

Read case study and set out a programme of intervention based on the principles of ‘What Works’. Include awareness of theoretical background to effective practice, programme design, including evaluation and methods of intervention.

When considering to assess and address offending behaviour there exist a variety of methods of interventions, which are adopted as a means to reduce and eradicate offending behaviour, with such interventions predominantly amalgamating the ‘What Works’ initiative. In addressing the case study of Mary Tudor, the essay will devise a programme of intervention, which will very much reflect the ideals of ‘What Works’. Therefore, to address the essay title and establish a programme of intervention, to assist Mary in reducing her offending behaviour the essay will analyse three prerequisites, assessment, programme delivery and evaluation, which are essential elements to incorporate, when creating such a programme. Firstly it is necessary to give a brief introduction to the theoretical background of the ‘What Works’ initiative.

Much of the work in reducing offending behaviour during the 1960’s and 1970’s was discouraged with a lack of research evidence. Much of Britain’s beliefs centred around the ideals of the ‘treatment model’, culminating the doctrine of ‘nothing works’, with much of the evidence concluding such view, which was drawn together from existing treatment-outcome studies. Such notion of thought derived from Martinson 1974 who expressed a “radical flaw in our present strategies- that education at its best, or that psychotherapy at its best, cannot overcome, or even appreciably reduce, the powerful tendency for offenders to continue criminal behaviour” (Martinson, 1974 cited in McGuire, 1995, P. 4). However within this pluralistic era much research began to transpire during the 1980’s, mainly from North America, signifying a promising proposal in its attempts to reduce offending behaviour. Raynor and Vanstone (2002) interpreted this research into three categorical strands. The first strand comprised of a cognitive-behavioural approach,

which was centred on the social learning theory and the process of cognitions, which are deemed to uphold causality to crime. To exemplify, “adverse social factors such as poverty and a lack of opportunities can make it difficult for parents to provide a consistent and supportive environment for children...poor social skills and problem-solving abilities will make offending an attractive option” (Raynor + Vanstone, 2002, P.85). The second strand of research embodied research reviews and meta-analysis, which tied together a number of research reviews into a single frameworks to obtain a feasible goal of what techniques were effective. A prime researcher Andrew et-al (1990), with reference to his contribution of meta-analysis research, embarked on the principles of risk, need and responsivity, which helped to shape the current understandings of the ‘What Works’ initiative, as we know of it today. The third and final strand comprised of research studies on structured programmes of intervention, undertaken by probation areas in Britain on high risk offenders, which demonstrated inspiring results in terms of reducing offending behaviour. The message which transpired from these strands of research were that particular features could be incorporated within an intervention, which are capable of delivering a confident outcome in terms of reducing offending behaviour. Such features construct the major principles of the ‘What Works’ approach, which will be incorporated within my programme of intervention for Mary Tudor throughout my essay.

Firstly it is necessary to deliver an assessment on Mary Tudor, which is a continual and dynamic process, comprising of the collection and interpretation of Mary’s criminogenic needs, in order to determine the level and type of risk she poses. “It is essential to distinguish between criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs, i.e. we should separate client’s problems or features that contribute to or are supportive of

