



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE *for* SCOTLAND**

**Sex Offender Supervision in the 21st Century: Future Vision
Effective Approaches to Case Management.
Sydney 17 – 19 October 2006**

Bill Whyte

Introduction

No two jurisdictions can or should respond to and manage people involved in sexually harmful behaviours in exactly the same manner. Local practices have to take into account the nature of the local population characteristics, the social and political climate as well as the resources available. Nonetheless, in relation to case management with sex offenders, many of the practice issues are very similar across jurisdictions even if the context is somewhat different. Many of the challenges for practitioners, in trying to manage and supervise sex offenders effectively, are common to all our jurisdictions and ones that tax everyone's energies in a disproportionate way. While they represent a tiny proportion of police and probation caseloads, sex offenders take up a substantial amount of time and resources and are the source of worry work for professionals and a source of great public and political concern.

The role of case management and in particular the role of the supervising practitioner within it, are being re-examined and re-contextualised as a key element in bringing together and 'humanising' the direction of the evidence, the value of rigor, technology, structured methodologies and controls alongside the need to connect offenders to social resources and opportunities to support desistance and better social integration. In many ways the case manager is the glue that binds these elements together.

Characteristics

Although often referred to as a "type" of offender, there is no such thing as a "typical" sex offender, and sex offending is not straightforward to define and is complex to deal with. People involved in such behaviour can come from all backgrounds, ages, income levels, and professions and a wide variety of behaviours fall within the definition of sex offence (Ahlmeyer, Heil, McKee, and English, 2000)

For practitioners concern has to focus on the danger and harm caused to others, the risk of re-offending, on prevention and on how to support long term desistance. We know in general terms that

- most recorded offences are committed by men though the numbers of recorded offences by women seems to be growing

- many commit multiple crimes against multiple types of victims with whom they have varying types of relationships
- offences are often carefully planned rather than impulsive and involve a major breach in trust and an abuse of power
- most victims are women or children though not exclusively
- most offences are committed by people known to their victims and random attacks by strangers remain relatively rare
- sexual deviancy is though often to begin in adolescence.

While recorded crime data tends to suggest that first formal conviction is often much older than for other offenders, self report data suggest that many may have offended a number of times before being first caught. First offences may still be around 18. Despite the diversity of offences which can be classified as ‘sexual’ in nature, contemporary popular and political discourses have tended to conflate different categories and highlight the threat posed by the ‘stranger’— male adult predatory ‘paedophiles’ who offend against either male or female child victims unknown to them—as being symptomatic of the wider evils of sex offending in general. This image does not reflect people with varied motivations, patterns of behaviour and different levels and types of need, some who when detected are total acceptors of their responsibility, others who are acceptors but justify their behaviour, through to ambiguous deniers and unequivocal deniers.

To some degree, a new ‘stranger’ risk is emerging because of new technology and the numbers of detected internet offenders are growing relative to other known categories. These include

- people socialising and grooming children in preparation for sexual abuse online and to contact other sex offenders(Davidson, 2004)
- people using children’s computer language and learning about their hobbies and interests (O’Connell, 2003, Chase and Stratham, 2005)
- people using the Internet to access indecent images (Martellozzo, 2006)

While grooming online seems still relatively infrequent, police officers acting covertly as children claim to be catching offenders every week and report on the extra-ordinary lengths that some men will go to spending months preparing a child for abuse online. New typologies have been developed based on relatively recent experience showing a wide range of categories of internet offenders

- *Browsers*’ accidentally ‘come across’ indecent images and save them, in reality such images are generally purchased via credit card or swapped by collectors
- *Private fantasiers*’ create digital images for their own private use
- *Trawlers*’ search for indecent images through open browsers and may engage in some networking
- *Non-secure collectors*’ look for indecent images in open areas of the Internet such as chat rooms, and are probably networking
- *Secure collectors*’ in online hidden paedophile networks;. highly organised collectors who employ sophisticated security to conceal their offending
- *Groomers*’ target and groom children via peer-to-peer technology, interactive Internet games and chat rooms.

- *'Physical abusers'* contact abusers who have an interest in indecent images as a part of their fantasy cycle; offenders may photograph their abusive behaviour for their own use.
- *'Producers'* record the sexual abuse of children for the purposes of distribution to networks and to satisfy their own fantasy.
- *'Distributors'* distribute indecent images either for financial gain or as part of their collecting behaviour (Krone 2004)

All of us involved in the practice field have much to learn about different groups of sex offenders and if or how they differ from the general criminal population if appropriate responses are to be designed to accommodate these differences. Although some people seem unique from the general criminal population, such extra familial child abusers and mentally disordered offenders, others e.g. rapists, often possess many of the same characteristics that are associated with more general criminal behaviour. Indeed some feminist critiques have suggested that all men are potential rapists (Dominelli 1992).

Whether you would support such a view or not, this is a reminder that if we are serious about assisting people change rather than simply policing them, which for the most part is likely to be the best way to protect victims and the public at large, we have to deal with sex offenders as people first – people who present risks but also who have needs. This is not always easy given the nature of their actions. In the context of public fear and anxiety, their portrayal by the media as 'beasts' or 'monsters' doesn't particularly help. These are images that conveniently distance the community from the roots of sexual violence, from responsibility for the way we socialise children, particularly boys and how society views sexuality.

The highly emotive and punitive social climate that surrounds the issue of sexual crime impacts on a sex offender's presentation of himself or herself, and ultimately his ability to self-manage risks associated with re-offending. If people are to acknowledge and understand their offending and establish and maintain a role as an 'ex-offender', this must be sustained by a self image based on positive social roles and meaningful life style resources. If victims are to be safeguarded, the most 'risky' offenders may need some kind of 'wrap around' assistance – not simply from enforcement and surveillance mechanisms, but also from positive and resilient social networks which support, monitor and maintain, whether through circles of support, through developments in restorative practices, or through other ways of providing or mobilising family and other social network resources robust enough to acknowledge the harm done while supporting positives in the offender's life, providing hope and optimism about their future. These are likely to hold key to knowledge relating to the offender and can act as the ears and the eyes of those agencies responsible for the management of that offender, feeding in vital information and a more constructive alternative to Sarah's Law approaches to outing sex offenders (Saunders and Wilson 2002).

We know that effective supervision in the community has to be built around a human service approach based on meaningful and positive human relations; and yet at the same time practice approaches directed by current research and practice experience have to assume that such people are likely to be manipulative, deceptive, and secretive. Finding the right balance is much easier to talk about than to deliver and creates very real day to day challenges.

