



National Offender
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Service-user involvement in developing the therapeutic regime within a high-secure, prison based personality disorder treatment unit

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Overview and Aims

To present:

- Why creative sessions came to be included within the unit's regime
- How the unit approached the development of these sessions
- The 'lived experience' of the staff-prisoner steering group
- Initial evaluation into the impact of the new sessions
- Future directions

The Westgate Unit

- 65 bed, standalone unit offering assessment and treatment
- **Criteria:** male offenders who are assessed as high risk and have a diagnosis of “complex” personality disorder (which are functionally linked)
- Offer varied treatment interventions and supporting services
- ‘Complementary regime’ – gym, horticulture, art
- Multidisciplinary team working is employed across the unit

Therapeutic Regime



The steering group and their task

The Steering group:

- Staff and prisoner volunteers
- They met weekly and (in time) worked in sub groups

Sessions had to:

- Contribute to 'meaningful activity' on the unit
- Increase the therapeutic ethos on the unit
- Complement 'Enabling Environments' (EE)
- Build on Good Life Goals introduced during the Chromis Motivation & Engagement component

Session 1:	Aims of the session:	Good Life Goal and Enabling Environments (EE) standards:	Materials required and associated cost: Room:	Facilitators available for this session- and how the delivery will be shared:
Working title is 'Album Club'	<p>Listen to and discuss albums</p> <p>Discuss themes and styles of music</p> <p>Discuss artists progression through different albums</p>	<p><u>Good Life Goals</u></p> <p>Relationships and community</p> <p>Creativity</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <p>Excellence in work and play</p> <p><u>EE</u></p> <p>Belonging</p> <p>Involvement</p> <p>Development</p>	<p>1 CD per week</p> <p>Some will be available through the library</p> <p>Some will need to be ordered. Naxos CDs can be bought for approx. £6</p>	<p>Faye Wood</p> <p>Bernadette</p> <p>Krys Jones</p> <p>Keith Worrall</p>

Finalised sessions

- Card Making Classes
- Nutcracker workshop
- Comic Book Club
- Album Review Club
- Jigsaw and Games club
- 'Talking Point' Discussion Group
- Stress Busters
- Unit-based creative time
- Westgate Team Challenge
- Guitars
- Matchstick modelling



The Group's 'Lived Experience'

- **AIM:** To explore the lived experience of the staff-prisoner steering group who developed and implemented 'Creative Sessions' on the unit.
- **PARTICIPANTS:** 5 male prisoners, 3 prison officers
- **FORMAT:** Two focus groups
- **ANALYSIS:** Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)
- The findings presented today are preliminary

‘Prisoners representing the voice of the community’

- Participants had responsibility and ownership over their environment.
- Didn’t just impact on the prisoners in the team, impacted on the wider community.
- Considered to represent ‘Involvement’, ‘Empowerment’ and ‘Leadership’ within Enabling Environments.

“The good opportunity was that we got to change the nature of the place. Our ideas have been taken on board and things have actually changed” - prisoner

“There were moments where you felt a little empowered, as if you were coming up with these new sessions that were going to help the unit as a whole” - staff

‘Team members’ qualities’

- Individuals’ qualities had been crucial in the success of creative sessions being implemented.
- Considered to demonstrate ‘Communication’ and ‘Openness’ Enabling Environment standards.

“I know [prisoner] was more than prepared to do extra work, he did the research, he looked into things... really kind of proactive” - staff

“[Staff were] really collaborative...Always keeping us in the loop....genuinely listening to us” - prisoner

“[Ideas] were explored, the ones that weren’t feasible or whatever weren’t just chucked aside. For me, I was told why we wouldn’t be able to use them” - prisoner

‘Perceptions of self and others’

- Service-users felt valued, “normal”, more “human”.
- Participants showed positive aspects of themselves and saw this in others.
- Considered to be evidence of the ‘Belonging’ Enabling Environment standard.

“Rather than a human being with problems that need dealing with, you were just a human being talking about sessions... Usually when you sit down and talk with psychologists it’s about the worst part of your life. In this you weren’t, you were talking about something different, nothing to do with you in that sense, and sometimes they’d tell you little stories. I don’t know, they were just more human as well” – prisoner

‘Collaboration and Team Work’

- Equality and lack of staff-prisoner divide
- This was considered to challenge expectations and historical beliefs

“We went in there as, what’s the word I’m looking for? Just people, as opposed to prisoners and staff... equals. You know, level playing field, their ideas and points were just as valid as ours so again, that broke down a lot of barriers I guess... they loved it” - staff

“I’ve come from ‘you don’t sit down with staff and have meetings with staff’. It’s a totally different environment. It felt strange at first but the staff were keen to get on board” - prisoner

Evaluation into the 'Roll Out' of Sessions

- There was a small decrease in the number of missed sessions being recorded on the unit per month since the introduction of the creative sessions
- Prisoners reported a general improvement to their living and working lives on the unit
- Staff and prisoners, in general, reported an improvement to their relationships with others
- Prisoners feel that there is a greater opportunity to practice skills
- Prisoners felt more confident practising skills

Prisoners' preferences

“Learning to be creative and work with other musicians”

“Working as a team”

“Broadened my musical taste and made me feel more sophisticated- I have been surprised at how much I like it and finding out about different composers”

“They are fun and I feel good about going, rather than feel forced”

Evaluation recommendations

- Service-user involvement can be valuable and achievable in a high secure setting despite the (necessary) limitations that this environment presents.
- Future creative sessions should aim to offer new and diverse opportunities than the existing sessions offer
- Regular reviews of creative sessions should take place once they have been implemented to ensure that they maintain a structure and are well attended



Any questions?

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