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"The definition of perfectionism is - paralysis"

WINSTON CHURCHILL

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Project: An investigation of a behavioural change program in HM Prison Service U.K., involving the application of behavioural observation checklists and a computerized database to train inmates and which also aids accurate application of a tiered system of incentives and earned privileges.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to investigate a prison based behavioural change program it is important to first clarify the objectives of that particular program. In the case of this investigation there are two distinct, but related programs. One program is the **Incentives and Earned Privileges** programme (IEP). This is essentially a policy directed from the Home Office which states that all prisons must implement a regime for inmates of structured incentives, which can be earned through positive behaviour and lost through antisocial or inappropriate behaviour. The aim of the IEP was to motivate good behaviour and performance in prisoners. In principle it is quite simplistic behavioural psychology, where the occurrence of an undesired behaviour is reduced by punishment such as loss of a privilege, and desired behaviour is rewarded and increased through provision of a privilege. Overall there can be seen to be an aim to provide a total training environment for inmates where punitive measures are largely replaced by a system of rewards. Punishment only involves the loss of such rewards.

The particular incentives and privileges provided by a gaol and the structure of the regime are determined by the individual gaol, within the national framework policy. Determinants include the gaol's level of security, which of course allows varying degrees of inmate freedom and thus makes available varying levels of opportunities. The needs of that particular gaol's inmate population are also considered. Resources the gaol has access to, including specialist staff and financial fluidity also play a role. Finally, the attitudes of management to the IEP and to the inmates themselves are also accounted for.

The second aspect of the investigation is the **Sentence Management System** (SMs). This is particular to Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Garth and a few other gaols. It is not a national program. It is essentially a computerized, behaviour checklist system for training inmates in skills such as assertiveness, controlling aggression and respectful communication.. It will be explained later in detail. The aim of the SMs was to provide an objective assessment of inmate behaviour and to utilize the whole prison environment to modify inmates behaviours towards more prosocial interactions. While the basis for the reward and punishment of the IEP regime at HMP Garth is based on the behaviours and resultant scores of the SMs, the two are distinct programs and may stand alone.

Subjectivity in decision making is always present at some level when assessing human behaviour. It is desirable to reduce this as much as possible in order to provide reward and punishment contingencies that as close as possible, relate to an inmates actual behaviour, rather than the assessors biases and assumptions. Accuracy is an important factor in determining whether a behavioural modification program will have its desired effect. Establishing target behaviours, those ones that can be observed, attends to this ideal. Another factor, which the SMs also addresses is the principle that a desired behaviour is complex and is made up of a hierarchy of more simple behaviours. The observation checklists then, are formed of areas of items that are hierarchically listed so that to score highest an inmate must first be able to do the more simple, but less desirable behaviours. This is known as shaping and allows gradual acquisition of new complex behaviours. The SMs if operating with these principles in mind can facilitate the success of an IEP program. It can also simply be aimed at changing human behaviour, thus it may serve but is not the servant of IEP.

Acknowledgements are due to many including Graham Beck the Principle Psychologist for the North West Region in Her Majesty's Prison Service and my initial and main contact throughout my endeavours. Other thanks are due to HM Prison Service and all the staff at the various prisons and Head Office who met with me and used their valuable time to instruct me on their work and the programs I was interested in. This was most taxing on the Psychology Unit at HMP Garth who provided me with time, resources and allowed themselves to be interviewed. Thanks also go to the Governor of HMP Garth who extended me his professional hospitality.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Project Description: An investigation of a behavioural change program in HM Prison Service U.K., involving the application of behavioural observation checklists and a computerized database to train inmates and which also aids accurate application of a tiered system of incentives and earned privileges.

Highlights

The highlights of my Fellowship program were day to day contact with the running of the Sentence Management System (SMS) and the Incentives and Earned Privileges programme (IEP) at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Garth. This allowed me to develop an in-depth knowledge of the benefits and problems with this program. The opportunity to visit several prisons to observe the programs allowed me to compare different implementations of IEP and SMS. Most time was focussed on SMS, which was not intrinsically tied to IEP. The opportunity to see the process of revision and discuss with staff and inmates the programs was useful. It made an initial paper exercise much more real. It also enabled me to see the similarities and differences between HM Prison Service and Corrections in NSW. This was important in my assessing the viability of the project's application to my own correctional system.

Perhaps the most valuable contact with respect to me both initially developing the idea for the Fellowship project, and then its follow through to completion was Graham Beck, Principal Psychologist, North West Region HM Prison Service and the other psychology staff at HMP Garth.

With respect to IEP and SMS the major lessons learnt about the programs include, that for such a large-scale project, its implementation must be simple at ground level to work. Policy makers rarely actually implement a policy, it is left up to others. Policy provides a guiding framework and directs a departmental effort, yet the successful application of that policy is not solely determined by its value. SMS at HMP Garth was also developed collaboratively and was relevant to staff expectations of inmates, this encouraged acceptance of this by staff. Overall support from staff at all levels was high. Where there were problems, lack of ownership or understanding of the program contributed to this. An issue to keep in mind.

