe, wrongly, that murder is more common than suicide.

Thinking fast can also produce biases when it comes to predicting odds and knowing what to make of chance outcomes. The gambling fallacy is a well-known illustration of this point, in that we irrationally expect odds to change once something improbable has happened. We struggle to believe after tossing heads five times in a row that there's an equal chance of it happening a sixth time. Sometimes we're so surprised by these irregularities that we attribute some significance to them. The authors give the example of basketball fans who subscribe to the myth that players get a 'hot hand'; that they are more likely to get the next shot if they got the last. But these streaks are just what you'd expect from a series of chance-based outcomes.

Framing

How people react to information depends to a surprising extent on how it is pitched to them. If something, say a surgical procedure, ends well for 90 percent of people, it should be obvious that it doesn't for the other 10 percent. But the number of patients who will agree to the procedure depends on which fact gets the emphasis. It's also important in framing information to

keep in mind that people are loss-averse. Our Energy and Efficiency Conservation Authority tells us how much we can save by switching appliances off at the wall. But the authors of *Nudge* suggest the message would be more effective if we're told how much we stand to lose by keeping them on.

Inertia and the status quo bias

How likely we are to choose something also depends on whether we have to choose it actively, or just allow it to happen. This has been dubbed the 'status quo bias' and is the observation that we tend to settle for our current state of affairs, or some default option, even when other options may be more desirable. Even the small effort required to change the channel when one television programme ends and something we hadn't intended to watch begins, or to opt into a savings scheme, can prevent us from making the choice we actually want. Policy-makers can take advantage of this bias in order to make beneficial decisions more likely.

This is by no means a revolutionary idea. It has already been put to great use by making Kiwisaver a scheme eligible employees have to opt out of. In fact, there is often no neutral way to design these choices, because there has to be a default option. It's incumbent on policy-makers in these situations to get the design right – and they usually do.

Conformity effects

Some of the more forceful nudges can be attributed to our peers and to social norms. Alarming, most people will accept absurd propositions and overlook obvious errors if enough other people (even complete strangers) do. The most striking example is a study where subjects were asked to consider a controversial statement about the suppression of free speech in certain situations. Asked in private whether they agreed with it, only 19 percent said yes. But asked in the company of four others who agreed with the statement, 58 percent of the subjects agreed. This doesn't bode well for the values of someone who is constantly in the wrong company.

The lesson in this is that we can sometimes give people a nudge in the right direction just by informing them about what others are doing. We've seen that the British Nudge Unit claims to have increased tax compliance by telling people how many of their peers have already paid. Likewise, studies suggest that, because university students over-estimate the proportion of their peers who regularly abuse alcohol, telling them what proportion don't abuse alcohol can statistically reduce alcohol abuse.

Collecting information from people, as well as providing it, can have surprising consequences. Take someone who intends to do something, like vote or exercise. By

asking them whether they intend to vote or exercise, you can actually make them more likely to go through with it. This is known as the 'mere-measurement effect'. People will generally floss more in the next week when asked how many times they expect to floss in the next week.

Short-sightedness

We all suffer at times from a conflict between our short and long-term interests; we are tempted by things now that have negative consequences later. And we'll sometimes take strange measures to resist them. In the same way that Ulysses had his crew tie him to the mast to avoid being tempted by the irresistible song of the Sirens, the authors suggest strategies for preserving our long-term interests in the face of temptation. A topical example that comes to mind is reports that, in Texas and parts of the United Kingdom, some young offenders have asked correctional authorities to monitor their movements by GPS. The near certainty of detection helps them resist peer pressure from their associates and curb their temptations to re-offend.

The moral objection and some brief replies

The enthusiasm for nudge-based policy-making is not universal. You can see how the very idea, especially when characterised as an attempt to make people behave as the State considers desirable through subtle forms of influence, might make some of us suspicious.

Nudges do seem to have some potential for abuse, for example, through mis-information. But these concerns about excessive paternalism are, as far as I can tell, entertained rather abstractly and have no basis in the policies and practices that have so far resulted from the enthusiasm generated by *Nudge*. Still, there has been resistance enough that Cass Sunstein has devoted a subsequent book *Why Nudge?* (2014) to defending the use of these techniques in public policy. Readers short on time, however, might take some comfort in the following facts:

- *The state often can't help but nudge us.* There is no neutral way to design many of our choices. Questions have to be framed one way or another and government schemes often have to be either opt-in or opt-out. Most of us would prefer to be nudged by the state in the direction of our own interests than being nudged thoughtlessly.
- *Nudges can be a liberty-preserving alternative to more coercive policies.* Nudges can make more objectionable and interventionist approaches unnecessary. The tax compliance initiative is a good example here because the friendly and informative letters were trialled as an alternative to more abrasive letters that reminded recipients of the consequences of failing to comply.

