

For staff in South Yorkshire Probation Area

September 2008

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Demonstrating we make a difference

THE 'Demonstrating we make a difference' campaign is off to an excellent start inside and outside South Yorkshire Probation.

We've had positive press coverage of our four star status in local newspapers and we'll be publishing new information for sentencers soon using your contributions.

Thanks to everyone who has sent in stories and quotes which so powerfully demonstrate the difference we can make in individuals' lives.

We will be using these throughout the year in a number of different ways to promote this work so please keep them coming in.

In the meantime keep thinking about what you do and how **YOU** can demonstrate the difference it makes to South Yorkshire and the safety of the people who live and visit here. Remember:

- **SMART sentence plans and SMART recording;**
- **Review and resource OASys;**
- **Record changes in psychometric results;**
- **Record skills learnt during Unpaid Work Requirements;**
- **Record employment obtained and kept;**
- **Obtain feedback from offenders at the end of their order and record it.**

A word from the Chief...

Extra days leave for all staff

A YEAR ago, despite huge improvements in our performance, we were 31st in the league tables.

This year we are joint third and our performance against targets has gone from strength to strength.

I and the Board know that this would not have been possible without your hard work and commitment and this is why we decided to reward and recognise this by awarding every staff member an extra day's leave. This is our way of saying 'thank you'.

The Government set targets are important for a number of reasons - they measure the actual work we do with offenders, they ensure we see people as required, that we enforce orders as required and that we intervene in ways that are known to reduce re-offending.

At the same time they are the measures issued by the Government to decide how successful an area is. It is now clear that areas that are seen as 'failing' will be at risk of 'performance testing' - that is being offered to the private sector, or the voluntary sector to run in place of the public sector. High performance is our best way of ensuring we remain as we are.

But most importantly of all high performance against targets ensures we are doing the right things to demonstrate we make a difference.

Demonstrating we make a difference

Recently we have been told the following by the people we work with:

"It has learnt me more to realise what my victim went through and realise I never want to create another victim ever" (NSOG completer)

"I just hope that people can see that I can and have changed and not think of me for what I did but for what I am doing about it." (IDAP completer)

"Well I'm proud of myself for completing it because things like this program in the past I would have not completed, and I wanted to prove to my family and myself I could do it because they said I wouldn't do it" (Think First completer)

"Before I came here I was not bothered about anything and now I feel there's more to life than going to jail all the time" (Female programme completer)

"He had tears in his eyes when Nicky and I met with him and was thanking us profusely for being able to be part of the ASRO course." (ASRO tutor on a graduate who is now in full-time work)

You'll find more examples of great feedback like this elsewhere in this issue of *Inside*.

The work we do is important, it changes people's lives. We do it very well. We have every reason to be proud of our achievements.

ROHAA Success

The quality of the work we do is measured in a number of different ways.

During this last year we have been part of the following externally validated quality audits:

- The Risk of Harm Area Assessment;
- The Approved Premises Quality Audit;
- The Accredited Programmes Quality Audit;
- The Unpaid Work Quality Audit;
- A Value for Money Audit;
- A Financial Audit;
- The European Excellence Model Assessment;
- Investors in People Re-validation.

All these audits concluded that South Yorkshire Probation carried out this work concerned to a high standard.

So if the IPPF demonstrates we are doing the right things these quality audits show we are doing them well.

Well done everyone and thank you.



Roz Brown

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roz Brown".

A word from the Chair...



Peter Smith

AS I write this I am just over six months into my appointment.

I have made a conscious effort over the first few months to visit as many sites as possible, to meet as many people as possible and try and get a 'feel' of things.

The County Managers Meeting in Rotherham, where

we celebrated your remarkable achievement of four star status provided another opportunity for me. As a magistrate (in West Yorkshire) I did have a knowledge of our work but I am obviously now much better informed!

Just as important for me personally is that I am enjoying it.

For those of you who do not know how it works, I have been appointed initially for three years and I am 'contracted' to do two days a week. I am just about keeping to that with time split between the area, the region (Leeds & Wakefield), London meetings and time spent working from home.