The SMS's use of a computerized database and behavioural checklists at HMP Garth, succeeded in making the application of behavioural principles simple and easy. In fact my observation is that it was a very efficient and effective way of achieving the aims of modifying inmate behaviour, as well as supporting IEP and achieving good order. The idea that all interactions in a gaol offer an opportunity to modify inmate behaviour from antisocial to prosocial was best met by SMS at HMP Garth. As was the principle that the everyday gaol environment should support skills learnt on specialist programs, such as aggression control. The message to inmates was we expect you to change your behaviour, that is your responsibility, ours is to assist you and provide an environment where that is possible. This ideally led to an environment of cooperation. Such an ideal was not always met, but SMS did allow for some control over subjective decisions or in the worst case victimization of inmates with respect to the program. It did also provide a good opportunity for inmates to change their behaviour.

Evidence of effectiveness

HMP Garth has reached to some degree its aim of being a total training environment, where all interactions were aimed to be learning experiences for inmates. Improvements in the gaol milieu and the benefits of SMS were assessed through use of the database. Associated with the use of SMS, were reductions in violence by inmates against other inmates and staff, less segregation of inmates into punishment areas and less adjudications for breach of gaol rules. While not wishing to be overly idealistic, overall there was a feeling of order and respectful interactions between staff and inmates. Given the environment was a medium security gaol with over 600 inmates, mostly convicted of violent offences, these achievements were commendable. Assessment of effectiveness was enhanced by computerization. IEP appears to be less valuable without being linked to an objective SMS.

I intend to present the information to the Director of Psychological Programmes, the Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Management as well as with the Commissioner of the Department of Corrective Services. Excerpts of the report are to be published in the Psychological Programs Newsletter and the Dept. of Corrective Services Bulletin. My final report to the Fellowship will also be sent to appropriate departments in other states of Australia. I am proposing that a small-scale pilot study would aid in establishing the credentials and feasibility of Sentence Management and IEP in Australian prisons.

PROGRAMME

Rather than organizing my fellowship program in a series of relatively short visits to appropriate gaols I chose a program more focused on learning as much as I could from a longer visit to the

main gaol where the SMs was most developed. I also visited other gaols where the IEP and SMs programs were both implemented. This allowed a comparison of the supposed Gold Standard at HMP Garth.

Gaols visited included HMP Garth, which was my base, other gaols for comparison were Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institute (HMYOI) Lancaster Farms, HMP Wymott, HMYOI Thorncross and HMP Wandsworth.

I also visited various units within the Prison Service in order to obtain a wider experience of other programs implemented. While these were peripheral to the main focus of the Fellowship, they all form part of the Prison Service's strategy to reduce offending behaviour and provide a productive environment for prisoners. It was also intended to provide a wider perception of the potential for the SMs and IEP program with respect to these specialist programs.

MAIN BODY

Incentives and Earned Privileges Programme

The Incentives and Earned Privileges program (IEP) has been introduced throughout Wales and England as a matter of policy. As such it has been implemented in all prisons. Yet the administration of each prison determines the actual privileges offered. This being ordained by factors such as facilities available and inmate population needs, (e.g. young offenders, women having additional or different needs to adult male inmates for example). The type of gaol is also a determination. Some gaols such as local prisons have a very transient population and this makes the implementation of IEP difficult.

The regimes must have at least three levels, Enhanced, Standard and Basic. The lowest level provides normally only the bare facilities as determined by statute and department policy. Thus inmate's basic rights are guaranteed and not effected by IEP. The principle is that additional rewards are offered for increasing levels of performance. The aim behind the policy is to establish order in the prison through actively encouraging desired behaviour. The role of punishment is seen as less important. In this system it takes the form of loss of privileges and not physical or other punitive measures. The fact remains though that in situations where inmates present risks to staff welfare, then physical options such as restraint and removal to segregation wings is possible. The reality of prison life is not ignored.

With the aim of IEP to encourage appropriate behaviour it would be hoped that the reality is that these more punitive options are required in a very small number of cases. Prison environments offer the chance to change by offering and encouraging different options to what inmates have previously relied on. For instance men in gaols for crimes of violence may find it difficult to change when their inappropriate behaviour is only met with violence or other punitive action. In such situations a person learns to think society does not want them to be violent, but that violence can be used against those who transgress. This dilemma teaches inmates a role, violence is OK if you are the person in control, or simply that violence is OK if you believe you are in the right. So violence may only at the very least, be suppressed in gaol but no new behaviour is learnt. These men are left with another dilemma, if they do wish to change, what else should they do.

It is true that treatment programs may teach new options, but if these are not then encouraged and are even discouraged through the continuance of aggression by others in gaol, then the new ways of behaving are lost. They gain no personal value. It would be simplistic to argue that gaol systems are the perpetrators of violence and to assign blame there. It is true that gaols have a reputation for being violent systems and regimes of punitive action. The need and existence of various independent bodies in different countries to monitor the rights of inmates attests to both the potential for and the existence of abuse of inmate's rights. Blame though serves little function, as in the case of trying to change inmate behaviour, or for that matter any person's behaviour. The solution is well established in the annals of behavioural science. To change human or other animal behaviour, you must provide reward for the desired behaviors and remove such reward when undesired behaviour occurs. The use of punishment may be effective in removing a behaviour, but only if it occurs every time after the event and very near to that event and the subject believes that it will continue to be that case. Reality in gaol and the outside community is that these conditions are not met. So punishment with respect to those criteria, will most likely be ineffective. There are additional problems as well. It is as I have stated previously, to discourage

violence with use of violence is contradictory. Behaviour is not changed or adopted simply through the presentation of reward or punishment, it is also learnt importantly through social learning. A well established example is what is called modeling, that is when we see another person complete a behaviour, and we note the consequences of that behaviour. If those consequences are favorable then it becomes a possible behaviour for the observer.

