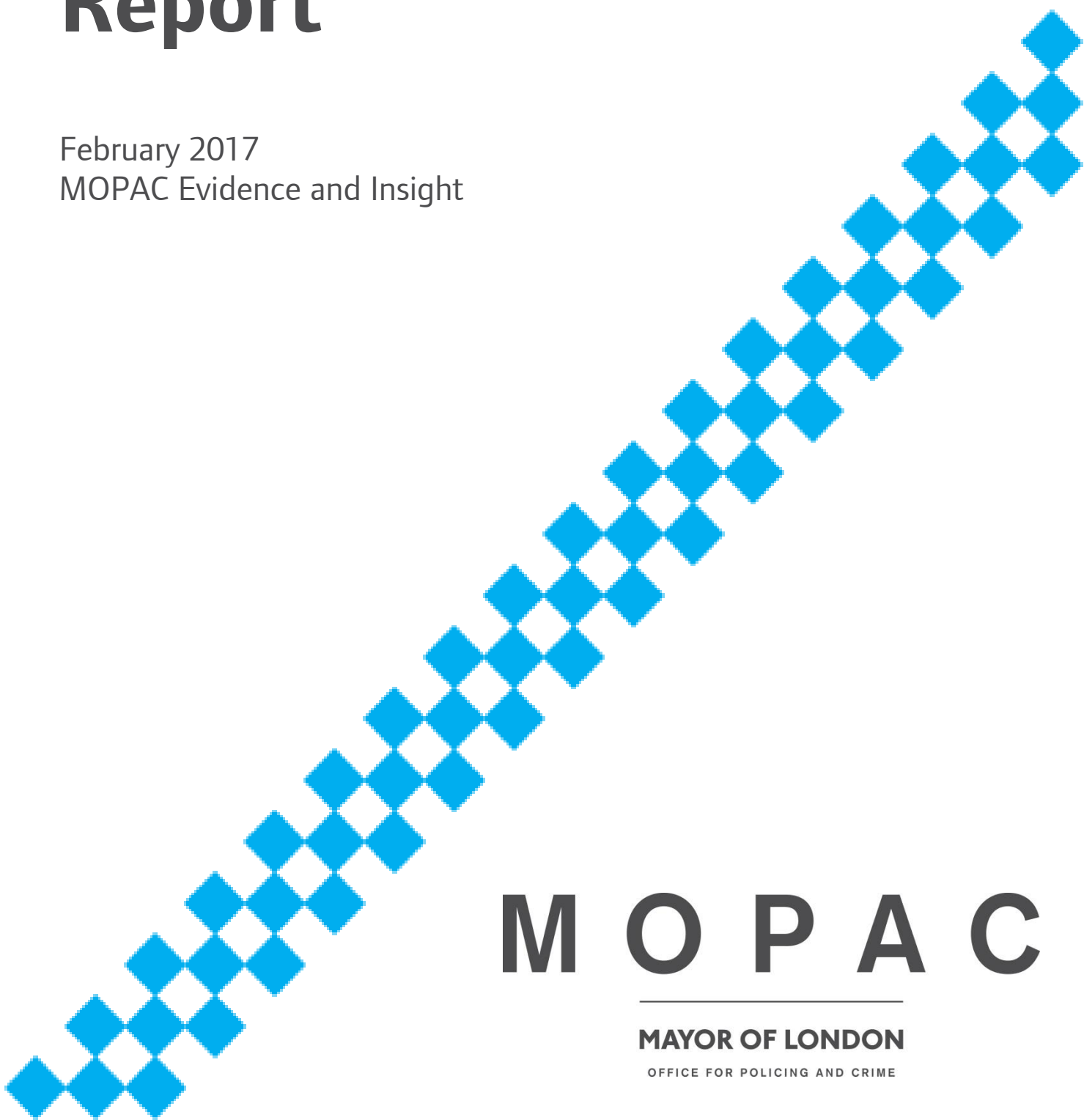

Gripping the Offender Interim Evaluation Report

February 2017
MOPAC Evidence and Insight



M O P A C

MAYOR OF LONDON

OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

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Executive Summary

The Gripping the Offender (GtO) pilot aims to test a new partnership approach to tackle the most prolific offenders across the whole Criminal Justice System (CJS). Commissioning for the two-year pilot began in April 2015 and the first phases of delivery began in February 2016 in the North and East London Local Justice Areas. The pilot aims to deliver an end-to-end approach across the CJS, including:

- Courts: enhancing the pre-sentence report (PSR) capacity to speed up sentencing time
- Offender Management (OM): providing additional support to resettle and rehabilitate offenders within the cohort, particularly young adult males and females
- Pathways: addressing the mental health and employment needs of prolific offenders
- Policing: providing the police with a greater ability to complete research and intelligence gathering and focusing on offender based tasking
- Electronic monitoring: testing the use of GPS tags as an electronic monitoring requirement of a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order

The evaluation of the pilot is being conducted by the Evidence and Insight team at MOPAC. This interim report will share emerging findings from the research, including performance analysis of the enhanced services for the first 11 months of delivery and staff feedback from interviews, surveys and focus groups. This report does not include impact analysis due to the low numbers of interventions completed. The report will provide an update on the overall progress of the evaluation and next steps.

Key Findings

- Courts: Between 6th February and 31st December 2016, a total of 225 offenders received the PSR service, including 37 18-25 year olds; 38% of reports were delivered within the 5 day target.
- OM: Referrals into the enhanced OM services for young adult males were slow to begin with, but have steadily increased over the last four months. Forty-four young males have started mentoring and three have completed the service. Groups were scheduled to begin for the Right Track and TIGER programmes in January 2017. One female has been accepted for the personalised budget service.
- Pathways: Between 1st July 2016 and 31st December 2016, 102 referrals were made to the mental health service resulting in the commencement of 24 direct interventions and 305 case consultations with practitioners. Seventy-one referrals were made into the employment pathway, with two having secured employment.
- Policing: Since going live in July 2016, the policing research hub has completed a total of 110 intelligence development plans and 320 offender-based taskings have been carried out on these cases.
- Electronic monitoring is due to be rolled out in courts from the 13th March 2017. Training of magistrates and probation staff is currently underway.