I have also spent time reviewing with my Board colleagues how we work and organise ourselves. The changes we are making will hopefully have longer term benefits for the organisation. One of the decisions we have made is to take our Board meetings out into the organisation and hold a couple of meetings a year in area offices, not just Division Street.

This will give local teams the opportunity to meet Board Members, present to them the work they are doing to make a difference, and to better understand how the Board works.

Roz and I have now started the process of setting out a five year strategic plan for South Yorkshire

Probation working with both the Senior Management Team and the Board. We look forward to sharing our thoughts with you in the months ahead.

I have really been impressed with the capability and pride in the work you do. This together with what you are actually delivering means that we are better placed than most areas to meet the difficult challenges ahead.

I also believe that the recent changes to our human resources operation will better support future delivery, and we have an excellent record of financial control and managing information.

Operationally we potentially face a growing workload (3,000 new criminal offences created since 1997, stiffer sentencing and an increasing prison capacity and population) in a climate of increasing financial constraint.

We will probably need to adapt to a changing local and national political agenda as well as to becoming a trust.

We also need to educate society at large as to the true value of the work we do and how we make a difference to both changing peoples' lives and public protection.

So we continue to 'live in interesting times' and I look forward to sharing these challenges with you in the months and years ahead.

The Board on SYPA Intranet

THE Board now has its own section on SYPA Intranet.

You'll find profiles of each Board Member, agendas and minutes from Board meetings.

The site also includes information on the Audit Committee, which has an important role in the governance of South Yorkshire Probation.

Their oversight includes the **Whistleblowers' Charter (or Public Interest Disclosure Act Policy)**, which is overseen by the Audit Committee, and this places rights and responsibilities on all staff and members.

[SYPA Intranet > Essential Information > South Yorkshire Probation Board](#)

New Probation Chief's Association (PCA)

THE PCA is a new independent body that will represent the views of probation chief officers.

The PCA aims to comment, challenge, and contribute to the development of not only probation but wider criminal justice policy and practice.

All chief officer grade staff are members and it

aims to act as the independent professional voice of probation leaders, particularly in the media, promoting public understanding and confidence in the service, and safeguarding core professional probation values.

Demonstrating we make a difference

THIS new campaign is our call for you to tell us about your success stories.

The examples listed on these two pages are some of the examples we've received so far. We'll be using them on our website, in our communications with

Dean (28), Doncaster

DEAN had a long history of offending, including a spell in a Young Offenders Institution (YOI), and was released on licence after three and a half years in prison.

The majority of Dean's offending has been alcohol related, and he was convicted of dangerous driving and aggravated actual bodily harm following an incident in which he was pursued by a police officer.

Released on licence at the end of 2004, Dean was given a **Drug Abstinence Requirement** and a **Home Detention Curfew (HDC)**. His offender manager (Tracy Allison), set him the following sentence plan objectives:

- **Remain drug free;**
- **Find and maintain employment;**
- **Increased self-control.**

**Drug-free,
employed and now
in college**

sentencers and in our work with the media to tell them how we are 'Making a difference'.

Please keep sending any examples to the PR & Communications Unit at Division Street (Jack Tarr or Katherine Green).

These objectives were met by:

- **Detox in custody and remaining drug free on release with all negative tests;**
- **Finding work as a plasterer, with support from agencies to help him buy equipment;**
- **Taking up kick boxing to channel his frustrations.**

Dean has remained in contact with his offender manager since completing his licence, and gave a talk to magistrates at a Doncaster Probation Liaison Committee (PLC) to tell them about his progress.

His kick boxing career has flourished and he remained in work as a plasterer until last September when he started a B Tech Sports and Coaching course at Doncaster College.

He has had no further convictions and has ambitions for what he wants to do with the rest of his life.

Making a

Level Three NVQs

THE National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level Three scheme began in 2000.

It gives Probation Service Officers (PSO) the change to gain a nationally recognised qualification, but the area struggled at first to get people through it on a consistent basis.

Changes have been made to better support candidates and the consistent approach developed since Suzanne Holdsworth was appointed as Level Three co-ordinator is now bearing fruit.