Nothing has been said of acquiring new behaviours, punishment is unable to do this when used to extinguish a behaviour as it teaches nothing new, reward though can be used to help develop new behaviours. A system of non-physical degrading loss of reward and the presentation of reward will act together to produce positive results. While IEP was not thought of exactly with these ideas in mind, it does show the benefit of popular psychology and wisdom in the community. It does fit loosely with in what scientific psychology has discovered.

HM Prison Service has not evaluated IEP itself in terms of outcome data. Anecdotally its success appears to have been varied. The following sections detail one of its successes and by example highlights how the process of implementation can drastically influence policy outcome, and in this case the application of psychology to changing human behaviour.

Sentence Management

Sentence Management (SMs) grew from an attempt to provide a computerized database and profiling system of inmate behaviour. This system known as PROBE was trialled and intended to be implemented across the whole prison service. It was never completed for a number of reasons, but importantly the computerized approach stimulated more localized versions at HMP Garth, HMYOI Lancaster Farms, Wandsworth and HMYOI Thorncross. It is also run at HMP Wymott, but the latter is a non-computerized attempt to make IEP more systematic.

The former institutions also exhibit various aims, like Wymott, Wandsworth appears to be directly related to IEP and the notion of being able to train specific behaviours is not paramount. Rather the intention is to link generalized performance with rewards and punishment. While the system at Wandsworth is computerized and as such is amenable to easier self-evaluation that that at Wymott, it does not utilize checklists. This is significant as the system at Wandsworth relies more on the submission of negative and positive reports, with the type of report in terms of severity and valence determining reward and punishment.

This is problematic as it means not all inmates are routinely assessed. Who is assessed and scored then. It appeared that a pattern of negative reports far out weighing positive reports emerged. This probably reflected a bias towards negative behaviour scanning by staff, not unusual in a gaol. The use of a checklist would direct staff towards observing particular behaviours in every inmate, thus making all inmates subject to observation and in certain well defined areas. Research on racial biases in sentencing and policing which are most likely to continue in the prison services around the world, highlights one possible bias. A checklist system for every inmate may act to reduce this bias and other biases.

Another characteristic of Wandsworth's system is that by not using checklists of discrete behaviours, but relying on an officer deciding on what behaviour is worthy of a demerit point, it introduces another level of subjectivity. This added to the previously cited subjective influences. It would seem that the use of sentence management at this gaol, is simply as a method of deciding who should be on which IEP regime. It offers little over a non-computerized version, except easy generation of numbers. Data output is only as good as the data collected, in this case it is perhaps too subjective to be of use at the gaol population level and certainly at the individual inmate level it has little to offer.

The system at Wymott is similar, except without a computerized database, thus making any assessment of its outcome more difficult, the same problems with subjectivity and inability to train inmates exist.

HMP Garth, HMYOI Lancaster Farms and HMYOI Thorncross are in the same administration region and reflect a different intention with the SMs to that at Wandsworth and Wymott. Although Wymott is in the same region the SMs is not administrated by the Psychology Unit. As it was these psychology units which developed and administered the SMs they are more synonymous with regard to the nature of the SMs. Staffing changes and other factors related to each gaol have determined the implementation and maintenance of the SMs.

HMP GarthDevelopment of the SMs

Sentence Management at Garth exists perhaps in the most pure working form of all the goals to be discussed. Its aim was that while it would be linked to IEP and enhance the functioning of IEP, it would serve a separate function and could operate without IEP. There is some evidence for that from the SMs at HMYOI Lancaster Farms. The SMs at Garth has two main characteristics. It is a computerized database of selected inmate behaviours and these behaviours are assessed by standard behaviour checklists, which ask officers and other staff to rate inmates on eight areas of behaviour on five item scales.

The development of the SMs at Garth is instructive, while psychologists hold the expertise in developing such scales and the theory behind them. That is that complex behaviours can be trained by first rewarding the simplest required component of that behaviour and then by only rewarding successively more complex and desirable forms of the target behaviour. This is the guiding principle for re-training inmates into more desirable ways of behaving. Rather than just saying "be good and you will get this", which is IEP in its rawest form, they direct inmates towards what is required and reward them contingent on the performance of those behaviours.

The macro approach of IEP may explain to some extent its varied success, it simply does not make clear to inmates what is expected of them. Yes at some level it is clear but as with the training of children by parents with the use of Beta commands such as be good, such global statements to inmates are probably ineffective.

