

# Collaborative case formulations within the Offender Personality Disorder Pathway – Service Users' Perspectives

## Service Evaluation

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# PIPE Unit at HMP/YOI Low Newton

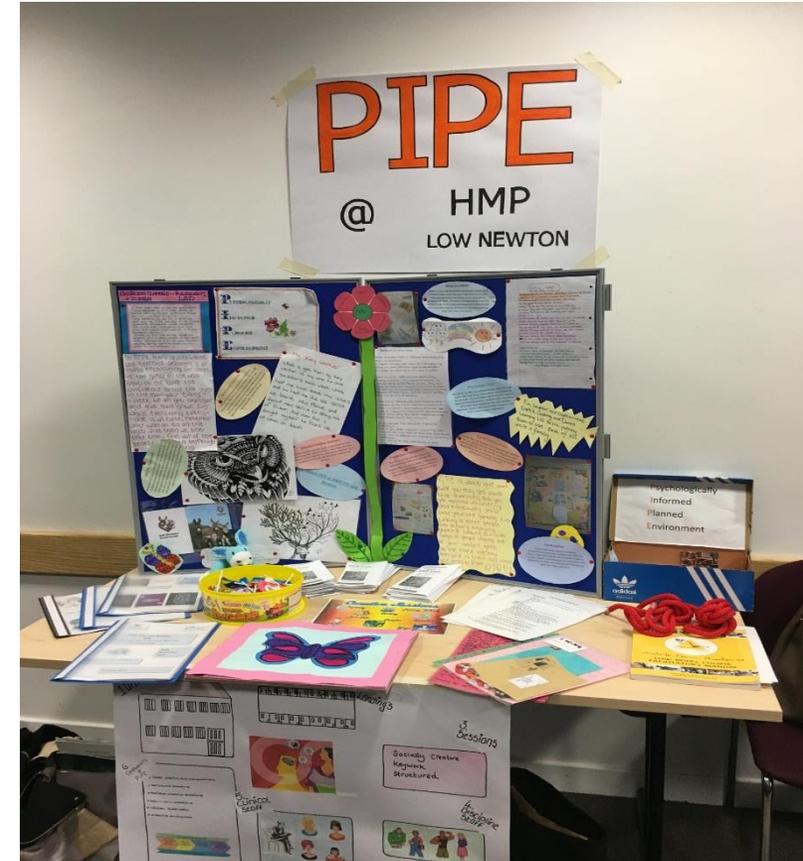
**P** psychologically

**I** informed

**P** planned

**E** environment

- The PIPE unit forms part of the Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) Pathway.
- Residents are likely to have a diagnosis of a personality disorder or have personality difficulties and these are linked to their offending behaviour.



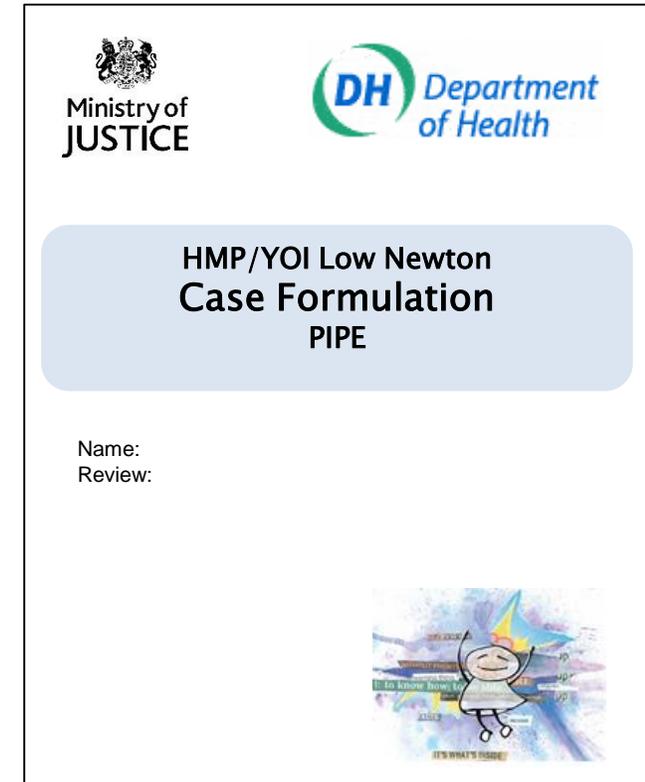
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## Case Formulations on PIPE

- Formulation...summarises and integrates a broad range of biopsychosocial causal factors. It is based on personal meaning and constructed collaboratively with service users and team (DCP, 2011)
- Case formulations are seen as fundamental in the psychologically informed management of high-risk offenders with personality disorders and difficulties (NOMS and NHS England, 2015).
- Information from a variety of sources is collated and a series of interviews are conducted to collaboratively write a case formulation for each resident using the 5P Model
- The completed case formulation is shared with the resident and relevant parties



The image shows the cover of a document titled "HMP/YOI Low Newton Case Formulation PIPE". At the top left is the Ministry of Justice logo, and at the top right is the Department of Health logo. The title is centered in a light blue rounded rectangle. Below the title, there are fields for "Name:" and "Review:". At the bottom right, there is a small cartoon illustration of a person with a large head and a speech bubble, with the text "IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE" below it.