Staff intakes now occur twice a year with briefings and clear guidance, leading to a lower drop out rate and higher rate of completions.

29 out of 32 PSOs who commenced in 2005 were successful in 2007, and a further 16 achieved Level Three last year, building the level of professional skills within the organisation.

TPO Success

CAROL Jones is a Cohort 9 Trainee Probation Officer and is due to qualify this October.

Carol abilities have been praised many times and most recently by Hallam University academics who gave her a highest ever mark of 85% for one particular assessment of her work so far.

Katy Walker, another Cohort 9 TPO, was recently commended by a ROHAA inspector who said her OASys assessment was one of the best they had ever seen.

Among our Professional Development Assessors (PDAs), Anthony Doherty, Suzanne Holdsworth and Liz Ford have all completed and passed their ILM coaching and mentoring course, while Lynda Edwards successfully completed her NVQ Internal Verifiers Award in the record time of seven months. The expectation for completion is 12 months.

Thinking First

WAY back in 2006, on a Think First course, we had a 70 year old man whose main offending was driving whilst disqualified.

Whilst he was very good on the course, he justified his actions in terms of feeling guilty at not being able to 'ferry' his grandchildren around, and this 'appeared' to get in the way of progress in his thinking. Anyhow, at the end of the course he was full of praise and reflected that he had learned a lot.

Two years later he arrived at GPD, on a pedal bike, to thank us for having him on the course.

He said his life has changed for the better because of the course, that he has not offended since (nor had he driven a motor vehicle whilst serving his disqualification), that his relationship with his wife was fantastic (they had separated prior to attending Think First due to his continued offending) and that he was getting ready to take part in a cycle race.

Gill Millington, Group Programmes Division

Interventions News

LOOK out soon for a new issue of *Interventions News*, with best practice examples and useful information for all offender managers.

Our interventions teams routinely collect lots of feedback on individual success stories, and are adept at winning wider recognition.

The new issue features details of our second consecutive national **Howard League Community Schemes Award** for FareShare in Barnsley, as well as details of our high profile mayoral unpaid work projects.



There's also detailed feedback from offenders who've completed programmes and unpaid work requirements.

difference

Jason (23), Sheffield

JASON has spent the last three years committing crimes to fund his drug habit. Today he is drug-free and gaining qualifications to help them find employment.

He admits that he would not have been able to rebuild his life if it wasn't for the support of the probation service and partner agencies who have kept them on the straight and narrow.

Jason says: "I hadn't realised what the drugs had done to me. I didn't care how I got the cash for my next fix. I robbed cars, handbags and broke into houses. I didn't consider what I was doing to other people. I've even spent time inside, but I came out and was straight back on the drugs."

He has completed an intensive community sentence, which involved high levels of contact with probation staff, drug tests, appointments with a drug treatment agency and education and employment agencies. Jason has also completed a group programme run by the probation service to address his substance misuse.

He adds: "What I found really useful was

'Probation gave me the opportunity to change my life'

the reviews we had in court. I've never had much praise, I've never done good at school, so to hear the magistrates' saying how pleased they were with my progress really spurred me on."

On the sentence Jason maintained an intense diary sheet, sometimes up to 25 hours of contact a week. He says:

"To be honest I didn't realise how strict probation is, but I think people are starting to realise that if they mess up on the order they'll be in prison. Probation gave me the opportunity to change my life, I'm slowly winning back the trust of family and friends and have got a new girlfriend who really supports me."

Whilst on the order Jason completed a course in fork lift truck driving and gained NVQ qualifications in Maths and English. He says

"I learnt things that I should have learnt at school, but I was too busy messing around. I had to start again from scratch, but it's made me more confident and I'm starting full-time work as a fork lift truck driver next week. I've come a long way in the last year and I'm not going back."

SYPA Intranet > Essential Information > Demonstrating we make a difference

Increasing Confidence in Community Sentences

SUSPENDED Sentence Orders (SSOs) are down 33% in South Yorkshire as the ICCS project begins to show the first signs of success.

92 SSOs were made by courts in August 2008, compared to 135 in July. Just as importantly, SSO proposals fell to just 17 in August compared to 34 in June showing that the messages of the ICCS project are getting through to Offender Managers.