There also remains an additional problem for inmates, that is they may lack fundamental skills, such as assertiveness or simple communication skills. This can lead to a series of problematic interactions with others that may then escalate to increasing levels of antisocial interaction. Research has established to some degree that male violence does appear to occur in this way through escalation.

These guiding behaviour change principles could not guarantee such a program working in a gaol, it lacks an essential component, staff ownership. While psychologists administer the program, it is the custodial staff and other staff such as work place supervisors who have the most contact with inmates and as such are best placed to provide relatively continuous training opportunities.

The development of Garth's SMs was with the assistance and guidance of staff, it was staff who suggested what areas were to be trained, these being based on the behavioural expectations they had of inmates. This process which occurred in consultation over several months grounded the SMs not as a psychological program but as a prison program. I noted in several discussions at all levels of the prison hierarchy, that staff on the whole felt the SMs was a benefit to them as well as inmates, it made their lives easier and it directed them in their interactions with inmates. While it was not the intention of the SMs to make staffs' lives easier but to make gaol a training environment for inmates, it is a useful spin-off, and is probably inherent in a well designed behavioural management program that is relevant to the gaol's needs. Well-behaved inmates will make gaol a better environment for staff and inmates.

Use Of Behaviour Checklists

The use of behaviour checklists is a common means in psychology of monitoring human behaviour and when used in conjunction with the principles of reward and punishment can be used to change that behaviour. Above I have expounded the notion of behavioural change. An important component must be added to that, a component I believe is lacking in IEP alone, that is the need for accurate identification of behaviours and contingent application of reward and punishment to those behaviours.

SM-1 Forms

The behaviour checklist SM-1 forms contribute to the objective monitoring of behaviour and thus the contingent application of the reinforcements. The quality of the output is again determined by the input, so if the forms are unclear and or other wise badly constructed they offer little improvement. Overall they appear to work and this is attested to in the later section by the evidence of change. Staff impressions were that they worked well, but there was some concern that they were unclear, being vague with respect to some areas. This is probably correct and was being addressed by a revision process. This process is probably somewhat late, partly due to

staffing problems in the psychology unit. This flexible ability to revise and improve the forms was an advantage facilitated by the ease at which the forms usefulness could be assessed.

There is also a lesson here, revisions of the forms need to be at regular levels. For several reasons, it acts as a training exercise for staff, re-orienting them towards the goals of the SMs and informing new staff of the process, until the forms are well established it is important they be fine tuned. The last reason is that the checklist system trains up the whole population in a skill. It finally should reach a ceiling effect. There then is a need to establish new behaviours to be trained, but still monitor the old, this will determine if the old behaviours have become internalized, the idea being that IEP reinforcement may not always be the sole determinant of these behaviours.

As they stand the SM-1 Forms are slightly different for each work place and education area as they reflect skills required in those areas, yet they do share some central features related to social interaction. The forms for residential or living areas are all the same. The residential forms were completed with ease on some wings and not others. Some staff complained they took too long, 10 minutes though does not appear to be a significant amount of time. Then it became apparent that some wing managers had more efficient systems of having the forms completed. Those wings where many forms were completed by only a few officers on a roster basis complained a great deal, it also would seem unlikely that an accurate account was optimized in those cases.

Two other approaches seemed more efficient and useful, one involved a committee approach and the other where a few forms were given to each officer also worked well. The latter had the advantage of allow senior staff to monitor staff development as well. The SM forms had to correspond with the inmate's file where records of behaviour were kept. This acted to prevent victimization of inmates and also had improved the quality of information in the inmates' files. Previously a word or two existed and now inmates were described in terms of the checklists. This meant the files were more behaviourally oriented with specific types of behaviour being noted. This also improved the ability of staff to complete reports later on inmates, the need to rely on impressions and assumptions being reduced. Any assumptions would then have to be backed up by both file and SM-1 data.

SM-1-Activities

Having stated some problems with the residential SM-1 forms, it needs to be noted that in assessing level changes the activities (work, education, etc.) forms are noted used. It was felt that it was unfair as the forms contained skills that it took time to learn, thus a job change could result in a level reduction when overall behaviour has remained good. This is duly noted, but the common areas on all SM forms could be utilized and given that the activities forms are most likely based on more interaction time and observation, they may more accurately reflect inmate behaviour. This is an area for development.

SM-2 Forms

One last point before discussing the use of the SMs in relation to IEP level changes. When an inmate's performance falls below a certain percentage level on the SM-1 form then he is assigned an SM-2 which is essentially the same form except it allows targeting of the particular problem behaviours. The inmate and his personal officer together discuss the problem and then set the inmate a target in the needed area of improvement. This system appears to work well with research by K. Bailey indicating that SM-2 use, results in increases in performance above that occurring before the SM-2. The aim is not to have the inmate move too highly, but to improve to some degree. Based on the assessment of the two parties they may decide that he simply needs to in the first instance, improve his behaviour up by 1 item on a 5 point item scale. The principle again is that of Shaping behaviour by gradations.

Reports and the Database

For the past few years every SM form for every inmate has been input into a computer database using an optical reader. Thus a large amount of data is now available. In addition information on cell movements, adjudications on misbehaviour and drug testing are also entered along with demographics of each inmate. This has allowed assessment of the SMs in relation to its effect on these other variables and also as to whether factors such as age or crime effect performance. Some of this is discussed below, it has already been mentioned that the database allowed an evaluation of whether the SM-2 process was effective.

