

2013 consultation exercise:
Final report & recommendations

Integrated Offender Management Cymru All Wales Youth to Adult Transition Model

Supported by



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the views of criminal justice and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector practitioners working in Wales. These stakeholders were asked about their views in relation to service provision for young adults (16-25 year olds) in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), and specifically how Integrated Offender Management (IOM) could be utilised to support a new approach.

The IOM Cymru board initiated this work to establish how an all-Wales IOM strategy could support young adults (16-25 years old) in the CJS. Young adults were recognised by IOM Cymru as a priority group within the system, with distinct needs, for whom a number of gaps exist between youth and adult services. This report has been written by Clinks (www.clinks.org) and is supported by Transitions to Adulthood Alliance (www.t2a.org.uk), a broad coalition of organisations and individuals that promotes the need for a distinct and radically different approach to young adults in the CJS.

The views and opinions represented are that of practitioners from across Sectors who work with young adults in the CJS. Over 200 practitioners attended three events, as well as three separate online surveys targeted at different stakeholders providing a further 48 responses. The responses from practitioners and service managers provided us with two broad strands of information:

- an overview of young adult services, and
- the role of IOM in supporting young adults.

These two strands have provided Clinks and IOM Cymru with a wide range of existing good practice, some clearly identified development needs, a view on the role IOM Cymru could play in designing services, and how IOM could practically deliver targeted services for young adults.

We have supplied 17 recommendations as a result of the consultation exercise. These represent an opportunity to improve services for young people in their transition to adulthood, hopefully diverting them away from crime and helping them to positively contribute to their communities and wider society.

There is overwhelming support from practitioners for a new approach that recognises young adults as an important and distinct service user group. Much can be achieved without the need for legislative change and without the need for large-scale investment in new services. They look at an approach which is about inter-agency cooperation, better service design, responsive approaches, a better understanding of maturity and how to support clients transitioning from youth to adult services which so often radically differ from one another. It is also clear that IOM is seen as a good vehicle through which to implement a different, multi-agency, and more coherent approach to supporting young adults in the CJS.

The recommendations in this report are intended to spur on change in Wales. We recommend that stakeholders with an interest in the young adult agenda consider their priorities in relation to this report's recommendations and assign appropriate resources to assist in the undertaking of these activities. This will require human resources to take forward, and if possible should not be left to chance but should invest in the development of better services at this early stage in the development of IOM services for young adults so as to ensure the best possible outcome.

SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: IOM Cymru and associated partners should make clear that 16-25 years old is the age range in question when we refer to young adults in the Criminal Justice System and that youth to adult transition is a much broader than the transfer of young people between youth justice services and probation.

Recommendation 2: IOM Cymru encourages the development of local strategies that outline the desired services for young adults in contact with the CJS, clearly identify the age group, engage a broad range of providers, facilitate practical joint working and monitor existing provision to avoid unnecessary overlap, as well as highlighting gaps in services.

Recommendation 3: IOM Cymru should develop a Wales-specific benchmark for young adult provision that sets out what it expects from a quality service. Guidance should be developed to support local services. This could include the development of organisational strategies for working with young adults, practical transition processes, different working practices, collaborative approaches, taking maturity into consideration. This should be supported by case studies of where good practice where it is already in place.

Recommendation 4: IOM Cymru should provide guidance to areas on how local transfer arrangements, co-location and collaboration could be achieved. This should take the form of promoting existing/known good practice, clear guidance on developing these services, and identifying and supporting 'champions' or leads to push forward local service development and/or capacity building support.

Recommendation 5: IOM Cymru and stakeholders will need to explore how thresholds that exist across services can be broken down, so that services become more flexible, existing provision is extended, or alternative provision sourced. Guidance may need to be provided to local areas to support a negotiation between services to encourage a more appropriate service for young adults.

Recommendation 6: IOM Cymru should establish a clear service user involvement strategy that applies to the wider development of IOM across Wales. Furthermore it should establish a benchmark for young adult service user involvement that local IOM teams can be measured against.

Recommendation 7: Family engagement needs to be built into the service design for IOM Cymru and guidance provided locally as to how appropriate engagement could be facilitated. This should include guidance on involving the carers of young adults as well as the possibility that they may be fathers or mothers in their own right.