ICCS is the South Yorkshire response to a cash injection of £1.17 million from the Government with two specific aims:

- **To increase the effective use of Community Orders (COs) instead of short prison sentences where appropriate;**
- **To ensure greater offender compliance with Community Orders and Licences thereby reducing the need to breach or recall to custody.**

SSO orders down 33%

Says **Marion Wright (ACO - Offender Management)**:

"The ICCS project is off to a good start and I am pleased to see that the key message about SSOs is taking hold.

"We have had a higher than average number of SSOs in South Yorkshire and figures show that offenders

who receive them are more likely to breach and receive a short custodial sentence.

"Suspended Sentence Orders should not be addressed OR proposed in any report prepared for Magistrates Court (FDR, SDR or Breach Progress) unless a custodial sentence is likely and the approval of an SPO has been obtained."

An SSO proposals exception form should be completed every time one is made.

Project Progress

Project Managers Claire Gilmour and Julie Colleyshaw report that the initial phase of ICCS is now drawing to a close. Consultation with staff, sentencers and the profiling of offenders has helped identify some solid proposals to improve compliance, and these will be rolled out soon.

Specified Activity Requirement

Two new Specified Activities are about to be introduced in South Yorkshire for use by Offender Managers.



Short Compliance Programme

Locally developed, it aims to develop offender's motivation and improve their thinking and problem solving in relation to complying with their community sentence.

The **Short Compliance Programme** consists of two structured sessions completed over a two week period. It will be delivered on a one-to-one basis by the Offender Manager and would be in addition to any other requirements of their order.

All offenders who are subject to a Community

Order or Suspended Sentence Order and who have breached these orders through non-compliance are suitable for this programme.

Victim Awareness Programme

Offered through **Remedi**, this programme has two sessions on victim awareness for offenders who have gone into breach on a Community Order.

It allows the Community Order to become more onerous, whilst enabling the offender to actually comply with the order and reduces the risk of re-offending.

Session one will provide work directly linked to the offender's offence for which they were first sentenced. So if there was a direct victim involved then the work should relate as to how the offence impacted on the victim. If there is no direct victim then the work should be in relation as to how the offenders offending behaviour impacts on society as a whole.

The second session will be chosen by the Offender Manager from a range of sessions already offered by **Remedi**.



SSOs Made	August 2007	June 2008	July 2008	August 2008
Barnsley	16	20	21	16
Doncaster	18	21	26	5
Rotherham	16	16	13	4
Sheffield	33	32	26	26
Crown	37	41	49	41
Total	120	130	135	92

Offender Management Inspection (OMI)

PREPARATION for the OMI continues at pace as the area prepares for its full inspection since 2005.

Shelley Scott (Assistant Chief Officer - Offender Management) is now the lead manager for OMI, following the imminent departure of David Thomas to a new ACO role in Avon and Somerset.

The inspection will run for one week, starting 19 January 2009, and will include all community sentence and licence commencements (except those in 'phase two') during July 2008.

Getting these cases right is essential, especially with regards to timeliness, and the work done now will be crucial to our success.

Inside spoke to Shelley to find out the key messages that all staff need to know.

What is the OMI and who is involved?

It is a full inspection of the work of South Yorkshire Probation and every single member of staff is involved. It includes a detailed look at a selection of cases currently under our supervision, but it also has a wider scope looking at all different aspects of how we do business.

What are the inspectors looking for?

OMI builds on the criteria we worked to in the **Risk of Harm Area Assessment (ROHAA)**. Assessors are looking for quality, examples of us making a difference in offenders' lives and successful outcomes.

What is the scale of the inspection?

165 cases will be audited by a team of 12 HMIP inspectors, assisted by seven area assessors recruited from our own staff. Two additional inspectors from OFSTED (the education ombudsman) will be looking at basic skills provision for offenders provided by OLASS (Offender Learning and Skills Service).

The actual inspection includes questionnaires sent out in advance followed up by interviews with offenders, key workers, case administrators, offender managers, middle managers, senior managers, Board Members and our strategic partners.