The database and software also allow reports to be printed, which contain the above information and a percentage level of achievement on the SM forms. These reports are used monthly by the committee who decides on level changes. There are set criteria with respect to adjudications on drug use etc. and additional criteria regarding percentage level of SM attainment. In order to be placed on Enhanced an inmate had to attain over 90% on the SM-1-res forms for 3 continuous months. To drop off Enhanced only one report below 90% was enough, similarly reduction from all levels only involved one negative report. From Standard to Basic a score below 75% was required. Yet this was stop-gapped by the use of SM-2 forms. Non-compliance with the SM-2 system resulted in immediate reduction to Basic level.

Having attended several meetings and comparing them to similar meetings in NSW I was impressed by the smoothness and ease at which decisions could be made. Essentially the staff had predetermined the computer to make those decisions. The committee met in case other information had come to light. For instance if an inmate had attained 100% on the SM form, but had recently be caught fighting or using drugs. It is noted that the reports of drug use and discipline problems had to indicate a pattern of behaviour in order to count against an inmate. This was problematic as it violated the notion of shaping behaviour where non-desired behaviours should be punished or not rewarded. It also neglects the knowledge that inmates are usually only caught for a small percentage of their misbehaviours, in and out of gaol. It would seem reasonable that an Enhanced inmate could be expected to not receive even one positive drug test. Behaviours such as fighting are perhaps due to more interpretation due to the involvement of an additional inmate. Bullying behaviour should logically result in instant removal from Enhanced or Standard.

With the use of the SMs report the reliance on assumption and biases towards inmates was removed at the committee level. It is noted that this still may occur at the SM-1 completion stage, but it has been minimized. The use of the SM scores and report which is also made available to the inmate means that they can challenge the report and SM-1. Asking the officer to give examples of their misconduct. As the SM-1 concerns observable behaviour this is more easily settled. Officers report that disputes are resolved easily.

Inmates spoken to regarding their reports and SM-1 gave mixed responses, some complaining but not be able to give specific problems other than in one case where an inmate felt that the forms didn't account for the diversity of inmates; e.g. elderly inmates having different needs. This was true but was being addressed. A review of this inmate's file showed that in this case he wasn't being disadvantaged and was in fact on Enhanced.

The report generation and use, appeared smooth and equitable. It was an advantage over other non-computerized schemes and allowed transparency of the process so that inmates could understand changes in their regime. This is not to say that they always agreed with the change, yet they could understand the reasons why. Nonetheless the process adhered to a principle of optimizing objective assessments of inmate behaviour and using these to apply reinforcement contingencies.

Revision Process

Currently the SM-1 forms are under review at HMP Garth. The notion of the SMs is that it changes with the needs of the gaol and when the inmate population is trained up to a certain level in particular areas, then new target behaviours should be developed. This motivated the revision process in this instance. Having attended one of the review meetings, which again involved the psychologists and several custodial staff, it appeared that more frequent meetings were needed. While at the end of the day progress was made and items were being revised, the process was difficult. I feel this was due to some officers having a different agenda to the psychologists. Other officers simply did not understand the role and aims of the SMs. These were not insurmountable problems. It did indicate though the need for relatively frequent staff training and revision meetings. Staffing levels have resulted in this particular problem. With the psychology unit not being able to carry out more frequent staff training and revisions. It possible to foresee increasing resistance to the SMs if these problems are not addressed. It also highlights the value of such programs being developed in conjunction with staff from different disciplines. This was happening and will contribute to the working out of the problems noted.

Producing Evidence Of Effectiveness

The database of information attained on inmates from the SM forms and other sources places the users in an enviable position of being able to assess the effectiveness of their endeavours. Given the scientific origins and profession of psychology this is not really a luxury, but a requirement of good practice.

It can briefly be summarized that the SMs appears to have contributed to reductions in adjudications for violation of prison rules, less removals for being placed in the secure unit and a reduction in violence. There are other variables which contributed to this such as the placement of TVs in all cells which reduced conflicts over soccer matches. Yet there is an obvious trend related to the use of the SMs. Staff themselves, see both factors as contributing to the improvement in behaviour but add that the SMs is the "icing on the cake".

In other respects the database has been used to demonstrate its value. It was found that selecting inmates for anger management training based on certain aggression related items on the SM-1 forms was a more efficient means than relying on staff referrals. The database selections were assessed by comparing the high scorers with variables know to be related to aggression. A relationship emerged that confirmed the inmates selected were indeed more likely to be aggressive. The SM-1 also proved to be sensitive to changes following the anger management course again providing support for its utility as a behavioural measure of inmate behaviour. This is important in this area as self-report tends to be unreliable in such environments. This also suggests that staff referrals may be less likely to be based on accurate assessments of anger problems. They may be more due to assumptions or inmate persistence in asking for such a referral.