A number of positive messages emerged from stakeholder feedback, including: strong support for the rationale for the pilot; the positive impact the pilot has had on partnership working; and the additional resources available for offenders through the enhanced service offer.

Practitioners had mixed views about the delivery of certain aspects of the pilot, with the PSR service, prison co-ordination service and mental health pathway rated the most positively. Overall, delivery was thought to have been compromised by: perceived challenges within probation and the poor performance of the CRC; the complexity of the pilot; and resource problems within boroughs.

Overall, most respondents agreed GtO has the potential to impact on a number of important outcomes, but many felt at this stage the pilot has not transformed this potential into tangible results.

As a result of the phased approach to delivery and the slow commencement of some services, it has been recognised that further time is required to develop and embed the work already undertaken and to understand the impact of the pilot on reoffending and offender management. A considerably higher volume of referrals and engagement is now taking place, providing confidence that a further operational period will lead to the proposed volumes for the enhanced services being met. Consideration is currently being given to develop and extend the pilot for a further 18 months. It has also been recognised by the Implementation Team that the pilot has placed additional focus on the functionality of the IOM baseline; any future extension will continue to support and address adding consistency to IOM.

Over the next six months, the evaluation will continue to gather the views of staff involved in the pilot and will also seek to capture the views of individuals receiving the enhanced services through interviews and case studies. The impact of the PSR service on court timeliness and sentencing outcomes will also be explored. The long-term aim for the evaluation is to robustly examine the impact of GtO on proven reoffending and cost to the system, but this will be dependent on having an adequate sample size, robust data being available, and the identification of an appropriate comparison group.

1. Introduction

Background to the Management of Prolific Offenders

It is accepted that a minority of offenders commit a disproportionate amount of crime. This has been the driving principle behind many offender management initiatives over the past 15 years (e.g., the Persistent Offender Programme, Prolific and Other Priority Offender Scheme, the Diamond Initiative). Prolific offenders place a disproportionate heavy demand across the entire Criminal Justice System (CJS) and therefore present the biggest opportunity for impact.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)—a strategic partnership approach to tackling prolific offenders—was launched nationally across the UK in 2004. The overarching aim of IOM is to bring a ‘cross-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities by managing the most persistent and problematic offenders identified jointly by partner agencies working together’.¹ However, it has been recognised that IOM has been adopted at different rates across London, and that the approach adopted varies significantly between London boroughs, often reflecting local circumstances and priorities. Differences include: cohort size and selection; staff resource allocation; governance arrangements; performance management; information sharing; and multi-agency activity.

The North West London IOM pilot evaluation¹ reported tentatively positive results in terms of proven reoffending: there was a 12 percentage point improvement comparing the predicted versus actual OGRS scores of offenders on IOM.² Furthermore, there was a 25% reduction in offences during the first year of IOM, suggesting a lower volume of offending subsequent to IOM. The evaluation also suggested there is a narrow ‘window of opportunity’ when working with prolific offenders. Of those who reoffended, the majority did so quickly: 58% within the first 3 months and 79% within the first 6 months.

Despite the impact of previous offender management initiatives, adult reoffending remains a key priority for the Mayor’s Crime Reduction Board as reoffending rates remain stubborn, driving consistently high state expenditure. Overall reoffending rates stand at 25% but the most prolific offenders have predicted reoffending rates closer to 80%. It is therefore this cohort that presents the biggest opportunity, both in terms of reducing crime and generating savings to the system.

The Gripping the Offender Pilot

The Gripping the Offender (GtO) pilot aims to test a new partnership approach to tackle the most prolific offenders across the whole criminal justice system with the aim of delivering significantly better outcomes and simultaneously driving down demand across the public sector. MOPAC successfully applied to the Home Office Police Innovation Fund and received a total of £1.4m over two years to design, test and evaluate an approach that creates an enhanced whole system response to those offenders causing the most harm to communities and the greatest demand on

¹ The London NW IOM scheme commenced early 2012. MOPAC ‘Evidence and Insight’ conducted the evaluation based upon 418 offenders. The individuals were selected based on high OGRS and specific offence types. More detail available upon request.

² Offender Group Reconviction Scale risk of reoffending in the next 12 months.

the broader criminal justice system. Commissioning for the pilot began in April 2015 and delivery began in February 2016. The pilot has a phased delivery approach, with different elements being launched as and when they become available.

The GtO pilot includes enhancements across the whole CJS and is fully supported by the London Reducing Reoffending Board. Key partners engaged include: Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), National Probation Service (NPS), London Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), and Local Authorities (LA). The enhanced services commissioned through GtO aim to deliver an end to end approach—from arrest to conviction and release back into the community—where all partners are working together to target and support prolific offenders throughout the whole CJS. An enhanced offer has been commissioned in the following areas:

Courts

A focus within the court aspect is to enhance the pre-sentence report (PSR) capacity to enable more on-the-day reports to be completed and speed up the sentencing time for individuals who are prolific in their offending. This strand of the pilot is supported by analysis which demonstrates the disproportionate demand of prolific offenders within the court system. The North West IOM evaluation showed that a total of 20,441 offences had been committed by 418 IOM offenders prior to the scheme: an average of 49 convictions each. The evaluation also reported that, although individuals on IOM proceeded through the CJS quicker than ever before (on average 12 days quicker over the first year of IOM), this was due to the reductions in the time from offence to arrest (21 to 6 days). The time taken from arrest to conviction did not significantly change subsequent to IOM (39 to 36 days), suggesting prolific offenders were not receiving a heightened response at court.

Analysis was completed to identify the courts where offenders in the cohort were most likely to appear. As a result, the enhanced PSR service was rolled out in Thames and Highbury Corner Magistrates' Courts. Two dedicated probation officers operate within these courts and prioritise GtO cases for on-the-day and other fast delivery reports. The court officers also undertake DRR and ATR assessments.

