MOVING FORWARD WITH MENTORING:
AN EVALUATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SCHEME IN WALES

Ms Anna Clancy, Ms Julie Lane & Dr. Beverley Morgan, Home Office (RDS), National Assembly for Wales

Professor Mike Maguire, Cardiff University

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contents page

List of tables

List of figures

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) aims to provide 'through the gate' mentoring support for short sentence prisoners up to 12 weeks following their release from custody. Specifically, TSS is designed to address the practical resettlement needs of short-sentence prisoners who are returning to Wales, and who are experiencing on-going substance misuse problems. The primary focus is upon increasing access to drug treatment and subsequently reducing/ceasing drug consumption. The scheme also aims to address additional problems which have been shown to increase the likelihood of offending including homelessness; relationship problems; finances; low educational attainment; and unemployment. Mentors are expected to enhance the motivation of offenders to address their offending behaviour through the application of cognitive/motivational techniques.

The scheme has been running since the 1st January 2004 across the four Welsh prisons (HMPs Parc, Swansea, Cardiff and Prescoed) in addition to HMPs Altcourse, Eastwood Park and Styal. TSS is being delivered by two different service providers. In North Wales and Dyfed Powys, TSS is delivered by the DAWN Project. DAWN is a partnership initiative led by CAIS (a drug and alcohol agency based in Llandudno) which brings together substance misuse and rehabilitation agencies to address the needs of ex-offenders. In South Wales and Gwent, the scheme is delivered by Group 4 Justice Services (hereafter referred to as G4S), who are based just outside HMP/YOI Parc, Bridgend.

Aims and objectives of the research

The key aim of the evaluation is to identify 'what works' via a thorough assessment of project design, implementation (including the context in which the project is operating), delivery and impact. The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Identify the rationale for the scheme and to gather information on how it was implemented and developed.
- Identify significant features of the social, environmental and service context in which the scheme is operating.
- Assess the impact of the scheme on proxy indicators of effectiveness namely, change in criminogenic attitudes, levels of post release contact and service uptake.

The research provides a picture of the ways in which the TSS has been organised and delivered by DAWN and G4S. In particular, it gathers and examines the views and experiences of a variety of 'key players' involved in the scheme, including TSS staff, prisoners and members of outside service agencies. It has also produced interim indicators of the effectiveness of the TSS scheme.

Methodology

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted for this research:

- An analysis of case management records (CMRs) which were to be completed by DAWN and G4S for each prisoner joining TSS.
- An analysis of CRIME-PICS II questionnaires (which relate to levels of perceived life problems and criminogenic attitudes) completed by prisoners pre and (where possible) post release.
- Semi-structured interviews with 26 members of staff from G4S, the DAWN Partnership and the prisons participating in TSS.
- Semi-structured telephone interviews with representatives from 31 agencies providing post release services to offenders.
- Structured pre release interviews with 31 prisoners who joined TSS.
- Structured post release interviews with 29 ex-prisoners who joined TSS.

Background to the two schemes

The G4S TSS in South Wales/Gwent is being delivered using 18 mentors (three of whom are full time members of staff). The DAWN TSS is currently being delivered in North Wales by three NACRO mentors. Following the termination of an agreement between DAWN and NACRO (Crime Reduction) to deliver the TSS in Dyfed Powys, DAWN has established a spot purchase arrangement with two drug treatment agencies (WGCADA and Prism) in order to continue provision in this area.

Eligibility criteria are the same across both schemes. In order to qualify for TSS support, prisoners must:

- Be relocating to Wales.

- Be serving a sentence of less than 12 months.

- Have a substance misuse/alcohol problem.

Methods of recruitment and referral to the TSS scheme differed for each service provider. Prisoners relocating to either the Dyfed Powys/North Wales areas and eligible for the DAWN TSS scheme were referred to the DAWN administration office in North Wales by either a CARAT worker, the prison link worker (HMP Altcourse only) or a member of the prison resettlement team. Prisoners eligible for the G4S scheme (i.e. relocating to South Wales/Gwent) were referred from a variety of sources, which included the CARAT team, induction staff, wing staff, programme staff, the local DTTO office and self-referrals.

TSS participants

Participants were predominantly male and white. The age profile of the prisoners referred to TSS differed slightly across the two schemes, with a greater proportion of over 35s referred to the G4S scheme (26% compared with 15% in DAWN). Over half (58%) of prisoners referred to the DAWN scheme were aged between 25 and 34, compared with 46% of referrals to G4S falling within this age group.

Implementation of the TSS

A range of implementation and organisational issues emerged during fieldwork.

Staffing

The number of staff employed by the schemes has remained relatively stable in North and South Wales/Gwent. Provision of the service in Dyfed Powys (West Wales) lapsed for a short time following April 1st 2005 following DAWN's decision to shift responsibility for the delivery of TSS from NACRO (Crime Reduction) to two drug treatment service providers (WGCADA and Prism) in South West Wales.

Training

The content and quality of training differed across the two schemes. DAWN TSS staff were required to undertake the standard NACRO induction training. The content of this training varied slightly in North Wales, however, when compared with Dyfed Powys. Since receiving the initial training provided by Crime Concern, G4S has devised its own comprehensive training package for TSS mentors, which is due to be put forward for accreditation by the National Mentoring Network.

Allocation of mentors

In North Wales, every effort was made to allocate clients to mentors on a geographical basis in order to reduce travel times and associated costs. The allocation of clients to mentors from the G4S TSS was also very considered, with different mentors covering different geographical areas. In addition, every effort was made to "match" the client and mentor (in terms of interests, personality and gender).

Working relationships

Working relationships between full-time/volunteer G4S TSS staff and personnel from prisons across Wales were reported to be very positive. The majority of G4S TSS volunteer mentors worked in a variety of roles within HMP Parc, including education; the Probation Service; healthcare; the gym; reception; and on the wing. This dual role was seen to be very beneficial, as it enabled close relationships to be fostered between other prison staff and the prisoners themselves. A number of mentors were also recruited from external agencies including New Link, the Probation Service, a community-based drug treatment agency, Bridgend DTTO office, and Swansea CARAT team.

TSS staff in the North Wales team reported having good working relationships with CARAT and Resettlement workers in HMP Altcourse, although evidence suggests that there had been some initial "teething problems". Most notably, there had been a lack of communication between prison staff and the TSS. This had resulted in a breakdown in the referral system. Evidence suggests that current relations between TSS staff and HMP Altcourse are much improved. This has been facilitated by two prison link workers employed by DAWN and their close contact with the CARAT and resettlement teams. Relationships between prison personnel in HMPs Swansea and Cardiff and TSS staff in Dyfed Powys were described less positively and were perceived by the mentors to be due to a lack of contact stemming from the low referral rate to the scheme. Despite efforts on the part of the TSS mentors to build links with the CARAT teams, the level of referrals remained extremely low throughout the evaluation period. Relations with staff in HMP Parc were described more positively however, with regular contact achieved between the TSS and resettlement staff through their attendance at the various resettlement initiatives run at the prison.

The referral system

The referral process for DAWN was organised by a full time administrator, who was responsible for co-ordinating an initial assessment of the appropriateness of the referral received and for distributing clients amongst the mentors. Central to the DAWN referral process was that mentors were not involved in the recruitment of potential clients. This meant that co-ordinating and mentoring roles were separated and that mentors could focus on providing help and support to clients. It also meant, however, that mentors had to wait to be allocated referrals by the DAWN administrator. Evidence suggests that this was a frustrating process for mentors based in NACRO in Swansea, which had prompted them to contact the prisons directly in order to generate and access clients. The number of referrals to the DAWN TSS from HMP Swansea has remained relatively low. Several mentors speculated that the lack of referrals could be partly due to the competition for clients. Both the Swansea Chaplaincy and NACRO run mentor and resettlement schemes from HMP Swansea.

Case management

Examples of good case management were evident across both TSS schemes. This was particularly true for the G4S scheme where detailed contact reports were completed for each community contact (whether face to face, telephone, letter, email or text message). In the DAWN scheme, once the referral has been received and the client allocated to a mentor, TSS staff in both North and West Wales were required to keep basic demographic and GP details of the client, in addition to a weekly activity record. A record of attendance was also completed for each client for auditing purposes.

Arrangements for pre-release contact

The principle of support 'through the gate' was clearly demonstrated and adhered to by teams in both schemes. Both G4S and DAWN TSS mentors tended to visit the client at least twice prior to their release from prison. Some mentors commented upon the need for more pre-release contact than is currently taking place.

Arrangements for post release contact

A crucial part of the mentor's role was to link clients to appropriate community-based agencies. The amount of post release contact depended on the needs of the client and how long they had been out of prison. Working relationships between TSS staff and the agencies they had contacted were described positively (by TSS staff). A key theme to emerge from interviews conducted with the agencies, however, is that they would value more information and publicity about the aims of the scheme and increased contact by TSS managers and mentors.

Staff experiences and perceptions of the TSS

Staff across both schemes placed greatest emphasis on the need to tackle clients' practical problems upon release and to build a prisoner's own motivation and confidence to pursue their goals and objectives. Mentors noted, however, that there have been times when it has been difficult to "let go" at the end of the 12 week mentoring period, especially when the mentor has built up a good working relationship with their client. Several mentors argued that the scheme should be extended and also made available to prisoners serving more than a 12 month sentence. Although this particular client group will have designated contact with the Probation Service (unlike those serving a less than 12-month sentence), mentors claimed that the TSS offers a complementary service.

Offender experiences and perspectives of the TSS

An analysis of the 31 pre-release interviews with offenders revealed that 42% had joined the TSS in order to receive support to stop using alcohol/drugs. Almost a quarter (19%) wanted help with housing. Indeed, when asked to describe the problems they faced upon release, 61% cited homelessness; 58% felt that drugs would be a serious problem; 45% mentioned employment/training issues; 19% were concerned about alcohol use; and 23% were worried about peers encouraging them back into crime/substance misuse.

Pre release contact

Of the 31 individuals interviewed pre release, at the time of the pre-release interviews, 17 had received a visit from their mentor. Where contact had taken place, interviewees were asked to describe their initial perceptions of the mentor: 65% reported that their mentor had 'listened very carefully' and 71% stated that their mentor had been 'very interested' in their problems and needs. Of the 17 respondents interviewed who had received a pre release visit from their mentor, 53% reported that they had already received support with housing. Four participants reported receiving assistance with employment; three had been referred to drugs agencies, whilst two had received information regarding training courses.

Referral to agencies

Mentors were asked to evidence referrals made to agencies on behalf of participants, and where able, to indicate the level of service uptake achieved. Of the 98 CMRs completed, referral data was returned for 58 of the G4S TSS participants and 28 participants in the DAWN scheme. Proportionally, the number of referrals made per participant was slightly higher for the G4S scheme, with 1.9 referrals made per participant compared with 1.4 referrals per DAWN TSS participant. Around half of the participants in both the G4S and DAWN TSS were referred on to agencies dealing with accommodation issues/homelessness (52% and 54% respectively). Just over half (55%) of the G4S participants were referred on to employment services compared with just under a quarter (21%) in the DAWN scheme. The percentage of drug/alcohol referrals made were also slightly higher for G4S participants with 52% referred to a drug/alcohol agency (40% drug, 12% alcohol) compared with 47% of DAWN scheme participants (36% drug, 11% alcohol). The proportion of participants for whom no referrals were made also differed slightly across the two schemes, with 14% of G4S participants not referred on to other services compared with 18% in the DAWN TSS.

Level of service uptake

Overall, relatively high rates of service uptake were achieved with 67% of G4S TSS participants attending appointments in the community, compared with 49% of DAWN participants. (It should be noted, however, that there was a large amount of missing data in relation to the outcomes of referrals made by the DAWN TSS.) An examination of CMRs indicated that as a direct result of the scheme, at least five individuals had obtained employment; one had enrolled on a training course; 13 had found temporary accommodation; and two individuals had obtained permanent accommodation. These figures may be an underestimate of actual uptake, however, due to missing CMR data. Additional information relating to the outcome of referrals made can be gleaned from 29 post release interviews undertaken with participants up to three months following their release. During the interviews, eleven individuals reported that they had obtained temporary accommodation as a direct result of the mentor; three had found permanent accommodation; and one had found employment.

Offender criticisms of the TSS

Ten (of 29) participants felt that they would have benefited from more contact with the mentor and more intensive support on release. Seven of these suggested that more mentors were needed, as those currently in post were 'stretched too thin'. Three participants felt the scheme needed to develop closer links with other community-based agencies in order to facilitate access to services – especially housing. Participants also suggested extending the eligibility criteria to include longer sentence prisoners; having more contact earlier on in the prison sentence; and having greater publicity to raise awareness of ways to contact TSS amongst potential participants.

Potential effectiveness of the TSS: Interim outcome measures

Four proxy measures of efficacy have been used as interim outcome measures. The first is level of voluntary post release contact with the TSS scheme mentors. The second relates to agency referrals and subsequent service uptake. The third and fourth are changes in CRIME-PICS II scores, which relate to levels of perceived life problems and criminogenic attitudes The degree of change is measured by the administration of first and second CRIME-PICS questionnaires in prison, and up to three months following release. Data has also been collected on the change in participants' self reported drug use, offending behaviour and accommodation/employment status following their involvement with the TSS scheme. Whilst these factors are not sufficiently robust to be used alone as indicators of effectiveness, they do relate to the success of the scheme in achieving its key aims of assisting ex-offenders to resettle back into society and reducing/ceasing substance misuse.

Level of post release contact

The interim outcome measures of effectiveness used in this study have yielded some encouraging results. According to management data, both schemes have attained high levels of continuity 'through the gate'. DAWN TSS and G4S TSS have contact rates of 70% and 71% respectively (based on scheme management data). These contact rates are far in excess of those found in previous research (Lewis et al, 2003). There was however, a large discrepancy between this data and the CMRs, with contact rates according to CMR data of 73% for G4S and 36% for DAWN. It is uncertain whether the discrepancy between the DAWN management data and CMR data is attributable to missing data or a genuine lack of post-release contact between DAWN mentors and participants. The intensity of the work carried out also varied slightly across the two schemes according to CMR data, with a third of G4S mentors and 16% of DAWN mentors meeting in the community six or more times. Reasons for this are unclear, although it may be related to the longer distances covered by mentors in the North between the prison in Liverpool and participants' homes in order to facilitate contact.

Changes in CRIME-PICS Scores

Positive change was effected by both schemes in participants' criminogenic attitudes and perception of life problems, as measured by the CRIME-PICS II tool. However, statistically significant results were only attained by the G4S TSS scheme. The greater degree of change achieved by G4S mentors may be linked to the increased frequency of community contacts with participants. The motivational interviewing training undertaken by all G4S mentors could also have been a contributory factor to their success.

Accommodation and employment

When comparing pre and post imprisonment accommodation and employment status, the proportion of participants in permanent accommodation on entry to prison was very similar

across both of the schemes (around 50%). Encouragingly, whilst 37% of participants across both schemes were homeless on entry to prison, only 12% remained so on release. This fall in homelessness was accompanied by a corresponding rise in the number going into transient accommodation. This was most marked in North Wales where none of the participants were recorded as homeless following release, but 50% of participants were classed as living in transient accommodation post release compared with 21% prior to imprisonment. The percentage of offenders in employment on entry to prison was the same across both schemes (14%). A comparison of expected levels of employment at the time of the assessment in prison with actual levels recorded up to three months post release indicates that participants were far more likely to be in employment than they had originally anticipated. A quarter of participants were employed overall compared with 9% who expected to be. Also encouraging is the decreased level of unemployment pre and post release, with three quarters of participants unemployed on entry to prison compared with just over half (56%) on release.

Self reported substance misuse and offending

Of the 29 participants interviewed post release, all admitted to having a substance misuse problem prior to imprisonment. Since leaving prison, 72% admitted to using drugs/alcohol. Nonetheless, the majority (69%) felt that the mentor had had a positive effect upon their drug taking/alcohol use. Most striking was the shift away from injecting polydrug use and heavy heroin consumption towards the use of cannabis. The frequency of use was also markedly reduced following involvement with the TSS scheme. A third of those admitting to drug/alcohol use post release reported that they had reduced their use from a daily consumption to less than once a week.

Participants were also asked whether they had been involved in any criminal activities since their release from prison. Only one participant admitted to committing an offence post release.

Agency perspectives of the TSS

As part of the evaluation, 31 interviews were conducted with representatives from a variety of statutory and voluntary agencies in Wales involved in the provision of support and services for ex-offenders. A number of key themes emerged from these interviews.

TSS referrals

One of the key responsibilities of TSS mentors was to refer their clients to voluntary and statutory agencies. The number of referrals received by the agencies interviewed as part of this evaluation, however, was fairly low with no agency receiving more than ten at the time of interview (March 2005).

Working relationships

There were mixed responses when representatives were asked to describe the agency's working relationship with staff from the TSS scheme and score it on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor). Ten of the 31 agencies (32%) described the working relationship as "very good" or "good" (i.e. a score of 1 or 2), while 5 representatives (16%) described their relationship with TSS staff as "poor" or "very poor" (i.e. a score of 4 or 5). 13 of the 31 agencies (42%) stated at the time of interview that they have had "no contact" with the TSS.

Backing for transitional support

One of the central themes to emerge from the interviews with agencies was their support for a community-based mentoring scheme for short-term prisoners. When asked to comment on the usefulness of TSS, 22 of the 31 agencies interviewed (71%) gave the scheme a score of 1 or 2 (where 1 is very useful and 5 is not at all useful). Only four agencies (13%) gave the scheme a score of 3 or 4 (and no agency gave a score of 5). Their reasons for backing transitional support are discussed below.

Access to services

Agency representatives commented that there is often limited (or a lack of) support available for ex-offenders when they leave prison. Furthermore, the barriers facing ex-offenders when they leave prison make it difficult for them to access what little support / services are available. TSS mentors can help to facilitate access to a range of different support services by contacting them on behalf of their client; arranging meetings; and by providing help and guidance to fill in forms.

Help / support with rebuilding the lives of ex-offenders

Agency representatives stated that ex-offenders often want and need help to re-build their lives. In particular, it was noted that ex-offenders sometimes lose the support networks they had before they went into prison. Re-building one's livelihood can be difficult to achieve without these networks in place. It is also important to acknowledge however, that many offenders' existing support networks are not necessarily positive influences, with drug using peers often cited as a reason why individuals have found it difficult to stop using/offending. Furthermore, people often go to prison without having "tidied their affairs". Upon release, ex-prisoners often have to face rent arrears; debts; unpaid bills; and disconnected electricity and gas supplies. Mentors can offer help and support to ensure that problems such as these are addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Potential impact on re-offending

Agency representatives maintained that transitional support for ex-offenders (such as a mentoring scheme) could help to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. A number of explanations were put forward as to why this might happen. Firstly, mentors are able to provide emotional as well as practical support to ex-offenders. Mentors were described as

someone the ex-offender can "talk to" / "turn to" / "listen to" / "trust". Secondly, mentors will treat their clients as "human beings" and may even be one of the first people to have offered support and advice. Crucially, agency representatives claimed that mentors can help ex-offenders find accommodation away from the area where they were living before they went to prison. This can help to remove the ex-offender from previous (possibly detrimental) social networks and an environment where it would be easy to slip back to "their old ways" (i.e. substance and alcohol misuse and/or criminal activities).

Continuity of support

The link between prison and the community is a difficult one and prisoners often find the adjustment process problematic. A mentor will be able to assist the ex-offender by making an assessment of needs; pre-empting what will be required upon their release; and providing a continuity of support.

Improved positive outcomes

Ex-prisoners often lead very chaotic lifestyles. Mentors can help to bring stability and structure into their lives (for example, by getting them into a daily routine and putting them in touch with support services that can help to address the specific problems they are facing). By helping to deal with problems that arise as part of day to day life, mentors can help to empower the ex-offender. Empowerment and improved self-esteem can impact on their outlook and attitude towards life.

Despite the very positive feedback about the value of transitional support for ex-offenders, it should also be noted that mentoring schemes *alone* may only have a limited impact – especially if the client has a long history of drug and alcohol misuse. One representative commented, for example, that a mentor scheme is unable to replace the need for interventions such as prescribing methadone for heroin addicts and the need for primary care.

Agency concerns about TSS

Although there was considerable support for transitional support and mentoring schemes for ex-offenders, the agencies interviewed also had concerns about the way in which the TSS was currently being implemented and suggested a number of areas for development.

Limited publicity

Publicity about the TSS appears to have been piecemeal. Some agencies commented that they knew "very little" about the TSS. In particular, there was sometimes confusion over what the scheme was seeking to achieve and concern about whether the TSS was duplicating the work of other agencies. In North Wales, there was also confusion over who is managing the scheme.

Mentors

Some agencies commented on the need for paid full-time mentors rather than part-time volunteers (given that the latter may not be able to accompany clients to appointments during working hours). This was duly addressed by G4S in October 2004, with the appointment of two full-time paid mentors. There was also support for the use of ex-offenders as mentors, or individuals who have recovered from substance misuse problems. Agencies mentioned that prisoners might be more willing to engage with mentors who had first hand knowledge of "what they were going through". Following extensive negotiations with the G4S Executive Board, an ex substance-misusing offender was subsequently appointed by G4S as a volunteer mentor in April 2005.

Some pointers for policy

The principal issues identified as having implications for the effectiveness of TSS are summarised below, along with recommendations for both practitioners and policy-makers within the resettlement field.