The database has also allowed the evaluation of the SMs in other ways. For instance it was partly the evidence from the database that most inmates were scoring almost perfectly that promoted a review. There was a trend in the improvement of inmates scores which suggested a training effect for the program. This then lead to the conclusion that the goals must now be reset, so that the inmates can be trained further.

Other information also exists on the database. Such as that regarding younger inmates. They appear to be most often the poorer performers and are subsequently most often on the SM-2 scheme. This evidence allows the opportunity for these inmates to be targeted more intensively. It may also suggest that the program may not be meeting the particular needs of these younger inmates. Given the research that suggests that discipline problems in gaol increase with decreasing age, it is not necessarily a failure of SMs. That is unless the problem remains unaddressed. The database to its credit allows the identification of both successes and failures and this in of itself is a success. What is then done about such information is the responsibility of the larger gaol community.

Sentence Management and Other Prisons

HMYOI ThornCross

HMYOI ThornCross has the PROBE system installed and utilizes a behavioural checklist system.

It is currently being reviewed and with good reason. While SM-1 forms are in use, they are completed by the psychologists based on information collected by custodial staff. Custodial staff are aware of the criteria for various scores on the SM-1 forms, but the level of awareness appears to vary and without the forms actually being present it is questionable how accurate the data is. Additionally the scoring system is quite complex and may add to staff non-compliance.

It would seem best practice to have the staff who observe the behaviour to complete the forms both for accuracy and as a matter of efficiency. Psychological staff could then feed in the forms using the optical reader. This takes a matter of minutes instead of the current half day.

Again the issue is one of efficiency which appears lacking and also the aim to make assessments of inmates' behaviour objective. The system at Thorncross goes some of the way to doing this yet their current approach introduces an additional level of subjectivity that is unnecessary. It brings into question the value of the process.

HMYOI Lancaster Farms

Lancaster Farms utilizes the PROBE system SMs similar to Garth's. Their SM-1 forms differ of course, as expected. There is a major difference though and that is the SMs and IEP are not linked. This means that staff complete SM-1 forms and a separate protocol for IEP level behaviour. In effect they perform the same task twice. Yet based on my interviews with a small selection of staff they have little time for the SMs and see it as a waste of their time. They suggested that they simply completed the SM-1 forms ad hoc and without much care. This seems reasonable given that they feel they are not getting anything out of the process. While their conclusion may not be true, it probably is given their subjective approach to the SM-1 forms. An important lesson here is one both of staff training and the concrete needs of staff. Psychologists can lecture on the value of behavioural shaping continuously, yet if delivery staff cannot see concrete gains for them, or have to put in extra effort then a change in their (staff) behaviour is unlikely. The latter contingency is in fact an established relationship from Public Health research.

CONCLUSIONS

Why does the SMs Work?

The behavioural change program (SMs) at Garth, does not appear at first to strictly adhere to the way *Shaping* occurs. Perhaps it cannot do so as that would require a much more intensive level of staff supervision of each inmate than is feasible. A process of rewarding each additional acquisition of the desired behaviour appears not to be occurring. It is more global in its reinforcement with rewards occurring later in the time frame, and additionally these are based on overall scores not each incremental improvement. More micro attempts at shaping behaviour are simply not going to occur. The reason it cannot occur is that goals are not designed to be intensive behavioural units. This being the case, the staff - inmate ratios will never reach that of small therapy units. There is also the issue of staff skill level. While skill level has been increased by the SM-1 forms, it is unlikely that resources will be available to consistently monitor staff skill levels and program integrity. Despite these anomalies in terms of the principles of shaping, the attempt to shape behaviour at Garth does still appear to be effective.

There are possible reasons for the effectiveness and one is that the IEP rewards even with their longer-term nature, still hold some reinforcement value with respect to discrete behaviours. It is possible that they are not the sole determinants of the observed change in behaviour. While they most likely hold some significant power in the relationship, it is quite possible that it is the changing interactional style between staff and inmates that contributes to the shaping process. Staff and inmates are reinforcing each other as people do in the community through their reciprocal interpersonal behaviours. It is perhaps at this level that much shaping actually is occurring, though in a lay sense. This is not to be criticized as for most of us it is the means by which we develop our reasonable social skills and associated pro-social beliefs. What has perhaps been created by the structure of SMs at Garth, is a closer approximation to the external community than that which exists in many correctional centres.

A question then arises of why link the SMs to IEP at all. I think the situation at HMYOI Lancaster Farms is instructive on this. SMs while delivering long-term benefits is itself part of a behavioural contingency and staff must see immediate gains for their completion of forms and participation in the process. Providing two systems of behaviour change as at Lancaster Farms, obviously creates extra work. In the case of SMs, staff who cannot see its benefit will only experience the punishment aspect of it and subsequently their commitment to it will be lacking. In this respect IEP and SMs should remain linked in order to encourage staff participation in the early stages. It is also a system easily understood by non-psychological staff and thus further engenders support for the whole process.

There is an additional argument for the linking of the two and that is that in the earlier stages of behaviour change the power of obviously tangible rewards will be a stronger motivator for inmates to change their behaviour. It is probably the case that inmate and staff interaction styles change over time, and thus initially, they are both operating on contingencies other than interpersonal reinforcement. This also recommends the linking of IEP and SMs.