The current 'panic' and obsession with sex offenders in the popular imagination and the heavy reliance on enforcement and surveillance through legislation, monitoring, tracking and policing systems in Scotland and in other UK jurisdictions over the last 20 years has singled sex offenders out for special punitive consideration. This climate does not lend itself to a debate on the need for positive resources (Hudson 2005).

Custody and reducing offending

In reality most jurisdictions use custody for more serious sex offenders. Over half of all those convicted of sexual assault and over a third of all offenders convicted of sexual offences against children in Scotland are sent to prison. As a consequence a major challenge for practice is dealing with problems at the back end as people return to the community often poorly prepared for the transition. The high cost of custody and the reality that most will return and require supervision in the community has been a strong political motivator to drive changes in community provision.

England and Scotland currently sit as the two custody capitals of Western Europe with prison population of around 145 and 137 per 100,000 respectively compared to Australia's 112 per 100,000, which is closer to the European average which is generally under 100 per 100,000. So much has been used in prison resources over the last ten years on short term places, it will take the same time to reduce the prison population and to utilise those resources constructively for people who present the most serious risks to the community. For the first time in public, Scottish Prison Service (SPS) has entered the debate with its Chief Executive appealing to politicians and sentencers alike not to allow anyone to be admitted to custody for less than six months and ideally not for less than a year in order to give them the opportunity to work more effectively with the most serious offenders. Peterhead prison which houses specialist sex offender facilities was described in September 2006 by the Scottish Inspector of Prisons as having 'the worst conditions of any prison in Scotland' and because of the over use of custody 'prisoners about whom the public are most concerned are still the least well-prepared for freedom'. Despite running a well regarded Sex Offender Treatment Programme (STOP) for many years, 129 of the 299 prisoners are likely to have been released before they receive or complete the STOP programme.

At the same supervision of sex offenders in the community remains a source of public and political anxiety – the 'populist' attitude seems to be that sex offenders should go to prison and stay there for ever! I was interviewed recently by a journalist from the Scotsman, one of our more serious national newspapers on community supervision of sex offenders and suggested that the courts might better use resources by replacing short prison sentences for sex related offences by lengthy period of supervision in the community subject to structured programmes as a more cost effective approach. Despite efforts to explain the possible benefits, the headline captured the populist view - 'Expert's stay out of jail card for sex crimes'!

Public Protection Practices

Research suggests that while sex offenders are much more likely to commit subsequent sexual offences than the general criminal population, they do not exclusively commit sexual offences. Many commentators (Quinsey 1998) remind us that in the absence of definitive knowledge about effective sex offender responses, the best approach is still to structure interventions around what is known about effective practice with offenders in

general. So our core practices have to be well embedded to handle the additional demands that sex offenders pose.

The literature on effective practice and the drive for better outcomes has influenced changes in organisational and practice approaches to supervision in most western jurisdictions. In England and Wales the national probation service has been replaced by a National Offender Management Service (NOMS). In Scotland we disbanded our national probation service in 1969 and integrated the service within all purpose local authority social work provision and from 2007 will introduce regional Community Justice Authorities accountable to local politicians under the direction of a National Advisory Board chaired by the Scottish Minister of Justice. Scottish Prison Service will remain separate but is expected to reconfigure custodial provision to provide local facilities to assist better integrated case management and meaningful pathways to community resettlement. There is a new statutory duty on SPS and agencies including health to co-operate in providing community based services (Scottish Executive 2005).

Scotland, like England and Wales, has its own national programme accreditation panel and all jurisdictions are now operating accredited versions of a Community Sex Offender Programme (C-SOGP). The English C-SOGP is being evaluated by David Middleton and we at CJSWDC are evaluating the Scottish version as a part of an action research project. Our Centre hosts a National Development (Champions) Group which meets monthly with the aim of promoting research based practice and training. In addition we have a national practice evaluation group to support the evaluation of the C-SOGP programme. An Individualised Treatment for Sex Offending (ITSO) (2:1) programme is currently being piloted. Scotland has also established an independent national Risk Management Authority (RMA) to deal with new powers for Lifelong restriction for very serious violent and sexual offenders and to set national standards for risk assessment and risk management practice.

All UK jurisdictions are adopting VISOR (violent and sex offender registration) protocols – a national intelligence database that holds information on registered and non-registered sex offenders to assist surveillance and the sharing of information between the police, social work sex offender teams and the Scottish Prison Service.

MAPPA - multi-disciplinary public protection arrangements for dealing with very high risk offenders are at different stages of development. They have existed in England since 1999. In Scotland different approaches developed over time

- reviews led by the police;
- multi-agency meetings for potentially dangerous offenders led by criminal justice social work services; and
- multi-agency risk management groups chaired by the police.

so that staff were not always clear which of these was the correct forum in which to discuss a particular case and there was sometimes duplication of discussions. While better protocols have gone some way to clarify this confusion, MAPPAs will be rolled out across Scotland by early 2007 with Local Authorities as the lead. Each Community Justice Authority will appoint a MAPPA co-ordinator to collate information, co-ordinate MAPPA meetings and support dedicated teams for dealing in co-operation, with SPS and Police, with different categories of high risk offenders. Thornton's Risk Matrix 2000 is

used for shared assessment by police and social work to determine the status and response level:

- Level 1 – where a single agency can manage the risk at a local level – most offenders will be managed by social work
- Level 2 where there is need for involvement of other agencies through regular multi-agency meetings
- Level 3 the critical few – often require specialist resources to manage the risk with multi-agency meetings twice monthly

The intention of the localised structure is to support and link such developments directly to local authorities' corporate responsibility for public and child protection under social work legislation which includes responsibility for probation. I suspect we are on the way to developing an integrated public protection service to parallel child protection provision.