Recommendation 8: The IOM Cymru strategy for young adults should establish clear links with the IOM Cymru Women Offender Pathfinder, other developing women's strategies, including domestic and sexual violence, and local service providers to explore what distinct young adult service for female offenders are needed.

Recommendation 9: Mental health needs to be represented at the national IOM Cymru Board level to ensure that connections can be made with local areas to advocate for more appropriate approaches to young adults, whether through access to on-going service provision in CAMHS or alternative provision that can support the needs of this age group.

Recommendation 10: IOM Cymru should consider the use of Restorative Justice interventions with young adults, possibly first time entrants, and whether this could be implemented more widely to divert young people from the Criminal Justice System and support victims to address the impact of the crime committed against them.

Recommendation 11: Explore, through direct engagement with stakeholders, how a range of partners including Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations could access and contribute to data and needs analysis on young adults in IOM, community and custodial services.

Recommendation 12: IOM Cymru should explore what the support needs are for local practitioners, service managers, strategic leads, and commissioners, with a view to developing a training and development package to support a more consistent understanding of young adults in the Criminal Justice System, and guidance on how best to support them.

Recommendation 13: Develop a clear communications strategy for national, regional and local use that can clearly show that IOM is a service for young adults and ensure that a diverse range of organisations have the opportunity to engage both strategically and operationally. The fact that young adults are part of the cohort will need to be clearly laid out and communicated.

Recommendation 14: Provide a benchmark for the type of young adult service that should be expected from an IOM service, and ensure that there is clear communication and transparency as to how that operates and which agencies are involved in the strategic development and operation of the IOM service locally.

Recommendation 15: IOM Cymru to explore the viability of a partnership development programme to assist with the necessary creation of diverse service delivery partnerships that can meet the diverse needs of young adults. This would include local mapping exercises to assess what existing service provision is already available to avoid duplication.

Recommendation 16: Provide information to local areas on the range of young adults in any given area of Wales to support the case for a young adult cohort within the IOM service (where applicable). Support areas with a concise case for why young adults should be targeted alongside the previously recommended benchmarks for quality service design.

Recommendation 17: We recommend that IOM Cymru consider their priorities in relation to this report's recommendations, and assign appropriate resources to assist in the undertaking of these activities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the views of criminal justice and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector practitioners working in Wales. These stakeholders were asked about their views in relation to service provision for young adults (16-25 year olds) in the CJS, and specifically how Integrated Offender Management (IOM) could be utilised to support a new approach.

Young adults (aged 16-25), who constitute less than 10% of the population, are disproportionately involved in the CJS, with almost a quarter of the probation caseload in Wales being 18-24 year olds. This alone demonstrates the importance of recognising the distinct needs and circumstance of young adults in developing effective sentencing.

The needs they display are multiple and also expressive of the difficult transition from a young person, to an adult. The highest percentage need for 18-24 year olds, as assessed by OASys is 'thinking and behaviour' and 'lifestyle', clearly articulating issues of maturity and the influence of peers. However, there are also cross cutting need on all other issues, including accommodation, drugs, alcohol, education, emotional wellbeing, finance, relationships and attitudes. This goes some way in identifying why a multi-agency approach such as IOM might be beneficial.

Young adults in the CJS are more likely to be low to medium risk of harm to the public, with only 9% of 18-24 year olds being assessed as high or very high risk. This does not mean that they are of lesser importance. They will commit a disproportionate amount of crime, will have a negative impact on communities and on the victims of their crimes, and require high levels of support to enable them to desist from crime. Yet young adults are the most likely age group to desist and grow out of crime, and the wrong intervention at this time can slow desistance and extend the period that a young adult is involved in the CJS.

This consultation was made possible with the support of IOM Cymru and the associated agencies. The report's author, Clinks (www.clinks.org), were able to support IOM Cymru as part of their role as a Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Alliance member. The T2A Alliance is a broad coalition of organisations and individuals which identifies and promotes the need for a distinct and radically different approach to young adults in the CJS; an approach that is proportionate to their maturity and responsive to their specific needs. Please visit www.t2a.org.uk for more information.

These consultations were held in the summer of 2013 across Wales with the support of IOM Cymru and the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (www.wcva.org.uk) through their Community Justice Cymru Network so that we could engage with the VCSE Sector.

2. THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

Three events were held and three online surveys completed as part of this consultation with over 200 practitioners and service managers consulted about how to support young adults through IOM in Wales. The events were held with a range of criminal justice agencies represented including police, magistrates, probation, youth offending, and prisons. Subsequently events were held with VCSE organisations through the Community Justice Cymru network hosted by Wales Council for Voluntary Agencies, and one further event with a range of VCSE Sector stakeholders.

Online surveys were advertised and sent to both statutory and VCSE Sector organisations to submit further feedback. This was designed so that practitioners and service managers who were unable to attend the events could contribute their views.

A final consultation exercise with service users was attempted by encouraging local organisations to conduct consultations and feed them into the process. However, only two groups of service users were consulted, providing a minimal response. We would encourage further, and ongoing, service user involvement as part of the IOM Cymru delivery programme.

As a result of this consultation it is expected that IOM Cymru will put this report to use in discussing a practical way forward with colleagues in devolved services and at a strategic level across agencies reducing crime and increasing community safety, including the VCSE Sector.

3. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

The responses from practitioners and service managers provided us with two broad strands of information:

- an overview of young adult services, and
- the role of IOM in supporting young adults.

These two strands have provided Clinks and IOM Cymru with a wide range of existing good practice, some clearly identified development needs, a view on the role IOM Cymru could play in designing services, and how IOM could practically deliver targeted services.

In order to structure this report we have grouped the feedback we received into the above strands and then pulled out key recurring themes, under which we have offered recommendations on what the next steps could be. These recommendations have been made solely as a result of the feedback, however, they are not intended to represent the entire breadth and depth of views from all the practitioners and service managers who attended the consultations.

AN OVERVIEW OF YOUNG ADULT SERVICES

Services for young adults in the CJS have been developed in various locations with diverse providers from different Sectors. These cover everything from unique service provision, for example, through an age-specific housing support project, to inter-agency transfer protocols, such as those that exist between youth justice services and Wales Probation Trust. Although good practice exists, it is clear that provision is inconsistent and varies from area to area. IOM approaches that focus on young adults have already been taken in some areas, such as in Cardiff, and these should be studied closely to assess how replicable they are in other areas. However, services seemed to suffer from a lack of cross-Sector strategic buy-in which result in significant barriers to young adult's desistance from crime.

Below we have provided an overview of the key recurring trends from the consultation and provided recommendations on a way forward for IOM Cymru and other stakeholders.

3.1.1. RECOGNITION OF THE AGE GROUP

Consultees felt that the 16-25 age group was being increasingly recognised, and drawing increasing interest from service commissioners, independent funders and policy makers. This includes services being given the option to have 'non-exclusion' policies which meant that they were able to work with service users regardless of their age and cut across traditional age barriers, such as the Switch drug and alcohol service that supports young adults up to the age of 25 in the Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot area.¹ The normal cut-off point for young people's drug and alcohol service is 18, which is an arbitrary age to sever service delivery, especially when adult drug services are often not equipped to deal with the different drug and alcohol misuse in this age range.²

¹ Switch is a service run by West Glamorgan Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Ltd, see: www.wgcada.org/young_persons.php

² DrugScope, 2010, Young people's drug and alcohol treatment at the crossroads: www.drugscope.org.uk/Resources/Drugscope/Documents/PDF/Publications/YoungPeopleCrossroadsReport.pdf

“It’s very hard to classify ‘young people’ - an 18 year old may well have the emotional and social functioning levels of an adult, or may even display some behaviours which make them a risk to other younger people, and be better served by accessing adult service. Whilst a 24 year old may have a lower level of maturity which would be better suited to younger person’s service approaches. We need systems which allow for professional judgement to override criteria.”

Practitioner

Most criminal justice agencies were either starting to think about a young adult approach or had already implemented a specific intervention or transfer protocol to work with this age group. However, it was also clearly noted that the definition of a young adult’s age seemed to shift, so some areas would focus on 18-25, others on 15-21, others on 18-21. In addition many thought that the emphasis on young adults was too heavily focussed on those transitioning between youth justice services and probation, this was seen as flawed because so few actually transition in this way. This calls for much clearer strategic consistency on the young adult age range which needs to be owned across Wales to push for a more unified understanding of the age range in question.

Recommendation 1

IOM Cymru and associated partners should make clear that 16-25 years old is the age range in question when we refer to young adults in the Criminal Justice System and that youth to adult transition is a much broader than the transfer of young people between youth justice services and probation.