Offender Management

The CRC was commissioned to deliver additional support to resettle and rehabilitate offenders within the cohort. There is a universal prison co-ordination service for all GtO cases in custody, as well as further enhancements targeted at specific priority groups within the overall cohort. Young adult males (aged 18-25) are a priority focus due to the significant volume of the GtO cohort (36%) falling within this transitional age group, as well as their high reoffending rates. Young adult males will receive an increased intensity of support on release from prison alongside mentoring and interventions to address their specific needs (e.g., antisocial peers, family problems).³ These enhanced services are also available as part of a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement for young adult males in the community.

³ These services are available 'Through the Gate' for individuals in custody and as part of a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement. The mentoring service is being delivered by four providers across the eight pilot boroughs: Caring for Ex-Offenders, Osmani Trust, Reaching All People, and New Choices for Youth. A family intervention (Building Bridges) is being delivered by Pact and two cognitive-behavioural therapy programmes (Right Track and Transforming Inside Growing Emotional Resilience; TIGER) are being

Females are also a priority focus due to their bespoke needs. Research suggests that interventions with female offenders are more likely to have a positive impact when they are responsive to the specific needs of women.ⁱⁱ Personalised budgets will be available for 25 females within the GtO cohort. Offender managers will be able to spot purchase interventions to meet the individual needs of each woman.

Policing

The policing offer introduced as part of GtO aims to provide the MPS with a greater ability to complete research and intelligence gathering on select offenders within the GtO cohort. Intelligence Development Plans will be available for all GtO cases that are “Red” rated, including crime mapping, association mapping, open source research and other intelligence products. The intelligence profile should be used to influence release and resettlement plans, and sentence plans. Offender based tasking—as opposed to tasking based on hotspots or offence types—is a new approach being used by the MPS and will also form part of this strand. This tasking process will be a feature of both fast time problem solving through daily pace setter meetings and also in longer term problem solving through Tactical Tasking and Coordination Groups.

Pathways

NHS England has funded a pathway to address the mental health needs of the GtO cohort. Evidence suggests that individuals with mental health needs are disproportionately represented within offender populations. Data shows that 72% of prisoners face at least two mental health problems; 95% of imprisoned young offenders have a mental health disorder; and childhood and adolescent trauma is widespread amongst offenders.ⁱⁱⁱ As part of the mental health pathway, a consultative function will be provided for all cases on the GtO cohort, as well as direct face-to-face interventions for offenders. The aims of the mental health pathway are: to improve offender engagement with GtO practitioners; improve confidence and competence in supporting offenders with mental health issues; and provide GtO practitioners with a range of techniques to use when working with this cohort.

A second pathway has been established to pilot the delivery of employment opportunities for up to 20 identified GtO nominals. Evidence suggests that employment is one of the biggest barriers to the reintegration of ex-offenders.^{iv} Data shows that over 60% of prolific offenders in London have an employment, education or training need.⁴ The employment pathway delivered as part of GtO will recruit, employ and place ex-offenders into contracts with commercial partners on fixed-term 6-month contracts.

GPS tagging

This element will pilot and test the impact of compulsory GPS tagging on offender behaviour with the purpose of informing the effectiveness of GPS tagging as an offender management tool. An electronic monitoring requirement will be made available to courts to use as part of a Community

delivered by Rise Mutual. Young adult males managed by the CRC will also receive an increased intensity of support from their offender manager.

⁴ Based on OASys information for prolific offenders drawn from NPS/CRC caseloads.

Order or Suspended Sentence Order. This aspect is projected to go live on 1st March 2017 and will run for 12 months with a total of 75-100 offenders to be tagged during this time.

The Gripping the Offender Cohort

The GtO pilot targets individuals in London who are most prolific in their offending. Analysis of the cohort across London was undertaken to identify the most suitable location for the pilot. Volume was considered alongside reoffending rates, acquisitive crime performance, and IOM investment. This analysis identified the North and East London Local Justice Areas as a priority location for the pilot covering the boroughs of Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

To be included in the pilot an individual must meet the following criteria:

- Convicted of an offence
- Aged 18 or over
- Resident within one of the eight pilot boroughs
- An OGRS 2 year⁵ score of either (a) 75%+ or (b) 50-74% with either a robbery or burglary offence in the preceding 12 months

Individuals managed by both the NPS and CRC are in scope. Identification of GtO eligible individuals was first undertaken in July 2015 from data held by the NPS and CRC. This data showed there were 1,187 individuals residing within the eight pilot boroughs who met the GtO eligibility criteria. Consistent with their status as prolific offenders, GtO eligible individuals had been arrested an average of 53 times each. The average age at first arrest was 15 years and 62% of the cohort was arrested for the first time before the age of 16. The cohort had an average of 33 prior convictions and 48% received their first conviction before the age of 16. Within the last year, almost 60% of the cohort had been convicted of a new offence and almost 90% received a new conviction within the last 3 years.

The data was pulled again in December 2015 to identify an updated cohort of GtO eligible individuals for the commencement of the enhanced services. These cases then went through a quality assurance process by local IOM teams. The final cohort consisted of **1,363 GtO cases** in the eight pilot boroughs: 67% managed by the CRC and 33% managed by the NPS (see Figure 1 for a breakdown of cohort numbers by borough). Although these cases provided a starting point for the pilot, the GtO cohort is designed to be dynamic in that cases are regularly added and removed by local IOM teams.⁶

⁵ Offender Group Reconviction Scale risk of reoffending in the next two years.

⁶ Cases are removed from the cohort if they move outside of the pilot area, if their sentence is terminated, or if they no longer meet the OGRS criteria (e.g., the robbery or burglary offence falls outside the 12 month criteria).



Figure 1. Initial GtO Cohort Split by Borough

The initial cohort was predominantly male (91%) and in the younger age brackets (36% were 18-25 and 29% were 26-34). The average age of the cohort was 31 years (range 18-69 years). More offenders of all ages were managed by the CRC (73%) than the NPS (27%). The average OGRS2 score was 82% (range 52% to 98%), indicating an 82% likelihood of reconviction in the following two years. Thirty-eight percent were identified as being in custody, 38% were on a community order, and 24% were in the community on licence.

2. Methodology

The evaluation is being carried out by Evidence and Insight (E&I): a dedicated in-house social research function based within MOPAC. The team informs strategic decision-making through robust crime and performance analysis, as well as qualitative and quantitative social research methodology.