# Case Formulations from the Perspective of Service Users

A major gap in the literature is service users' experiences of formulations<sup>1,2</sup>...more research is needed in order to improve the process of writing formulations that is respectful of and informed by service users' experiences

- Chadwick et al (2003) found through semi-structured interviews revealed that some clients found the formulation (on symptoms of anxiety and depression) helpful by **enhancing their understanding of their problems**, that they **felt reassured and encouraged**. Others reported finding the formulation **saddening, worrying and upsetting**.
- Kennedy et al (2003) (team formulation) clients reported that they **felt 'normal'** and had a new **understanding of their problems**
- Redhead (2010) (formulation with clients referred for CBT for anxiety and depression) described the process as helpful in **increasing understanding and trust** and **enabled clients to move forward**, however some clients experienced **painful feelings and distress** facing the origins of difficulties.

1. Good Practice Guidelines on the use of psychological formulation, Division of Clinical Psychology, BPS (2011) 2. Formulation in Psychology and Psychotherapy, Making Sense of People's Problems (L. Johnstone, R. Dallos, 2014)

## Service Evaluation on PIPE

- The primary objective of the service evaluation was to explore service user's experiences of the case formulation process within the OPD Pathway to inform future practice
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 3 female offenders with completed case formulations that were written collaboratively whilst on the PIPE at HMP/YOI Low Newton. All offenders screened into the OPD Pathway
- Interviews were transcribed and 4 main themes were drawn:
  1. Adverse experiences of discussing the past
  2. Positive experiences of discussing the past
  3. Increasing understanding
  4. Providing a narrative



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# Theme 1: Adverse experiences of discussing the past

## Sub theme 1: Re-traumatisation

(all)

*“Explaining it all, like my abuse and my rapes and all that, just going through it all over again”*

*‘all my abuse and all that it just brings it all back up doesn’t it...it just brings it back again, its back at the front again’*

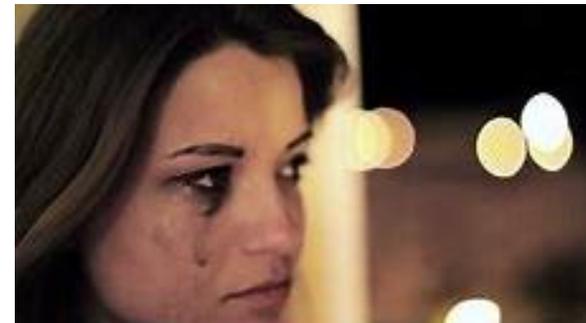


## Sub theme 2: Emotional difficulties after discussing the past

(all)

*“When I was locked behind my door I will always say that’s always the hardest”*

*“there’s a couple of officers that I talk to, they’re the ones that are aware of what I’ve been through and the trauma involved, new staff would say ‘put a smile on your face’ ...they should be informed what it [the formulation process] entails’*



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## Theme 2: Positive experiences of discussing the past

### Sub theme 1: Empowerment

(all)

*“I didn’t want to but I knew it would be something to look forward to and read back and go yeah, I did open up and I did that”*

*‘all that coming out my past, it was like a big weight being lifted off my shoulders it was’*



### Sub theme 1: Resilience, Positivity and Change (2)

*“...you realise I’ve been through a lot and I’ve survived, you learn how strong you are from that”*

*“I’m glad it’s there [the formulation], I am glad for some strange reason, maybe because now with all that that I’ve gone through, I know I can be a strong person, I can look forward in life”*

THINK+  
POSITIVE.

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## Theme 3: Increasing Understanding

### Sub theme 1: Helping others to understand and support (all)

*“the staff at the hostel would love to read this, if I take it back, the staff can read through it ... so they understand if I do have a bad day what could be leading onto it...it would be helpful ... he said I am just one person he cannot understand”*

*“You have the best support from it because people understand your needs and what makes you the way you are, helps them to understand you more”*

### Sub theme 2: Understanding of the self (all)

*“I was always trying to please people and I was fearful...because of my past and the way I was treated”*

*‘I found it like insightful because when it’s done and you’re like reading it’s like wow really, because you don’t think the little bits from your past make up who you are now”*



### Sub theme 3: Promoting Change (all)

*“it makes me feel more positive towards change because I finally understand me”*

*“You learn a lot more about you as a person...you know hopefully you can learn from that”*

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## Theme 4: Providing a Narrative

### Sub theme 1: case formulations as an accurate account

(All)

*This is just me down to a T in just like 3, 4 pages, I wouldn't change it for the world*

*It's a true view of life and what I've been through*



### Sub theme 2: case formulations as a tool to explain narrative to others

(All)

*'Anytime you meet a new professional they ask you generally about your past...its gets annoying...you're constantly having to explain what you have been through'*

*'I don't like opening up...but if they read it...it would be easier for me to explain, like if they pick one bit - say about my kids or my heroin, I can read it back over and it explains it better'*

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## Discussion Points

- Small sample size acknowledged, preliminary outcomes within the OPD pathway
- An under-researched but important topic area, often the focus is on how helpful formulations are to professionals rather than service-user's perspectives
- Findings similar to limited existing literature (reported experiences of negative affect, increased understanding and formulations to facilitate change)

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## Suggestions for future clinical practice...

- Training on case formulation to be delivered to wider staffing teams, including Prison Officers to allow more of an understanding of the difficulties involved in the case formulation process
- More considerations around the interviewing process and re-traumatisation:
  - timings of interviews
  - grounding techniques
  - more of an understanding of an individual's history pre-interview to be aware of potential triggers
  - follow-up support, involvement of Keyworkers/Personal Officers

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Thank  
you



Thank you for your time

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