At the same time internet offenders have opened up global frontiers that have required new responses aimed at protecting children on line

- Virtual Global Task Force (VGTF) - law enforcement agencies from Australia, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Interpol).
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)- an independent watchdog)
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) (to raise awareness and provide support and advice.
- Police High Technology Crime Units- (PHTCU) policing the internet

to raise awareness through educational programmes involving children, the police and parents. Increased powers are being sought to establish routine inspection of home computers, unannounced visits to view offenders' home environments and explore computing use. The intention is to have unlimited access to (sex) offenders computers through MAPPA arrangements in future and new legislation is coming into force in Scotland that will enable the police to enter sex offender's home to verify what is said in risk assessment reports. It is likely that Public Protection Officers (MAPPA) will be expected to sample from the register to check the lifestyles of all sex offenders (not just known Internet offenders) including computer use on a regular basis'

Despite all of this intended activity, in truth, relatively little is known about those who use such images and there is limited expertise on risk assessment with online groomers, or research exploring the link between indecent image use and online grooming. There is as yet no certainty that sex offenders using the Internet are distinctive as a group or whether offenders convicted of indecent image related offences, often assessed as 'low risk', may actually be a higher risk in terms of their propensity for contact abuse or indeed clear data to suggest a correlation between the viewing of extreme pornographic material and violent sexual offences..

All of this adds to the kind of information that practitioners need, at least, to be aware of and looking for in their day to day dealings with sex offenders. If sex offenders are to be subject to a range of screening, particularly about internet offending, practitioners may need basic IT knowledge to enquire about computer use at home or in an Internet café,

about the nature of the obsession and how much of time is focused on it (Taylor and Quayle. 2006).

Huge investments of resources, time and energy are going into this field. It remains to be seen if we will learn lessons from the developments in child protection systems over the last 40 years. Tragedies and risks seem unavoidable and enquiries continue produce very similar results of poor communication, lack of integrated and multi-disciplinary strategic management etc. It is noticeable that few, if any, of these development are aimed at change and better social integration of offenders. We continue to plough resources and energy into technical solutions which are important, but will not in themselves be sufficient without a meaningful human service and a professional development approach to case management to effect positive change on those detected.

What Works? - challenges of implementation and sustainability

In most jurisdictions probation has taken on board the directional principles drawn from systematic reviews of research over the last 20 years and is shaping provision around them – all of us trying to utilise the best methodologies, the best mix of human art, social science evidence and organisational structures on which to direct effective practice and provision.

The focus for practice is on the requirement to demonstrate the impact of intervention on reducing re-offending. However implementing effectiveness principles with integrity, rolling them out on a large scale and developing the art of sustaining motivation, compliance and change through differentiated and structured intervention, as you know, is not a straightforward challenge.

Until this year I was a member of Scotland's National Accreditation Panel and have been encouraged by the demanding standards that are being set for accredited structured programmes – both rigour, and substantial resources required to work with those considered to present medium to high risk of re-offending. National programme accreditation has created a step change in the quality of programmes and has put pressure on the service to develop explicit quality assurance processes to fulfil 'on site' implementation requirements and for provision that is not programme based. At the same time accreditation developments are exposing practitioners to greater professional scrutiny that requires a supportive learning environment, if these are not to be experienced as oppressive.

A trading standards definition of quality - 'fit for purpose' - implies there should be clear and stated purposes for any quality intervention that attempts to match needs and risks with individual characteristics, in particular gender, ethnicity, age, learning style, to bring together the relevant mix of resources and skills to achieve the desired objectives. Do we do what we say we will do? Arguably, this is the logical step that is most commonly neglected in practice (Bonta and Rugge, 2004).

The emphasis on effective implementation and practice integrity marks the latest phase of the Effectiveness Project in UK jurisdictions –the so called What Works? Agenda. Evaluation of a series of pathfinder projects in England and Wales, has probably been the largest initiative of its kind anywhere in the world. Substantial investment was made to achieve a rapid step change in the effectiveness of probation work through the systematic application of international research and to promote confidence in policy makers,

sentencers and the public. The pathfinder programmes included a resettlement pathfinders for short-term prisoners (Lewis et al., 2003)

Outcomes to date have been less positive than was hoped for suggesting that effective implementation may require a much longer term strategy. Although the recent evaluations are ongoing and major improvements based on the experience are expected, the published data highlights a number of important issues. What worked best in resettlement appeared to be a combination of facilitating access to social resources relevant to prisoners' needs alongside taking steps to address their thinking and motivation. Notwithstanding methodological issues, none of the pathfinders showed a dramatic reduction in offending among those who participated (Hollin 2004).

A number of themes have emerged; the main one being the difficulty of implementing structured programmes with integrity. The Top-down management style adopted to drive implementation forward within the prescribed time-scale seemed to alienate parts of the workforce (Blumsom, 2004) and possibly a warning in regard to sex offenders that top down enforcement will not be sufficient if practitioners are not fully engaged in the development work. Staff in some areas found their work demands spiralling out of control at the same time as demands to meet targets were increasing.

Preoccupation with a strategy of implementing structured programmes meant that little attention was paid to the need for effective case management and resource allocation beyond the confines of the programmes. Research has shown how, without a clear framework for resource allocation, the effort and energy put into programmes can tend to drift into a "one size fits all" middle ground (Bonta and Rugege, 2004).

The conclusions drawn from the rigorously conducted studies suggests that we are unlikely to see a major impact on re-offending rates, as promised by the 'What Works?' literature, from accredited programmes alone. On the positive side there was a clear demonstration of the risk principle in many of the findings. Good targeting for programmes did appear to be linked to successful results. While this research did not relate specifically to work with sex offenders it does suggest that no matter how good the enforcement techniques and structured programmes such as C-SOGP, core case management practices that surround programmes and follow up from them are likely to be crucial to fulfilling the potential gains from them.

CSOGP Programme

We in Scotland have had the advantage of learning from the appraisal of three sex offending programmes in England and Wales - TV (Thames Valley)- SOGP. N(orthumbria) SOGP and the West Midland's C-SOGP, which was selected for national accreditation for use across England and Wales from 2000 and is now running in 42 sites. We accredited a Scottish version of C-SOGP for national use in 2004 and it is now running in five sites.