- Both the recruitment process and subsequent referral rates differed markedly across the four scheme catchment areas. An examination of referral procedures for recruitment on to the TSS scheme indicates that mentors need to take a pro-active approach and be fully integrated, even based within the prison. Better relationships with prison staff were also established in schemes where the TSS was closely integrated into the prison system. Evidence suggests that a proactive approach to recruitment not only helps to increase referral rates, but also aids integration with prison staff. In prisons where it may not be practicable to operate such an integrated system, induction staff should play an important role in TSS recruitment and be fully trained in TSS eligibility criteria.
- Low numbers of BME prisoners were recruited on to the schemes, and whilst this is for the most part, reflective of the Welsh prisoner population as a whole, it is important to acknowledge the needs of BME prisoners. This could be achieved via the use of minority ethnic mentors and the systematic monitoring of recruitment at points of referral.
- Evidence of good practice in relation to staff training, support and supervision was found in both schemes, although the delivery of training varied across the three scheme sites. The development of the G4S mentoring skills training package (submitted for accreditation by the Mentoring Skills Network) and the focus upon motivational enhancement was especially well received. This indicates that TSS mentors would benefit from a consistent roll out of an accredited mentoring skills training package across Wales, with a focus upon motivational interviewing techniques.
- There is also a need for Wales-wide consistency in the operational organisation of TSS. Differences were found in the training and safety procedures not only between DAWN and G4S, but also between the two DAWN schemes (North and West Wales). This need for consistency also applies to scheme publicity with varying levels of awareness of TSS amongst service providers across Wales. TSS could therefore benefit from a consistent rollout of a Wales-wide publicity campaign (which should also include those English HMPs releasing prisoners back to Wales as potential sources of referrals). Due to high levels of staff turnover across both the HMPs and community-based agencies, this needs to be an ongoing process).

- Interviews with staff and prisoners found broadly positive attitudes, and prisoners' comments about what they had gained from mentoring support were extremely encouraging and in line with TSS aims. These findings tend to support the wider use of mentoring in supporting resettlement work.

- In relation to the interim outcome measures used, the greater level and intensity of post release contact achieved by the G4S scheme could be partially attributable to the scheme's increased focus upon the enhancement of clients' motivation in G4S training. Additionally, the use of a combination of full and part-time mentors enables the scheme to provide a flexible mentoring package tailored to the needs of individual offenders, with the more needy clients receiving a more intense form of mentoring support.

- Differences between pre- and post-mentoring support in scores on the CRIME-PICS II 'G' and 'P' scales were significant. The greater degree of change achieved by the G4S scheme could reflect their increased focus upon motivational enhancement, and is consistent with previous research within the resettlement field (Lewis et al, 2003a; Clancy et al, forthcoming) that effective resettlement services must address motivation as well as practical needs.

- In sum, it appears from the findings of this evaluation that TSS work is complementary to that of the Probation Service/ROM, and the type of welfare work offered by mentors could be a much-valued addition to statutory supervision.

1.0   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Since the 1991 Criminal Justice Act, all prisoners serving twelve months or more have been subject to statutory supervision on release. Short-term prisoners (offenders sentenced to less than 12 months and normally released at the mid-point of their sentence) constitute the majority of adult receptions and releases across the prison estate. However, unlike prisoners serving 12 months or more, short-term prisoners are not subject to statutory support and supervision upon release from prison. Nonetheless, research has consistently shown that this group of prisoners has the greatest level of resettlement needs and the highest rate of reconviction (NACRO 1998; Home Office 1992a; Maguire 1997). Indeed, NACRO (1998) argued that a successful resettlement scheme for short term prisoners should be based upon a co-ordinated multi-agency approach and include an action plan, good accommodation, work or training, income, strong community ties, help with addiction/health and help with addressing offending.

A series of reports published in recent years (HM Inspectors of Prisons and Probation Home Office Report, 2001; Halliday, 2001; the Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; and Carter, 2003) has highlighted the need to address the particular problems presented by short-term prisoners. Each report stresses the importance of developing appropriate services and an 'end to end' approach to prisoner resettlement. The passing of the Criminal Justice Act in 2003, attempted to fill this gap in support provision and subsequently all prisoners will become subject to statutory supervision following release. Most notably, the new enforceable requirement, 'Custody Plus' sentence (to be introduced from 2007) which will consist of a short period in prison followed by a lengthy period of supervision in the community, the aim being to produce a 'seamless' transition between the two stages of the sentence. Offenders subject to Custody Plus will be 'case managed' throughout the process by staff from the new National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

The Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) was developed in an attempt to provide support to those not yet subject to statutory supervision on release (prisoners serving less than 12 months). TSS has been gradually implemented in the four Welsh prisons (HMPs Parc, Swansea, Cardiff, and Prescoed) in addition to HMPs Altcourse, Eastwood Park and Styal. The scheme has been running from the 1st January 2004, with an official launch date of 11th March 2004. The South Wales and Gwent area is contracted to G4S, whilst the scheme in the North Wales and Dyfed-Powys areas is contracted to the DAWN Partnership. NACRO Education and Training provide the mentoring service in North Wales, and NACRO Crime Reduction covered the Dyfed Powys catchment area (referred to as West Wales) from the 1st January 2004 to 31st March 2005. From the 1st April 2005, however, DAWN were intending to spot purchase mentoring provision in West Wales from both the West Glamorgan Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (WGCADA) and the Prism drug treatment agency covering West Wales.[1]

The TSS is designed to address the practical resettlement needs of short-sentence prisoners who are returning to Wales, and who are experiencing on-going substance misuse problems. The primary focus is upon increasing access to drug treatment and subsequently

---

[1] In light of this division of responsibility, individual quotations in this report that are attributable to staff from NACRO Crime and Reduction in Dyfed Powys and NACRO Education and Training in North Wales have been labelled as "TSS DAWN". Quotations that are attributable to staff from G4S are labelled as TSS G4S.

reducing/ceasing drug consumption. The scheme also aims to address additional problems which have been shown to increase the likelihood of offending including homelessness; relationship problems; finances; low educational attainment; and unemployment. In addition, mentors are expected to enhance the motivation of offenders to address their offending behaviour through the application of cognitive/motivational techniques.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The key aim of the evaluation is to identify 'what works' via a thorough assessment of project design, implementation (including the context in which the project is operating), delivery and impact. The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Identify the rationale for the scheme and to gather information on how it was implemented and developed.
- Identify significant features of the social, environmental and service context in which the scheme is operating.
- Assess the impact of the scheme upon change in criminogenic attitudes, levels of post release contact and service uptake.

1.2 Methodology

The evaluation was carried out by a team of three Home Office researchers based in the Community Safety Unit, National Assembly for Wales. The study uses a variety of data sources and methods of analysis, which are described in more detail at appropriate points in the text. These include:

- A quantitative analysis of case management records (CMRs) completed by the mentors for each prisoner joining the TSS scheme. A total of 98 CMRs (containing an overview of pre and post release activities) have been analysed.

- The administration and analysis of CRIME-PICS II (99 pre release CRIME-PICS and 37 post release CRIME-PICS).

- 26 interviews with TSS staff (mentors and managers) and prison staff across the three scheme sites (North, West, South Wales and Gwent).

- 31 telephone interviews with representatives of agencies providing post-release services to offenders.

- Pre-release interviews with 30 prisoners who have agreed to join TSS.

- Post-release interviews with 29 prisoners who have had contact with the TSS (up to three months after their release) – 21 of whom had also been interviewed pre-release.

The above data have been analysed in order to:

i)   provide a picture of the ways in which TSS was organised and delivered by the two schemes;

ii)   gather and examine the views and experiences of a variety of 'key players' in the process, including TSS staff, prisoners and members of outside service agencies; and

iii)   produce interim (proxy) indicators of the outcomes of the TSS scheme.

It is important to note that due to the small sample size used in the study, the analysis and conclusions are indicative rather than conclusive. Furthermore, as participation in the TSS scheme was voluntary on the part of prisoners and therefore self-selecting (to some extent), it cannot be assumed that those who took part are representative of the whole prison population. In addition, scheme staff rather than the researchers collected part of the data for the study, with the researchers heavily reliant on CMRs filled in by mentors. Although these records were well completed on the whole, there was a certain amount of missing data, particularly in relation to the CAIS DAWN scheme. Finally, it was not possible to complete CRIME-PICS II assessments on every participant. There is the possibility that these missing data may distort some of the findings.

In general, however, it appears that most failures to conduct assessments or fill in records were caused by pressures of time – and that there was no systematic bias in data recording at an individual level. One potential bias that should be noted, however, relates to the post release interviews with participants. Those offenders who agreed to be interviewed (post release) are more likely to have been actively engaged with TSS, settled in the community and there may be an increased likelihood that they have desisted from crime. Those who proved to be "too hard to reach" may have had very different experiences and contact with TSS. This should be borne in mind when considering the research findings.

1.3   Structure of the report

Section 2 provides an overview of each TSS scheme, and includes a profile of the types of individuals joining. Section 3 outlines the implementation and organisational issues surrounding the delivery of the schemes, whilst an examination of staff and offender perspectives of TSS is provided in Section 4. Section 5 provides an analysis of interim outcome measures. This includes an analysis of the level of post release contact, and the changes in crime-related attitudes and self-assessed problems as measured by the CRIME-PICS II instrument. Changes in employment, accommodation and self-reported drug using status are also examined. Section 6 summarises the results of interviews undertaken with community-based service providers and a discussion of the research findings and their implications for the future delivery of the scheme is provided in Section 7.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SCHEME

This section provides a descriptive overview of each of the schemes operating under the TSS umbrella, and includes a profile of participating prisoners. A more detailed, analytical discussion of the organisational issues around staffing, prisoner recruitment and service delivery can be found in later sections.

2.1 G4S

G4S are contracted to deliver the TSS scheme across South Wales/Gwent. Their catchment area covers Gwent, Cardiff, Swansea, Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil, the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT). The TSS team is based just outside HMP Parc, which is a private category B local prison housing approximately 1,000 male adult and young offenders. The prison has a reputation for running a progressive regime, which offers prisoners a range of activities and courses equipping them with skills to reduce the risk of re-offending and facilitate successful resettlement.

The team comprises a manager and 18 mentors, three of whom are full-time, paid staff whilst 15 are part-time volunteers. The mentors come from a broad range of backgrounds. Eight were recruited from within HMP Parc and include staff working in education; on the wing; the gym; the Offending Behaviour Programmes Unit (OBPU); and the Probation Service. Of the eleven mentors recruited externally, one has a voluntary sector background having worked in a local drug agency. Others have come from the Probation Service; the Bridgend Drug Treatment and Testing Order office; New Link[2]; and the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Two of the mentors are also ex-users. The team has also recently recruited a TSS profiler responsible for risk assessments and mentor allocation. The scheme also works in partnership with the Shaw Trust, which aims to assist individuals on incapacity benefit to get back into employment. A Shaw Trust Placement Worker is currently working with the TSS on a 13-week placement.

The TSS scheme is overseen by a management team comprising:

- Director of Custody and Rehabilitation, G4S;
- Head of Resettlement, HMP/Young Offenders Institute (YOI) Parc, G4S;
- TSS Operational Manager, G4S
- Commercial Manager, G4S and;
- Short Termer Programme Manager, G4S.

A Strategic Development Board also exists, which comprises a mix of managers based within the prison. Monthly resettlement integration meetings are held to discuss all aspects

---

[2] New Link is a Substance Misuse Volunteering and Training Agency (investors in Volunteers).

of resettlement and rehabilitation work going on in the prison and in the community, including the TSS.[3]

To be eligible for the G4S TSS, prisoners must:

- Be resettling within the South Wales/Gwent catchment area.

- Be serving a sentence of less than 12 months, and not subject to statutory supervision on release.

- Have a drug/alcohol misuse problem.

All referrals are made to the TSS manager and can be received from a variety of sources, including the CARAT team, induction staff, wing staff, programme staff and self-referrals. Either the manager or the team leader is responsible for making the initial visit to the prisoner to explain the scheme and gauge their suitability for participation. The prisoner is then allocated to a mentor, who will attempt to visit the prisoner twice before release. The mentor will then arrange to meet the mentee on their release, and can pick him/her up at the gate if they wish.

2.2   The DAWN Partnership

The TSS in the North Wales and Dyfed Powys areas is contracted to the DAWN Partnership. DAWN brings together a range of different drugs/alcohol and offender rehabilitation services with the aim of addressing the current and emerging needs of individuals involved in or at risk of substance misuse, criminal behaviour and/or social exclusion. Current members include the North Wales Health Authority; North Wales Police; North Wales Probation; CAIS; SOVA; NACRO; and the Employment Service, Further Education and Group 4. Delivery of the TSS is undertaken by partner agencies within the DAWN consolidation (although no formal contract to deliver TSS exists between the DAWN Partnership and its partners).

The TSS offices are based across several locations. NACRO (Education and Training) is responsible for delivering the scheme in North Wales and comprises an Operational Manager and three mentors (one full-time, two part-time). In addition, the North Wales team also has a 'stand-in' mentor who is able to provide cover in the event of staff absence. NACRO (Crime Reduction) had responsibility for TSS provision in the Dyfed Powys area between 1st January 2004 and March 31st 2005. However, the DAWN Partnership terminated this agreement as of 1st April 2005. Coverage of the Dyfed Powys area was then to be spot purchased from the Prism drug treatment service (which operates in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot) and the West Glamorgan Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse (WGCADA) from the 1st April onwards.

---

[3] Attendees at the meeting include: the Sex Offender Treatment Programme Manager; the Sentence Planning Manager; the TSS Manager; the Drug Strategy Unit Manager; the ETS Treatment Manager, P-ASRO Treatment Manager, the Sentence Planning Supervisor; the Resettlement Manager; the Short-Termer Manager; and the Head of Resettlement.

To be eligible for the DAWN TSS, prisoners must:

- Be relocating to the North Wales/Dyfed Powys catchment areas.
- Be serving a sentence of less than 12 months, and not subject to statutory supervision on release.
- Have a drug/alcohol misuse problem.

The DAWN Administrator (based in CAIS) must receive all referrals via the prison-based CARAT teams.[4] These referrals are then allocated to mentors depending on their location and availability. Ideally, mentors visit the mentee at least twice prior to release to discuss issues and draw up an action plan. Mentors then arrange to meet with the mentee on release, and often will pick him/her up at the gate depending on their needs.

2.3   The Project Board

A Project Board comprising senior members of both the Probation and Prison Service and the Welsh Assembly Government has closely monitored the delivery of both schemes from the outset. In order to ensure comprehensive and consistent monitoring was undertaken across both schemes, quarterly reporting forms were devised by the Project Board and distributed to scheme staff in North, South and West Wales.

Any issues arising from the reporting forms were subsequently discussed by the Project Board at the quarterly formal contract management and review meetings. Providers were also required to make presentations to the Board on two occasions to provide progress updates, and respond to any concerns the Board had regarding scheme delivery and implementation.

2.4   Prisoner participation in each of the schemes

This section provides an overview of prisoner referrals to each of the schemes. It also includes basic profiles of the prisoners who have been referred to TSS. Details presented include their age, ethnicity, initial Crime-Pics II assessment scores, and accommodation and employment needs.

---

[4] CAIS is a drug treatment agency based on North Wales and is the founding member of the DAWN partnership.

Table 2.1   Total number of referrals received by the TSS and source prison

(as of May 11th 2005 for DAWN and May 23rd 2005 for G4S)

Prison	G4S (N)	DAWN (N)	Total (N)
HMP Cardiff	36	1	37
HMP Parc	67	2	69
HMP Swansea	42	15	57
HMP Prescoed	34	5	39
HMP Altcourse	-	159	159
HMP Kirkham	-	8	8
HMP Liverpool Walton	-	3	3
HMP Styal	-	4	4
HMP Eastwood Park	25	-	25
Other*	2	2	4
Total**	**206*****	**199**	**405**

* Other comprises: HMP Drake Hall, HMP the Dana, HMP Winston Green, DTTO Office.

** Included in this total, the two service providers also received a number of inappropriate referrals (i.e. those not suitable for the TSS): As of May 23rd 2005, G4S had received 6 inappropriate referrals and DAWN had received 40.

*** As of May 23rd 2005, ten G4S referrals were still in prison: six from HMP Parc; three from HMP Swansea; and one from Prescoed.

Table 2.1 shows that a total of 199 referrals have been received by the DAWN scheme to date, with the vast majority (159/199) received from HMP Altcourse. Relatively few referrals have been received from other prisons in the Northwest, with HMP Liverpool Walton making just three referrals. The low number of referrals made during the course of the evaluation to the Dyfed Powys catchment area is also evident. HMP Swansea provided just 15 referrals; HMP Parc made two referrals; and only one participant was referred from HMP Cardiff. However, it is important to acknowledge that prison data (unpublished data, NOMS, June 2005) which provides a snapshot of the Welsh prisoner population on 30th June 2005 indicates that a low number of prisoners in Wales originate from the Dyfed Powys area, and thus are less likely to be released there. Referrals have, however, been received from prisons as far afield as HMP Kirkham (eight).

G4S referrals appear to be more evenly spread out across the South Wales prisons. Around one third of referrals have been received from HMP Parc (67). HMPs Prescoed and Cardiff each referred a similar number (34 and 36 respectively). Interestingly, a substantial number have been referred to G4S from HMP Swansea (42) and yet the Dyfed Powys DAWN

scheme have received only 15 from this prison (see Section 3 for a fuller discussion of this issue).

In the light of the complex targeting arrangements, and an absence of relevant information from the prisons, it is not possible to calculate what proportion of all those prisoners eligible to join the programme actually took part in the scheme. However, an attempt to provide some indication of the number of prisoners eligible to join the scheme has been made. A 'snapshot' of the number of sentenced Welsh short term prisoners in England and Wales was obtained for 30th June 2004 from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), showing that there were 239 Welsh short-sentenced prisoners across the prison estate on this date. It was estimated that 66% of this population were substance misusers[5] (Social Exclusion Unit Report, 2002), indicating that 158 prisoners were eligible across England and Wales for referral on to the TSS scheme on this date. Taking into account the fact that the average prison sentence is 3.0 months[6], we can estimate that around 800 prisoners are eligible for the TSS in any one year[7], indicating that the schemes collectively referred around half of all eligible prisoners during the evaluation period (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2, which show for each scheme, the stages at which prisoner attrition occurred).

---

[5] C, Sharp et al . Drug misuse declared in 2000, key results from the British Crime Survey, Home Office Research Findings 149, 2001.

[6] Sentencing Statistics 2004, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 15/05, October 2005.

[7] Excluding approximately 1/3 of prisoners on remand/not in the referring prisons. The majority of prisoners will serve 6 weeks of a 3-month sentence.

Figure 2.1 **Prisoner attrition from the G4S TSS scheme according to scheme management data**

```
┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   **Referred prisoners  │ ───────► │ *Prisoners not yet released │
│         206             │          │            10               │
└─────────────────────────┘          └─────────────────────────────┘
            │         \
            ▼          \
┌─────────────────────────┐    \     ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   Appropriate referrals │     ───► │  Inappropriate referrals    │
│   released from prison  │          │          6 (3%)             │
│         190             │          └─────────────────────────────┘
│        (97%)            │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Any post release contact│
│       177 (90%)         │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Face to face post release│
│        contact          │
│       134 (68%)         │
└─────────────────────────┘
```
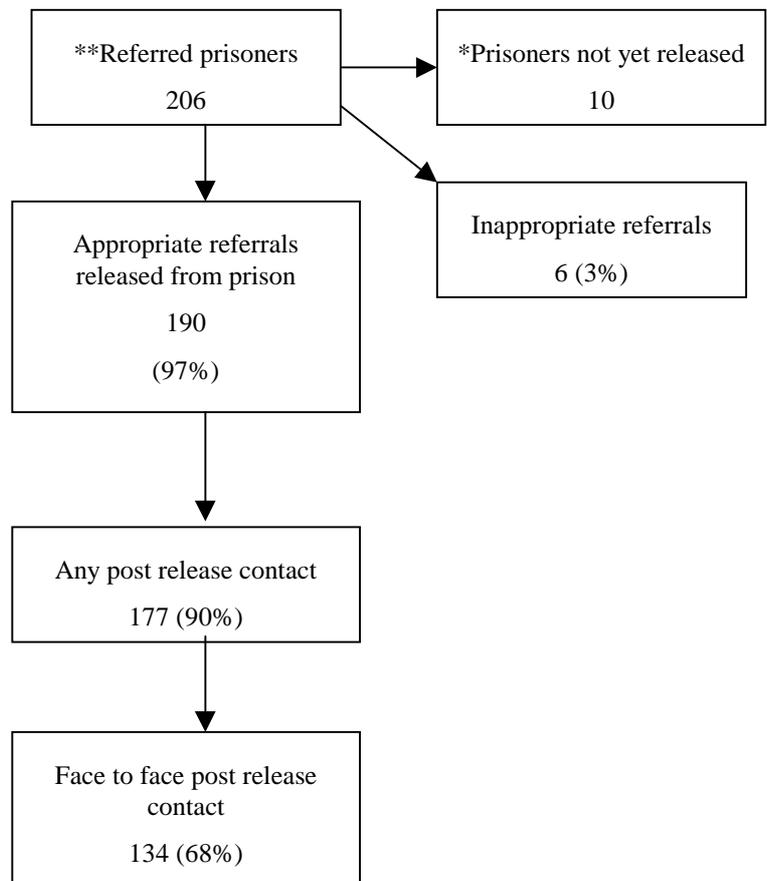
*Number of prisoners not yet released from prison have been excluded from this analysis, as they are not yet eligible for community contact.