The Basic Skills inspection is new - what does it involve?

The basic skills inspection by OFSTED will not be looking at just referrals, but the motivational work undertaken by offender managers to support offenders.

It will look at three strands of learning - employability skills, skills for life, and personal development and social integration.

What is the one thing all staff need to remember?

OMI is already underway and the work we are doing now is what will be assessed. Each division and support unit now have their own action plans. You need to know what your plan says and then ask yourself:

What do you need to do?

OMI Key Facts

Four Criteria

1. Assessment and sentence planning;
2. Implementation of interventions;
3. Achievement and monitoring of outcomes;
4. Leadership and strategic planning.

Case Specification & Tiering

Community & Suspended Sentence Orders:

Tier 1	25 cases
Tier 2/3	50 cases
Tier 4	15 cases – 12 high risk and 3 PPO
	Total of 90

Licence cases:

Tier 2/3	35 cases
Tier 4	25 cases – 20 high risk and 5 PPO
	Total of 60

Custody cases:

Total of 15 cases (Including 2/3 IPP)

Introducing PROMS

A MAJOR project is underway in South Yorkshire Probation that will produce a simple easy to use guide to how we do business.

The South Yorkshire **Process Management System** (or **PROMS** for short) will be part of the **SYPA Intranet** and the project aims to map every major process in use in the area.

Process Mapping

Process mapping is a top to bottom approach to understanding how we work and doing things better.

Everything, from arranging an appointment, or sending a breach letter, to setting the budget or recruiting new staff will be dissected and mapped over the next three years.

Specialist software is being used to create simple interactive process maps, accessible via the intranet, that will take staff through a task step by step.

Linked to each process map, you will be able to access the policies, strategies, action plans and practice instructions that have shaped the definitive approach you are following.

Managing Change

The project is being managed by Ann Maughan, from the Information Services Unit, and it has been chaired in the early stages by David Thomas (Assistant Chief Officer - Performance).

A **Process Control Board (PCB)** has been established to oversee the implementation of **PROMS** and the mapping of current processes. The PCB will also take oversight of all future changes in practice across South Yorkshire Probation, with process mapping fully integrated from the start in any change management.

The Management Model

With a new project like **PROMS** it is important to get the structure right from the beginning, so the mapping of processes is integrally linked with the development of a management model.

The model will define four key policy areas for the service (see diagram on the right), and there will be a core set of around six overarching policies within each area. Policies will define the principles of what we are trying to achieve.

Each policy will be linked to specific practice instructions which define current procedures, all of which will eventually be mapped in **PROMS**. All policies will be updated annually.

The policy areas will be clearly labelled and accessible via the intranet and all new policies, processes, and new and existing practice instructions, will be grouped together so they are easy to find. The first stage of all this work should be ready for launch in January 2009.

Lead the Business

Includes Corporate Governance, Strategic & Business Planning, Business Risk, Developing the Organisation, Ensuring Diversity.

Manage Offenders

Includes Offender Management, Public Protection, Courts, Domestic Violence, MAPPA, PPOs, Safeguarding Children.

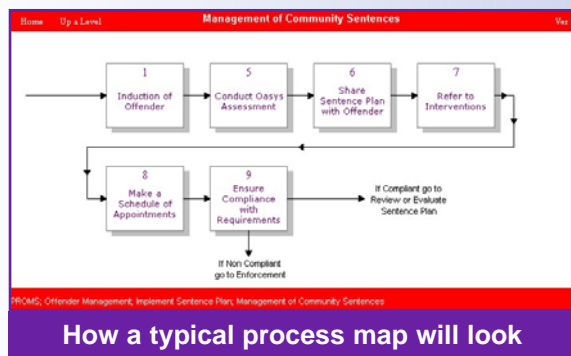
Deliver Interventions

Includes Programmes, Unpaid Work, Approved Premises, ETE, Accommodation, Drugs, Alcohol, Finance, Benefit & Debt, Victims.

Support the Business

Includes IT, Financial Services, HR, PR & Communications, Diversity & Inclusion, Health & Safety, Commissioning.

The Four Key Policy Areas



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