The preceding points suggest that an alternative approach to staff compliance is training. This is always an issue but probably would not be useful in terms of de-linking IEP and SMs. Rather than trying to introduce completely new ideas to staff it may well be better to assimilate their views, a process already adopted in the development of the SM-1 forms. The two systems operate best together and should continue to do so. If the idea of the SMs were to be introduced in another

system the linking with SMs and IEP would be most effective in terms of shaping / reinforcing behaviour.

Beyond Specialist Programs

The milieu that appears to be present at HMP Garth, and the influence of the behavioural change program is perhaps under utilized. A relatively common conclusion from studies of therapeutic programs in gaols is that they do not work as good as those conducted for offenders in the community. The use of SMs at Garth may serve three very useful purposes. The first is that without any such programs, some level of behavioural change has occurred. Yet it seems unlikely that it results in a significant reduction in offending behaviour, given that it has not attempted to change criminogenic factors. Nonetheless, it has created a humane environment for staff and inmates to live in, and it has effectively improved inmate pro-social interpersonal behaviour in that environment. The possibilities are more pronounced in the next two areas. SMs could be used to continue to specifically monitor and reinforce particular skills learnt in therapeutic programs, thus attempting to reduce the disparity between community based and probation based programs. Lastly, in a more general sense it could simply be used to create a milieu where such learnt skills are more accepted and reinforced without being specifically targeted. This milieu possibly exists at Garth, but the worth of this needs to be evaluated.

The interesting thing about these possibilities is that they are reasonably easy to test. This is because SMs at Garth collect continuous data on all inmates and is equipped to assess inmate behaviour. The other factor which contributes to its testability is that most gaols in the UK are not running this system. The general milieu hypothesis could be tested by comparing skill maintenance and even reconviction data, for men not sent to and those sent to Garth following therapeutic programs. HMP Garth does not run such programs so there would be no contamination effect from an inmate both completing a program at Garth while also being subject to the SMs. This last point is important though as theoretically that combined situation would in fact create the optimum environment for a therapeutic effect. Arguments from proponents of programs such as R&R can rightly claim a degree of effectiveness for their programs, yet the effect sizes are often relatively small. This would suggest that other considerations are worth attention. These would include the SMs approach. The possibilities for integration or some form of relationship are many.

Apart from the potential for additional benefits, the SMs at Garth was instructive in other important areas. For such programs to work, and this is relevant to Australia, they must be relatively seamless with the rest of the gaol's operation. They must deliver tangible benefits. Staff training and support is essential for the programs successful implementation. Finally, it must not tax too greatly on the skills of program delivery level (custodial) staff, this consideration acknowledges the seamless approach.

A last question is can SMs work in NSW Corrective Services. From my observation I believe that the HM Prison Service and the gaols in NSW are run on a similar enough basis that the introduction of SMs would pose no great problems. For instance we already collect data on inmates and have some form of a database. We use a case management approach and establish contracts with inmates to attempt to provide them with goals and rewards for desired behaviour. The SM review meetings at Garth are similar to our case management meetings we run on a weekly or more frequent basis in NSW. These NSW structures could be adapted at least in part to include a SMs. Sentence Management from Garth could also be adapted to suit the NSW system. What would work best is a matter for further thought. The overriding issue would be in relation to the will of the department to implement such a program.

The issues of staff acceptance became a matter that was successfully dealt with at Garth. Prison cultures are relatively similar and as such Prison Officers in both countries have similar concerns about work load, the ability of inmates to change and also similar views on how to change them. The process of the SMs development at Garth should prove equally successful in Australia. This is not to say it would be easy, only that it would be feasible with the support of senior gaol management and department management.

The evidence collected so far is supportive of the value of the SMs. Such evidence is becoming a powerful tool in offender focused systems. It forms part of the ethos of the search for what works

with inmates. This search too, has begun in Australia and is evidenced by the existence of the Sex Offender Program in NSW, which is based on sound theory and evaluation. This ethos would welcome at least the prospect of using a SMs structure in NSW.

The only problem areas were those quite typical to correctional systems and in fact were related. Continuity in staff training had partially stopped due to low staffing levels in the psychology unit. This was starting to lead to problems with staff compliance or at least attitude. The revision process, which had begun again and which also involved a level of staff training will serve to address that problem, at least partially. Yet it remains an important issue, staff, even old staff need "booster" sessions on the SMs in order that a high level of program integrity and staff support be maintained. Overall though this is a system that works smoothly and enhances management of inmates with a humane objective approach. Staff and inmates benefitted from the environment created by the SMs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions from the previous section lend themselves to some specific recommendations. These fit into two basic areas. The first, concerns the applicability of the SMs and IEP in NSW corrections. The second concerns improvements to the current system in Garth. The latter is important as it would reflect issues that would concern anyone wishing to implement the system in NSW, or for that matter anywhere else in Australia.

Regarding implementation in NSW, it would appear that the system could be implemented in NSW given the similarities of the two correctional systems. The issue is what exact form would it take. There are some differences between the services and one is that NSW already collects more data on a statewide basis. Given this, the SMs, I believe would best serve NSW corrections by focusing on its behavioural shaping aspect. This of course entails the use of an IEP program. Based on the previous discussion of the linking of the two they are considered synonymous here.