E&I are using a variety of research methods to evaluate the GtO pilot, including surveys, interviews and focus groups. Key performance measures will also be assessed throughout the pilot, and the evaluation aims to robustly explore the impact of GtO on re-offending outcomes and cost to the system. This analysis is dependent on the provision of appropriate data; without this, the evaluation will consist of only process and performance analysis.

Performance Analysis

A range of performance data will be gathered throughout the pilot on a monthly basis to determine what is happening 'on the ground'. Performance data will include: cohort size, numbers eligible for the enhanced services, numbers accessing the services, numbers of completers vs. non-completers, age, gender, ethnicity, needs.

Process

Staff feedback will be gathered using online surveys (3 waves), interviews (with ~20-30 staff at 2 time points) and focus groups (at 2 time points across pilot delivery). These methods will enable the research team to capture learning around the design and implementation of GtO, and to capture change over the course of the pilot. Themes to be explored include: set-up and design, partnership working, training, staffing, governance, data collection, data management, ways of working, products developed, use of data, business change, multi-agency work/partnerships, new approaches in managing offenders, perceived impacts, lessons learned, and challenges. Offender insight and experience of the pilot will also be gathered through interviews and case studies. The anticipated sample would be 20-30 offenders.

Impact

This aspect will examine the impact of GtO on a number of primary (e.g., proven reoffending, severity, frequency, time taken to reoffend, speed through the system, disposal type) and secondary outcomes (e.g., offender attitudes, partnership involvement, data sharing between agencies, borough crime levels, offender victimisation, victim types, demand reduction, needs being met, timely referrals).

The primary and secondary outcomes have different appropriate follow-up periods. Impact of the PSR service on court timeliness and sentencing outcomes will be examined first, because these outcomes do not require a long follow-up period. Early impact for the remaining services will be examined using arrest and charge rates within a six month follow-up period. Any more robust

measure of impact (e.g., proven reoffending) will require a longer follow-up period (18 months for proven reoffending).

The aim will be to use a quasi-experimental design to statistically match offenders who receive the GtO enhancements with similar GtO eligible offenders who do not receive the enhancements. This analysis will only be possible if: there is robust data available; successful implementation of the pilot; the sample size reaches over 150 cases; and a suitable control group can be identified from the available data.

Cost-benefit

The evaluation may also include a financial model outlining the cost benefit of the pilot as well as outlining the cashable and non-cashable savings delivered by the model. This aspect is vital to support the longer term sustainability of interventions; external expertise may be commissioned to deliver this element.

Overview of report

This is the first interim evaluation report for GtO which will share progress and initial findings from the evaluation. It will consist primarily of process and performance analysis. The proposed plan for the remainder of the evaluation will be presented at the end of this report.

3. Results

Performance Analysis⁷

Pre-sentence Report Service

Between the 6th February and 31st December 2016, a total of **947** offenders came to the attention of the probation officers based at Highbury Corner and Thames Magistrates’ court (see Table 1). These cases were predominantly male, were 35 years old on average, and most frequently appeared in court for theft (33%), violence (16%) and burglary/robbery (11%) offences. Eighty-two percent of offenders pled guilty to their qualifying offence.

Of the eligible cases that came to the attention of the court officers, **225** (or **24%**) received a PSR as part of the enhanced service⁸; **86** reports were delivered within 5 days of the offender’s plea and **64** of those were delivered on-the-day. The desired outcome for the service is for 90% of PSRs to be delivered within 5 days; the data shows that **only 38%** were delivered within 5 days. The main reasons why reports were not completed within 5 days were: the court officer did not become aware of the case until more than 5 days after the plea; the case was sent to Crown Court; the offender failed to attend their appointment; or a DRR/ATR assessment was carried out.⁹

Table 1. Pre-sentence report service performance data

	Thames Magistrates’ Court		Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court ¹⁰		Total	
	All	18-25	All	18-25	All	18-25
Number of cases came to attention	588	87	359	89	947	176
Number of reports delivered	150	20	75	17	225	37
Number of reports delivered on-the-day	20	3	44	8	64	11
Number of reports delivered within 5 days	39	4	47	10	86	14

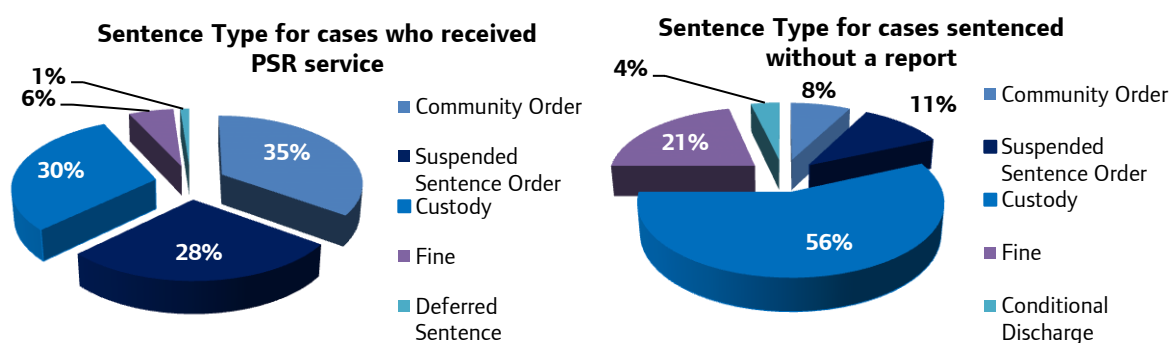


Figure 2. Sentence type for cases who received the PSR service and for cases sentenced without report

⁷ Full performance data is available via the GtO performance dashboard: <http://data.london.gov.uk/resources/gto-dashboard>. Please contact Julia.Yesberg@mopac.london.gov.uk if you require the password.

⁸ Reasons why offenders did not receive a report included: they were sentenced without a report (41%); the case was adjourned (11%); the case was committed to crown (7%); and the trial was in another court (5%).

⁹ The court probation officers have carried out a total of 88 DRR and ATR assessments: 78 in Thames and 10 in Highbury Corner.