All offenders are assessed prior to and during the programme using a set of psychometric measures aimed at identifying a low or high deviance profile. This profile is then combined with an actuarial risk profile produced by using the Thornton RM2000. The assessments are used to determine pathways through the programme. Some offenders are excluded from the programme if they have a low IQ or are unstable. Low risk/deviance

offenders complete Module 1 followed by the alternative 20 week Relapse Prevention Programme. High risk/deviance offenders are required to complete the full programme of 240 hours including a 50-hour relapse prevention module. Low-risk offenders complete the induction module and the 50-hour relapse prevention module. The Programme consists of 7 Modules as follows:

<i>Module</i>	<i>Duration¹</i>
1. INDUCTION	-----11 weeks
2. CYCLES & COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS	-----13 weeks
3. RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTACHMENT STYLES	-----13 weeks
4. SELF MANAGEMENT AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	-----15 weeks
5. THE ROLE OF FANTASY IN OFFENDING	-----11 weeks
6. VICTIM EMPATHY	-----12 weeks
7. RELAPSE PREVENTION & LIFESTYLE CHANGE	-----12 weeks

Offenders who have already completed an accredited programme in prison [**S.TO.P**] can be linked to C-SOGP depending on their current assessment and can be placed directly into either the 190-hour core programme or the 50-hour relapse prevention programme. I would assume this is similar to many of the specialist programmes running in Australia. The theoretical base of C-SOGP is cognitive-behavioural and the programme is

- group work based for males over 18 in the normal IQ range.
- delivered through a modular structure
- for mixed sex offence types
- normally court mandated either community disposal or release on licence
- duration of between 100 hours for low need/risk to 240 for high need/risk
- takes on average 12- 18 months to complete.
- intended to be compatible with prison SOTP

In Scotland C-SOGP is delivered by qualified and registered social workers – criminal justice social workers with back up of psychology consultancy. Specialist training is provided for programme managers, facilitators and case-managers.

Programme Evaluation

An early evaluation (Allam, 1999) suggested that those completing the programme showed a reduction by 7.4% in the rate of reconviction for sexual offences (3.2%, compared to 10.6% for a matched control group), a reduction by 11% for violent offences, and a reduction by 22% for other offences such as theft. While results showed improvements in recidivism rates, the time frame for such measurement is really unknown and may be 20 years rather than the standard 24 months for other kinds of offences.

¹ *Total of 87 weeks assumes 8 offenders per group. A larger group size will increase these timings. For example a group of 9 will need 98 weeks and a group of 10 will require 112 weeks

The Scottish national evaluation through CJSWDC began in 2005 as an action research project to improve delivery and understanding as we go. Profile data has been gathered but not yet outcome data (Hutton and Whyte 2006 unpublished). Results to date from England and Wales national data show encouraging results from the range of measures in use (Middleton, Hayes and Mendeville-Norden 2006 unpublished). The programme appears to change offence supportive attitudes and personality factors which relate to sexually harmful behaviour. However generally participants fell within the normal range on many of the pre-programme measures and so there is a need for greater in depth examination of differences in risk levels, deviance categories, offence types, and delivery sites before firmer conclusions can be drawn. In the absence of an appropriate control or comparison group there is no data, yet, to suggest the changes detected result in reduced reconviction. The comparative profiles between Scotland and England/Wales show similarities in the age range of offenders and victims and some differences e.g. greater proportion of 'extra familial' or stranger offenders related to the number of internet offenders in the Scottish programmes; a reminder that programmes will be used differently by courts in different jurisdictions and each jurisdiction has to do its own evaluation.

Given the importance of good core practices, no matter how successful C-SOGP might be in terms of completion and changes measured by psycho-metrics, it is a reasonable assumption that good case management is required to assist the individual maintain changes gained and to transfer knowledge attitudes and skills gained from the programme into real life situations. One aspect of effective case management is to incorporate aspects of programme work into ongoing supervision with an individual which involves:-

- Assessing and managing risk;
- Planning, undertaking, and reviewing work with the offender;
- Identifying and allocating resources;
- Co-ordinating and sequencing work;
- Managing contacts, including attendance and enforcement;
- Setting priorities within staff caseloads and within an overall strategy for the services.

Ongoing case management during the C-SOGP programme is a requirement of accreditation framework and the case- management manual identifies key tasks at three stages

Pre-Programme Work Tasks

Tasks during the Programme

Post-Programme work

Pre-Programme Work Tasks include

- liaison with the Treatment Manager re the entry point into the Programme.
- be familiar with the Programme offering advice and information to the offender re the Programme
- Re-enforce the expectations of the Programme concerning the attendance requirements.

- Use the (Home) Workpack exercises to increase motivation assisting the offender to identify and tackle problems
- Send information from the (Home) Workpack e.g. Life Timeline exercise to the Group Facilitators (via the Programme Manager) to inform their work
- Screen for any literacy difficulties and check the ability of the offender to understand the exercise task instructions and their performance in completing the written tasks. Informing the Programme Manager .. ensure that the offender also has support to be able to complete homework tasks arising from Programme.

Tasks to be undertaken during the Programme include

- weekly feedback re attendance performance; investigate and deal immediately with unacceptable absences using National Standards and enforcement procedures
- For acceptable absences liaise with the Treatment Manager re undertaking catch-up work
- Provide supervision as per National Standards in addition to the programme attendance particularly for high risk/deviance.#
- Share disclosed information to Programme Treatment Manager that requires further investigation re victims, employment associations and relationship, deterioration in mood, use of time, compliance with supervision, use of distorted attitudes or decrease in inhibitors (e.g. use of drink/drugs).
- Inform Supervision Plan by the feedback from the Group Facilitators and end of Module Reports.
- Supervision Plan sent to the Programme Manager for information of the Group Facilitators.
- At appropriate intervals... review meetings including all relevant parties

Post-Programme work includes

- At the conclusion of the Programme Review Meeting to receive information concerning the Relapse Prevention strategies which the offender will be using. You will be given assistance from the Programme staff to determine how these can be assisted and monitored. The use of the Behavioural Checklists should be used in this process.
- Final Programme Report will outline requirements for ongoing monitoring
- Deterioration in behaviour referred to the Programme Manager for possible re-inclusion in the Programme.
- Long Supervision Licences (more than 3 years) given 50 hour Relapse Prevention Programme as a “booster” prior to the ending of their Licence.

The case-management work pack provides a series of exercises for use in supervision as ‘homework’ aimed at assisting the person continue to recognising problems for themselves. This includes a checklist for monitoring Acute Risk Factors under the headings

- Victim Access Behaviours;
- Lifestyle Deterioration;
- Co-operation with Supervision
- Distorted Attitudes Checklist;
- Low remorse/Victim blaming;

- Rape Attitudes; Child Molester Attitudes; Sexual Entitlement

Case management and Desistance

The political climate in the UK and the associated culture of fear of crime has been exacerbated by the more recent terrorist threat –and has strengthened reliance on a criminal justice paradigm – crime conviction punishment and enforcement. However While effective practice initiatives and accredited programmes such as C-SOGP have highlighted the technical and managerial challenges of rolling out delivery with integrity, attention is turning again to the human service dimension of case management to support connections to local services and social networks as an integral part of the supervision and case-management process. Practices geared to ‘prevention, crime reduction and desistance’ require a more holistic and socially integrated approach to deliver effective provision aimed at long lasting change. This is arguable one of the reasons Scotland decided to adopt a regional and local. The different organisational approaches within the UK reflect different ways of trying to resolve the same challenges. Whatever the structures, theory and research stress the links between social integration, social learning and sustained personal change; the conditions for which have to be positive, meaningful, iterative, and applied in a social context that reinforces desistance.

