Tackling substance dependence and primary mental health problems among UK prisoners: An integrated approach

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The Forward Trust

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Background

➢ Who are the Forward Trust?
  • Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPT)
  • Blue Sky Development

➢ What we do

➢ Who we work with
Forward’s Commitment to Research

- Evaluating the effectiveness of Forward’s interventions
  - Routine data collection
  - Validated assessment and outcome tools

- Service development, creating new interventions to meet evolving needs
  - Service user feedback and focus groups
  - Commissioning priorities and requirements

- Impact briefings and award-winning, peer-reviewed publications
  - 5 published journal articles to-date
Comprehensive Assessment Process

➢ Holistic appraisal of needs
   • ETE
   • Accommodation
   • Offending history
   • Physical health
   • Substance use
   • Mental health

• Responsive, person-centred care-planning
Mental Health Screening

- Part of Forward’s programme assessment process since 2006
- Extended to all service users in April-17
- Informing care-planning at ground-level, including onward referrals
- Informing service/programme development centrally
  - Seeking Safety
  - Mindfulness
The Evaluation

- 109 service users who completed Forward’s Substance Dependence Treatment Programme (SDTP)
  - 2015-16
  - 8 prison establishments

- Pre- to post-treatment assessment of symptoms of anxiety and depression
  - Comprehensive Addiction and Psychological Evaluation¹ (CAAPE) tool
  - Structured interview, compatible with DSM-IV-TR criteria
  - Suitable for identifying symptoms
Context

- Mental health problems affect at least 46% of those involved in both substance misuse treatment and the criminal justice system\(^2\)

- Rising rates of self-inflicted death and self-harm in prisons\(^3\)

- Prisoners suffering with co-occurring mental health and substance misuse problems continue to ‘fall through the gaps’
  - Call for better integration – PHE Health & Justice Annual Review (2015-16)\(^4\)
About the SDTP

- 16-21 weeks (full-time)
- Adult male prisoners
- Abstinence-based
- Evidence-based approaches
- CSAAP accredited
- Significant reduction in reoffending rates\(^5\)
  - 31% vs. 49%
Scoring Criteria Anxiety & Depression

**Anxiety**
- 0-1 → No anxiety disorder
- 2-4 → Unusually high levels of anxiety, potentially indicative of an anxiety disorder

**Depression**
- 0-2 → No depression
- 3-4 → Participant has symptoms of depression
- 5+ → Participant experiences episodes of depression
### Findings: Symptoms of Anxiety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Pre-treatment</th>
<th>Post-treatment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>showed no symptoms of anxiety disorder</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>showed unusually high levels of anxiety</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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(forward)
Findings:
Symptoms of Depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-treatment</th>
<th>Post-treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Showed no symptoms of depression</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showed symptoms of depression</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced episodes of depression</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Implications

- Relationship between depressive symptoms and increased reconviction rates

- Initial findings indicate efficacy of integrated intervention for reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression

- Potential to alleviate burden on overstretched prison mental health services
Q&A
References


Get in touch

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