- *Nudges needn't lack transparency in order to work.* We could even consciously nudge ourselves by rephrasing a question, finding out how our peers have responded, or stating our intention to exercise to anyone who will listen. Many of us set our clocks and watches a few minutes fast in a conscious and often successful attempt to get to appointments on time.

Other criticisms

Nudge lends itself so readily to application in policy development that there is some risk of seeing everything as an opportunity to nudge people, over-estimating efficacy or failing to anticipate other consequences. Regularly asking offenders on parole whether they intend to comply with their release conditions might turn out to be more irritating, or even patronising, than helpful. Incidentally, this kind of unrealistic optimism is one of the very traps the book itself warns us about. (People starting their own business were surveyed on a) what they thought was the chance of success for a typical business like theirs? and b) what they thought was *their* chance of success. The most common answers were 50 percent and 90 percent respectively.)

It's possible to imagine nudges going further wrong where optimism prevents us from appreciating their potential consequences, especially for impressionable or vulnerable populations. For example, the conformity effect might serve the apparently useful purpose of bringing down power consumption by allowing high-users to see how they compare with other users. But in households where there is a very good reason for high power consumption, the social pressure to bring down their use could be bad for their health. A nudge might sometimes be enough to send a minority over a precipice.

Some restraint is also called for in light of the few examples of success in applying the insights of *Nudge* that seem to get repeated. Although Nudge Units claim to have introduced all kinds of innovative policies, six years on from the book's publication, we keep hearing about opt-out pension and organ donation schemes and letters providing statistics to people who owe money to the Crown. This might suggest that the discovery of opportunities to nudge the public for the better is rather gradual, involves some trial and error, and may soon reach a natural limit.

How New Zealand stands to benefit: the case for international collaboration

On balance, foreign governments do seem to be getting a decent return on their nudge-inspired interventions. Moreover, many of the strategies are so simple and inexpensive that we might have very little to lose by

adopting them, whether or not they turn out to be a fiscal god-send. I've argued, however, that there are certain risks with making policy through this lens and that there might be non-financial costs associated with unrealistic optimism.

An obvious way we can avoid these risks is by participating in the international community of behavioural experts and policy-makers who have already road-tested the ideas and measured their effects. There is a clear willingness within that community to share findings and boast about successes they've enjoyed. The fact that other policy-makers stand to benefit from their experiences is a classic example of what economists call a positive externality. It would allow us the advantage of being selective, based on evidence, in our use of nudges. If we can establish that unusually informative letters have demonstrably increased tax compliance and fine payments in the United Kingdom, why not find out how the winning formula would be applied here?

Government agencies in New Zealand could be expected to research international success stories, the science behind them, and apply them autonomously to their own respective policy programmes. It's likely this is already happening to some extent. But the tendency in other countries to establish a dedicated and suitably qualified team to investigate nudge-related opportunities across the public service may also be an example worth following. I can think of three immediate reasons for this:

- A dedicated team is the most obvious channel through which to investigate international practices, disseminate findings as they relate to agencies and work out where in public policy resources are best invested.
- A certain effort and expertise is required to evaluate the success of initiatives, understand their basis in behavioural psychology, and account for differences in our own policy settings.
- Participation in the international community is likely to involve some give as well as take, meaning we might be expected to earn our keep by contributing and testing some of our own ideas.

Conclusion

New Zealand has so far been relatively silent on its stance on nudging. I have argued that there are good reasons for being cautious and that the risks can be obscured by the seductive quality of behavioural insights and the success others seem to have enjoyed by applying them. But caution also involves an opportunity cost.

Other countries have been putting these ideas to the test for the last few years and claim to have accomplished much at very little expense. We can infer

from strong themes in reports of their success that some ideas are proving more effective and extracting more value than others. Hence, the longer this goes on, the more we stand to gain by participating in this international community – or, should I say, the more we stand to lose by being excluded!

In this article, I've offered reasons for thinking New Zealand's participation would be best received internationally, and would produce the best results, through a single channel of expertise that interacts with government agencies. There is also a risk that the vacuum created by not having this direct and purposeful contact with other countries could result in isolated and less informed efforts in the public service to put nudges into practice.

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