Multi-level, Desistance-focused Practice

Mobilising or investing in ‘human capital’ includes inner resources: such as self control, self-determination and personal responsibility, motivation, attitudes and beliefs, values and decision making.

Findings from the most extensive longitudinal study ever carried out aimed at accounting for onset, continuation and desistance from criminal behaviour in general (Laub and Sampson, 2004) concluded that most theories are inadequate because they ignore ‘human agency’ – **the active participation of individuals in structuring their own lives**. It concluded that this is crucial to successful long term desistance as is the presence of a network of social influences, controls, structured routine activities. These are likely to be general principles for all offender groups including sex offenders.

The evidence from recent studies focusing on desistance (Maruna et al., 2004) highlighted the ‘dire circumstances’ that many offenders face because of their experience of social difficulties. Commentators such as Farrall (2004) suggest that rather than a mass application of cognitive skills programmes, attention equally need to be focused on their need for education, employment or for decent housing. Effective responses have to give people some realistic ‘hope’ of taking control of their lives and having a positive as well as safe life-style. A key finding in many desistance studies is that ‘hope’ **-successful personal agency related to goals’** (Snyder et al., 1991) is associated with lower reconviction rates. In practical terms, without opportunities for education, employment, leisure, stable and sage accommodation, the conceptualisation of ‘alternative, law-abiding futures’ is very difficult to develop and sustain with credibility.

Many commentators have (Rex 1999) argued that there is a synergy between acts of practical assistance and their subjective impact on the working relationship; the practitioner’s *actions* confirm his or her trustworthiness, increasing the preparedness of

the person to take steps towards desistance. Building a professional working alliance is an important basis for achieving compliance and nurturing the motivation to change and sustaining change over time.

The desistance literature highlights the need to establish relationships within which attempts to influence positively the offender carry *moral legitimacy* (from the offender's perspective). This again underlines the need for the worker's authority to be exercised in a manner that is clear, explicit and fair. It also points to the importance of offering practical help to offenders since this a vital expression of concern for them *as people*, as well as demonstrating an awareness of their social reality (Burnett and McNeill, 2005).

It is fairly apparent - that these aspirations cannot be achieved with sex offenders without an better integrated model of case-management.

Case Management	Offending Behaviour Programmes
Structured assessment Targeting Supervision planning Risk Management Co-ordination of Service Delivery	Cognitive skills foundations Programmes targeted at specific offence or risk factors
Motivation Reinforcement Application	Associated personal factors Substance misuse Mental health Relationship problems
Surveillance Compliance Enforcement Evaluation	Re-integration factors Accommodation Basic life skills Education/Employment Budgeting/debt counselling

Successive Probation Inspectorate reports in the different UK jurisdictions have been critical of the lack of holistic approaches to disadvantage as well as to criminality. The English report in 2002 was critical of the high level of investment in programmes alone and called for a more holistic approach, employing the traditional skills of probation officers to nurture and sustaining offenders' motivation to change (Morgan, 2003).

A similar reaffirmation of the value of traditional skills was made by Christine Knott (2004) now a Director in NOMS who suggested that effective 'case management' has to incorporate qualities of traditional 'casework' practice, explaining that this implies direct and ongoing ('hands on') involvement of the supervisor, who is 'not only the referrer and the enforcer' but also 'the motivator and the reinforcer and the person who holds onto the longer-term aims of social re-integration and reducing re-offending' (p. 23).

Effective Staff

In addition to encouraging findings on effective programme characteristics, research on the characteristics of effective staff or the best staff practices to use in the delivery of these interventions remains limited.

Andrews and Kiessling (1980) identified, over 25 years ago, five dimensions of effective practice largely based on social learning theory. These included

- 1 **effective use of authority** - a “**firm but fair**” approach ensuring formal rules are made more visible, understandable and unambiguous
- 2 **modelling and reinforcing anti-criminal attitudes and behaviours** through directive **positive and/or negative reinforcement**.- promoting pro-social and anti-criminal attitudinal through regular interactions with front-line staff.
- 3 **concrete problem-solving skills**.- resolving the key obstacles that result in reduced levels of satisfaction and rewards for non criminal pursuits.
- 4 **effective use of community resources** referred to as advocacy/brokerage
- 5 **relationship factors** -warm, genuine, humourous, enthusiastic, self-confident, empathic, respectful, flexible, committed to helping the client, engaging, mature, or intelligent.

Essentially, this approach argued that the interpersonal influence exerted by practitioners is maximised under conditions characterised by open, warm, and enthusiastic communication. An equally important consideration is the development of mutual respect between the offender and practitioner. Dowden and Andrews developed these core practices further.

- Relationship factors
- Skill factors
- Effective reinforcement
- Effective disapproval
- Problem solving
- Structured learning
- Effective modelling
- Effective use of authority
- Advocacy/brokerage

They attempted to test the hypothesis that these could make significant independent contributions to outcomes of reduced offending over and above that contributed by the type of service. Using meta-analysis, they ranked these Andrew’s and Keisslings’ core practices against those associated with reduced re-offending in order of effectiveness

- **Quality of interpersonal relationships (5)** The programme staff possessed any of the following characteristics:
- **Effective use of community resources (4)**
 - a. *Evidence of advocacy* (i.e., job referrals, medical referrals, etc.) or brokerage (speaking on behalf of the client at home, school, work, and other organizations)
 - b. *Skills factors*—The program staff used directive, solution-focused, structured, non-blaming, or contingency-based forms of communication with the offenders.
- **Appropriate modelling and reinforcement (2)**. The programme staff used a coping model, demonstrated the behaviour in concrete and vivid ways, rewarded the clients for exhibiting the behaviour, or was generally a source of reinforcement rather than punishment for the offender.