¹⁰ There was a gap in service provision in Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court for most of the latter half of 2016, which is reflected in the lower number of individuals receiving the service at this court.

As the above charts show, offenders who received the PSR service were more likely to be sentenced to a community order (CO) or suspended sentence order (SSO) compared to offenders who were sentenced without a report (63% vs. 19%). Offenders sentenced without a report were more likely to receive a custodial sentence (56% vs. 30%).

Of the 37 18-25 year olds who received a report and were eligible to receive an enhanced Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR) as part of the enhanced offender management services, **12 (32%)** received it. The remaining 18-25 year olds were sentenced to a CO or SSO without the enhanced RAR (n=19), custody (n=9) or a fine (n=1).

Enhanced Offender Management Services

Prison co-ordination service

Between 25th April and 31st December 2016, the prison co-ordination role has impacted on a total of **293** custody cases located in a variety of prisons, including Pentonville (22%), Thameside (15%), Isis (11%), Brixton (5%), Bronzefield (5%), Feltham (4%), and Wormwood Scrubs (4%). The prison co-ordinators have also carried out tasks with **79** cases on a community sentence and **433** offenders on licence. The specific tasks undertaken by the prison co-ordinators include: notifying prison and/or offender manager (OM) or senior probation officer (SPO) of new cases; flagging cases as GtO on Delius; identifying cases as eligible for the enhanced services and sending in referrals; case discussions with OM or SPO; referrals to local IOM team; and providing feedback to IOM panels about progress, resettlement plans and release dates.

Enhanced services for young adult males

Between 25th April and 31st December 2016, **98 referrals** were made to the mentoring service, **40** to the Building Bridges programme, **72** to the Right Track programme, and **48** to TIGER (see Figure 3 for a chart tracking referrals by month and a comparison by borough). Referral rates were low over the first few months of delivery but picked up in September 2016. Referral numbers vary by borough, with Tower Hamlets having the most referrals across all services.

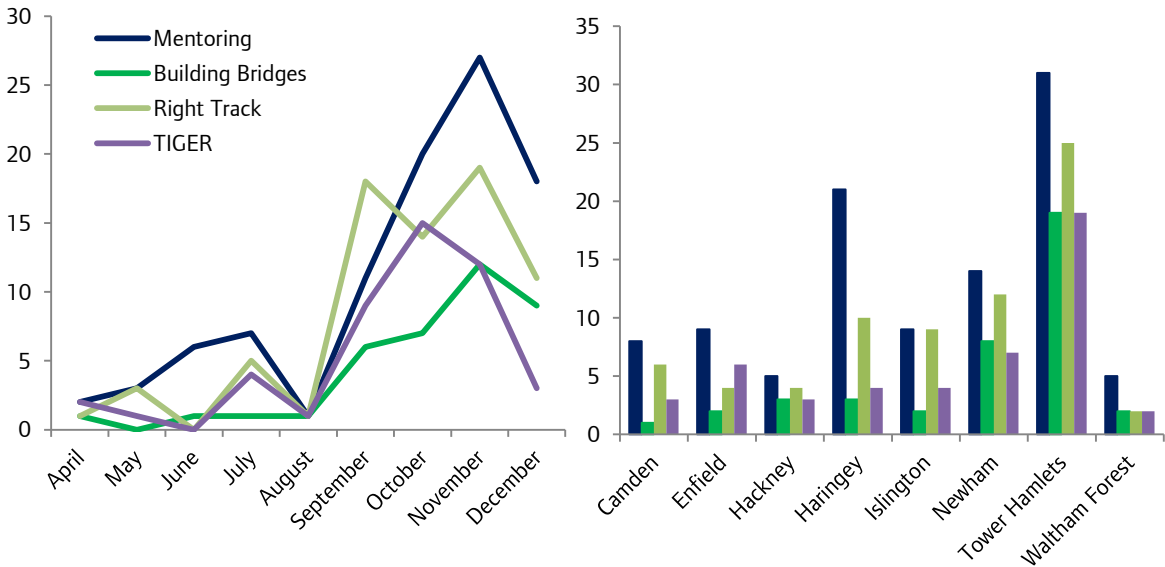


Figure 3. Number of referrals made to the enhanced services for young adult males by month and borough

Eighty-two referrals have been accepted for mentoring (see Table 2). To date, the mentoring providers have engaged with **48** cases and **4** individuals have completed the mentoring service. **Twelve** young adults are due to commence the Right Track programme in January, and a group is also scheduled to commence the TIGER programme. No programmes have been scheduled for Building Bridges at the time of writing.

Table 2. Mentoring performance data

Mentoring Provider	Referrals made	Referrals accepted	Number of clients seen	Number completed
Caring for Ex-offenders	6	3	0	0
Osmani Trust	38	30	21	0
Reaching All People	30	29	25	4
New Choices for Youth	24	24	3	0

In addition to the above services, young adult males have received increased contact with their offender manager. Cases released between 1st October and 31st December 2016 received an average of **1.18** appointments per week, meeting the target of weekly appointments. Furthermore, **90%** of cases released prior to 30th September 2016 received fortnightly appointments for the remainder of their supervision period.

Female Personalised Budgets

Four females have been referred to the personalised budget service since it launched on 15th November 2016: two from Tower Hamlets, one from Enfield and one from Islington. Of these referrals, **one** has currently been accepted. This budget will be used to spot purchase the following interventions: Moving On Resettlement Coaching, Female Wellbeing and Development Programme, and a Gender Specific Mental Health Intervention.

Pathways

Since the Mental Health pathway went live at the beginning of July 2016, a total of **102** referrals were made to the service. From these referrals, the forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) have undertaken **272** consultations with offender managers, **33** consultations with other professionals, and **45** assessments with service users. **Twenty-four** service users have commenced a care plan with a FMHP, which include the following direct interventions: motivational interviewing (**11**), psycho-education (**9**), supportive programmes (**6**), mood management (**4**), anger management (**3**), brief intervention on coping strategies (**3**), crisis management (**3**), problem solving (**3**), resilience (**2**) and anxiety management (**2**).¹¹

The Employment pathway has received **70** referrals since going live in July 2016. **Two** referrals have been accepted. Reasons why referrals have not been accepted include: the referral does not reside in a pilot borough; the referral is in custody; the referral is an identified drug user; and no full referral form returned.