**Percentages are calculated as a proportion of total referrals received (excluding those still in prison).

Figure 2.2   ***Prisoner attrition from the DAWN TSS scheme according to scheme management data**


```
┌─────────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────────┐
│ **Prisoners referred│──────────────▶│Inappropriate referrals│
│        199          │              │         40          │
│                     │              │       (20%)         │
└─────────────────────┘              └─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│ Appropriate referrals│
│        159          │
│       (80%)         │
└─────────────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│ *Face to face post  │
│   release contact   │
│        112          │
│       (56%)         │
└─────────────────────┘
```
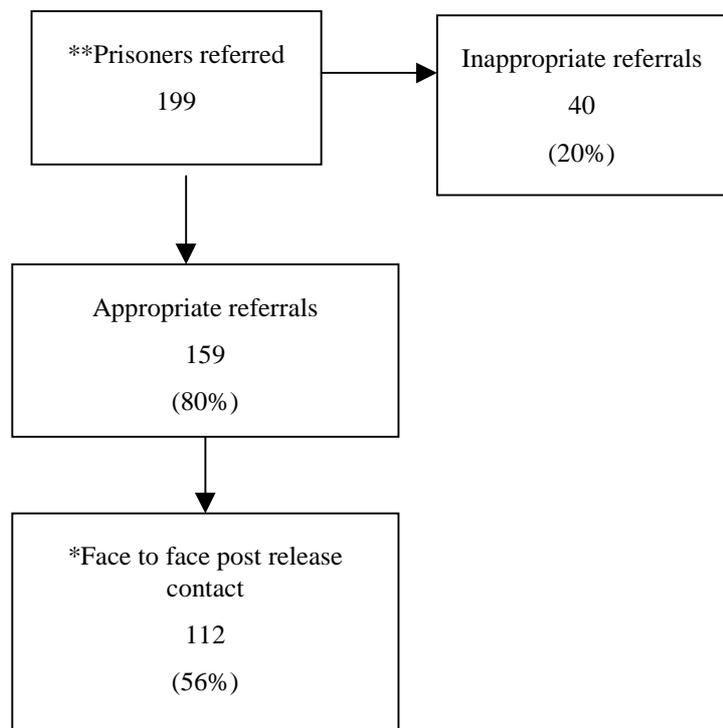
*Data relating to any type of post release contact (letters, phone calls etc) was not made available to the evaluation team and therefore only face to face contact is shown.

**Percentages are calculated as a proportion of total referrals received

As Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show, there is a marked difference between the two schemes in the number of inappropriate referrals received. The high level of inappropriate DAWN referrals (20% compared with 3% in G4S) was an issue raised during the interviews with North Wales mentors, and may be due to the different referral systems used. The G4S manager and full time mentors actively canvassed for referrals across the different prisons. In contrast, the reliance upon prison resettlement/CARAT staff to pass TSS referrals through to the central CAIS-DAWN administration centre initially caused some problems, as there was confusion amongst prison staff with regards to who (resettlement team or CARAT workers) should be making the referrals. In the early stages of the evaluation, there also appeared to be a lack of awareness of the eligibility criteria for referral onto the scheme. This has since been rectified following the appointment of two prison-based DAWN link workers who are now responsible for making TSS referrals.

2.5   Prisoner Profile

2.5.1   Age and ethnicity

The age profile of the prisoners referred to TSS differed slightly across the two schemes, with a greater proportion of over 35s referred to the G4S scheme (24% compared with 16% in DAWN). Over half (56%) of prisoners referred to the DAWN scheme were aged between 25 and 34, compared with 47% of referrals to G4S falling within this age group. Around the same proportion of prisoners referred to both schemes were aged below 25 (29% in G4S compared with 28% in DAWN).

An examination of the [8]ethnic composition of the prison population across all referring prisons indicates that whilst extremely low numbers of ethnic minority participants were referred onto both schemes (97% of TSS referrals were categorised as 'White British'), this is reflective of the Welsh prisoner population as a whole. An examination of the ethnic composition of the short-term prisoner population across the referring prisons indicates that 94% were classed as White British. The greatest proportion of ethnic minority prisoners were sent to HMP Cardiff (9%, 91% White British) compared with 3% (97% White British) in HMPs Swansea and Parc, and 2% (98% White British) in HMP Altcourse. This does indicate however, that BME were slightly under-represented in the TSS recruitment figures for Cardiff due its higher proportion of BME prisoners relative to the other Welsh prisons.   The project specification outlined the need for diversity to be recognised and ethnic minority participants to be matched with mentors where appropriate. Whilst G4S currently have no BME mentors in post, they are members of New Link Wales, and are able to request assistance with the provision of ethnic minority volunteer mentors and advice on BME issues. It is important to ensure that the needs of BME participants are addressed by the scheme. These groups have consistently been found to have more acute resettlement problems than white prisoners (for example, see Maguire *et al* 1997, 2000; NACRO 2000, 2002).

Table 2.2   **Age and ethnic group of TSS referrals by scheme***

Scheme	Age at sentence (N=125)			Ethnic group (N=117)			
	Under 25 %	25 – 35 %	Over 35 %	White %	Black %	Asian %	Other %
G4S	29	47	24	96	1	3	-
DAWN	28	56	16	100	-	-	-
Total	29	50	21	97	1	2	-

* Based on all CMRs received (N= 98). Missing data supplemented where possible with pre/post-release interview data. Appropriate referrals only.

---

[8] It was not possible to acquire data relating to the ethnic composition of the eligible population i.e. short-term, substance-misusing prisoners returning to Wales. The closest approximation we were able to obtain, provides the ethnic breakdown of all short-term prisoners sentenced at Welsh courts during the evaluation period (May 2004 – April 2005). It is acknowledged that the HMP data relates to the number of receptions and does not represent the numbers discharged during this period.

2.5.2 Problems and needs

Prisoners were assessed using the Crime Pics II instrument (Frude *et al*. 1994). This tool measures attitudes to crime (G score) and the level of practical and emotional problems offenders face (P score). The higher the score, the greater the criminogenic need. The forms were administered at two points: once prior to release from prison and once in the community following participation in the TSS intervention. Results presented here refer to the initial Crime-Pics scores administered prior to release from prison. In total, 99 Crime-Pics were administered pre-release (and 37 post-release). The extent of change is used as an interim measure of effectiveness in the absence of a reconviction study and will be discussed along with other outcome measures in Section 6.

Table 2.3 shows that the average 'P' scores of prisoners joining the TSS were similar across both schemes indicating similar levels of practical problems. However, a higher percentage of prisoners joining the G4S scheme scored 40+ (33% compared with 21% in DAWN) indicating greater severity of life problems. The figures relating to the 'G' scale (criminogenic attitude) were broadly similar across the two schemes, with a mean score of 46 for participants in both G4S and DAWN (see Table 2.4). These figures differ marginally from earlier research carried out by Lewis et al (2003), which used the Crime-Pics tool to examine the impact of the Phase One Pathfinder Programme resettlement scheme delivered both in custody and then up to three months following release. Average scores for the cohort of short-term prisoners in this study showed them to have slightly lower levels of criminogenic attitudes and practical problems than TSS participants (43.4 and 31.5 respectively). The difference may be partly due to the requirement for all TSS participants to have a substance misuse problem in order to join the scheme, indicating a greater degree of need than those joining the phase one Pathfinder programmes.

Table 2.3 Initial CRIME-PICS P ('Problems') scores by scheme*

CRIME-PICS P	< 20 %	20-29 %	30-39 %	40+ %	Total %	Mean
G4S	4	25	39	33	101	35.5
DAWN	-	36	43	21	100	33.7
Total**	**2**	**29**	**40**	**28**	**99**	**34.7**

* Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.
** Based on all referrals assessed as suitable for participation in TSS N=99 (G4S 57; DAWN 42).

Table 2.4 Initial CRIME-PICS G ('Attitudes') scores by scheme*

CRIME-PICS G	< 30 %	30-39 %	40-49 %	50+ %	Total %	Mean
G4S	5	14	46	35	100	46.3
DAWN	5	17	41	38	101	46.1
Total**	**5**	**15**	**43**	**36**	**99**	**46.2**

* Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding
** Based on all referrals assessed as suitable for participation in TSS: N=99 (G4S 57; DAWN 42).

TSS mentors were also asked to identify up to six key problems to be targeted and to record these on participants' case management records. Table 2.5 shows the problems highlighted as having the greatest priority for intervention. Housing issues were more likely to be identified by DAWN mentors (58%) compared with 40% in G4S. This may reflect the difference in availability of housing in the two areas. Indeed, lack of both temporary and permanent accommodation was highlighted as a major problem during interviews with mentors from the DAWN scheme (see Section 3). Around the same proportion of participants in both G4S and DAWN had drugs listed on action plans as the greatest priority (20% and 18% respectively), with the same percentage in both targeting alcohol abuse (13%).

The increased focus upon housing issues may seem surprising when taking the eligibility criteria for participation in the schemes into account – namely that all participants must have a substance misuse problem. However, post release interviews with ex-offenders indicate that many are not ready to tackle their drug/alcohol addictions until they have addressed their housing problems. Mentors in the G4S scheme were more likely to identify thinking skills and motivation as key priorities. This may be explained by the greater focus on thinking skills and motivational interviewing techniques in the training received by G4S TSS staff.

Table 2.5   Key problems to be targeted by TSS*

Key Problem 1**	G4S %	DAWN %
Housing	40	58
Drugs	20	18
Alcohol	13	13
Employment	5	5
Relationships	7	3
Low self esteem/confidence	5	0
Motivation to change	3	0
Financial	2	0
Peer influence	2	0
Education	0	3
Physical health	2	0
Anger management	2	0
Total*	**101**	**100**

* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
** Highest priority is defined as those problems listed as 'key problem one' on the CMR
*** Total N: G4S = 60; DAWN = 38.

Finally, information has also been collated from 98 clients regarding two of the main problems faced by short-term prisoners – unemployment and lack of suitable accommodation from entries in their case management records. Tables 2.6 and 2.7 show the self-reported employment and accommodation status of TSS clients prior to coming into custody and their expected status on release. Results indicate that half (49) were living in permanent accommodation and only eleven out of 98 individuals across the two schemes were in full or part time employment on entry to prison. The figures in parentheses show prisoners' expected post-release employment and accommodation status at the time of their first assessment in prison, and show that even fewer expected jobs or accommodation following their release. This finding is in line with previous research which has highlighted the detrimental effect of short-term sentences (Lewis et al, 2003; NACRO, 2001).

Table 2.6   Employment status before sentence (and expected after release) by scheme

	Employed Prior to custody % N	Unemployed prior to custody % N	In training/ education/inactive prior to custody % N	*(Expecting to be employed on release) % N	Total % N
G4S	15 9	73 44	12 7	(5 5)	100 60
DAWN	5 2	95 36	- -	(- -)	100 38
Total	**11 11**	**82 80**	**7 7**	**(5 5)**	**100 98**

*Refers to expectations prior to TSS intervention

Table 2.7   Accommodation status before sentence (and expected after release) scheme

	Permanent prior to custody % N	*Transient prior to custody % N	NFA prior to custody % N	**(Expecting to go to permanent on release) % N	Total % N
G4S	55 33	8 5	37 22	(47 28)	100 60
DAWN	42 16	11 4	47 18	(34 13)	100 38
Total	**50 49**	**9 9**	**41 40**	**(42 41)**	**100 98**

* Transient comprises bail/probation hostel; supported housing; and short term accommodation.
** Refers to expectations prior to TSS interventions.

As the above discussion shows, many TSS clients suffer from a range of problems (the most acute being a lack of permanent housing and unemployment), thus making them a very challenging group for mentors.

3.0   THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS: EMERGING ISSUES

This section presents the findings that relate to the organisational structure of the TSS and the working arrangements that surround its implementation. The first part of the section focuses on organisational issues. This is followed by a discussion of the main stages of TSS contact with prisoners (from recruitment through to post-release follow-up). Throughout, particular attention is paid to any obstacles hindering the effective delivery of the TSS.

Between June 2004 and February 2005, regular visits were made to HMPs Cardiff, Parc, Prescoed and Swansea in South Wales; HMP Eastwood Park in South West England; and HMP Altcourse in Liverpool. During these visits, 26 interviews were undertaken with prison staff, TSS managers and mentors. The interviews were designed to elicit information about staff training and supervision; recruitment and assessment procedures; as well as interviewees' experiences of delivering the TSS. Specifically, the interview guides covered the following areas:

- The nature of pre release work carried out with the prisoners.

- The integration of TSS within the prison, with particular reference to linkage with in-house services.

- The mechanisms for ensuring that the prisoners receive adequate post-release support following their release into the community.

A content analysis of interview transcripts has been undertaken and the results are discussed below.

3.1   Organisational issues

A range of different organisational issues emerged during the interviews with managers and mentors, and can be divided into the following areas: management; staffing; training; supervision; TSS referral systems; the allocation of clients to mentors; relationships with prison staff; and links with prison services.

3.1.1   Management

The G4S TSS employs one manager. She has been in post since October 2004 (when she replaced the original TSS manager appointed in January 2004). Rather than disrupting the day to day running of TSS, interviews with the mentors and treatment managers have suggested that this changeover has had a positive effect on the scheme:

> "Since X has taken over as acting manager,…. X will talk to people, she will ring them up, she will do all the stuff with the agencies. She is a very enthusiastic, bubbly person and that is what it needs,….. There has been a sharp uptake recently

and in the short and long term, if it is captained in the right way it will work really well, and go from strength to strength as it should have done." [TSS, G4S]

The positive impact resulting from the management changeover has highlighted that a clear and strong management framework is essential to the day to day running of the scheme. It is also crucial to staffing issues; supervision; and training (which are discussed below).

An operational manager from NACRO Cymru (Education and Training) oversees the delivery of the TSS scheme in North Wales. December 2004 saw a changeover of staff, with the existing manager leaving the scheme. This was not believed to have had any discernible impact upon delivery. The post was immediately filled internally by a NACRO manager working in a different area office, also based in North Wales. Following the termination of the agreement between the DAWN Partnership and NACRO (Crime Reduction), negotiations are currently underway between WGCADA, Prism and DAWN regarding the provision of the service in the Dyfed Powys catchment area on a spot purchase basis.

3.1.2 Staffing

The schemes have very different levels of staffing. G4S employs a TSS manager and a pool of 18 mentors; three of who are full time members of staff and 15 are volunteers. By contrast, the DAWN TSS in North Wales (being delivered by NACRO) operates with three paid mentors (two of whom are part-time) and no volunteers. Between 1st January 2004 and 31st March 2005, NACRO also had responsibility for the Dyfed Powys catchment area. During this period, the scheme was operating with two part-time mentors. As noted in the previous chapter, however, NACRO's agreement with DAWN to deliver the TSS in Dyfed and Powys was terminated on 31st March 2005 and is to be replaced by a contract with WGCADA and Prism. Negotiations are currently underway to finalise the practicalities of delivering the scheme in this area.

The number of staff employed by the schemes has remained relatively stable across all three sites. When staff have left, there has been a seamless appointment of new mentors. Indeed, it appears that staffing issues have not been a significant problem for either G4S or DAWN, with the number of mentors currently in post deemed adequate to deal with the TSS caseload. It should be noted, however, that the ability of the G4S TSS scheme to expand their client caseload in line with demand was initially restricted by the number of part time volunteers in post, and the subsequent difficulties associated with balancing mentoring and full time employment. In view of this, three full time paid mentors are now in post. (The G4S TSS originally only had one full time mentor.) This has led to an increase in capacity, which has meant that the manager of the G4S TSS has been able to publicise the scheme more widely.

3.1.3 Staff training

The training received by those in the G4S scheme varied slightly depending on the time they started in post. Mentors who were recruited when the scheme first began attended an intensive four-day induction course run by an external training provider. This covered motivational interviewing techniques and drugs awareness. Training in breakaway techniques and first aid was provided over a weekend by G4S. Although staff who

undertook the initial four-day training course felt that it was adequate, there were a number of criticisms. For example, it was noted that staff with little or no previous experience of mentoring might benefit from a more practical or "hands on" approach, which could be achieved via shadowing. As this mentor commented:

> "It was adequate for people who had experience with offenders. For people with no experience shadowing other mentors would have been helpful". [TSS, G4S]

In light of these criticisms, it was felt that a more bespoke training package needed to be produced. G4S subsequently devised and delivered its own comprehensive training package for TSS mentors. The new training is to be put forward for accreditation by the National Mentoring Network. It is designed to be flexible and takes into account the differing abilities and experience of new staff. Specifically, it focuses on how to best equip TSS mentors and to ensure that the mentor has "sufficient knowledge, and therefore confidence, to effectively embark upon the task required" (G4S Training Manual: page 3). It provides a "theory reminder" for motivational work with offenders; a record of G4S TSS Mentor policy documents and field paper work; a voluntary / statutory agency referral directory; plus an overview of the changing legislation and practice as it relates to the effectiveness and implementation of the scheme. All existing and recently recruited mentors are being offered the new training package. Newly recruited mentors with no previous experience of mentoring and who have never worked with offenders are required to complete the full training package. Those with previous experience can opt to undertake the parts of the training that are relevant to their individual needs.

G4S were also committed to continuous training and development, as the following quotation illustrates:

> "I firmly believe that this is not something where you can have three days training at the beginning and that's it…there is always new stuff coming in and motivation is a shifting dynamic. I would like to do regular feedback groups with people, talk about their mentor contacts, to share experiences and how we can as a group...overcome problems...The training is rolling to fit this type of work." [TSS, G4S]

As part of this ongoing commitment to training, G4S mentors benefited from one to one training with the author of the new G4S training package – who also works as a treatment manager in HMP Parc.

In terms of the DAWN TSS, all NACRO staff covering North and West Wales were required to undertake standard NACRO induction training. This covered a range of issues, which included a general overview of NACRO and the various projects currently running; personal safety; child protection; and equality and diversity issues.[9] There was a slight variation in the training received by those in West Wales (i.e. the Dyfed Powys catchment area) compared with mentors in North Wales. Staff in West Wales were able to shadow NACRO resettlement workers for several weeks on prison visits and community casework. Those in North Wales visited HMP Altcourse as part of a general induction and to meet the CARAT team. Despite the requirement for mentors to enhance clients' motivation through

---

[9] Those who were NACRO employees prior to becoming mentors were not required to attend induction training. For some mentors, this has meant that they have received no additional training since being in post.

the application of motivational interviewing techniques, only one mentor from the DAWN TSS reported having received training in this area. One of the mentors from West Wales commented that training in motivational techniques would be especially beneficial given that clients tend to drop out of the scheme due to a lack of motivation. The same mentor commented that training in counselling would also be helpful.

With regards to ongoing training, NACRO staff have had access to multi-agency training for the past two years. This has included training on offender rights to housing; drug and alcohol misuse; and access to benefits. Staff across both NACRO sites were also able to request further training if they felt it would improve their performance in the role. CAIS, for example, offer Drug and Alcohol Awareness courses to staff, both of which are accredited by the North Wales Open College Network, and also run two University of Wales, Bangor, accredited courses covering counselling skills and group work. Nonetheless, several staff in both the North and West Wales sites expressed a wish for more in-depth training on the housing rights of offenders and drugs:

> "I would like more information on certain aspects, drug abuse, types of drugs. I have a background knowledge obviously, but would like more in-depth knowledge of drugs." [TSS, DAWN]

> "What I have asked for now, I have had some drugs training but only basic and I would like more in-depth drugs training...that would be really useful." [TSS, DAWN]

This appeared to have been addressed in West Wales, where mentors were attending a monthly drug/alcohol-training course in addition to seminars and networking meetings run by WGCADA and other community-based agencies. It is likely that the new mentors working in WGCADA and Prism (covering the Dyfed Powys catchment area) will have considerable experience of working within the field of substance and alcohol misuse and will have relevant and on-going training in this field.

3.1.4 Support and Supervision

Close support and supervision to discuss arising issues is maintained to assist all mentors working in the G4S TSS. The frequency of these meetings was seen to be adequate by all mentors.