- **Effective use of authority (1).** Staff members kept the focus of the message on the behaviour and not the client performing it. In addition staff were direct and specific concerning their demands, used his/her normal voice, specified the choices with accompanying consequences, gave encouraging messages, supported words with action, used a firm -but- fair approach or respectfully guided the offender toward compliance.
 - b. **Effective reinforcement**—The client was immediately told why the staff member approved of the behaviour or the client was encouraged to think about why the behaviour was desirable.
 - c. **Effective disapproval**—The client was immediately told why the staff member disapproved of the behaviour or the client was encouraged to consider why the behaviour was undesirable. Staff members who immediately stopped showing disapproval and started showing approval as soon as the client expressed anti criminal behaviour were also coded as adhering to this CCP.
 - d. **Structured learning procedures**—Staff members who defined the skill, modeled the skill, role played, provided progressively difficult role-playing scenarios or provided feedback regarding the offender’s performance were coded as adhering to this CCP.
- **Problem solving (3).** Staff members who identified the problem, helped the offenders implement a plan, clarified goals, evaluated options, generated alternatives, or evaluated the plan were coded as adhering to this staff practice.

Their most striking finding was just how infrequently these practices were documented as important in studies on effectiveness. Their analysis found that these core practices did make an independent contribution to enhanced effects of human service provision, where they were relevant and adhered to the principles of risk, need, and general responsiveness

The ‘core conditions’ of effective psycho-social interventions relate to the ability of practitioners to convey accurate empathy, respect, warmth and ‘genuineness’; to establish a working alliance based on mutual understanding and agreement about the nature and purpose of the treatment; and to develop an approach that is person-centred or collaborative. These findings are similar to the kinds of issues highlighted by Chris Trotter’s work in Victoria and Sue Rex’s in England.

This is not to argue that sound administration, or technical and less personal approaches have no place, particularly with sex offenders. Quite the contrary but their place is *within*, rather than *instead of*, a predominantly human service approach. It may seem paradoxical, given the nature and history of probation work, but there a debate again in Scotland staff as much as about structures (21st Century Review of Social Work, Scottish Executive 2005)). – What kind of staff are needed and, in particular, what is needed if they are to be valued and retained to carry out such challenging supervision? The kinds of people needed will certainly not hang around to be part of some mammoth impersonal regulated bureaucracy that makes them feel they are more part of a sausage factory or simply social police than a constructive human service process. Building effective human relationships is, in turn, underpinned by the practitioner’s ability to develop and use authority, strong communication, counselling and inter-personal skills.

This is not a formula for somehow returning probation practice to some past era or to suggest that overhauls to the organisational, procedural and management elements of probation services have not long overdue Working with sex offenders requires a combination of skills to ensure avoidance of a rule of optimism, of naiveté, of enmeshment, to deal with issues of transference and counter transference, while at the

same time not being so detached as to provide contact that is meaningless in terms of trust, shared understanding and access to positive resources. To be effective in this area staff have to be supported by strong organisational process and by good professional supervision.

If anything traditional casework in social work fell into disuse because it became detached from a strategic, integrated and managed process, its methodologies were often too unfocused and not harnessed to a planned social learning project. The strongest practice message from the effectiveness literature is the requirement for multi-modal and multi-systemic approaches in which interpersonal skills and processes are part of a graduated or integrated approach. Developments in MAPPA may provide a platform for such developments in the future. The reality remains the same - effective case management imposes an immensely demanding role for practitioners faced with a clientele whose social problems are wide scale, complex and potentially very harmful.

Modern practice requires a combination of human art, social science and a series of 'levers' to ensure compliance which may take many forms depending on the risks presented. Compliance in Community Supervision draws from a typology of methods and approaches and may require Compliance a mixture of all:

Typology of Control, Enforcement,

- **Incentive-based compliance** offering a *desirable state or good* at the end of the supervision
- process - literacy, employability , early revocation of the order, the relaxation of otherwise stringent conditions or demands.
- **trust-based compliance** - creating *working alliance, a sense of obligation* on the part of an offender , to *honour a promise* made to the supervisor or court.
- **threat-based compliance**- instilling a *fear of dire future consequences* if present arrangements are not complied with.
- **surveillance-based compliance** - instilling an *awareness of immediate, here-and-now regulation*, as a result of being perpetually or intermittently watched, close-up (intelligence-led policing) or at a distance (EM), with ones *trails and traces* retrievable from databases.
- **incapacitation-based compliance** - the actual *deprivation*, not just the *restriction*, of liberty and choice, the complete *inhibition*, not just the required *prohibition*, of desired action. (adapted from Nellis 2004: 239-240)

Effective Case Management

The term offender management is very relevant in encompassing work with sex offenders. Nonetheless it sends several unhelpful signals. It suggests that the 'sex offender' is simply a problem to be managed rather than a person in need of advice, guidance, assistance and control who is a key resource in the change process; that the practitioner's task is essentially technical, rather than possessing a moral and social element. It has a pessimistic tone, suggesting that offenders can be managed or controlled so as to mitigate risks, but perhaps not engaged in change processes that actively reduce risks, meet needs and exploit strengths.

The complexity of responding effectively to the needs and deeds of re-offenders does inevitably create a very real management task for practitioners who must weave together, with assistance, numerous threads of an intervention. The point of that ‘weaving together’ is to provide a coherent intervention that delivers a strong and reliable ‘pull’ towards desistance,

Many of these features raise questions about the moral legitimacy of the worker’s influence over the offender. The evidence suggests that any positive impact will rely heavily upon the inter-personal and professional relationships experienced with the various staff with whom the offender interacts. Management in this sense needs to be a human service function.

Inevitably this form of case-management is resource demanding and has to be targeted to certain groups. Collaborative case management formalises a process through which, in principle at least, a lead practitioner can work together with other providers to ensure a more coherent service and in which skeletal service pathways that are pre-established against typical need -risk requirements can be activated or brokered to complement direct face to face work undertaken by lead practitioners.

Case Management cannot easily be made a simple process - implementing complex plans, with people who are usually reluctant, often damaged, demanding – and sometimes dangerous – to achieve multiple objectives, some of which are in tension with one another is a real challenge. Nor can the idea of a single model mean ‘a one size fits all’ approach to provision. The term case management does not describe a single way of working, but rather a family of related approaches in which ideally “resources follow risk” in a proportional way to the needs and risks identified.

Developing service pathways of commissioned interventions is a strategic function probably best done a regional or at a large scale level. There is little brokerage a case manager can do if services don’t exist or if they carry the clout to secure easy access to the appropriate provision for the offenders for whom they are responsible..