¹¹ An individual may receive more than one type of intervention.

Policing

Since the policing intelligence support function went live in the first week of July 2016, a total of **101** intelligence development plans have been requested by the eight boroughs and **110** plans have been actioned by the research hub and sent back to the pilot boroughs. A total of **320** offender based taskings have been carried out by police on these cases. Table 3 shows there is large borough variation in the use of this service, with Haringey, Hackney and Waltham Forest making the most requests for intelligence development plans and carrying out the most subsequent taskings.

Table 3. Policing intelligence support function borough comparison

	Camden	Enfield	Hackney	Haringey	Islington	Newham	Tower Hamlets	Waltham Forest	Total
Intel Dev Plans Requested	7	14	16	33	5	0	9	17	101
Intel Dev Plans Received	6	14	16	36	6	4	10	18	110
Offender Based Taskings	0	0	110	182	0	2	0	26	320

Enhanced service referral overlap

GtO is designed to be a whole systems approach to offender management where prolific offenders are given enhancements across the CJS. As such, there has been significant overlap in referrals to the GtO enhanced services. Of the **225** offenders who received the PSR service, **125** also received the prison co-ordination service, **13** were referred to an enhanced OM service for young adult males, **2** to the female personalised budget service, and **10** to the mental health service.

Of the **98** cases referred to mentoring, **64** were also referred to Right Track, **36** to TIGER and **35** to Building Bridges. **Forty** offenders were referred to both Right Track and TIGER and **28** to Right Track, TIGER and Building Bridges. Of the **102** referrals to mental health, **3** had also been referred to an enhanced OM intervention.¹²

Key learning

The pre-sentence report service has impacted on 225 individuals over 11 months (an average of 20 reports per month). Offenders who received the service were more likely to receive a CO or SSO compared to those sentenced without a report. Timeliness of reports has not reached the target of 90% being delivered within 5 days; only 38% of reports were delivered within 5 days. Nine young adult males have been sentenced to an enhanced RAR out of the 37 eligible young people to receive the service.

In the first few months of delivery, referral numbers to the enhanced offender management services for young adult males were much lower than expected. There was a large spike in referrals in the month of September (mentoring referrals increased to 22 in September from an average of 4.5 per month over the previous 5 months), reflecting improvements to referral processes. Referral numbers have been maintained over the last few months.

¹² At this stage, we are unable to determine the overlap across the Blue Sky and Policing referrals. Individual level data has been requested.

Forty-eight individuals have engaged with the mentoring service, with four people completing it. Groups are scheduled to commence for the Right Track and TIGER programmes in January, but no interventions are currently scheduled for Building Bridges. One referral has been accepted for the female personalised budgets.

A total of 102 referrals were made to the mental health pathway in the first 6 months. Forty-five service users have been assessed by the Forensic Mental Health Practitioners and 24 have commenced direct interventions. A total of 305 case consultations have been undertaken by the FMHPs. The employment pathway has received 70 referrals, with only two being accepted.

A total of 110 intelligence development plans have been received by IOM teams, and 320 offender-based taskings carried out, almost exclusively in the boroughs of Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest.

Feedback from staff on the design and delivery of the enhanced services will be reported in the next section.

Process Learning

Staff feedback was gathered through interviews with practitioners in April 2016 (n=18); an online survey with practitioners, service providers, and strategic staff in September 2016 (n=44); and a focus group with service providers in November 2016. Given the size of the research cohort, some caution should be used when considering results.

Design of the pilot

There was positive feedback from staff about the rationale for the pilot. Respondents supported the rationale and thought the project aims were “relevant” and “commendable”. Others noted that the pilot presents a unique opportunity to focus on particular cohorts of offenders and to make a real difference to individuals. Many respondents commented that the pilot has a great deal of potential.

Although there was support for the rationale for the pilot, some staff thought the pilot was overly ambitious and contained too many elements, making the project complex and confusing to practitioners. Furthermore, some respondents thought the amount of enhanced services on offer were “starting to feel like overload.”

Other feedback about the design of the pilot related to a perceived disconnection between those designing the pilot and the realities of the frontline. As one respondent commented, “there could be more join up of commissioning vision with operational knowledge of what works/is needed on the ground.”

Finally, some staff criticised the services available for not being tailored to the needs of all service users and for not taking into account local variations in existing service provision. Some respondents questioned why there was nothing new or innovative for older men, while others

thought the services were not accessible to service users and failed to take into account the nature and motivation levels of prolific offenders.

It is important to understand what the needs of the cohort are before putting together a range of different interventions or none of them could make an impact [CRC]

It is challenging to implement a pan-London model as each borough set up is very different, so different areas need different things [Local Authority]

Relating to the design of the pilot, a number of respondents expressed confusion about how GtO fits in with existing IOM schemes, how it is different to IOM, and what added value it brings over and above the services already being delivered by boroughs. Some staff questioned why GtO was created separately when it could have been implemented within IOM “which is a well-established and recognised multi-agency approach in targeting prolific offenders.” Some staff also questioned whether the money would have been better spent by giving partner agencies more information and training on the current IOM scheme, and providing additional resources to IOM.

Delivery of the pilot

Practitioners were asked to give their opinion on the delivery of the enhanced services. Practitioners were most positive about the delivery of the PSR service and least positive about the delivery of the enhanced OM interventions for young adult males. The main themes about what is working well and what could be improved are presented below:

- Practitioners were positive about the PSR service and found it helpful having a direct point of contact in the court. Their impression was that cases were seen quicker than usual and that the reports were of a higher quality.
- The main criticism of the PSR service was the gap in service resulting from the vacancy at Highbury Corner Magistrates’ court. Other areas for improvement included ensuring the probation officers were contactable during court sessions (i.e., providing them with a mobile phone or tablet to access emails) and ensuring they were in communication with the IOM units to gather the relevant information before delivering the report.
- The prison co-ordination service also received positive feedback. The co-ordinators were praised for being efficient and communicating well and staff reported that it was helpful having a direct link into the prisons.
- Some respondents questioned whether the prison co-ordination service was value for money, having only used the service a couple of times. Others noted that the information provided by the service was information they would have been able to gather themselves, albeit over a longer time period. Practitioners also questioned whether the co-ordinators should be based within the prisons.¹³
- A number of concerns were raised by practitioners about the enhanced OM services available for young adult males. Practitioners reported difficulty progressing referrals and queried the length of time it was taking providers to act upon a referral.