The more limited focus of the SMs in NSW would have several advantages. The first is the effort and resources in setting up and then maintaining data input would be greatly reduced. Simply put less information would be collected as a function of the SMs. Yet the already present resources could be tapped for information needed in the behavioural change database. A cut down version of Garth's SMs would be more easily welcomed in NSW, yet could maintain the emphasis on behavioural shaping through objective assessments and appropriate reinforcement, its strongest characteristic.

Another possible change to the SM-1 forms could be a more theory driven approach to the development of the areas to be shaped. While the Garth approach of liaising with custodial staff remains important, it may be possible to balance both the needs of custodial staff and the targeting of criminogenic factors based on our knowledge of deficits exhibited by offenders.

The other issues concerning refinement of the Garth SMs are not dramatic restructuring but a matter of fine tuning. The first is with respect to the SM-1 Activities forms. They are at present under utilized in terms of behavioural shaping and monitoring. Yet they are perhaps best situated for monitoring and shaping inmate behaviour. This is so because they represent a greater period of time where inmates are observed performing a number of activities by staff. Many of which situations involve interpersonal interactions. The residential forms are useful too, yet there is at present an imbalance in the application of both sets of forms. At the very least the areas which all SM-1-activities forms share with each other and with the residential forms, could be entered into the assessment of attainment level. For instance all contain areas concerned with staff interaction and interaction with other inmates.

The SM-1 forms and the linking of them to level changes in IEP allows for the testing of what areas of behaviour lead most often to level changes. Perhaps overall deterioration occurs, or it may be that particular areas of behaviour suffer most, and it is they that lead to reductions in attainment, and then the consequent level change. If particular areas seem to produce level reductions, it may be they are risk factors for inmates, or skills that falter when they are under stress. This could then focus prison programs towards those needed skill areas. Programs may have to be developed or existing ones may satisfy the need.

This leads to an additional possibility and that is using the SMs as a means of assessing behaviourally the value of skill acquisition programs. For instance an inmate completing Anger management (which has already been assessed using SMs) or Assertiveness would be expected to display those skills in his day to day life. In this instance the SMs can both assess and as stated above continue training skills. These skill programs need not be nationally accredited ones, local education based programs should also be involved. In the case of Garth this is in fact all they presently have.

In a more experimental area it would be useful to investigate the qualities of Enhanced vs Standard and Basic Inmates. Looking at both demographics and psychological constructs such as personality, using tools such as the Psychopathy Checklist-R, Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-3, Personality Assessment Scale etc. This could add to the knowledge base of the SMs. It may be that certain inmates respond better to the SMs than others. This may be desirable or perhaps undesirable in the case of say Psychopaths. The latter's success being desirable is perhaps a matter of perspective. One could argue they are simply "playing the system" or it could be argued that this group of inmates, that research has established are more disruptive in gaol, are being managed well. Groups that perform unsuccessfully may through their characteristics suggest changes that need to be made to the SMs. This information could help to further improve the ability of the SMs to shape behaviour.

Keeping in mind the useful approach of having staff develop the targets for behavioural change it would be valuable to refer to other programs in the correctional system that target criminogenic factors thought to be related to offending. This may allow the psychologists to direct at least some of the SM-1 form revisions, still taking into account the wishes of custodial staff. This if successful, could create an opportunity to extend programs into everyday prison life. It also theoretically makes sense in terms of creating change towards desired non-criminogenic behaviour patterns.

These recommendations reflect the ethos of the SMs, which is one of a scientific approach to changing behaviour. The computerization of the database allows relatively easy implementation of the research aspect. The use of other programs to influence the nature of the forms, is perhaps more difficult, yet in some sense it can make the process easier, by avoiding the problems of always trying to develop innovation in isolation. In both cases they are feasible and while presenting challenges could offer the opportunity to gain even more out of the SMs.

Dissemination of information

In line with the Winston Churchill Fellowship's aim of creating opportunities for innovative knowledge to be collected and conveyed to Australia, the following approach is suggested. The most simple way of facilitating the dissemination of the knowledge is through word of mouth in everyday professional life. While this will occur naturally there are also more formal approaches intended. It is the report will be presented to the Director of Psychological Programmes, the Commissioner of the Department of Corrective Services (DOCS) and the Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Management.

It is also intended that an edited version of the report will appear in both the DOCS Bulletin, a monthly newsletter available to all staff and the psychologists newsletter. A seminar will also be presented to the psychologists in my region. With respect to other States' services a similar article will be sent to appropriate persons in each State department.

Implementation of Knowledge

It seems that it would be useful to at least have some basic plan of how the knowledge could move beyond written information. It will be proposed to DOCS senior management that a pilot study in one part of a gaol be undertaken to test the viability of the concept. This is how the SMs was first tested at HMP Garth. The exact details of such an enterprise could be better worked out nearer to the time. Issues such as gaol population levels, staffing levels and initial staff commitment levels, amongst others, would need to be considered in determining which gaol would be selected. This would seem to present the best possible opportunity to test out the SMs approach.

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