In Scotland the integration of probation within local authority provision was intended to create ‘a one door’ system in which the supervisor/case-manager was to have special access status to housing, leisure, drug and mental health, education and employment provision. This cannot be delivered without a management framework and service pathways supported by protocols, service level agreements and clear expectations of the outcome measures to be returned to case managers routinely. We have not been very successful to date and Community Justice Authorities are another take on trying to resolve this problem . Everyone is supportive of interagency case management in principle and evidence highlights the kinds of issues that are likely to be associated with effectiveness.

What Works? in Case Management

- Networking remains a key element in facilitating collaboration
- Information sharing and resources
- Establishing clear roles and responsibilities
- Having time and appropriate venue to meet

- Good facilitator
- Contracts, Procedures and protocols
- Adequate resources

However in practice it continues to prove very difficult to deliver, at least with any consistency, whatever the jurisdiction. We are only too familiar with the barriers to good case management which include

- Lack of Time – to build working alliances, to meet to discuss and to contact the right people
- Practitioners overburdened with work or caseloads too heavy
- Lack of resources and services themselves or lack of outcome measures
- Lack of commitment on part of partners to contribute despite protocols if they exist
- Differences in philosophical stances or ways of working with offenders
- Egos, attitudes, and turf issues.

Partridge's review of case management for the Home Office (2004) in England and Wales provides a useful reference point for the development of a national model of case-management. Three main models of case management were identified - 'generic' 'specialist', and a 'hybrid' models combining elements of the other two. Each model had different benefits for different people – senior management, practitioners and offenders – highlighting that choices have to be made about balancing these different priorities or at least being explicit about where the service priorities lie.

Generic models

For senior management generic models offered greatest flexibility, particularly where staff resources are limited or spread across a rural, geographically dispersed area.

For operational staff, working with a **mixed caseload** of offenders seemed to enhance staff motivation by creating:

- continuity of contact with the same offenders which enabled them to see the impact of their work.
- avoiding fears about deskilling associated with carrying out one set of tasks;
- ensuring staff retained a knowledge and overview of the various supervision stages and processes of working with offenders; and
- minimising the stress associated with the intensive demands of working solely with high-risk-of harm offenders

Specialist models

Separating the provision of case management functions across different teams provided advantages for senior management in co-ordinating service delivery tightly and targeting resources at specific offender groups and at key supervision stages, particularly with high 'risk-of harm' offenders and at certain stages of the supervision process. It improved monitoring of service delivery priorities and National Standards, due to enhanced accountability resulting from smaller teams with specific aims. It created efficiency gains by allowing staff to concentrate on specific case management functions, thus developing skills and expertise in particular subjects and types of offenders.

Specialist models equally had **drawbacks** by separating tasks and responsibilities into discrete one can

- create resource intensive boundary management issues, requiring negotiation about when ‘responsibility’ should be transferred between teams;
- staff became territorial about their specific functions, reducing the flexible sharing of resources across teams and focus on the ‘overall’ aims of the probation area;
- boundaries created communication barriers.

Overall the evidence suggested that the greater the level of task separation and fragmentation in a model, the more offenders were confused by the range of different teams and staff they saw at different stages of their supervision and about who was overseeing their order; who to contact if they experienced a crisis. This fragmentation was most apparent in the specialist models. Offenders were more likely to build trust with their case manager, address their problems and ask for help if they saw the same person over a period of time particularly during the initial stages. The local context in which a model operates has a large impact on what type of model that is feasible and how successfully it can be implemented.

Hybrid model - case management team approach

While for offenders in general, it is an ideal for one practitioner to oversee them throughout their entire community supervision, it is generally impractical due to resource issues, staff turnover and may be unwise in the case of sex offenders. Hybrid models varied in their balance between generic and specialist elements. They attempted to maximise continuity of contact by adopting a more integrated *team* approach, where at least one team member knew what was happening to an offender at each stage or at a given period and was able to update other team members.

The hope was hybrid approaches would help alleviate some of the effects of staff turnover, shortages and sick absences by having regular contact with a small team of people who are aware of their circumstances and creating a consistent, familiar and supportive environment for them to learn, be motivated and complete their order.

The hybrid team approach may provide the most practical model for the supervision and case management of sex offenders.

Principles of case management team approach

Whatever model is adopted, several core case management principles emerged as enhancing engagement

- models need to acknowledge offenders’ experiences and needs;
- continuity of contact with the same case manager(s) and other staff was essential to building confidence and rapport with the offender, particularly during the initial stages of supervision;
- the greater the level of task separation, the more offenders were confused by why they were undertaking different elements of their supervision, particularly where contact with the case manager had been limited;

openness, flexibility and support were key motivating factors for offenders – exemplified by three-way meetings between case managers, practitioners and offenders and where case managers attended initial meetings as offenders moved

So what of the future? –

The evidence and experience suggest that the service is likely to ensure a better focus on effective practices, if it is able to put individual case management at the centre of a holistic service. Some clear, although not necessarily new, messages are emerging in managing effective change.

A Human Service Approach

- **Single Concept of Implementation** with key stages are mapped on an end-to-end process in which case management binds them together into a coherent
- **Differentiated Approaches** enabling different resources and styles to be matched to different cases, re gender, age, ethnicity, or special need and risks.
- **One Plan: One Lead Case Manager” as a baseline** against which all delivery arrangements are judged
- **A variable concept of Teamwork** as part of a **Whole System Approach**, which requires that organisational support functions support the core business process of case management

This model is seeking to achieve Holt’s 4 C’s “**Case Management: The Context for Supervision**” (Holt (2000))

- **consistency** - consistency of message and behaviour, both by the same person over time and by different people working with the same offender at the same time
- **continuity** a reasonable degree of continuity of care and relationship running through the whole of supervision
- **commitment** - not just going through the motions
- **consolidation** - gains will be short-lived if new learning is not turned into normal behaviour through a process which reinforces and rewards it

An effective case management model should identify 3 main threads relating to key elements of “management”, “supervision” and “administration” Efficiency and effectiveness requires that whoever discharges the “case management” process should also provide supervision, but this may not always be possible. A key principle of any model is that the more a through-process is disaggregated, the more risks there are of it going wrong.