¹³ Since this feedback was gathered, the prison-coordinators have moved to being based in prison.

- Staff also reported that some of the enhanced services appeared non-existent and that there has been a lack of pro-activity by service providers. Practitioners also thought awareness among offender managers around what enhanced services are on offer could be improved.
- The mental health pathway received positive feedback. The forensic mental health practitioners (FMHPs) were praised for their communication and availability and for offering much needed advice to offenders and partners.
- There were some concerns regarding duplication of service; for example, some boroughs already having a surplus of mental health practitioners.
- Suggestions for improvement to the mental health service all related to an expansion of the service, for example: having the FMHPs based in the borough for the whole week in order to reschedule missed appointments; having a FMHP for each borough rather than two across the eight boroughs; and for the FMHPs to deliver 1-to-1 interventions across all boroughs.
- Only a few respondents took the opportunity to comment on the employment pathway and reported that, while the employment providers appear to be a good resource, they are currently absent from boroughs and could be more involved with referrals (e.g., by coming to meet offenders).
- Some respondents also thought it would be helpful for the pathway to have a focus on training needs and providing assistance for individuals to travel in to work.
- There was mixed feedback regarding the policing intelligence support function.¹⁴ Some staff reported that the process was simple, the turnaround quick and the product useful and appropriate. Others reported: the service is adding another layer of unnecessary supervision; intelligence support should be completed by IOM officers who know more about their cohort; there is risk of duplication of service; and it could be improved by providing an open source element.

More generally, a number of respondents reported the effective delivery of the pilot had been affected by the split of probation following Transforming Rehabilitation. They noted the pilot was “operating in a time of unprecedented change for Probation” and cited a number of problems with the performance of the CRC, particularly regarding the “unmanageable” workloads of offender managers and high staff turnarounds. These high workloads mean offender managers do not have the capacity to deal with the added demands of the pilot, resulting in a lack of awareness of available resources and low referral numbers. There was also dissatisfaction among respondents with CRC senior level management, with some staff observing a disconnection between senior level discussions and what is being delivered on the frontline.

The pilot has come at a time of great change within CRC, probation staff have unmanageable workloads and the added demands from the GtO pilot cannot be serviced adequately [Metropolitan Police]

Offender managers do not know what GtO is, they feel it is another referral form they do not have time to complete [Local Authority]

¹⁴ Since the 16th January 2017, the existing intelligence support function was changed to focus on enhancements to existing intelligence profiles rather than the creation of new profiles.

Feedback from the service provider focus group highlighted a feeling among providers that the pilot was extremely slow to start due to a perceived lack of planning at the front end. They spoke of the frustration they felt with people (i.e., offender managers) not knowing their roles or what the pilot was, and very few referrals coming in during the first few months. They reflected that there have been recent improvements to referral processes, and praised MOPAC’s response to issues raised.

Partnership working

An increase in partnership working emerged as one of the main positives of the pilot so far. Almost two-thirds of survey respondents (**65%**; n=21/32) agreed that working on GtO has allowed them to develop relationships with new partners, and **half** (n=15/30) agreed that working on GtO has allowed them to improve relationships with existing partners (see Table 4). Furthermore, **over half** (n=17/33) of respondents agreed they understand better what other agencies do to manage prolific offenders as a result of the pilot.

Comments from respondents suggested the pilot has increased contact between different partners (e.g., between prison and court services and practitioners), and has led to new partnerships being developed. Positively, almost **two thirds** (n=6/10) of service providers believed they were in a position to sequence interventions for offenders alongside other providers.

Table 4. Survey responses to partnership working questions

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Working on GtO has allowed me to develop relationships with new partners (n=32)	-	15.6%	9.4%	43.8%	21.3%
Working on GtO has allowed me to improve relationships with existing partners (n=30)	3.3%	16.7%	30.0%	36.7%	13.3%
I understand better what other agencies do to manage prolific offenders (n=33)	6.1%	27.3%	15.2%	39.4%	12.1%

However, feedback also suggested improvements could be made to the ‘whole-systems approach’. For example, only **one out of five** service providers were positive about the communication between their organisation and those referring into their service and **less than half** of service providers (n=4/10) reported feeling involved with the other providers. A number of respondents suggested that joining up the provider and practitioner meetings could help to increase awareness of the services on offer and, as a result, increase the number of referrals.

I believe that as a result of provider and other meetings we are beginning to understand how we might ensure that the approach we take compliments other referral pathways for the same service user [Service Provider]

It was only through an invite to the providers’ forum did I appreciate the amount of resources available for offenders resulting in a sudden spike of referrals being made to GtO [Local Authority]

Training, awareness raising and communication

Only **27%** (n=6/22) of practitioners reported finding the training, awareness raising and communication received from MOPAC useful; **58%** (n=11/19) found the operating model useful; and **59%** (n=10/17) found the Local Implementation Group (LIG) meetings useful. The main feedback regarding improvements were: having a more simplified operating model highlighting key practices and removing ambiguity; linking the LIGs with the Providers' Forum and inviting OMs and SPOs to the LIGs to increase awareness of the pilot and the services on offer; and making the information provided less repetitive and more specific to local areas.

The same low proportion of practitioners (**27%**) found the training, awareness raising and communication received from their own organisation useful. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents (**77%**; n=17/22) felt they had received enough training to use GtO in their role. Positively, the majority of service providers and strategic staff surveyed found the Providers' Forum and GtO Workshops useful, respectively.