> "I conduct three monthly written supervision for all permanent staff on the TSS team, which is delivered via a one to one supervision session. Additional supervision is given where appropriate. Volunteers are supervised during and upon completion of mentoring by way of constant contact during the mentoring period and closure questionnaires. We also have monthly TSS meetings, which are held after normal working hours to cater for those working during the day. I conduct a team briefing with the permanent staff every Monday, and as I am based in the main TSS office I am able to advise and steer the team as appropriate." [TSS, G4S]

As the majority of volunteer mentors work within HMP Parc, and the three full-time mentors are based in the TSS office within the grounds of HMP/YOI Parc, they are able to

support each other through regular and informal daily contact. Staff were satisfied with the amount of support and individual supervision they now received, owing to the 'open door' policy of the current manager. Additional support has been in place since February 2005, when two full time G4S mentors were given responsibility for supervising the 15 volunteer mentors. According to the G4S TSS manager, access to a supervisor (known as team co-ordinators) provides the volunteer mentors with instant access to help and advice:

> "I have also now put in an extra tier to the management structure. The two full time girls are also called team co-ordinators, and I have split the volunteers equally under the two girls by area. I think that is going to be a great help, if they have problems meeting a participant now, or they need a phone call to be made to an agency and they are busy and can't do it, or they want to discuss a participant for a chat or advice that can be done. The team co-ordinators know to come straight to me if there is anything highlighted. It means it is not all on the one person. It is too difficult if I'm out doing presentations and different things, and it is unfair to expect them to manage. If they think I am out and about, they think 'oh I won't bother her'. Whereas now, there are other people they can focus on, and the full time girls know if they go out and they hear of a good idea or something relevant to their duties, they will let their team know." [TSS, G4S]

The DAWN Partnership had been organising meetings on a quarterly basis with the TSS leads for NACRO in North and West Wales (Dyfed Powys); the mentors; and their line managers. Evidence suggests, however, that attendance at these meetings by staff from the Dyfed Powys office was difficult to achieve as the meetings were only ever held in North Wales. In terms of day to day contact, the DAWN TSS mentors and the team lead for North Wales were based in the same office and saw each other on a regular basis, via team meetings and informal contact. Similarly, the DAWN mentors covering West Wales also worked out of the same office (in Swansea) and therefore saw each other on a daily basis.[10]

Although arrangements for formal supervision with managers differed across the two DAWN sites, all staff expressed satisfaction with the level of support and supervision received. In West Wales, for example, support appeared to be provided on a needs-led, ad hoc basis with the manager operating an 'open door' policy. Mentors reported that they could pick up the phone or arrange meetings to discuss issues as they arose. In North Wales, formal supervision sessions were arranged once every six weeks. Mentors across both sites attended monthly team meetings and also supported each other informally, discussing issues as they arose and when required. The differences in management style could largely be attributed to the fact that the manager in North Wales was required to cover a large geographical area (Wrexham, Conwy and Shotton), whereas the manager of the West Wales scheme was co-located with mentors in the Swansea office.

---

[10] Interestingly, there has been very little contact between G4S mentors and those from either NACRO in Dyfed Powys or North Wales. Any contact that has taken place has occurred during Market Place events held in HMPs Swansea and Parc. Both managers have recognised the need for more contact, particularly in light of sharing best practice and discussing service provision.

3.1.5   Allocation of mentors

In North Wales, every effort was made to allocate clients to mentors on a geographical basis in order to reduce travel times and associated costs. Of the three paid mentors (one full time and two part time), one mentor covered Gwynedd and Ynys Mon; a second covered Conwy and Denbighshire; and a third covered Flintshire and Wrexham. One of the mentors also spoke fluent Welsh, so clients who have Welsh as their first language were allocated to her (regardless of where they live in North Wales).

The allocation of clients to mentors from the G4S TSS was also very considered, with different mentors covering different geographical areas. In addition, every effort was made to "match" the client and mentor. As one mentor put it:

> "[X] does a risk assessment first. If it comes back that he isn't suitable for a female mentor then it won't happen, and then we try and match them on their interests and personality". (TSS, G4S)

For the mentors covering Dyfed Powys, the allocation of clients was less formal and tended to be based on who was in the office when the referral came in.

3.1.6   Relationships with prison staff

Working relationships between the TSS and prison staff were reported to be very positive. The majority of G4S TSS volunteer mentors worked in a variety of roles within the prison, including education; the Probation Service; healthcare; the gym; reception; and on the wing. This dual role was seen to be very beneficial by the managers and mentors alike, as it enabled close relationships to be fostered between other prison staff and the prisoners themselves.[11] It also helped to integrate TSS closely with the in-house services:

> "It helps with referrals in Parc as people can refer prisoners as they meet them during the course of their working day. The contact is daily, not just with the other prisons, but with people in departments like housing, and they are building up those relationships with key people in the community…there is a real sense of it building". [TSS, G4S]

Indeed, whereas referrals from the other prisons linked in with the TSS came mainly from the CARAT and resettlement teams, prisoners in HMP Parc were referred clients from a wide variety of sources. TSS appears to have been well integrated into the prison system in HMP Parc. All prison induction officers were well trained in TSS and were able to identify eligible prisoners on reception. Any referral to TSS would then be recorded at the outset, along with other pre-release work on the prisoner's Resettlement Action Plan (RAP). As the following mentors noted:

---

[11] A number of agencies noted, however, that the transition from "prison employee" to "friend" is likely to be challenging (see Section 5).

"It is not uncommon to have a short-termer who has his initial assessment when he comes in, then does the Gate Programme[12], then feeds into FOR[13], then goes to the resettlement fair and then goes to TSS. It is like a high dosage, continuous pre and post release support system". [TSS, G4S]

"Referrals can come from FOR, and any of the programmes. Anyone in the sentence planning group such as induction officers, custody officers, anti bullying, disability officers, education anyone really who has daily contact with prisoners would have some inkling of what TSS is and make referrals". [TSS, G4S]

Relationships between G4S and staff working in other prisons were also reported to be very good, with CARAT teams referring prisoners to TSS from all of the South Wales prisons. Indeed, G4S has a protocol in place to consider any ex-offender returning to South Wales/Gwent from any prison, and whilst it may not always be possible to undertake a pre release visit, mentors arrange to meet the participant immediately on arrival into the catchment area.

"Across all the prisons the CARAT worker tends to be the central point of contact. In Cardiff we have links with the drugs people in resettlement unit, and it can come from a variety of sources. We have had a lot come from Eastwood Park being referred by CARATS there. [TSS managers] are well known and have relationships with key staff in all the other prison…. regular visits, no issues there." [TSS, G4S]

TSS staff in both the North and West Wales sites, however, expressed some concern when asked to describe working relations with prison staff within their respective catchment areas (HMP Altcourse in North Wales; and HMPs Parc, Swansea, Prescoed and Cardiff in South Wales). The quality of relationships with prison staff varied markedly across the different prisons, and appeared to be closely linked to the referral process (see Section 3.1.6 below).

While the North Wales team reported having good working relationships with CARAT and Resettlement workers in HMP Altcourse, evidence suggests that there had been some initial "teething problems". Most notably, there had been a lack of communication between prison staff and the TSS which had resulted in a breakdown in the referral system:

"There is confusion around the referral process, there are too many people and the main issue is that resettlement and CARAT don't get on within the prison and so if one refers the other doesn't. There are internal politics within the prison, which we have little influence over." [TSS, DAWN]

---

[12] The Gate Programme is a two -week development programme aimed at building confidence and tackling self-esteem issues.

[13] Focus on Resettlement (FOR) programme is a four-week programme aimed at tackling cognitive motivational deficits, with an agency referral and post release support phase.

Furthermore, despite repeatedly informing the CARAT team of the eligibility criteria for referral on to TSS, the scheme was initially being sent inappropriate referrals. In order to safeguard against this, mentors were given more discretion to refer those assessed as unsuitable back to two prison link workers employed by CAIS. This ensured that the individual referred to TSS (but deemed unsuitable) would still receive the full DAWN provision, albeit through another project.

Mentors also reported receiving referrals from prisons not linked in with the scheme, most notably HMP Kirkham. Due to the travelling time/expense involved, it became impractical for mentors to continue accepting clients from prisons outside of the scheme. As a result, referrals that are subsequently transferred from HMP Altcourse to another prison were still accepted – but referrals from all other prisons were sent to the CAIS prison link worker for referral onto other CAIS-DAWN schemes. This raises questions with regards to the contractual duty of CAIS-DAWN to ensure the female prison estate and male prisoners returning to Wales from English prisons receive TSS provision.

Evidence suggests that relations between TSS staff and HMP Altcourse were much improved. This has been facilitated by the two prison link workers employed by DAWN and their close contact with the CARAT and resettlement teams. The DAWN TSS in North Wales was originally only receiving referrals from CARAT workers. This was subsequently expanded to include referrals from the Resettlement Team. Given that the latter are involved with a prisoner's induction process, they were ideally placed to deliver information about the TSS.

3.1.7 The referral system

The referral process for DAWN was organised by a full time administrator, who was responsible for co-ordinating an initial assessment of the appropriateness of the referral received and for distributing clients amongst the mentors. Central to the DAWN referral process was that mentors were not involved in the recruitment of potential clients. There are both advantages and disadvantages to this approach. The key advantage is that co-ordinating and mentoring roles have been separated – which leaves mentors free to provide the service they are contracted to do (i.e. provide help and support to clients). In essence, mentors avoid "wasting time" trying to allocate clients amongst themselves. As the manager of the DAWN TSS stated:

> "We just couldn't understand how we could run an effective mentoring service if the first point of contact was going to be the mentors. It was also felt that if the first point of contact was the administrator, that person could confirm the appropriateness of the referral, and immediately contact the worker to say that they have a client in to be seen at such and such a day at such and such a time and it was a very smooth process and to a very large extent it has worked." [TSS, DAWN]

Several of the NACRO mentors expressed some concern with this approach in that mentors are reliant upon CARAT/Resettlement staff making the referral as opposed to the mentors proactively canvassing for clients themselves. Interviews with NACRO mentors indicated that they felt the referral process needed to be simplified. Indeed Swansea-based mentors found it particularly frustrating due to the low number of referrals coming through. This

had subsequently prompted them to take matters into their own hands and contact the prisons directly in order to generate and access clients. As one mentor commented:

> "The majority of my time since I started here in November has been spent looking at ways to generate clients. I have written to the Governors of the various prisons, including prisons in the Southwest and around the periphery of Wales, Liverpool, and Gloucester. Doing this I have generated about three clients at the moment. A letter went out middle of December. Since then we have had quite a few calls saying we didn't realise you offered that service and we would use you. Now that is strictly against what CAIS [DAWN] have been telling us to do. We have gone to Cardiff in the past on a visit, and they have said we have two people here that would fit into your TSS system." [TSS, DAWN]

Indeed, when NACRO was responsible for the TSS in Dyfed Powys, the majority of referrals came from TSS staff proactively canvassing at the various resettlement initiatives held at HMP Parc, with only a small number of referrals received via the CARAT team and DAWN administrator:

> "It is pretty good in Parc, we have a lot of contact with the staff and resettlement team in Parc; there is regular contact through the job-fairs, marketplace and Gate. As far as Swansea goes, we don't have a relationship, we don't speak to them as we never have any work from Swansea. There is a bit of tension between NACRO and Swansea as they want the referrals for the resettlement team." [TSS, DAWN]

> "Referrals from Parc are what we pick up on the jobs-fair, we rarely get any sent to us from CAIS [the DAWN administrator] via that CARAT worker in Parc…. There are people in Parc and Cardiff and we are not getting the referrals." [TSS, DAWN]

TSS staff in West Wales did not view referral problems as attributable to a lack of awareness amongst prison staff. Indeed, TSS staff reported visiting CARAT teams based in all prisons linked in with the scheme both around the time it commenced and subsequently. Furthermore, TSS staff had made direct links with the CARAT team based in HMP Swansea, and despite several meetings with both the Chaplaincy and CARAT team there, the volume of referrals initially remained very low. Several mentors speculated that the lack of referrals could be partly due to competition for clients amongst the schemes:

> "We have done training there so they know the package we offer, it seems as if they want to obstruct us…it is as if they don't want other agencies taking over their clients." [TSS, DAWN]

> "I don't think our provision have been anything like as effective in the Dyfed Powys area, our numbers have been minuscule. There are blockages, we are just not proactive, we are not effective, and there are barriers between the referrer and the provider. There are other competing provisions [i.e. the NACRO Resettlement

Scheme and the Chaplaincy at HMP Swansea] and we need to deal with that as well." [TSS, DAWN]

The NACRO Resettlement Scheme is targeted towards individuals below the age of 25 and has similar aims to that of the TSS (i.e. transitional support for ex-offenders in order to ensure access to help, advice and support services). Similarly, the Chaplaincy operates out of HMP Swansea and offers advice and practical support for those who request it.[14] The continuous presence of the Chaplaincy in HMP Swansea means that they have early and regular access to the prisoners. For example, a Chaplain in HMP Swansea will visit every prisoner when they first arrive on one of the prison wings. They also have access to information about a prisoner's release date and will visit all prisoners at least once pre-release. This helps to foster relationships and encourages prisoners to request help from a known and trusted source. As a result, prisoners may choose not to participate in the TSS, opting instead for advice and practical help from the Chaplaincy.

Following the recruitment of a new mentor, the NACRO team had hoped to increase the number of referrals from HMP Swansea.[15] As of March 31st 2005, however, DAWN terminated NACRO's contract as service provider for the Dyfed Powys catchment area. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, NACRO mentors had been bypassing the DAWN referral procedure. This was felt to have caused a breakdown in DAWN protocol and communication (given that the DAWN TSS administrator was finding out about referrals made to the NACRO team in Swansea after initial visits had been made to clients in prison). Secondly, there was some speculation as to whether low number of referrals was due to NACRO accessing potential TSS clients and referring them to their own resettlement scheme. As noted earlier, the scheme in West Wales will now be delivered by WGCADA and Prism (two Swansea based drug agencies).[16] As referrals are received by DAWN from CARAT and Resettlement teams in the prisons, the DAWN administrator will ring the most appropriate agency (based on capacity to deal with the referrals area of prisoner relocation) and arrange for a mentor to visit the potential client. It is hoped that this will be a more responsive and flexible way of providing the service. In addition, the manager of the DAWN TSS has been in contact with HMP Swansea with the view to arranging earlier access to clients (ideally at induction) in order to increase the number of referrals.

3.1.8 Links with prison services

G4S staff commented that the co-location of TSS alongside in-house prison services in HMP Parc served to facilitate access to schemes and initiatives running in the prison. The full integration of TSS into the prison resettlement strategy also means that eligible

---

[14] The Chaplaincy is a very similar scheme to the TSS, although it tends not to offer support to those with mental health issues. Examples of the type of help and assistance that the Chaplaincy offers includes "starter kits" for those leaving prison (e.g. toiletries, clothes, shoes); assistance with accessing emergency and "move-on" accommodation; help with finding work; as well as general advice and catch-ups (e.g. meeting for a coffee or a meal in a local café).

[15] The new mentor already had close links with the prisons in South Wales by virtue of his background in resettlement and training at HMP Wakefield. During his time there, he had regular contact with the Governor at HMP Swansea and had formed a productive working relationship.

[16] WGCADA also have offices in Neath, Port Talbot and Bridgend.

prisoners can be routed onto TSS via any of the short termer schemes, several of which have close links with internal and external agencies.

Staff from NACRO in Swansea also took full advantage of the various resettlement initiatives being run at Parc and made regular visits to the resettlement fair, job market, Focus On Resettlement (FOR) and Gate programmes. However, contacts with services in other prisons were poor, with few referrals received and contact with prison staff limited.

3.1.9 TSS - duplication of work?

Despite establishing strong links with the prisons, there was some concern that TSS was duplicating the work of Resettlement Teams:

> "There was a problem at one stage, there seemed to be some duplication of work. Resettlement were starting the procedure, contacting the homelessness officers on the council. TSS workers were then coming in, identifying housing as an issue and contacting the same people. Through regular team meetings those kinds of issues were addressed. It is very useful, one of our main roles is to take the client to the homelessness office to sort out the accommodation there and then, it is not so easy for resettlement to do that within the prison. Same with benefits, people can come here and fill out their forms and we'll take them to the benefits office. Also whilst in theory people can fill out applications for work and submit housing and benefits claims pre release, it doesn't happen so this extra support on the ground on the day is vital." [TSS, DAWN]

In theory, however, there should be enough contact between a Resettlement Team and the TSS to ensure that everyone knows what is being done for the client (and by whom):

> "You'd ask them anyway when you go to meet them on their pre release visit, what has or hasn't been done. CARATS are pretty good anyway when they are referring in, they'll say well he's got housing and suchlike. If that did happen, it is only a phone call to an agency like progress to work and them saying, we have already got him….you know? That's very rare and it's not a problem at all." [TSS, G4S]

> "It has definitely got its own place. We are hardly going to run out of participants. If anybody does think it is overlapping, that is a silly attitude really. There are so many people out there not getting the support they need. There is no need, as long as we talk to each other, and one of us is prepared to back off. We have done that. If we feel there is another agency better suited, like [Client X] in Cardiff. We had a girl that was a very, very heavy drug user, all over the place, from Cardiff, we phoned X up and they said, "we'll do that!". You can have too many people coming at you, so if it is overlapping we are not doing our job." [TSS, G4S]

The duplication of work should therefore not be an issue providing TSS and Resettlement Teams are working closely to ensure client access to statutory and non-statutory services.

3.2 Issues in service delivery

This section focuses upon the delivery of the scheme in the community, concentrating on case management, pre-release contact, arrangements for post release contact and safety issues.

3.2.1 Case management

Examples of good case management were evident across both TSS schemes. In the DAWN scheme for example, a TSS referral form is initially completed by a CARAT worker, which provides basic information and the client's signed permission for their data to be made available to the relevant agencies. Once the referral has been received, and the client allocated to a mentor, TSS staff in both North and West Wales are required to keep basic demographic and GP details of the client, in addition to a weekly activity record. The weekly activity record is returned to the DAWN administration on a weekly basis, and records the date, time and outcome of each community meeting with the client. A record of attendance is also completed for each client for auditing purposes. During the initial meeting with the client, a detailed assessment form is completed, which was originally created for the NACRO resettlement scheme. This covers offending behaviour; employment circumstances; finances; physical and mental health; substance misuse; housing; and relationships. In addition, the mentors in West Wales created a more detailed version of this form for their own records.

A similar approach is used by the G4S scheme, whereby detailed forms are completed for every type of contact held between mentor and client including text messaging and phone calls. These forms are returned to the TSS office within 48 hours of meeting with the client.

Those working in West and South Wales/Gwent felt that the amount of paperwork was manageable. DAWN mentors in North Wales, however, found that it became impractical to return feedback sheets on a weekly basis, and have subsequently reported on a monthly basis.

3.2.2 Arrangements for pre-release contact

The principle of support 'through the gate' was clearly demonstrated and adhered to by teams in both schemes. Where possible, referrals were made to TSS several weeks in advance of the release date in order to enable mentors to visit the client in prison. During these initial meetings, a relationship between the mentor and client can begin to be established, thereby increasing the likelihood that post release contact will take place. The client's problems are discussed, and the mentor can begin to set up appointments with housing departments; employment and benefit agencies; and drug agencies in preparation for his/her release:

"We interview the client [in prison], discuss their needs...create a care-plan. The idea is to start the work before they leave prison…so we try to find out their problems before they come out. If you have a reasonable time to plan ahead you can start work with things like housing before they come out...we look at employment, colleges and try to help with grants." [TSS, DAWN]

For both G4S and DAWN Transitional Support Schemes, mentors tend to visit the client at least twice prior to their release from prison. Often, the exact number of visits will depend on how much time the client has left to serve. As one mentor put it:

"It all depends how long they have got left. There are some who I will see three times before release because they got referred well in advance of their release date." [TSS, G4S]

Some mentors commented upon the need for more pre-release contact than is currently taking place. For example, one mentor from NACRO stated:

"I think we need to get in to the prison and speak to the clients earlier than we do. Where there are referrals being made to us, it is only 14 days often max before discharge. You might get in to see them twice but it isn't enough time to establish a good working relationship with the clients and you need that time to show them you are going to be effective in the support you are offering… I think the main factor would be the credibility of the NACRO staff. If you can establish credibility with the client and he knows he has someone committed to him who is supportive and available that goes a long way. If you don't get to someone until 3 days before discharge you don't get chance to build that relationship." [TSS, DAWN]

In those instances where clients are referred to the TSS immediately prior to their release, it may only be possible for the mentor to meet with them when they have left prison.

Evidence suggests that in North Wales, there were some initial teething problems with the way in which prisoners were met for the first time:

"[U]ntil recently anybody who wanted to see the TSS worker would all be collected at the same time and had to sit in the waiting room. The first one would be fine as they only had to wait a little while, the second one not so good and the third often would decide to go back to their cell as they had to wait so long. That has changed now, they have made rooms available on the wings. That is working better." [TSS, DAWN]

This situation has now been resolved and potential clients are being allocated individual "slots" for their first meeting with a TSS member of staff.