MANAGEMENT refers to the tasks involved in exercising the legal authority, enforcing compliance which gives direction to an order, alongside collaborative rather than authoritarian responsibility for assessment, planning, reviewing and evaluating achievements

The core of the management process in England and Wales is captured by the acronym **ASPIRE**: **A**ssess – **S**ervice **P**lan – **I**mplement – **R**eview – **E**valuate. This however offers little explicit direction in regard to desistance and better social integration, rather assuming that somehow this will follow. In Scotland National Standards emphasis that active steps to support better personal, psychological and social integration are required so that from assessment, a single holistic or multi-systemic plan can be formulated, which specifies who will do what and when to achieve the stated objectives and the intermediate targets. Case Management inventories such as OASys or LS/CMI should include a standard summary plan essential for continuous improvement which identifies SMART(ER) objectives, who will do what and in what timescale – which are required from the supervisor or from those delivering brokered services.

In the three key elements of this model of case management (see NOMS 2006)

SUPERVISION is used to describe the sequence of day-to-day, face to- face tasks and planned activities required in most cases to secure compliance, generating motivation to co-operate, and achieve cohesion of the plan. Most offenders will not co-operate actively with the plan simply because one exists. Supervision implies establishing a meaningful working alliance built on principles of mutuality -gains for the offender as well as gains for the community – through advocacy and brokerage of appropriate services.

ADMINISTRATION involves the implementation of the order and case management can be bound-up in a complex web of service standards and procedures that require a degree of reliable administration if it is to meet all of its objectives.

Conceptually the model provides the ‘direction of travel’ but not the means or how is this to be achieved. It provides a single framework into which activity and initiatives which might otherwise seem unrelated will fit but needs to include within it a way of matching learning styles, and allocating different levels of resources to different cases. So the crucial overarching element of the model is a **Whole System Approach** that needs to be teased through into operational practice, in a process of continuous improvement.

Conclusions

It is obvious that the services in UK jurisdictions do not lack conceptual frameworks as such. However the concept of an integrated or **whole organisational approach** slips off the tongue so easily but what does it mean, what does it look like, and how can it be achieved?

Organisations are not simply structures, they are people - they are you. Staff are the agency’s most precious resource and indeed the community’s for which you work tirelessly often with little recognition. While seeking to develop ‘best fit’ models of case management, it is important not to lose sight of the clues from theory, research and practice from the field of practice. If we agree that effective intervention with sex offenders requires a human service and social learning approach as well as technical monitoring procedures, these messages should apply equally to the organisation and its members as it does to the clientele who are also the focus for change.

To what extent can the same methodologies be applied within the organisation?

Practice what you preach – casework management

The stress in the UK is again recognising the importance of restorative or relational practice of restoring relationships, healing or making things right with victims or communities through the medium of agencies of control and from this generating wrap around networks of support.

This matrix (slide) spells out the qualities of effective practitioners who are relational. Effective organizations need to place relationships as the core of their success with champions at all levels to model constructive, pro-social and effective multi disciplinary working relationships. Applying these concepts and systems with integrity across the organisation remains a challenge for all of us

Whatever conceptual model of case management is adopted, success is likely to be greater if the structure reflects the same issues of concern in promoting safe and positive change with offenders and it is developed on the basis of continuous improvement.

Personal/professional efficacy is a key to change within a context of social network support – for offenders; it is no less so for practitioners caught up in major change. How much scope do front line staff have to exercise responsibility within the change process, to champion new ways of working and to take defensible risks.

Planning for change – do proposals/plans reflect the quality of provision ('fit for purpose'); have views of all levels been taken into account to support motivation and working alliances; is there clarity of role and responsibility as well as shared procedures,

Providing learning opportunities to acquire knowledge, attitudes, skills through structured or other means; adequate staff training and staff development. Are there enthusiastic leaders and modellers of change to champion better integrated ways of working. Training in pro-social modelling may be done on a training course but doing it in practice begins in the work place with colleagues at every level. Research suggests that the more practitioners are interested, inquisitive, and supportive, the more likely change is to succeed. How does this apply to organisational change?

Developing well structured service pathways– typologies or models of expected service responses are required for different levels of risk and need; good protocols, service level agreements etc. How much 'clout' does the case manager have in accessing provision and arrangements for ensuring information including shortfall can be logged meaningfully.

Effective supervision and compliance - what staff support and supervision mechanisms are in place? Is it safe to be a critical friend of the organisation?– sharing practice, whistle blowing on behalf of offenders/the community on lack of provision. Do Quality assurance mechanisms allow for meaningful and speedy data return to assist resource management and highlight continuous improvement, practice achievement, strengths and weaknesses. Is practitioner compliance based on incentives, trust, fear or restriction?

Opportunities to apply learning - adequate time is required to do the priority work and for peer support networks. Are you well 'connected' to maintain and support change?

Gap analysis can help develop a culture of risk avoidance or positive risk management. The aviation industry learns best from its 'near misses' about the thresholds of real risk – while disasters have to be studied, they tend to generate risk avoidance strategies – lets never go there again! Does the organisation support defensible decisions.

Risk taking and beneficence – a willingness to go the extra mile on behalf the offender, victims and the community, recognising that if boundaries for beneficence are too rigid they don't work, if they are too slack practitioners can go native!

Outcome oriented – accredited or commissioned programmes should already have measurable objectives, what about other services or interventions? – Standards, Manuals guidance, generally stress SMART objectives and ongoing monitoring and evaluation as crucial to success but the data gathered has to be relevant for practitioners in doing their job, if it is to be valuable to middle managers and strategists.

Power and authority– How much power, influence and what kind of stake do practitioners have within the organisation – top down, bottom up.

Providing rewards – not withstanding salary and professional standing, positive rewards for social learning motivates us all, For most practitioners the reward has to be in the practice itself and feeling safe and secure in taking risks. Feedback on achievement, internally and externally, builds resilience and a sense of interpersonal/professional worth.

Collaborative advantage from working together?

Do practitioners carry a strategic mind map of where they fit in their day to day work - what do I have to do, to do my job, that will help others do theirs?

Model of Continuous Improvement and dynamic change over time

Do local communities know about the tireless work that you do on their behalf? What is shared with victims, and communities about the realities of work? If organisational processes, a pain though they may sometimes be, help you do the job well, at least for some people, some of the time, and monitoring and scrutiny is part of a supportive learning environment for reflective change, this can build loyalty, commitment and is a major feature in staff retention and a competent confident workforce.

I hope this conference provides you with an opportunity both to value the work you do, and provides an opportunity to review the strengths and weakness of current practices to continue the worthwhile task you carry out on behalf of all your communities.