Potential for impact

Of the aims and objectives of GtO, survey respondents were most confident the pilot had the potential to achieve: a reduction in reoffending (**84%**; n=37/44); to support offenders to tackle problems in their lives (**84%**; n=37/44); to improve partnership working across agencies (**82%**; n=36/44); and to improve the engagement of prolific offenders (**80%**; n=35/44). Respondents were less confident that GtO had the potential to improve public safety (**50%**; n=22/44), and to improve public confidence in the ability of the CJS to tackle prolific offenders (**55%**; n=24/44).

However, despite agreeing the GtO pilot has the *potential* to achieve these aims and objectives, a number of respondents took the opportunity to state that the pilot has yet to transform this potential into actual results:

GtO has a lot of 'potential', but I'd say at this time it is struggling to transform that potential into actual results [Metropolitan Police]

Although GtO does indeed have the potential to achieve the above ticked answers, at the moment, it is definitely potential rather than actual from our perspective as a Service Provider [Service Provider]

In terms of the impact of GtO on ways of working, the majority of respondents (**69%**; n=23/33) agreed the pilot has the potential to impact their work in a positive way; however, only **35%** (n=11/28) of respondents currently agree that GtO has had a positive impact on working with prolific offenders. Furthermore, **32%** (n=9/28) of respondents reported the pilot has increased their workload beyond a comfortable level.

Positive learning and challenges

Overall, a number of positive aspects of the pilot were identified by survey respondents, including: having additional resources available to offenders through the enhanced service offer; developing stronger working relationships with partner agencies; the opportunity to add consistency to the

IOM approach; and increasing awareness of the role of other partnership organisations. Furthermore, of the enhanced services available, the PSR service, prison co-ordination role, and mental health engagement were consistently identified as positive aspects of GtO.

It has been useful in bringing all parties together that work together to reduce reoffending
[Mentoring provider]

An opportunity to add some consistency to IOM approach across a wider area of London
[Metropolitan Police]

Being part of a London wide pilot programme directly linked to the Mayor's office is a big positive for me
[Local Authority]

Despite these positives, there were a number of challenges identified by respondents, including: the pilot creating additional work without the resources to properly carry it out; disjointed implementation leading to confusion about some aspects of the pilot; too much administration and data gathering, including the continuous updating of the GtO cohort; lack of awareness about the services from OMs leading to low referral rates; lack of flexibility and some enhanced services thought to be inappropriate or impractical for this cohort; using out-of-date OGRS scores as the method of selection; and lack of adequate IT databases to accurately identify and track participants.

Service providers spoke of their particular challenges in the focus group, including difficulties accessing some prisons and prisoners being moved before they have the opportunity to meet with them; problems getting service users onto courses due to locations and gang issues; poor communication between the providers; and lack of knowledge about the pilot from offender managers.

Furthermore, a number of respondents were critical of the name of the pilot and thought 'Gripping the Offender' gave a negative perception of the pilot to partners and service users.

There is a feeling on occasion that some aspects are 'box ticking' or busy work to satisfy the terms of the bid rather than doing things we would feel might contribute to reducing reoffending
[Metropolitan Police]

'Gripping The Offender' as a publicly used piece of language is inappropriate: it runs counter to the non-labelling and supportive environment that many Criminal Justice professionals support [CRC]

Key learning

Findings from interviews and surveys with stakeholders revealed a number of key points for learning. Staff were generally positive about the rationale for the pilot, but expressed a number of concerns about how aspects of the pilot were designed. In particular, respondents questioned whether the pilot was overly ambitious and whether it should have been rolled out as an enhancement to local IOM schemes.

Practitioners had mixed views about the delivery of certain aspects of the pilot, with the PSR service, prison co-ordination service and mental health pathway rated the most positively. Overall, delivery was thought to have been compromised by perceived challenges within probation and the poor performance of the CRC.

The pilot has had a positive impact on partnership working, but more linking up and communication between practitioners and providers was suggested as an area for improvement. Training, awareness raising and communication was generally rated poorly by practitioners both in regards to MOPAC's training and the training provided by respondents' own organisations; however, most respondents agreed they had received enough training to deliver their role in GtO.

Overall, most respondents agreed GtO has potential for impact but felt at this stage the pilot has not transformed this potential into actual results.

4. Discussion

This interim report has provided an update on the progress of GtO and highlighted some key learning from stakeholders involved in the pilot. On the whole, performance analysis indicates that some enhanced services are progressing well in terms of numbers (e.g., the PSR service, mental health pathway); whereas for other services, referral numbers and numbers accessing the enhanced services are lower than anticipated.

The increase in referrals into the enhanced OM services from September indicates positive steps have been taken to improve referral rates. This work needs to be sustained moving forward to meet the proposed volumes for the enhanced services and, more importantly, to make sure those individuals who would benefit from the services have the opportunity to receive them.

A number of positive messages emerged from stakeholder feedback:

- There was a great deal of support for the rationale for the pilot and respondents understood why the pilot was designed
- Staff identified an increase in partnership working as one of the main benefits of the pilot so far, both in terms of creating new partnerships and improving relationships with existing partnerships
- Staff were positive that the pilot had created additional resources for offenders through the enhanced service offer and noted the particular benefits of having a direct contact in the courts and prisons, and having ready access to forensic mental health practitioners
- Most staff agreed that GtO has the potential to impact on a number of important outcomes, including reduced reoffending, helping offenders tackle problems in their lives, and improving partnership working

Feedback from staff also suggested a number of challenges to the effective delivery of the pilot, including: ongoing issues with the CRC and unmanageable OM caseloads; the complexity of the pilot leading to a lack of understanding about all the services available; and resource problems in boroughs. The realities of creating a whole-systems approach involving a range of agencies was also apparent from the experiences of staff, and communication between practitioners and providers was identified as an area for improvement.

Over the next six months, the evaluation will continue to gather the views of staff involved in the pilot through surveys, interviews and focus groups. The evaluation will also seek to capture the views of individuals receiving the enhanced services to get their experiences of the pilot and the perceived benefits of the enhanced services on themselves. The long-term aim for the evaluation is to robustly examine the impact of GtO on reoffending and a range of other outcomes; however, this will be dependent on the number of offenders who access the enhanced services, the quality of data received, and the identification of an appropriate comparison group.

References

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