3.2.3 Arrangements for post release contact

As noted above, a crucial part of the mentor's role is to link clients to appropriate community-based agencies. The team based in North Wales operated slightly differently to the TSS in West Wales, as they had the added advantage of being able to refer clients to a 'one stop shop'. This functions under the DAWN Partnership, and comprises six agencies in Colwyn Bay (Shelter; CAIS; Princes' Trust; Duke of Edinburgh; SOVA; and NACRO) all of which are based in the same building. The NACRO mentors covering the Dyfed Powys area (and also those in G4S) did not have this facility, and so referred clients to agencies across their catchment areas. As the following mentors commented:

> "If needs be we come and pick them up. If they have housing problems we take them to housing, the job centre, make them an appointment with their GP. Social Security and if they have a drug problem, we will go and see the drug agency. I'm not saying that all happens in one day…Sometimes we go with them and if we don't go with them, we give the agency a ring and ask if they turned up. We record everything on contact forms, if we speak to an agency for them if we phone them, then we fill out forms for that." [TSS, G4S]

The amount of post release contact often depends on the needs of the client and how long they have been out of prison. Some clients require a more intensive input than others, and often there was a greater amount of contact upon release:

> "Depends how far you are into the scheme, it [contact with clients post release] does decrease. It also depends on individual clients, I have had a couple who have needed a lot of help and I've met them on weekends too. One was struggling more with drugs on the weekend, I made links with his family. His brother committed suicide whilst in 28 day accommodation a couple of weeks before he was released so he needed a lot. So for people like him I was out at weekends whereas for others it can be once a fortnight." [TSS, DAWN]

On the whole, TSS staff seemed satisfied with the level of service provision, although some expressed frustration at the length of waiting times for access to drug/alcohol services. Housing was another area of concern raised by mentors. Due to the lack of housing provision for ex-offenders with no fixed abode, many were placed in temporary accommodation with other drug users/alcoholics:

> "For drugs/alcohol it can be quite a long wait. If you want to go on the detox programme, there is a lack of facilities as there is only one agency. WGCADA has at least a six month wait, once you get on you have to wait another 12 weeks to actually start the programme." [TSS, DAWN]

Working relationships between TSS staff and the agencies they contacted were described positively (by TSS staff). According to the mentors, regular contact (both formal and informal) by themselves and the managers of the scheme had helped to facilitate this relationship. In South Wales and Gwent, for example, G4S mentors conduct regular visits

to the agencies they are in touch with and have given out posters, leaflets, pens and key rings. Pens and key rings are also given to the ex-prisoners upon release. In spite of this publicity, one of the mentors mentioned that there seems to be some confusion over eligibility criteria (to access the scheme) in HMP Cardiff.

Section 5 of this report discusses the relationship between TSS staff and statutory and voluntary agencies in further detail. A key theme to emerge from interviews conducted with the agencies, however, is that they would value more information and publicity about the aims of the scheme and increased contact by TSS managers and mentors.

3.2.4   Safety Issues

On the whole, G4S TSS mentors were satisfied with the procedures in place to ensure their safety. All mentors are given access to the client's risk assessments covering perceived risk; public protection; contact with probation; and previous convictions. They are also required to sign a protocol agreeing the terms under which they will carry out the community contact. All referrals are subsequently cross-checked with the Dangerous Offenders List. In the event of a high risk prisoner joining the scheme, two mentors are required to attend community visits, visits must take place in public places only with no home visits allowed, and a stringent booking in/out procedure is adhered to. Mentors are also provided with RAC cover; Palm Data Assistants (PDAs); or mobile phones. There is ongoing training and support covering risk issues, self-defence and breakaway techniques.

All DAWN mentors interviewed were satisfied with the safety procedures in place, and none reported feeling at risk whilst carrying out their role. Assessment information is received by North Wales mentors from the two CAIS-DAWN link workers based in the prison. Receipt of PSR/OASys assessments however, tended to vary according to which Probation Office held the information, with some more willing to share the information with mentors than others. To ensure their safety, all mentors are required to report their whereabouts at all times to the TSS office, and carry a mobile phone. Several mentors mentioned that they do not meet clients in their homes, preferring to meet in a public place such as a café, although this is left to the mentor's discretion.

3.3   Conclusions

Although the G4S and DAWN Transitional Support Schemes have been operating less than 18 months, evidence of good practice in relation to staff training, mentor support and supervision are already in place. The accredited training package developed by G4S on motivational interviewing techniques and mentoring skills has been particularly well received.

The number of staff employed by the schemes has remained relatively stable. When staff have left, there has been a seamless appointment of new mentors. Staffing issues have not been a significant problem for G4S and DAWN, with the number of mentors currently in post deemed adequate to deal with the TSS caseload.

Good working relationships are being developed between TSS mentors and managers, and the staff working in HMPs. Some relationships, however, appear to be working better than others. Indeed, better relations seem to have been established where the TSS has a permanent presence in the prison (for example, in HMP Parc where G4S TSS is based and HMP Altcourse where two DAWN prison links workers are able to promote the scheme effectively). Evidence suggests that competing transitional support schemes (such as the NACRO Resettlement Scheme and the Chaplaincy) have meant that there have been fewer referrals to the TSS from HMP Swansea.

The principle of support 'through the gate' was clearly demonstrated and adhered to by the mentors and managers from both G4S and DAWN. When referrals have been made to the TSS several weeks in advance of a release date, mentors tend to visit the client at least twice prior to their release. These initial meetings are essential to fostering a trusting relationship and can increase the likelihood that post release contact will take place. The amount of post-release contact between the mentor and their client will depend on the needs of the individual. TSS staff seemed satisfied with the level of service provision in the community, although the lack of accommodation for ex-prisoners was raised as a major concern (along with frustration at the length of waiting times for access to drugs and alcohol services).

4.0   STAFF AND OFFENDER PERSPECTIVES

In this section we explore staff and offender experiences of (and views about) the TSS. These include the experiences of managers, mentors and mentees. Staff perspectives are examined first, followed by those of prisoners.

4.1   Staff perspectives

During the interviews with managers and mentors across the two schemes, TSS staff were asked about the nature of pre-release work carried out with the prisoners, as well as the integration of the TSS both within the prison and the community (with particular reference to linkage with in-house and community-based services). The following discussion focuses on staff experiences of the scheme, and their views about the mentor/mentee relationship. It is structured under the following headings:

4.1.1   Key aims of the scheme

4.1.2   Perceptions of scheme effectiveness

4.1.3   Criticisms of the scheme

4.1.1   Key aims of the scheme

When asked to discuss the key aims and objectives of the TSS, staff across both schemes placed greatest emphasis on the need to tackle clients' practical problems upon release. To a lesser extent, mentors also commented on the need to build a prisoner's own motivation and confidence to pursue their goals and objectives:

> "To help individuals to help themselves. Also if a person wants to change, to help them focus on that change. To help to motivate them and keep their confidence". [TSS, G4S]

> "Give an individual from prison a better start and more support so that they will have a better opportunity of not using drugs or alcohol and not ending back in prison…needs appropriate referrals, the ability of the project worker to form and keep relationships, to know what external agencies are there, access to support for the individual". [TSS, DAWN

In view of the association made by the scheme between problems such as drug misuse, homelessness and re-offending, helping clients to link up with community-based agencies to aid the transition from custody to community was seen as vital.

4.1.2   Perceptions of scheme effectiveness

Staff were asked to describe their perceptions of key issues influencing the effectiveness of TSS. The factor most commonly mentioned by mentors was the need for appropriate referrals. When asked to explain further, mentors clarified that 'appropriate' related to the

need for clients who possess a degree of motivation to change at the outset (and not just be using TSS as a taxi service). As the following mentors commented:

> "If the commitment is there from the person, then I think it could work quite well, but again if they are not committed, or haven't got the support structure outside then I think it will fail." [TSS, G4S]

> "The individual themselves has got to have a determination to do what you intended on the care plan, and obviously the mentor's enthusiasm." [TSS, DAWN]

> "Appropriate referrals...sometimes I get some referrals that say 'yes I want to go on that scheme', but they just want to use us as a taxi service." [TSS, DAWN]

The need for adequate community service provision was also mentioned by a number of mentors across both schemes, as well as appropriate emergency and move-on accommodation:

> "It is often different once they get out. They tend to be housed back in the old environment, because of the responsibility of the councils. Back with their old friends, in exactly the same situation and I don't think that is ever going to work. No other council will have responsibility for them so there is nowhere else for them to go. If they could have a fresh start somewhere else, and I have often worked with clients who have desperately wanted and needed that but it has just not been possible." [TSS, DAWN]

Overall, however, mentors were satisfied that the scheme was successfully achieving its aims – not least because of the continuous support that the scheme offers to ex-offenders and the fact that it is responsive to individual needs:

> "The fact that it is not nine till five, the workers are prepared to talk to people at a time when the client needs to chat. They are flexible, provide the visible support, hold their hands, take them to appointments if necessary." [TSS, DAWN]

> "Rehabilitation is obviously a key aim, and that covers a lot. From making people feel valued in society, which I think I do successfully. Just by listening to them, being there for them, defending them, and then trying to act on their needs and requirements. Obviously ideal aims would be to have housing and employment so they have some stability. They are not always successful and again other factors come into play like the level of housing in the area, motivation of the client to get a job. Their motivation is often affected by their circumstances. You can't really expect someone to go out and get a job unless they are secure in their housing. All the factors come into play and have an effect. You just have to live with that, and learn from mistakes." [TSS, DAWN]

All mentors mentioned various clients who had acquired housing and employment, and achieved abstinence from drugs as a direct result of the scheme.

Mentors also noted, however, that there have been times when it has been difficult to "let go" at the end of the 12 week mentoring period – especially when the mentor has built up a good working relationship with their client. In some instances (where an extension to the period of mentoring is seen as crucial to the success of the client), G4S mentors have submitted a business case to continue support for an additional few weeks:

> "I have one I have built a really good relationship with and when I have to let him go I am going to be disappointed. He has worked well and done everything. I made a point of saying to him, look I can't meet up with you as often as I need to see lots of others too. Just gradually break off. I will be extending the three months with X. He is doing it all himself, but he is keeping me in the background as if without that safety he can't do it." [TSS, G4S]

Extending the period of mentoring is also something that mentors in North Wales have considered. In North Wales, however, mentors are able to refer clients to other projects and organisations that form part of the DAWN initiative (e.g. SOVA, CAIS) at the end of the 12-week period – and ensure continued support this way.

Several mentors also argued that the scheme should be extended and made available to prisoners serving more than a 12-month sentence. Although this particular client group will have designated contact with the Probation Service (unlike those serving a less than 12-month sentence), mentors claimed that the TSS offers a complementary service:

> "The one thing that keeps coming up time and time again. You get a person in longer than twelve months, coming to the end of their sentence, hears about the scheme and are gutted they can't do it. They feel discriminated against as well. I'm not running Probation down, but it is a different service, I think TSS should be for anybody coming out of prison and who are semi-motivated to change." [TSS, G4S]

Importantly, mentors claimed that operating TSS along side the Probation Service would provide clients with an even greater degree of support than is currently available.

4.1.3   Criticisms of the scheme

Staff across both schemes generally thought that the TSS was operating effectively. However, when asked what criticisms they had of the scheme, several DAWN mentors raised concerns over the how clients were being recruited. In particular, the need to simplify the referrals system was highlighted, plus a need for CARAT workers to be more discriminating when referring prisoners to the scheme:

> "Referral process could be much simpler, which would mean we would get the type of person who needs our help the most and the project workers could …have more discretion over who we take on". [TSS, DAWN]

It was noted that the TSS deals with a very difficult and challenging client group. Indeed, evidence suggests that clients are often referred to TSS with a full range of acute practical problems (e.g. unsuitable housing; a history of unemployment; substance misuse). Clients have to be motivated enough to want to address these issues and begin to achieve "positive outcomes" (see Section 5).

Some DAWN mentors were also concerned that a number of eligible individuals may have been released unsupported, without being offered the chance to participate in the scheme. They believed this could have occurred because of the requirement for all referrals to go through CARATS, and that due to resource limitations not all prisoners will have had the chance to be seen by a CARAT worker. One mentor suggested that Governors could issue lists of eligible prisoners coming up for release, thus enabling mentors to be aware of how many eligible prisoners they should be targeting.

Some G4S staff mentioned the need for more full time mentors as opposed to volunteer mentors, who may find it difficult to balance full time employment with mentoring (given that the latter can be quite labour intensive depending on the client's needs). This was addressed from October 2004, with the appointment of two full time paid mentors

4.2   Offender Perspectives

This section explores the perceptions and experiences of TSS clients in relation to their contact with mentors *prior* to release. The analysis is based on the 31 pre-release interviews conducted with offenders who have agreed to participate in the TSS scheme.

4.2.1   Perceived benefits

Respondents were asked to explain their reasons for joining the programme, and what they hoped to achieve by agreeing to be mentored upon release. As Figure 4.1 shows, over a third (42%, n13) of those interviewed cited the need for support to stop using alcohol/drugs as the principal reason for joining the programme. Almost a quarter (19%, n6) wanted help with housing, whilst, "having someone straight to chat to and general support" was mentioned by three interviewees. Only three individuals wanted immediate help with employment/training, with the majority seeing housing and abstinence from alcohol/drugs as their priorities.

Figure 4.1   Principal reasons for joining TSS
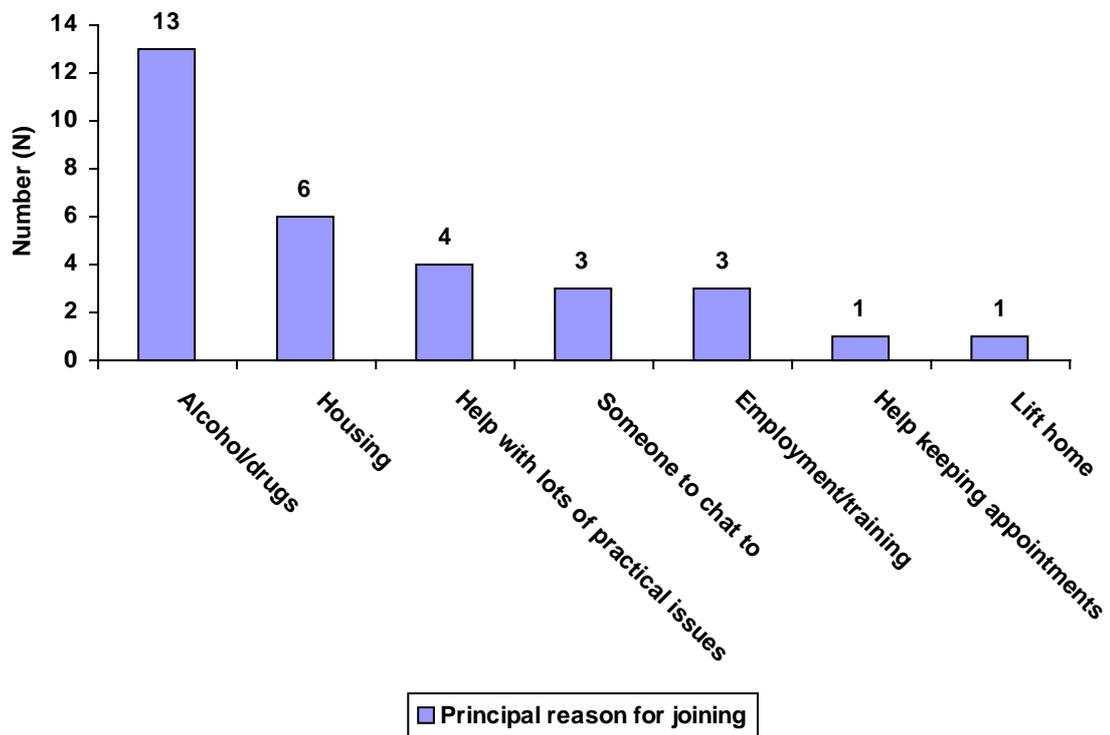
Total Number = 31

4.2.2   Initial perceptions of mentors

Of the 31 individuals interviewed pre release, 17 had received a visit from their mentor.
Where contact had taken place, interviewees were asked to describe their initial perceptions
of the mentor.   Figures 4.2 and 4.3 show that the vast majority viewed their mentor
positively with 65% (n11) reporting that their mentor had 'listened very carefully', and 71%
(n12) perceiving their mentor as 'very interested' in their problems and needs.

Figure 4.2   How carefully do the mentors listen to you?
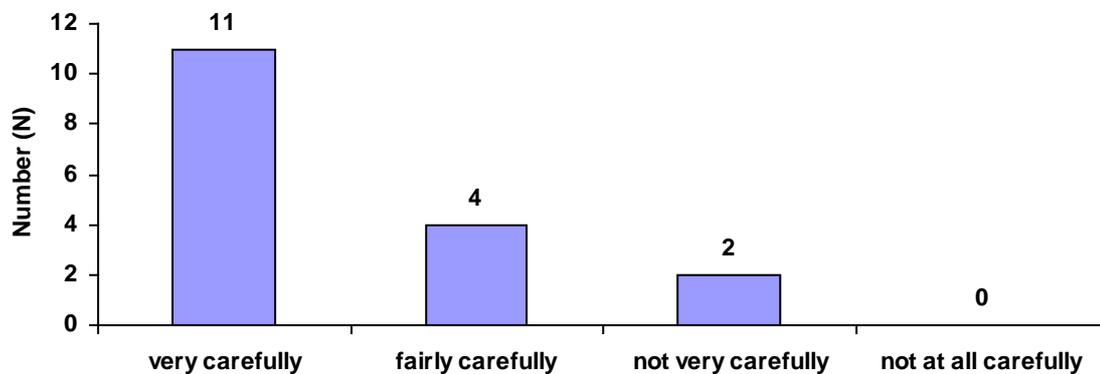
Total number of responses = 17.   Total number not seen by a mentor = 14.

Figure 4.3   How interested are the mentors in your problems?
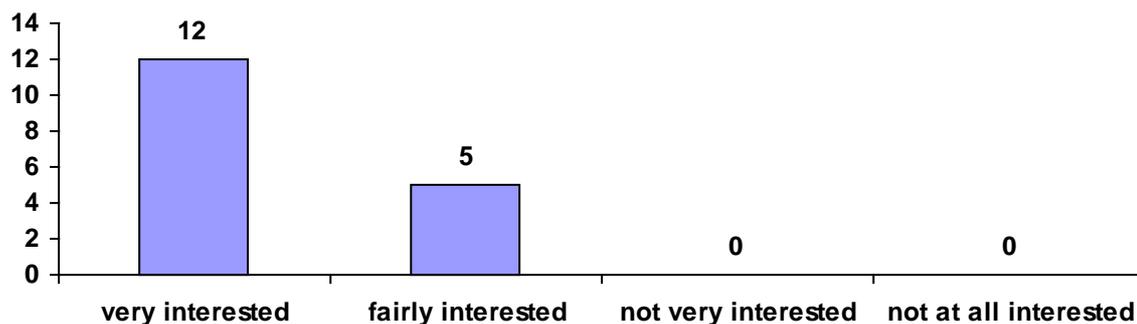
Total number of responses = 17.   Total number not seen by a mentor = 14.

4.2.3   Problems faced on release

When asked to describe the problems they faced on release, almost two-thirds (61%, n19) cited homelessness as a concern. A similar proportion (58%, n18) felt that drugs would be a serious problem (see figure 4.3). Almost half (45%, n14) mentioned employment/training issues; 19% (n6) were concerned about alcohol use; whilst 23% (n7) were worried about the possibility of peers encouraging them back into crime/substance misuse.

Figure 4.4   Problems faced by clients on release
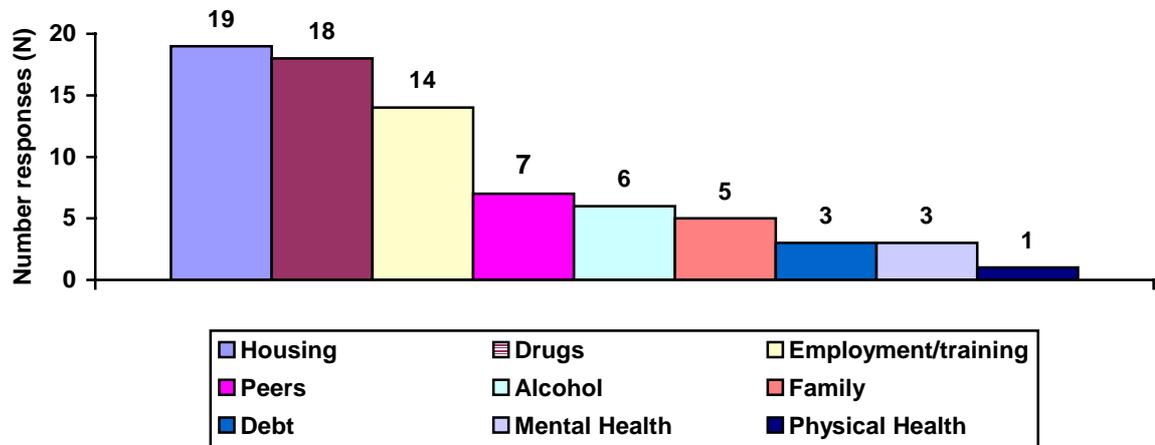
Total number of cases: 31. Total number of responses: 76 (as interviewees could give more than one response).

4.2.4   Support received pre-release

Respondents were also asked to describe the kind of work carried out on their behalf by mentors prior to their release from prison. Of the 17 respondents interviewed who had received a pre-release visit from their mentor, over half (53%, n9) reported that they had already received support with housing. This included referral to housing agencies and assistance with housing applications. Four participants reported receiving assistance with employment and three received referrals to drugs agencies, whilst two had received information regarding training courses.