offending, from those which are more distantly related or unrelated, to it” (McGuire, 1995, P.14-15). An assessment tool, (OASYS), the offender Assessment System, will be incorporated within this stage of analysis, which is central to the principles of ‘What Works’, as the intention of an assessment tool is to coincide the right offender to the right intervention programme of which will have the most promising effect in terms of reducing the risk of re-offending. Mary’s static factors, which are factors that have already occurred and cannot be modified consist of age, 21 years, age at first conviction, 16 years. Her criminal offending began when she left school and criminal record, which consist of two offences of theft from a shop in 1998 and 2001, theft from a car in 1999, two offences of deception in 2001 and 2002 and in 2000 Mary was convicted of being present in a stolen car. As it stands Mary is also convicted of three further offences of theft from a shop in 2003. Considering these factors alone cannot gauge Mary’s likelihood of re-offending, thus it is necessary to contemplate the dynamic factors, factors, which are potentially, subject to change. Mary’s dynamic factors entail her education and employment, of which her education comprise of several qualifications but employment wise she is unable to hold a job down and has not worked since her partner was sent to prison. Financial management and income suggests that Mary encounters raising two children financially problematic, as Mary is currently living on benefits and is in debt. She speculates that her offences to shoplifting were motivated by the burden of being in debt. Mary’s family and associates consist mainly of her mother, as her father passed away when she was young, but the relationship between Mary and her mother has deteriorated since she become involved with Phillip and recently Mary’s mother has been unable to look after her grandchildren as a result of a stroke. Mary’s associates comprise of her partner Phillip, who is presently in prison serving a two-year prison sentence for car

crime, and Phillips friends who got her involved in shoplifting. Mary's emotional well-being and thinking patterns unveil that she is quite depressed, she currently insists that she is no longer involved with alcohol but acknowledges that she uses amphetamines on a daily basis.

Initially Mary is not at risk of re-offending, as many external factors contribute to her offending behaviour thus in order to reduce Mary's risk of re-offending it is necessary that a programme of intervention is introduced to encourage her to modify her criminogenic need factors. Designing a programme of intervention refers to the embodiment of knowledge, which reflects a theoretical framework of evidence depicting what works for whom and in what circumstances. Underdown (1998), proposes a model of service design which accommodates five layers of services and programmes, ranging from the offender to the community. The first three layers incorporate cognitive-behavioural training and personal development, depicting work "on the underlying processes of cognition, patterns of behaviour or process of individual development" (Underdown, 1998, P.33). The second layer incorporates challenging offending choices which advocates offenders to castigate past and present day offending choices which will seek to construct appropriate future behaviour, and social and moral education. This technique seeks to cultivate and inform offenders of the applicable social and moral issues appropriate for life in society. The lower layers of the model comprise of the resolving of problems, meeting needs in family and community, which seeks to equip the offender with skills to administer their own initiative to progress in such areas as accommodation, money and employment, and community opportunities and reintegration which transgress the application of the new skills developed in the higher layers to consolidate the offenders potential to aspire the development of further opportunities. The crux of this model is that whilst

some layers of the model may depict more priority over others, depending on the offender targeted, the model demonstrates how each layer reciprocates on another, effectively embracing a wide range of offending-related needs.

In contrast to the above discussion the essay will now turn its attention to the programme design of intervention for Mary's re-offending. Research evidence indicates that "amongst the range of intervention methods included in meta-analyses, those which emerge as offering the most promising outcomes are based on the cognitive-behavioural approach" (McGuire, 1995, P.16), which will be incorporated into such programme to change Mary's thinking processes. The theoretical framework of the cognitive-behavioural approach is entailed on the perspective that our thoughts exert influence on our emotions and behaviour which structure the way we interpret the world. Thus if ones thoughts are irrational and dysfunctional, these thoughts collaborate initiating an adverse effect on ones behaviour. As the philosopher Epictetus quoted, "men are not disturbed by things but by the views they take on them" (Westermeyer, 1995, P.16). By selecting a range of cognitive-behavioural techniques the central focus is to modify the maladaptive thoughts and beliefs. Although research evidence strongly supports a presumption in sustaining the deliverance of a cognitive-behavioural approach, amalgamating multi-modal programme is perceived to formulate conclusive evidence. "Multi-modal programmes would be that supervision should target several offending-related needs and not rely on a single intervention method. It does not imply that all of that supervision needs to be provided in a single structured programme" (Underdown, 1998, P.25). Adopting a 'multi-modal' approach would consist of prioritising Mary's problems thus being her depression first, which would be treated using cognitive therapy. The core proposal underpinning such therapy is embedded within such