Figure 4.5   Support received pre-release

1
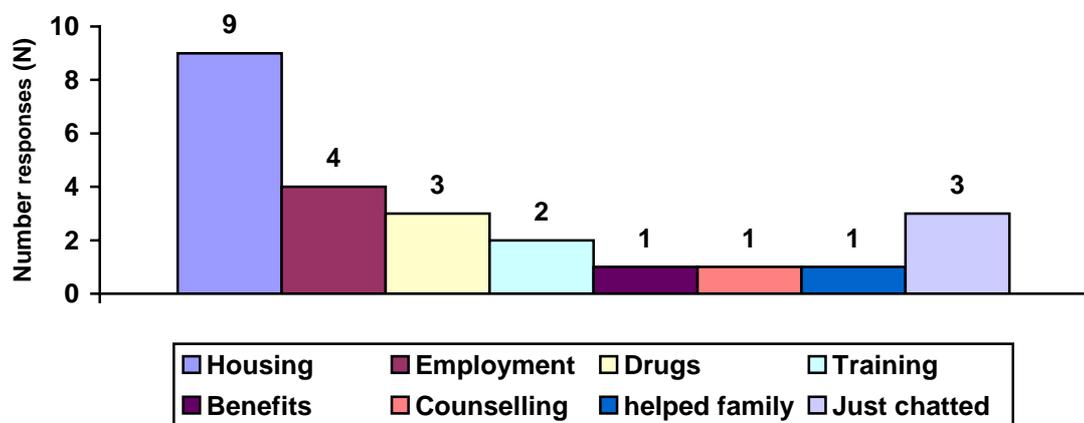
Total number of cases = 17. Total number of responses = 24 (as interviewees could give more than one response).

4.2.5 Post release experiences

In order to gain a fuller picture of participants' perceptions of the scheme (and to assess the extent to which their pre-release expectations matched their post release experiences) the research team aimed to locate and re-interview in the community the same 31 participants interviewed in prison. However, due to the difficulties associated with tracking ex-offenders post-release, it was only possible to re-contact 21 of the initial sample of 31. As a result, the post-release sample of participants was "boosted" by contacting those from outside of the original sample of 31 (but who had also been referred to the TSS). In total, 29 offenders were subsequently contacted and interviewed up to three months following their release from prison.

When asked to describe what they had found especially valuable about their contact with the mentor, over a quarter felt that help finding accommodation had been of great help to them (see Table 4.1). The same number reported that having someone 'straight' to chat to whenever they felt they needed support was also important. Six individuals found that assistance with the completion of benefits forms and help sorting out their financial affairs on leaving prison was useful. Only one participant mentioned help finding employment as one of the most helpful things the mentor had done. Comments from participants indicate that this is unlikely to be related to a lack of action on the part of the mentor. Rather, participants felt that on leaving prison, they were not ready to begin employment/education until they had found accommodation, sorted out their finances and stabilised their drug/alcohol use.

Table 4.1   **Help received from TSS of most value to participants**

Comment	Number
Help with accommodation	8
To have someone to chat to/give advice	8
Help with form filling/grants/bills/benefits	6
Referrals to the different agencies	5
Advocacy role of mentors with agencies/organisations	4
Build my self confidence/self esteem	2
To help mediate with families	2
Help getting to and from appointments	2
To make me see reason/calm me if things go wrong	1
Help with education/courses	1
Help with employment	1
Used the TSS facilities (phones/office)	1
TSS has not helped	2
Total N responses*	**43**

* Total number of cases = 29. Total number of responses = 43 (as participants could give more than one response).

4.2.6 Criticisms of the Scheme

Finally, participants were asked whether they had any criticisms of TSS and/or any suggestions for improvement. Sixteen of those interviewed proposed changes, while 17 participants were completely satisfied with the scheme. Ten of the participants felt that they would have benefited from more contact with the mentor and more intensive support on release (see Table 4.5). Seven of these individuals suggested that more mentors were needed, as those currently in post were 'stretched too thin'. Comments included:

> "Get more people involved, full time, if you are going to be a mentor you need to do it as a job, you need to be there for someone whenever they need it, need to be flexible. I would want a full time mentor." [TSS participant]

> "We need more of them, although I have seen X, there have been times when she hasn't been able to see me because she has been busy with other TSS boys." [TSS participant]

> "Could always do with more mentors if one is ill, get shuffled to another and we lose continuity, need more money for the scheme and it should be available to everyone." [TSS participant]

Three participants felt the scheme needed to develop closer links with other community-based agencies in order to facilitate access to services – especially housing.

> "TSS could be inter-linked more with other agencies e.g. homelessness, maybe they could get a better understanding with them, that would help us more." [TSS participant]

Other suggestions included extending the eligibility criteria to include longer sentence prisoners, having more contact earlier on in the prison sentence, and greater publicity to raise awareness of ways to contact TSS amongst potential participants.

Table 4.2 Participants' criticisms of the scheme and suggestions for improvement

Participants' suggestions	N
No criticisms – fine as it is	17
Want more frequent contact/more intensive support	10
Need for closer links and faster access to housing and other agencies	3
Extend the eligibility criteria of the scheme to include those on longer sentences	1
More contact earlier on	1
Advertise more, don't know how to get in	1
Total responses	**33**

* Total number of cases = 29. Total number of responses = 33 (as participants could give more than one response).

Conclusion

It is evident that TSS staff viewed the scheme extremely positively, recognising its value to a group of offenders who have traditionally benefited from very little support 'through the gate'.

Staff across both schemes placed greatest emphasis on the need to tackle clients' practical problems upon release. To a lesser extent, mentors also commented on the need to build a prisoner's own motivation and confidence to pursue their goals and objectives.

TSS staff had very few criticisms of the scheme itself, however some implementation issues relating to the referral process were mentioned. Staff from the DAWN scheme were concerned for example, that the referral process was too complicated, and may be causing a breakdown in the number of eligible prisoners being offered the scheme. This has been rectified in North Wales with the appointment of two prison based CAIS link workers however, the situation in West Wales remains uncertain since the termination of DAWN'S agreement with NACRO for them to deliver the scheme in this catchment area.

Perspectives from participants in the scheme were overwhelmingly positive. The need for assistance with practical problems was cited by participants as the main reason for becoming involved in the scheme. Indeed, TSS support to find housing and simply, 'having someone just to talk to and give advice' were the types of help most valued by participants. Participants' criticisms mainly focused upon the need for more mentors and more frequent contact/intensive support, in addition to an extension of the three-month support period. The need for schemes like TSS to be available to longer sentence prisoners was also recognised. Three individuals also commented on the necessity for TSS to be more closely integrated with community-based services, most notably housing.

5.0   POTENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS OF TSS

In order to draw substantive conclusions about the effectiveness of the TSS scheme, it would be necessary to undertake a reconviction study. In the absence of such a study however, four proxy measures of efficacy have been used. The first is the level of voluntary post release contact with the TSS scheme mentors. The second relates to agency referrals and subsequent service uptake, whilst the third and fourth are changes in CRIME-PICS II scores (which relate to levels of perceived life problems and criminogenic attitudes). The degree of change is measured by the administration of first and second CRIME-PICS questionnaires in prison, and up to three months following release. Data have also been collected on the change in participants' self reported drug use, offending behaviour and accommodation/employment status following their involvement with the TSS scheme. Whilst these factors are not sufficiently robust enough to be used alone as indicators of effectiveness, they do relate to the success of the scheme in achieving its key aims of assisting ex-offenders to resettle back into society and reducing/ceasing substance misuse.

5.1   Level of post release contact

One of the key aims of the TSS scheme is to engage with participants for up to 12 weeks post release, and assist with resettlement by making referrals to a range of community-based agencies designed to meet each individual client's needs. Success in maintaining post release contact is therefore an important factor to consider when assessing the impact of the scheme. Further, previous research carried out by Clancy et al (forthcoming) has found that increased levels of face to face post release contact resulted in a statistically significant reduction in reconviction rates. This appears to be an important finding, which supports the view that continuity of service 'through the gate' is of major importance to the effectiveness of any resettlement programme. It also, incidentally, gives credence to the use of 'continuity' as a proxy measure of effectiveness. Unfortunately, due to incomplete record keeping and the four-month delay between the launch of TSS and the start of the evaluation, post release CMR data was only available for 97 participants. Therefore, in order to gauge the most complete picture of scheme throughput, we have also used data collected by the two scheme providers. It should be acknowledged that post release contact on a voluntary basis could take a variety of forms, including telephone calls and reminder letters from staff to prisoners. However, the statistics on 'contact' in the following section focuses upon *face-to-face contact* only as this is believed to be a stronger indication of participants' willingness to engage with the TSS scheme. Additionally, whilst G4S kept records of all post release contact (including text messages, phone calls and letters – see Figure 2.1), data made available to the evaluation team from the DAWN scheme related to face to face post release contact only (although all types of post release contact are actually recorded by the scheme).

Overall, 405 referrals were made to the schemes, of which 359 were assessed as 'appropriate'.[17]   TSS 'participants' are defined as referrals that satisfy the scheme's eligibility criteria and have been assessed as 'appropriate' by a TSS mentor prior to release. Table 5.1 shows the total number of 'appropriate referrals' made to each scheme and

---

[17] Individuals assessed by TSS staff as satisfying the basic eligibility criteria for joining the scheme (see chapter 2). TSS staff were also given some discretion when accepting prisoners onto TSS. For example, they could exclude individuals if they felt they had no motivation to change or were using TSS as a 'taxi service home' (see chapter 3).

subsequent levels of face to face post release contact. This table is based on management information provided by both schemes, as opposed to case management records.

Table 5.1   Total number of appropriate referrals resulting in face to face post release contact (based on G4S and DAWN Management Information)*

G4S							
Source of referral	**N face to face meetings post release**						
	0	**1**	**2-5**	**6-10**	**11-20**	**20+**	**Total**
HMP Cardiff	10	2	9	8	5	1	**35**
HMP Parc	22	5	12	11	8	2	**60**
HMP Swansea	12	4	8	7	6	2	**39**
HMP Prescoed	3	4	6	8	8	1	**30**
HMP Eastwood Park	9	4	4	4	3		**24**
HMP Winston Green	0		1				**1**
DTTO Office	0		1				**1**
Total (N)	**56**	**19**	**41**	**38**	**30**	**6**	**190***

DAWN							
Source of referral	**N face to face meetings post release**						
	0	1	2 – 5	6 – 10	11 – 20	21+	**Total**
HMP Cardiff					1		1
HMP Parc			1				1
HMP Swansea	5	2	3	1			11
HMP Prescoed	1	1	1	1			4
HMP Altcourse	40	17	33	19	18	4	131
HMP Kirkham			1	1	2		4
HMP Liverpool Walton		1			1		2
HMP Styal	1				2	1	4
HMP Eastwood Park							
*Other				1			1
Total (N)	**47**	**21**	**39**	**23**	**24**	**5**	**159**

* As of May 23rd 2005, G4S had received an additional ten referrals who were still in prison: six from HMP Parc; three from HMP Swansea; and one from Prescoed. The total number of referrals to G4S is therefore 206. Given that post release contact has yet to take place, however, these ten referrals have **not** been included in this table. Data presented is based on number released: DAWN N = 199. G4S N = 190, and **excludes** referrals assessed as inappropriate (G4S N = 6, DAWN N = 40).

According to DAWN and G4S management information (See Table 5.1) both mentor schemes achieved similar and extremely high levels of continuity. Of the total 206 referrals made to the G4S scheme, 200 were subsequently assessed as appropriate and accepted as TSS participants. Of these, 190 have since been released and 134 (71%) met with their mentors at least once in the community.

Figures from the DAWN TSS scheme indicate that of the total 199 referrals made to the scheme, 159 were subsequently assessed as appropriate. Of these, 112 (70%) met with a mentor at least once post release. Nonetheless, the level of face to face contact achieved post release by both TSS schemes is far higher than that of previous mentoring schemes targeting short sentence prisoners. An evaluation of the first phase pathfinders (Lewis et al, 2003) found, for example, that mentoring schemes based in Lewes and Wandsworth prisons recorded face to face post release contacts with 23% and 29% respectively.

Possible explanations for the higher contact rates achieved by the TSS schemes could be attributed to the failure of the earlier schemes to retain staff, whereas both TSS schemes have consistently maintained high levels of staff retention. There has also been a strong focus in both TSS schemes upon staff training and the need to meet participants prior to release. Additionally, schemes at both Wandsworth and Lewes prisons had to operate within the context of poor service provision and an extreme shortage of housing stock, both of which may also have contributed to lower contact levels.

More detailed information relating to the extent and nature of post release contact with participants has also been collated from the 97 case management records (CMRs) completed by scheme staff (N= 59 G4S, 38 DAWN) and supplemented (where possible) by data from contact records kept by the two schemes. It was possible to identify the number of face to face contacts (post release) achieved for 99 participants across the two schemes – based on CMR data and post release contact forms (see Table 5.2). CMRs missing the data relating to levels of post release contact have been omitted from the analysis.

As Table 5.2 shows, almost three-quarters (73%) of G4S participants (for whom CMRs were completed) had at least one face to face contact with mentors post release. However, data from the DAWN CMRs tell quite a different story, with only 36% of DAWN CMRs indicating that mentors had met participants once or more in the community. Where post release contact was achieved, mentors in the G4S scheme were also more likely to achieve higher frequency of contact than DAWN mentors, with 32% meeting six or more times compared with 16% in the DAWN scheme. It is not possible to say whether the discrepancy between the DAWN management data (Table 5.1) and CMR data (Table 5.2) is attributable to missing data or a genuine lack of post-release contact between DAWN mentors and participants.

Table 5.2   **Level of post release contact achieved by scheme (based on CMR data)**

	N times seen %						
	0	1	2-5	6-10	11-20	20+	**Total**
G4S	27	10	31	19	10	3	**100% (N=59)**
DAWN	65	5	15	8	8	-	**101% (N = 40)**
Total	42	9	24	14	9	2	**100% (N =99)**

* Based on CMRs and contact form data: N G4S = 59. N DAWN = 40.
** Face to face contact only.

5.2   Changes in CRIME-PICS Scores

The third and fourth interim measures used in this study are based upon the CRIME-PICS II questionnaire and relate to changes in participants' pro-criminal attitudes and levels of perceived life problems. The instrument measures change across five scales. These are defined as, G 'general attitudes to crime'; A 'anticipation of re-offending'; V 'victim empathy'; E 'evaluation of crime as worthwhile'; and P 'perception of life problems'. This section concentrates on two scales, which are based on the largest number of items and are therefore most sensitive to change: the G scale ('general attitudes to crime') and the P scale ('perception of current life problems'). The questionnaire has been administered at two points:

- Prior to release from prison.
- In the community, up to three months following release.

Table 5.3 shows the degree of change for all five sub scales of the CRIME-PICS instrument across both sites, and indicates that highly significant change (at the 1% level) was achieved for each scale.

Table 5.3   Changes in average CRIME-PICS II scores: G4S and DAWN***

Scale	1st score	2nd score	Significance of change
General attitudes to crime (G)	46.2	39.9	**
Anticipation of re-offending (A)	16.2	13.8	**
Victim hurt denial (V)	7.3	5.9	**
Evaluation of crime as worthwhile (E)	11.8	9.6	**
Perception of life problems (P)	34.7	28.7	**

* Denotes significance at the 5% level.
** Denotes significance at the 1% level
*** CRIME-PICS 1 N = 99; CRIME-PICS 2, N = 37.

A comparison of change in CRIME-PICS scores by scheme is shown in Table 5.4 and indicates that the G4S mentoring scheme achieved the greatest degree of change. Highly significant (positive) change was achieved across both the 'G' and 'P' scales. Conversely, whilst positive change was also recorded by the DAWN mentoring scheme, the difference between the two scores is smaller and not statistically significant. It is important to note, however, that numbers are small for both schemes and should not be interpreted as conclusive. Furthermore, these 37 individuals are unlikely to be representative of all TSS participants as they remained in voluntary post release contact with the schemes. This may be a possible indication that they had a greater level of need and/or motivation than those who failed to remain in contact with the schemes and for whom it was not possible to complete a second CRIME-PICS.

Table 5.4   Change in average CRIME-PICS scores by TSS scheme

Scheme	Average attitude score (G)		Average problem score (P)		Change in average scores	
	Pre TSS	Post TSS	Pre TSS	Post TSS	Attitude change (+/-)	Problem change (+/-)
G4S (N = 21)	46.3	38.2	35.5	26.7	-8.1**	-8.8**
DAWN (N = 16)	46.1	42.1	33.7	31.4	-4.0 n/s	-2.3 n/s

* Denotes significance at the 5% level
** Denotes significance at the 1% level
n/s = not significant.

As Table 5.5 shows, this is indeed the case. A comparison of initial CRIME-Pics 'G' and 'P' scores indicates that those remaining in voluntary contact with TSS were more likely to have experienced greater practical problems before participating in TSS than those who did not maintain contact. These differences did not, however, reach statistical significance. In

addition, there was no difference in the average 'G'score overall, indicating that levels of criminogenic attitudes (measured pre release) did not differ between those who subsequently chose to maintain post release contact and those who did not. One might have expected that those with lower levels of criminogenic attitudes to have engaged with the scheme, but evidence suggests that this was not the case.

Table 5.5   A comparison of initial CRIME-PICS scores with post release contact

	Average Attitude score (G)		Average Problem Score (P)	
Scheme	Contact	No contact	Contact	No contact
G4S (N=57)	45.7 n/s	48.3 n/s	36.0 n/s	34.0 n/s
DAWN (N = 42)	47.5 n/s	45.3 n/s	34.1 n/s	33.4 n/s
Total (N = 99)	46.2 n/s	46.2 n/s	35.5 n/s	33.6 n/s

* Denotes significance at the 5% level
** Denotes significance at the 1% level
 n/s = not significant.

5.3   Other indicators of effectiveness

As previously mentioned, data relating to additional indicators of efficacy have been gathered during the course of the evaluation. The impact of the scheme in improving the accommodation and employment status of participants and reducing (self-reported) offending behaviour and consumption of alcohol/drugs should also be considered, and is the focus of this section of the report.

5.3.1   Referrals to other services

One of the principal aims of the TSS is to facilitate access and encourage ex-offenders to engage with community-based agencies. Mentors were asked to evidence referrals made to agencies on behalf of participants and (where able) to indicate the level of service uptake achieved. Of the 97 CMRs completed, it was only possible to identify the number and type of referrals made for 86 participants (see Table 5.6). Referral data were returned for 58 of the G4S TSS participants and 28 participants in the DAWN scheme. Proportionally, the number of referrals made per participant was slightly higher for the G4S scheme, with 1.9 referrals made per participant compared with 1.4 referrals per DAWN TSS participant. Around half of the participants in both the G4S and DAWN TSS were referred on to agencies dealing with accommodation issues/homelessness (52% and 54% respectively).

Just over half (55%) of the G4S participants were referred on to employment services compared with just under a quarter (21%) in the DAWN scheme. The percentage of drug/alcohol referrals made were also slightly higher for G4S participants with 52% referred to a drug/alcohol agency (40% drug, 12% alcohol) compared with 47% of DAWN scheme participants (36% drug, 11% alcohol). The proportion of participants for

whom no referrals were made also differed slightly across the two schemes, with 14% of G4S participants not referred on to other services, compared with 18% in the DAWN TSS.

Table 5.6   **Type of agency participants referred to by TSS**

Type of agency referred to	G4S		DAWN	
	N	%	N	%
Accommodation	30	52	15	54
Employment	32	55	6	21
Drug	23	40	10	36
Alcohol	7	12	3	11
Benefits	8	14	1	4
Family Support	3	5	-	-
GP	5	9	3	11
Social Services	4	7	1	4
Gym	2	3	-	-
No referrals made	8	14	5	18
Total Referrals	**114 for 58 participants**		**39 for 28 participants**	

*N cases = 86, N G4S = 58/59 CMRs; N DAWN = 28/38 CMRs. N responses = 167.

5.3.2   Level of service uptake

Table 5.7 shows the uptake of referrals made. It is important to note that there was a large amount of missing data in relation to the outcomes of referrals made by the DAWN TSS. In view of this, a complete breakdown of the data has been provided, which also shows the number of unknown outcomes for each referral made. The level of missing data should be borne in mind when looking at the total number of appointments attended, as this figure may have been distorted by incomplete record keeping.

Table 5.7 shows that although employment agencies received the most referrals from TSS mentors, services providing assistance with accommodation were more likely to be utilised by participants post release, closely followed by help with benefits and drug services. Overall, relatively high rates of service uptake were achieved with 67% of G4S TSS participants attending appointments in the community compared with 49% of DAWN participants (although as mentioned earlier, this may be due to incomplete record keeping).

Table 5.7   Uptake of referrals: Number of participants attending appointments post release

Appointments attended	N G4S			N DAWN		
	Yes	No	D/K	Yes	No	D/K
Accommodation	21	7	2	6	3	6
Employment	16	10	6	3	1	2
Drug	16	6	1	6	4	-
Alcohol	5	2	-	2	1	-
Benefits	8	-	-	1	-	-
Family Support	3	-	-	-	-	-
GP	3			-	-	3
Social Services	2	1	1	1	-	-
Gym	2	-	-	-	-	
**Total Appointments Kept	**76/114**			**19/39**		

* N cases = 86. N G4S = 58/60 CMRs; N DAWN = 28/38 CMRs. N responses = 167.
** Known outcomes only.

An examination of CMRs indicates that as a direct result of the scheme, at least five individuals obtained employment; one enrolled on a training course; 13 found temporary accommodation; and two individuals obtained permanent accommodation. These figures may be an underestimate of actual uptake, however, due to missing data on the CMRs. It is also important to note that the research is unable to determine whether these individuals may have found employment/accommodation in the absence of the TSS scheme.

Additional information relating to the outcome of referrals made can be gleaned from post release interviews undertaken with participants up to three months following their release (see Table 5.8). Eleven individuals reported that they had obtained temporary accommodation as a direct result of the mentor, three had found permanent accommodation and one had found employment.

Table 5.8   **Outcome of referrals made**

Outcome of referrals	Number
Found temporary accommodation	11
Found permanent accommodation	3
Found employment	1
Enrolled on training course/education	4
Receiving drug/alcohol counselling	9
Help to obtain benefits/grants	8
Anger management course	1
N/A didn't attend referral appointments	3
N/A no referrals made	1
Total*	**41**

* Total n cases = 29. Total n responses = 41(as participants could give more than one response).

5.3.3 Accommodation and employment

Previous research has consistently highlighted the links between imprisonment and the deterioration in the accommodation and employment status of prisoners (Maguire *et al* 1997; NACRO, 2000; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). The extent to which the TSS scheme is able to assist participants to gain access to accommodation and employment on release may therefore be interpreted as a measure of its success in resettling ex-offenders.

It was possible to compare pre and post imprisonment accommodation and employment status from the CMRs of 57 participants who remained in contact with the scheme up to three months following release.   It is also possible to compare offenders' *expected* status at the time they were assessed by mentors in prison with their actual status following release.

Table 5.9 Comparison of pre-prison accommodation status with expectations on entering custody and actual status post-release

Site	Permanent %			Temporary %		NFA %		In custody %
	Pre	Expected *post release*	Actual Post	Pre	Actual Post	Pre	Actual Post	Post
G4S	51	49	37	9	37	40	16	9
DAWN	50	36	36	21	50	29	-	14
Both schemes	**51**	**46**	**37**	**12**	**40**	**37**	**12**	**11**

N = 57 offenders who were in contact after release, and on whom both pre and post-release records were available. 'Expected' refers to expected accommodation status at time of assessment during prison sentence.

The table above shows that the proportion of participants in permanent accommodation on entry to prison was very similar across both of the schemes (around 50%). However participants in the DAWN scheme were more likely to anticipate losing this accommodation than those eligible for the G4S scheme. This is likely to be partly attributable to the large demographic area covered by the North Wales scheme and the resettlement problems arising from the lack of a prison in the North Wales area. This may impact negatively upon prisoners' family ties and the subsequent likelihood of them returning to the family home. (The vast majority of prisoners participating in the North Wales scheme are referred from HMP Altcourse, near Liverpool.)

Research has shown, for example, that the frequency of family visits is associated with a greater likelihood of successful resettlement (Niven & Stewart, 2005; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). Encouragingly, whilst 37% of participants (for whom CMR data were available) across both schemes were homeless on entry to prison, only 12% remained so on release. This fall in homelessness was accompanied by a corresponding rise in the number going into transient accommodation. This was most marked in North Wales where none of the participants were recorded as homeless following release; but 50% of participants were classed as living in transient accommodation post release, compared with 21% prior to imprisonment.

Table 5.10   Comparison of pre-prison employment status with expectations on entering custody and actual status post release

Scheme	Employed %			Training/ inactive %		Unemployed %		In custody %
	Pre	Expected *Post release*	Actual Post	Pre	Actual Post	Pre	Actual Post	Post
G4S	14	12	26	14	12	72	54	9
DAWN	14	0	21	-	0	86	64	14
Both Schemes	**14**	**9**	**25**	**11**	**9**	**75**	**56**	**11**

N = 57 offenders who were in contact after release and on whom both pre and post-release records were available. 'Expected' refers to expected employment status at time of assessment early in prison sentence.

The percentage of offenders in employment on entry to prison was the same across both schemes (14%). A comparison of expected levels of employment at the time of the assessment in prison with actual levels recorded up to three months post release indicates that participants were far more likely to be in employment than they had originally anticipated. A quarter of participants were employed overall compared with 9% who expected to be. Also encouraging is the decreased level of unemployment pre and post release, with three quarters of participants unemployed on entry to prison compared with just over half (56%) on release.

5.3.4   Self reported substance misuse and offending

Of the 29 participants contacted and interviewed post release, all admitted to having a substance misuse problem prior to imprisonment. Six of these reported that they had a problem with alcohol, with the remainder using drugs. 72% (n21) admitted to using drugs/alcohol since they had left prison. Nonetheless, the majority (69%) felt that the mentor had had a positive effect upon their drug taking/alcohol use. Comments included:

> "X met me on my day of release, took me straight to housing and got me accommodation. Normally I get out meet up with boys and end up back on heroin and before I know it I am inside again but meeting X made the difference."

> "If I go back on drugs, I am letting X *[mentor]* down. I'm not letting anyone down, they have worked hard with me to get me where I am today. I won't let them down the scheme does work, it is the most help I have ever had in my life."

Of particular note, was the shift away from injecting polydrug use and heavy heroin consumption towards the use of cannabis and the increase in the number of individuals reporting zero drug use post TSS (see Table 5.11). These findings must be treated with caution however, as by virtue of the team's ability to contact these individuals and their willingness to attend the interview, they are likely to lead more stable, settled lives than those it was not possible to make contact with.

Table 5.11   Drug use: pre and post TSS participation*

Drug type	Prior to imprisonment		Post TSS	
	%	N	%	N
Heroin	59	17	31	9
Crack	-	-	3	1
Cocaine	3	1	-	-
Amphetamine	7	2	3	1
Temazepam/Diazepam	3	1	3	1
Cannabis	7	2	21	6
Alcohol	21	6	10	3
No drug use	-	-	28	8
Total	**100**	**29**	**99**	**29**

* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

The frequency of use was also markedly reduced following involvement with the TSS scheme. A third (33%, n 7/21) of those admitting to drug/alcohol use post release reported that they had reduced their use from a daily consumption to less than weekly.

Participants were also asked whether they had been involved in any criminal activities since their release from prison. Only one participant admitted to committing an offence post release. This participant reported that he had been subsequently been charged and convicted of shoplifting. When asked whether there was anything more that could have been done to prevent him re-offending, he commented:

> "There is always more I could do with, but I can't blame anyone but myself. I need more counselling, maybe I will try to see X more than once a week." [TSS participant]

Individuals reporting that they had not re-offended were asked whether the mentor had had any influence over their desistance from offending: 64% (n 18/28) felt that the mentor had exerted a positive influence over their ability to remain crime free. Comments included:

> "I haven't even wanted to *[commit crime]*, it's like I'd be letting the mentors down, myself and my family. For them to put all that time and effort in to helping me and then I commit crime would be a slap in their face. I'd lose respect, this is the first time I have ever had respect." [TSS participant]

> "If I committed an offence, she'd kill me! Having the support has given me balance, she has talked me out of it, like a mum, she genuinely cares." [TSS participant]

> "She reminds me of the good things I can have and the negative things that will happen if I re-offend, she helps me to stop and think." [TSS participant]

These statements echo what was said by many of the agencies interviewed as part of the evaluation, who were keen to stress the potential for "improved positive outcomes" amongst ex-prisoners who have access to transitional support schemes

5.4   Conclusion

The interim outcome measures of effectiveness used in this study have yielded some extremely positive and encouraging results. According to management data, both schemes have attained high levels of continuity 'through the gate'. DAWN TSS and G4S TSS have contact rates of 70% and 71% respectively (based on scheme management data). There was however, a large discrepancy between this data and the CMRs with contact rates according to CMR data of 73% for G4S and 36% for DAWN. It is uncertain whether the discrepancy between the DAWN management data and CMR data is attributable to missing data or a genuine lack of post-release contact between DAWN mentors and participants.
 The intensity of the work carried out also varied slightly across the two schemes according to CMR data, with a third of G4S mentors and 16% of DAWN mentors meeting in the community six or more times. Reasons for this are unclear, although it may be related to the longer distances covered by mentors in the North between the prison in Liverpool and participant's homes in order to facilitate contact.

Positive change was effected by both schemes in participants' criminogenic attitudes and perception of life problems, as measured by the CRIME-PICS II tool. However, statistically significant results were only attained by the G4S TSS scheme. The greater degree of change achieved by G4S mentors may be linked to the increased frequency of community contacts with participants. The motivational interviewing training undertaken by all G4S mentors could also have been a contributory factor to their success. This group of individuals are also unlikely to be representative of all TSS participants released due to their willingness to remain in voluntary contact, indicating a greater degree of motivation from the outset.

Comparisons were made of participants' accommodation and employment status prior to entering prison, their expectations at the time of assessment and their actual status between one and three months after release. Encouragingly, levels of unemployment and homelessness fell amongst participants in both schemes.

Finally, of the 29 participants interviewed following their release from prison, almost three quarters admitted to having used drugs/alcohol at least once since their release. Nonetheless, the vast majority of these (69%) felt that being mentored had helped them to reduce both their consumption, and the severity of their drug of choice. Further, almost two thirds of individuals reported that the mentoring scheme had been an important factor in their ability to remain crime-free.

6.0 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE TSS AMONGST COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCIES

The following section presents an analysis of the interviews conducted with agencies that provide post-release services to offenders. Specifically, it discusses agency perceptions and experiences of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS) – with a focus on implementation and operational issues; the referral process; working relationships; and perceived advantages of the scheme for offenders. Particular attention is paid to their views on the value of mentors.

6.1 Background

Between February and April 2005, 31 interviews were conducted with representatives from voluntary and statutory agencies and support services currently operating in North and South Wales/Gwent.[18] The aim of the interviews was to collect information on the following:

- The type and level of support being provided for offenders post-release in Wales.
- The level and type of contact which agencies may have had with the TSS.
- Working relationships between agency staff and the TSS.
- Agency opinion and perceptions on the usefulness and benefits of the TSS.
- Potential areas for improvement and development.

The relatively short time frame associated with the evaluation has meant that only a sample of the agencies and services in Wales that offer post-release support to offenders have been interviewed. While every attempt has been made to interview "key players" in the support and service networks of offenders, there will inevitably be omissions.[19] As a result, this section does not contain an exhaustive list of the issues and themes pertinent to agencies in contact with the TSS in Wales. Other agency representatives (not interviewed as part of the evaluation) may have additional views and experiences that are not reported here. Furthermore, it is particularly important to note that agencies' views should be interpreted with caution, as any competition for services may compromise objectivity.

6.2 Profile of the agencies interviewed

Table 6.1 provides background information on the agencies interviewed. It highlights the wide range of statutory and voluntary support services that are potentially available to ex-offenders post-release.

---

[18] All bar two of these interviews were conducted by telephone.

[19] For example, it was not possible to interview a representative from every Community Drugs and Alcohol Team in Wales. Similarly, while a representative from the New Deal office in Llandudno was interviewed, it was not possible to conduct interviews with every New Deal Officer in the areas where TSS operates.

Table 6.1: Profile of the agencies interviewed for the TSS evaluation

	Percentage	Number
Type of service:		
Statutory	29%	9
Voluntary	71%	22
Agency capacity for client treatment		
<10 clients etc	6%	2
10-20	16%	5
21-100	23%	7
101-500	35%	11
Don't Know	19%	6
Service provision		
Employment/Education/Training	19%	6
Drug/Alcohol	42%	13
General Advice/Mentoring	3%	1
Accommodation	35%	11
**Waiting time for access to services		
< 1 week	16%	5
1 – 2 weeks	32%	10
3 – 4 weeks	0%	0
> 2 months	13%	4
Other*	39%	12

*   Other: For example, if an agency operated several different projects and waiting times different between them.

**   Refers to waiting time to receive services and not initial assessment interview.

As noted in Table 6.1, nine (29%) of the agencies interviewed were statutory, while the rest were voluntary. Of the voluntary agencies, 13 (42%) deal with drug or alcohol issues; 11 (35%) provide accommodation; six (19%) focus on employment, education or training; while the remaining one (3%) provides general advice and mentoring.

6.3   TSS referrals

One of the key responsibilities of TSS mentors is to refer their clients to voluntary and statutory agencies – where specific types of help and support are required (e.g. training; temporary and permanent accommodation; drug and alcohol rehabilitation). The number of referrals received by the agencies interviewed as part of this evaluation, however, was fairly low. Indeed, none of the agencies interviewed had received more than ten referrals since January 2004 (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Agency reports of the number of referrals received and subsequent take up of services

Number of referrals	Number of agencies with "N" referrals received	Number of agencies with "N" take up of services
None	4	7
1 – 5	10	4
6 –10	4	3
More than 10	0	0
Don't Know	13	17
TOTAL (number of agencies)	31	31

There are a number of possible reasons for the low number of referrals to agencies. Firstly, limited publicity about TSS may mean that some agencies are not yet in touch with the scheme. Secondly, there may be a lack of suitable clients. For example, two "dry houses" were interviewed who do not accept clients with substance misuse or alcohol problems. Some of the ex-offenders engaged with the TSS, however, still have drug or alcohol problems and as such, may not be suitable for the types of service offered by those agencies interviewed.[20]   Alternatively, it is important to consider that agencies may not always be aware of the source of referrals. The number of TSS referrals made to the various agencies may therefore be under recorded. Indeed, quarterly management data submitted to the Project Board from both schemes indicates that a high level of referrals is being made to a variety of agencies.

6.4 Working relationships

Working relationships between the agencies and staff from the TSS also emerged as a key issue during the telephone interviews. Specifically, there were mixed responses when representatives were asked to describe the agency's working relationship with staff from the TSS scheme and score it on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor). Ten of the 31 agencies (32%) described the working relationship as "very good" or "good" (i.e. a score of 1 or 2), while 5 representatives (16%) described their relationship with TSS staff as "poor" or "very poor" (i.e. a score of 4 or 5). Worryingly, 13 of the 31 agencies (42%) stated that they have "no contact" with the TSS.[21]

In terms of information sharing protocols between the TSS and the agency concerned, the vast majority of representatives stated that they were using the same protocols that they applied to other statutory and voluntary agencies.

---

[20] There will also be instances where TSS clients have been referred to an agency indirectly (via a third party) rather than the TSS mentor. In these cases, the agency will record the referral as being made by the third party and not TSS. Finally, some agencies in North Wales were unable to comment on the number of referrals they had been sent by the TSS. This is because ex-offender referrals were being recorded as NACRO (or CAIS) referrals. NACRO / CAIS referrals, however, are not necessarily TSS clients as these organisations also run programmes and support services in addition to those they provide as part of the TSS.

[21] Three agencies (10%) gave a score of 3 when asked to describe their working relationship with the TSS.

6.5   Agency perspectives of the TSS

One of the central themes to emerge from the interviews with agencies was their support for a community-based mentoring scheme for short-term prisoners. When asked to comment on the usefulness of TSS, 22 of the 31 agencies interviewed (71%) gave the scheme a score of 1 or 2 (where 1 is very useful and 5 is not at all useful). Only four agencies (13%) gave the scheme a score of 3 or 4 (and no agency gave a score of 5) There were a number of reasons as to why agencies claim TSS was beneficial. These are discussed below.

6.5.1   Access to services

Agency representatives commented that there is often limited (or a lack of) support available for ex-offenders when they leave prison. Furthermore, the barriers facing ex-offenders when they leave prison make it difficult for them to access what little support / services are available. Agency representatives commented that TSS mentors can help to facilitate access to a range of different support services by contacting them on behalf of their client; arranging meetings; and by providing help and guidance to fill in forms. Agency representatives also commented that ex-offenders can be treated like "second class citizens" and that people are sometimes unwilling to give ex-offenders a chance. As this representative commented:

> "It is helpful to the client who…they have built up a relationship with inside, someone who can continue the work and have continuity with. There are a lot of prejudices around having to restart lives and they [the ex-offender] will need someone who is on their side. Even the most public spirited of people won't be that helpful. Prisoners have their own peer group, but we try and steer them away from that group. People are not going to give you a chance. You need someone along side you, reassuring you, not necessarily to hold your hand, but you need to find the right balance…Ex-prisoners are treated like second class citizens. It would be helpful to have someone even if they are failing, to encourage them." (Drug Treatment Agency)

Indeed, it was suggested that having a mentor can help to ensure an ex-offender has someone to "fight their corner" and ensure they are given fair access to support services.

6.5.2   Help / support with rebuilding the lives of ex-offenders

Agency representatives stated that ex-offenders often want and need help to re-build their lives. In particular, it was noted that ex-offenders sometimes lose the support networks they had before they went into prison. Re-building one's livelihood can be difficult to achieve without these networks in place. A mentor will be able to help an ex-offender establish new support networks by contacting different agencies and service providers. Ex-offenders may also find it difficult to cope with day to day activities and need help with keeping appointments; working out budgets; and paying bills. It was suggested that a mentor would be ideally placed to assist an ex-offender with activities such as these.

Furthermore, people often go to prison without having "tidied their affairs". Upon release, ex-prisoners often have to face rent arrears; debts; unpaid bills; and electricity and gas supplies cut off. As this representative commented:

> "Prisoners are sent to prison without any sort of tying up of affairs. Many have not tied up their accommodation. They may have had local authority tenancy agreements that have gone into arrears because they were in prison. This would probably be true of a number of things. Some are in debt because they did not let the gas board know. It's traumatic enough to reintegrate into society without trying to do it on your own. We get 16 to 60 year olds who are incapable of putting their lives back on track. Now that the probation service is all resettlement, resettlement, resettlement, the need for services is great now than it ever has been." (Housing Agency)

Mentors can offer help and support to ensure that problems such as those highlighted above are addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible. Evidence from the interviews with ex-offenders corroborates this assertion, with several commenting on how mentors had been able to get gas and electricity supplies reconnected upon their release from prison (see Section 4 for further discussion of the views of offenders).

6.5.3   Potential impact on re-offending

Agency representatives maintained that transitional support for ex-offenders (such as a mentoring scheme) can help to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. A number of explanations were put forward as to why this might happen. Firstly, mentors are able to provide emotional as well as practical support to ex-offenders. Mentors were described as someone the ex-offender can "talk to" / "turn to" / "listen to" / "trust". Secondly, mentors will treat their clients as "human beings" and may even be one of the first people to have offered support and advice. In particular, mentors can give encouragement to the ex-offender and can do this in a non-judgemental way. All of these factors may motivate the ex-offender to re-think their lives and not return to crime. As this representative commented:

> "TSS does give support…The best part – lots of clients come out of prison with nothing and no-one to turn to and that's why they keep re-offending. Sometimes they are treated like terribly by councils. I've been there when they have tried to turn someone away. In most cases if the client was there they would kick off and this would give the council the excuse they need not to help. So having someone there that can speak to them and help…Having someone there that cares and knows and cares what happens to them. This is like a wake up call for them. It's like 'this person is speaking to me'." (Education/Training Agency)

Crucially, agency representatives claimed that mentors can help ex-offenders find accommodation away from the area where they were living before they went to prison. This can help to remove the ex-offender from previous (possibly detrimental) social

networks and an environment where it would be easy to slip back to "their old ways" (i.e. substance and alcohol misuse and/or criminal activities).[22]

6.5.4 Continuity of support

The link between prison and the community is a difficult one and prisoners often find the adjustment process problematic. A mentor will be able to assist the ex-offender by making an assessment of needs; pre-empting what will be required upon their release; and providing a continuity of support:

> "The link between a person leaving prison and coming back to the community is a difficult one. It's of benefit [to the ex-offender] as steps will have been made to get an idea about what a person wants to do. TSS can give them a taste of what is available. It can help to give them an improved positive outcome." (Housing Agency)

Ideally, mentors will have already negotiated access to support services by the time their client is due to leave prison. The mentor will also be able to fulfil a co-ordinating role when it comes to arranging access to services pre and post-release.

6.5.5 Improved positive outcomes

Ex-prisoners often lead very chaotic lifestyles. Mentors can help to bring stability and structure into their lives (for example, by getting them into a daily routine and putting them in touch with support services that can help to address the specific problems they are facing). By helping to deal with problems that arise as part of day to day life, mentors can help to empower the ex-offender. Empowerment and improved self-esteem can impact on their outlook and attitude towards life.

Some prisoners are homeless upon their release. TSS mentors are able to work with prison Resettlement Teams in order to ensure access to emergency accommodation upon release. Mentors can then work with the ex-offender to secure temporary move-on accommodation (e.g. housing charities that provide temporary housing for ex-offenders) and permanent housing (e.g. local authority or private sector housing). As this representative observed:

> "Support upon release from prison is essential…because of the issues that ex-offenders face in the community. The housing that they are placed in, sometimes, it's in the same street as with people they have been in custody with. In prison, they have professional support. In the community they don't have this. If they have someone there offering support this must be of benefit to them. Family relationships break down, they are tempted to return to drugs and alcohol, they are not going straight into employment, they are not using their time to good effect.

---

[22] Representatives also commented, however, on acute housing shortages (especially in North Wales) and the limited opportunities that exist to secure permanent council or housing association accommodation for clients.