statement, proposed by Beck, that being “that the primary pathology or dysfunction during a depression or an anxiety disorder is in the cognitive apparatus” (McGuire, 2000, P.62). The known repertoire of techniques embodied within this therapy gyrate around the identification and modification of dysfunctional thoughts, derived from self-observational diaries and interviews, thus infiltrating through a therapeutic process dysfunctional thoughts are reconstructed with functional, well established cognitions. Mary’s daily dependence on amphetamines would be the following dilemma to treat, which is very much linked to her depression and re-offending, as “drug users rely heavily on the income they derive from crime to finance their drug habits” (Hough, 1996 cited in Vennard + Hedderman, 1998, P.107). Such an approach which will be incorporated within the programme and administered to treat Mary’s drug dependency is motivational interviewing, it’s key exponents being Miller and Rollnick. Motivation is a fundamental augury in changing behaviour but for many individuals motivation can be considered as a state of balance or imbalance between a set of conflicting factors. Identifying what the factors are can exert influence on the Individual’s motivation to change. As identified in the assessment stage Mary clearly has a problem with holding a job down and finance management. Although identifying a causative link between unemployment and offending is disputable, “there is evidence that ex-prisoners and probationers are more likely to re-offend if they are unemployed” (Crowl, 1989 cited in Vennard + Hedderman, 1998, P.108). Thus it is necessary to integrate the Employability pathfinder programme within the devised programme of intervention. The Employment pathfinder addresses the offenders deficits regarding employability and secures motivation to gain employment by means of a group work programme, the Integrated Employability programme (IEP). In relation to Mary’s debt management it is evident from assessing Mary that

her offences to shoplifting were motivated by the burden of being in debt, so the issues related to being in debt need to be resolved first than her shoplifting. Skills including self-management should be reinforced through the programme and problem-solving training to tackle the problem of shoplifting, centralising on the skill consequential thinking, where the positive and negative factors of offending are identified which exposes the short term gains and enhances the long term acquisitions of departing from such offending behaviour.

Leading on from the discussion above, although selecting an appropriate programme of intervention is essential, ensuring the effectiveness and quality of such programme is just a fundamental, with such role very much strategically located within case management. The “term ‘case management’ is used to describe the responsibilities involved in planning and review, arranging and coordinating each element of supervision, monitoring process and deciding on required enforcement action. The case managers role is therefore crucial to effective practice” (Underdown, 1998, P.65), and to the success of the ‘What Works’ model. As with every other agency evaluation is of crucial importance in the development of effective methods of intervention in reducing offending behaviour, without such administration of evaluations research would not be in the position it is in now, identifying the types of approaches, which are best compatible to offenders, in reducing offending behaviour. However occupying an evaluative prerequisite is fundamental to the devised programme for Mary Tudor as it seeks to establish whether the programme is obtaining the required outcomes in comparison to the stated objectives. The required outcomes of the programme of intervention consist of a change in Mary’s attitude or behaviour, a change in her social circumstances and a high level of completion and compliance of the programme. Such goals can be measured by an offender feedback

evaluation or by the cycle of change. This model comprises of six stages, pre-contemplation, where the offender does not identify offending as a problem, contemplation, offender recognises a problem but is ambivalent about change, determination, where there exists motivation to change, action, the offender attempts to change, maintenance, change is maintained but relapse is a likely and relapse, where a setback can occur. Situated within the stages of this model are gains but setbacks and relapses are to be expected and managed but the emphasis is on gradual gains towards the intended outcome.

In conclusion to this essay, the essay has proposed a programme of intervention integrated through which are the principles of 'what works'. The initial driving force behind the 'What Works' agenda was that various forms of approaches demonstrated to be more effective than other methods pointing those agencies who work in the field with offenders in the right direction towards constructing effective programmes. The introduction of the 'What Works' agenda and National Standards has comprehensively led to structural and organisational changes to the Probation Service but it is essential that the imposition of these changes does not undermine the mere essence of 'What Works' and that the provisions of such programmes are systematically evaluated for the continuity of successful programmes for the foreseeable future.

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