They get bored. So if someone is there to point to education and training, plus housing – it has to be of benefit." (Housing Agency)

Mentors can also work with CARAT and Community Drugs and Alcohol Teams to ensure access to rehabilitation and detox services in order to address any alcohol and/or substance misuse problems. At the same time, different statutory and voluntary agencies can be contacted to ensure client access to education and training opportunities. Indeed, a number of the agencies interviewed offer "life skills" and "basic skills" courses. Others provide "money management" training. Courses such as these can give practical advice and support and can help/encourage an individual to gain control of their lives. Further examples of the feedback given by agency representatives on the value of transitional support and mentoring for ex-offenders can be found in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Examples of agency feedback on the value of transitional support and mentoring schemes

"If you've got mentors who are living in the real world, they can point out what ex-offenders are up against. The majority of people aren't willing to give ex-offenders a chance. People who are dealing with employers and housing agencies have an intimate knowledge of how they work – they then pass on this knowledge and this can only be a good thing." (Education/Training Agency)

"It's very useful because it is good to have links with the prison and someone to help until they are housed. People often struggle on their release and need someone to give intensive support." (Education/Training Agency)

"It [TSS] provides support for customers to make sure that they are accessing the right services for them. They will have served a custodial sentence but might not know about benefits, accessing education and TSS pulls this together for them. Especially if they are not returning to the family house, and they need support for a new independent life." (Employment Agency)

"Looking at the client group, if you've got people using drugs and they are ex-offenders, they have chaotic lifestyles…so for that client group it's very useful." (Housing Agency)

"Historically, people come out, they need someone there to give them support – otherwise they slip back in…Mentors facilitate access to allow them to get on." (Education/Training Agency)

"People were being released who weren't being given a chance with accommodation, and now they are being given support." (Housing Agency)

"It [a mentoring scheme] is very important. Without doubt mentors do very good things. Clients rely on them a lot. Mentors are usually people who have been through things and this always goes down well. If they have someone to talk to out of the family circle, they can have someone to share things. The mentor is out of the system, so there is more support for them." (Housing Agency)

"Just through my own experience, we get a very large number of ex-offenders who re-offend upon their release. Very often there will be homelessness, and they need something to ease the process of leaving prison and of claiming employment benefit and training." (Drug/Alcohol Treatment Agency)

"Very often, people might have been in and out of prison for years….These people are not equipped to look for services. They have one to one contact and this contact is helping them. WGCADA has the Domino Project which offers a range of different things for clients, but it's located a mile out of Swansea. If you make an arrangement on the Friday to see someone there on the Monday very often they're not there because something has happened or that's the way it goes. So mentors can help them get there." (Drug/Alcohol Treatment Agency)

"[TSS can provide] support for their client, pointing them in the right direction. They can take them to Progress 2 Work on their first day, and they are not being pulled into bad habits. They can point them to agencies that can help. The Cardiff Housing department, they [the mentor] will sit there all day with them [the client]. No-one tells you what's going on at the housing place. Clients can storm out. Having someone with them, means that they can help to talk through the process." (Employment Agency)

" People would have assistance in day to day living. Community projects are often restricted in what they can offer. A drugs worker will see three to four people, rather than offer help such as decorating their house, making appointments. When we send people to appointments they can go walk about from point A to point B. A mentor can take them to meetings. They can also support and can advocate for them." (Employment Agency)

Despite the very positive feedback about the value of transitional support for ex-offenders, it should also be noted that mentoring schemes *alone* may only have a limited impact – especially if the client has a long history of drug and alcohol misuse. One representative commented, for example, that a mentor scheme is unable to replace the need for interventions such as prescribing methadone for heroin addicts and the need for primary

75

care. The TSS often deals with a very challenging client group who may have chronic substance misuse problems, no housing, no job, no qualifications or training, and little motivation to change their way of life. Under these circumstances, the mentor may have difficulty engaging with their client and only have limited impact on the likelihood of re-offending. Furthermore, although there was considerable support for transitional support and mentoring schemes for ex-offenders, the agencies interviewed also had concerns about the way in which the TSS was currently being implemented and suggested a number of areas for development. These concerns and areas for development are discussed below.

6.5.6   Limited publicity

Some agencies commented that they knew "very little" about the TSS. A lack of publicity about the scheme and how it operated were often blamed. Others stated that they knew "the basics" but would value additional information and more contact to ensure that they were fully informed. In particular, there was sometimes confusion over what the scheme was seeking to achieve and concern about whether the TSS was duplicating the work of other agencies (see below). In North Wales, there was also confusion over who is managing the scheme:

> "It [TSS] could have been a good service but we've not been sure what TSS is doing. We are not sure who is working for who and who the manager is – CAIS, NACRO…confusion…It's difficult." (Drug/Alcohol Treatment Agency)

Others representatives, however, stated that they had been sent information about the scheme and were in regular touch with mentors – suggesting that publicity and information sharing may have been piecemeal.

6.5.7   Duplication of work

Greater publicity about the aims of the TSS and where it fits within the overall structure of post-release service provision for ex-offenders was seen as a key area for development. In particular, it was noted that greater publicity would help to allay fears that mentors are duplicating the work of prison Resettlement Teams, CARAT workers and Community Drugs and Alcohol Teams. Concerns about duplication of work were particularly pressing in Flintshire where a Prison Links worker (linked to Shelter Cymru) and the Community Drugs and Alcohol Team were already trying to link prisoners with the services and support they are entitled to upon release. Similarly, a representative from TEDS (Treatment and Education Drugs Services in the Rhondda Cynon Taff) had concerns that the TSS was replicating the work of CARAT and Progress 2 Work teams. According to the TEDS representative, any duplication could mean that the scheme is of limited benefit to prisoners.[23] Nonetheless, previous research has shown that there is a dearth of post release support and provision for short-term prisoners (Social Exclusion Report, 2002). Support of the kind offered by the TSS mentors does appear to be filling a gap not covered by other community-based services, and following the recent changes made to the Criminal Justice

---

[23] Counselling Advice Referral Assessment and Throughcare (CARAT) workers are located within each prison to offer advice, counselling and referrals to treatment rehabilitation programmes. Progress 2 Work is a voluntary agency funded by the Job Centre to provide support to clients with a substance misuse or alcohol problem (with the view to helping them access employment).

System could prove to be a useful adjunct to the statutory supervision proposed for this group of prisoners (see Section 7 for a more detailed discussion).

6.5.8 Funding and a lack of consultation

Despite the Welsh Assembly Government carrying out an open competition procurement process prior to the implementation of TSS, there was some concern expressed by a very small minority of agencies (n=2) that the TSS had been allocated funding directly by the Welsh Assembly and not from normal funding streams. Concerns about funding were sometimes tied to a feeling that TSS had been "parachuted in" with little or no prior consultation with Community Drugs and Alcohol Teams or Substance Misuse and Alcohol Teams. These agencies commented on the lack of consultation prior to the launch of TSS on a) whether the service was needed in the local area and b) how it was planning to operate.

6.5.9 Information sharing

A small number of the agencies in North Wales criticised TSS for not maintaining adequate client records and for not disclosing information on progress to date made by those who had accessed agency services (see section on working relationships). Others commented, however, that they had been sent information about the client load of TSS – again suggesting that information sharing is not uniform across the different agencies.

6.5.10 Mentors

Some agencies commented on the need for paid full-time mentors rather than part-time volunteers (given that the latter may not be able to accompany clients to appointments during working hours). There was also support for the use of ex-offenders as mentors, or individuals who have recovered from substance misuse problems. Agencies mentioned that prisoners might be more willing to engage with mentors who had first hand knowledge of "what they were going through".

6.6 Conclusion

Overall, agency representatives responded very positively to the concept of transitional support and the benefits that mentoring can bring to ex-offenders. However, mentoring should be seen as part of an overall package of primary and secondary care and support, and not as "the be all and end all".

There are also issues around the implementation of the TSS. Interviews with agency staff have indicated that publicity of the scheme has been piecemeal, with some schemes receiving literature/visits from TSS staff and others reporting no contact with the schemes. Working relationships are currently embryonic and care must be taken to ensure the implementation of appropriate feedback mechanisms between agency and TSS staff. Greater publicity will be allay fears that TSS is duplicating the work of other agencies

7.0   CONCLUSIONS

7.1   Introduction

This final section concentrates on the future delivery of TSS within the Criminal Justice System framework and takes into consideration the legislative changes that have recently taken place. The main issues identified as having implications for the effectiveness of TSS will be outlined and recommendations drawn out for both practitioners and policy-makers working within the field of resettlement. For a more detailed account of the various issues raised, readers should refer to the appropriate section in the body of the report.

7.2   Recruitment and referrals

Both the recruitment process and subsequent referral rates differed markedly across the four scheme catchment areas. TSS schemes based in North Wales (DAWN) and South Wales and Gwent (G4S) received referrals on a regular basis. However, the number of referrals to the scheme based in the Dyfed Powys catchment area (DAWN) has been extremely low. Various reasons for this have been explored. Competition for the same client group between a prison-based resettlement scheme already operating within HMP Swansea and an absence of support for TSS amongst prison based staff could go some way towards explaining the reluctance of prison staff to refer onto TSS. However, the relatively good rate of referrals received by the G4S scheme from HMP Swansea does not support this. Rather, the poor referral rate to the DAWN scheme is more likely to be attributable to the recruitment methods employed. DAWN TSS mentors are reliant upon prison staff to make TSS referrals as according to DAWN protocol it is the role of the administrator to receive referrals and allocate the client to a mentor. On the other hand, staff from the G4S scheme go into the prisons and are proactive in recruiting participants to the scheme. Similarly, staff based in North Wales received a far higher number of referrals than their West Wales counterparts. This was largely due to the work of two DAWN prison link workers based in the prison who actively recruited prisoners onto the scheme.

These findings point to the need for TSS to be fully integrated, and even based within the prison. By enabling mentors and/or link workers to refer prisoners on induction, the numbers recruited to the scheme would be maximised, all eligible prisoners would be informed of the scheme at the outset, and the number of inappropriate referrals would be vastly reduced. In prisons where it may not be practicable to operate such an integrated system, induction staff should play an important role in TSS recruitment and be fully trained in TSS eligibility criteria.

One further finding was the extremely low number of black and minority ethnic prisoners participating in the scheme. Whilst these numbers are reflective of the low BME prison population returning to Wales, it is important to acknowledge the distinct needs of these groups, as BME prisoners have consistently been found to have more acute resettlement problems than white prisoners (see, for example, Maguire *et al* 1997; NACRO 2000, 2002). Possible approaches include systematic monitoring of recruitment at points of referral, and the recruitment of minority ethnic mentors to the schemes.

7.3   Staff supervision and support

Both schemes have successfully maintained relatively stable staffing levels throughout the duration of the evaluation. This is indicative of a good level of staff support and supervision from TSS managers and evidence of good practice in relation to staff training, support and supervision was found across all three sites. In particular, the accredited mentoring skills training package developed by G4S (currently being put forward for accreditation by the National Mentoring Network), and the focus upon motivational interviewing techniques in this scheme was especially well received and should be replicated across all three sites. G4S in particular, have also recruited a diverse range of mentors including a large pool of volunteers, 2 full-time mentors and ex-offenders/drug users.
There was however, found to be a need for greater consistency across Wales in the operational organisation of TSS. This applies to scheme publicity, training and security measures put in place to ensure mentor safety. At the moment there are differences in training and safety procedures not only between DAWN and G4S, but also between the two DAWN schemes (North and West Wales).

7.4   Integration with partners

Working relationships with prison staff were, on the whole, reported to be very positive. Nonetheless, better relationships seem to have been established where the TSS is closely integrated within the prison system, and TSS staff proactively canvass for referrals. Evidence suggests that a proactive approach to recruitment by the mentors yields positive benefits not only in terms of increased referral rates, but also aids integration as prison staff become used to the mentors and heightens their awareness of TSS.

A survey of agencies likely to receive referrals from the schemes revealed a generally positive attitude to the programme. One major concern was the potential for duplication of work by TSS mentors and other voluntary/statutory agencies working with the same client group. Poor publicity and a subsequent lack of awareness of TSS were also raised as important issues by agencies interviewed. As a result, working relationships with a large number of agencies are currently embryonic and care must be taken to ensure the implementation of appropriate feedback mechanisms between agency and TSS staff.   To increase awareness of TSS, a Wales-wide publicity campaign needs to be rolled out consistently across North Wales, Dyfed Powys and South Wales and Gwent. Due to the high level of staff turnover across both the HMPs and community-based agencies, this should be an ongoing process.

7.5   Potential effectiveness of TSS

The principle of support 'through the gate' was clearly demonstrated and adhered to by mentors in both schemes. When referrals were made to the TSS several weeks in advance of a release date, mentors tended to visit the client at least twice prior to their release. Such meetings are essential to fostering a trusting relationship and can increase the likelihood that post release contact will take place. Indeed, earlier studies have found that early 'intervention' with prisoners during their sentence is crucial to a project's effectiveness at engaging with, and maintaining contact with prisoners after release (Lewis et al. 2003,). The interim measures of effectiveness used in this study have yielded some encouraging

results. According to management data, both schemes have attained high levels of continuity 'through the gate'. DAWN TSS and G4S TSS have contact rates of 70% and 71% respectively (based on scheme management data). These contact rates are far in excess of those found in previous research (Lewis et al, 2003). There was however, a large discrepancy between this data and the CMRs, with contact rates according to CMR data of 73% for G4S and 36% for DAWN. It is uncertain whether the discrepancy between the DAWN management data and CMR data is attributable to missing data or a genuine lack of post-release contact between DAWN mentors and participants. The intensity of the work carried out also varied slightly across the two schemes according to CMR data, with a third of G4S mentors and 16% of DAWN mentors meeting in the community six or more times. Reasons for this are unclear, although it may be related to the longer distances covered by mentors in the North between the prison in Liverpool and participant's homes in order to facilitate contact.

Unfortunately, the completion of case management records was not always consistent, with large amounts of data missing in some cases. This may have resulted in a failure to recognise the true extent of positive work being done with some participants. It may also be the case that the greater focus in the G4S training for TSS staff to concentrate upon clients' motivation increased the post release contact rate amongst TSS participants in this scheme. Furthermore, due to the recent recruitment of three full time mentors in addition to the pool of volunteers, G4S are able to offer a flexible mentoring package according to each client's level of need.

These findings highlight the need for schemes to employ a mix of both full and part-time mentors. This would ensure those clients with the greatest level of need receive intense support thus freeing up part time/volunteer mentors to take on more of the less needy cases. The need for consistent, high quality training focusing upon both the practical needs and cognitive motivational deficits of offenders is also paramount in order to ensure the both the integrity of scheme delivery and assist clients to maintain their commitment to change.

Whilst both schemes achieved positive changes in both attitudes and self-reported problems (as measured by the CRIME-PICS II 'G' and 'P' scales), the degree of change achieved by the G4S team was double that of the DAWN scheme and assessed as statistically significant. This may well be explained by the increased focus amongst G4S staff on the use of motivational enhancement techniques and the need to address offenders' motivation to change. These findings highlight the need for resettlement initiatives to target offenders' motivation as well as the practical issues such as housing and employment.

Some information was also gathered from post-release records on, and interviews with, TSS participants to glean more information relating to other positive outcomes of the programme – improvements in accommodation, employment and substance misuse, and reductions in re-offending. None of the findings can be taken as conclusive, however, as the more settled and successful individuals may be more likely to remain in touch with mentors and be available for interviews. It is important to recognise this potential bias and its implications for the results of this research. It may also be argued, however, that participants remaining in contact with TSS did so because they needed more assistance and guidance than those who did not (as indicated by the initial CRIME-PICS 'P' scores). Nevertheless, the CMR-based findings do indicate a substantial increase in levels of employment (pre-imprisonment to post-release) among the group of 57 on whom information was recorded. While the proportion in permanent accommodation fell, there

were also indications of a decrease in the numbers homeless. Moreover, many of those interviewees who were successfully coping with resettlement problems stated that their experience of the mentoring scheme had helped them to do this. It is also important to acknowledge that of the 29 interviewees who reported that they had a substance misuse problem before going to prison, 28% had not used since leaving prison, whilst eight individuals reported zero drug use post-TSS, compared with no individuals pre-TSS. Of those who had used drugs, 69 per cent claimed that TSS mentoring had helped them to reduce it to some extent after release – principally by adopting a less harmful 'drug of choice'. Similarly, of the 97 per cent of interviewees, who claimed that they had not offended since release, 64% felt that the TSS mentor had helped them to achieve this.

7.6 A review of recent changes: implications for TSS

It is important that any results and recommendations are considered against the backdrop of the new sentencing framework and the legislative changes put in place following the review of the Criminal Justice Act (2003). In particular, the problems presented by short sentence prisoners have been increasingly recognised and highlighted by HM Inspectors of Prisons and Probation (Home Office, 2001), the 'Halliday Report' (2001), the Social Exclusion Unit (2002) and most recently by Patrick Carter in his review of the Prison and Probation Service (2003). The Government strongly supported the recommendations set out in this report and set out their plans for reforming the management of offenders in the publication 'Reducing Crime-Changing Lives', which emphasised more joint working between the Prison and Probation Services to address re-offending. A National Offender Management Service (NOMS) was subsequently established in 2004, which brings together the work of the correctional services and will be responsible for reducing re-offending and managing the budget for offender services. These services will be managed at a regional level by Regional Offender Managers (ROMs) who will be responsible for the end-to-end management of offenders in the nine English regions and Wales. To achieve this, each offender will be assigned to an offender manager who will be responsible for overseeing their risk assessment, planning supervision, either in custody or in the community and for the interventions and services they receive.

The new era of contestability for correctional services spearheaded by the development of NOMS, means that interventions and services targeted at offenders will be carried out by a range of providers, from statutory, voluntary and private agencies. NOMS will co-ordinate the rehabilitative package received by each offender by commissioning from a range of providers to secure places in custody or on community sentences providers in the public, private and voluntary sector.

To take all of these recent changes forward, the Government has recently published a strategic report entitled; 'Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan'. A complementary strategy is also being prepared for Wales, which outlines the Government plan for reducing re-offending. The plan highlights five key action areas:

1) Develop and implement multi-agency regional strategies
2) Develop an effective case management approach
3) Establish processes through which agencies can communicate with each other
4) Be responsive to the diverse needs of individual offenders
5) Working with juvenile offenders

Seven pathways of intervention are also described in the plan, namely:

1) Accommodation.
2) Education, training and employment.
3) Mental and physical health.
4) Drugs and alcohol.
5) Finance, benefits and debt.
6) Children and families of offenders.
7) Attitudes, thinking and behaviour.

The rehabilitative package created by the Offender Manager (OM) for each individual offender may include actions relating to one or all of these pathways depending upon their level of need. To ensure its future existence, TSS along with other community-based service providers will need to relate to one or more of these pathways. Indeed, all seven pathways are already represented in the key problems targeted by mentors in participants' action plans (see Table 2.5).

7.7   The way forward

When taking into account the future rollout of TSS, it is important to consider what can be learned from this evaluation to ensure the success of TSS in the new era of contestability under the NOMS. Indeed, the future of resettlement initiatives such as TSS depends upon how well they are able to link in with the regional resettlement plan and their ability to evidence their effectiveness, quality and value for money.

It appears from the findings of this evaluation that TSS work is complementary to that of the Probation Service/ROM and indeed, TSS could be a much-valued adjunct to statutory supervision. Moreover, the extension of the Government's Drug Interventions Programme across Wales could have direct implications for the TSS scheme, as the aims and objectives of this scheme directly complements those of the DIP. Indeed, the aftercare package of support available to ex-prisoners on the DIP programme is described in the Government's Drug Interventions Programme Strategy as,

> "[Aftercare is] the support that needs to be in place after a drug-misusing offender is released from prison completes a community sentence or leaves treatment. This support does not consist solely of treatment but includes access to additional support for issues such as housing, financial management, family relationships, learning new skills and employment."

The welfare work provided by mentors, such as assistance filling in benefits/housing application forms, transportation to and from agency appointments and critically, motivational support, could fulfil a role the offender managers/Criminal Justice Integrated Teams (DIP) simply don't have the time or resources to take on. Indeed, mentors could

provide links and rapid access to smaller agencies, which may have lost out to the larger organisations as a result of the commissioning out process. However, it is vitally important that if mentors are to work alongside OMs they must retain their role as 'trusted friend and advisor' and not be seen as an extension of Probation/an enforcement agency. The very fact that the mentors were perceived by participants to be 'outside', and/or independent, of the criminal justice system was seen to help begin and sustain a mentoring relationship.

REFERENCES

Carter, P. (2003) Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime: A new approach. London: Home Office.

Clancy, A.,Hudson, K., Kynch, J., Maguire, M., Peake, R., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. (forthcoming) Prisoner Resettlement and Motivation to Change: Evaluation of the Pathfinders.

Frude, N, Honess, T. and Maguire, M. (1994) *CRIME-PICS II Manual.* London: M & A.

Halliday, J. (2001) Making Punishments Work. London: Home Office.Home Office (2001) Through the Prison Gate: A Joint Thematic Review by HM Inspectorates of Prison and Probation. London: Home Office.

Lewis, S., Maguire, M., Raynor, P., Vanstone, M. and Vennard, J. (2003a) *The Resettlement of Short – term Prisoners: An Evaluation of Seven Pathfinders.* Research Findings No. 200. London: Home Office.

Maguire, M. and Raynor, P. (1997) 'The Revival of Throughcare: Rhetoric and Reality in Automatic Conditional release'. *British Journal of Criminology*, 37, 1-14.

Maguire, M., Raynor, P. Vanstone, M. and Kynch, J. (2000) 'Voluntary Aftercare and the Probation Service: A Case of Diminishing Responsibility.' *Howard Journal*, 39, 234-48.

NACRO (1998) *Making a Fresh Start. Reducing Crime by Rehabilitating Offenders.* London: NACRO.

NACRO (2000) *The Forgotten Majority: The Resettlement of Short-Term Prisoners.* London: NACRO.

NACRO (2002) *Resettling Prisoners from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups*, London: NACRO.

Niven, S. and Stewart, D. (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison in 2003, Research Findings No. 248. London: Home Office.

Social Exclusion Unit (2002) *Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners.* London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.