The recognition of the age group has obvious benefits for young adults themselves, with more services and resources flowing towards them. However, this appears to be more of a grassroots initiative and it is not clear how services being developed across providers (and in different Sectors) working with offenders are thinking about how to create complimentary services. Even though youth justice services and probation often have promising transition services, these are often not joined up with other services such as drugs and alcohol, housing, mental health, care leaving teams, or other flexible one-to-one provision such as mentoring. This disconnect between services could undermine the good work of local organisations that are adopting creative approaches. Local area strategies are needed to develop a strategic focus on the young adults that could be adopted by a range of partners, including those that wouldn’t be considered traditional criminal justice agencies. This would need to be monitored in such a way as to ensure local services are complementary and well-connected.

Recommendation 2

IOM Cymru encourages the development of local strategies that outline the desired services for young adults in contact with the CJS, clearly identify the age group, engage a broad range of providers, facilitate practical joint working and monitor existing provision to avoid unnecessary overlap, as well as highlighting gaps in services.

3.1.2. THE SHAPE OF SERVICE PROVISION

“The transition process [for young adults] adopted by Cardiff allows autonomy for the officer to decide and the best transition process for each individual... This approach provides the opportunity to tailor the transition to meet individual needs in a bid to maximise the likelihood of compliance and reduce re-offending.”

Practitioner

There were many different services highlighted as good practice as part of the consultation. All of these advances are promising and offer us an insight into what is possible. They included:

- support to manage the transition between youth justice service and probation
- co-location of services
- the Intensive Family Support Service
- Switch’s young people’s drug and alcohol services that extends to 25 year olds
- Foyer provision that provided key workers to young adults up to one year after they had left their accommodation
- the Police Community Support Officers in Brecon who have been developing a specific approach to handling young adults
- Magistrates and Powys Youth Services working with schools to raise awareness of the consequences of crime
- Triage services provided by the Police which can re-direct young people out of the CJS to more appropriate services.

“I think more use could be made of the Attendance Centres which, in my view offers a much more effective and age-appropriate sentencing option for young offenders compared with unpaid work. The AC focusses on work-related skills, social skills and raising awareness of the impact of crime/drug awareness etc. I feel this valuable resource is under-used”

Practitioner

The consultation also highlighted broad themes of quality service provision that could serve to create a benchmark for young adult services across Wales, and specifically within IOM Cymru. These fit closely with the ten Transition to Adulthood (T2A) values of good service delivery, published in *Going for Gold: developing effective services for young adults throughout the criminal justice process*.³ These principles are:

- T2A targets young people in the transition to adulthood
- T2A improves the transition from the youth to adult services
- T2A is based on voluntary participation
- T2A is tailored, person-centred and holistic
- T2A engages with the family where appropriate
- T2A involves young adults and their families in the design of services
- T2A requires a multi-agency partnership approach
- T2A is intensive, requiring a high number of service hours and a high level of engagement from participants.
- T2A provides user-led support to enable behavioural change
- T2A encourages the involvement of volunteers in the delivery of services

³ Clinks, SJS, & T2A (2013): *Going for Gold: developing effective services for young adults throughout the criminal justice process*, <http://www.clinks.org/going-for-gold>

Not all of these principles will work for all agencies but they hold true to what most consultation participants said. However, there were specific issues raised through the events and consultations which add to the debate about what good services should look like. These were:

- Offering voluntary-based support as part of an exit-strategy for statutory services delivering sentences handed down by the courts.
- Non-statutory (voluntary) support should be offered as part of all orders, providing an element of service that is not part of mandatory court orders.
- Extended hours to provide out-of-hours support
- Transition services should be available to both those in the community and in custody
- A single point of contact should be provided for the young adult to provide consistency
- Provision should identify and treat with equal priority those young adults who do not transition between CJS agencies, but re-surface in the adult system after having been sentenced to their first adult order.
- Support should be outreach focussed, working in local communities and undertaking home visits where appropriate (especially to involve family members in support plans)
- Needs assessments should be aspirational as well as needs-based, encouraging young adults to think about what they can do, to inspire change and encourage self-motivation.

Recommendation 3

IOM Cymru should develop a Wales-specific benchmark for young adult provision that sets out what it expects from a quality service. Guidance should be developed to support local services. This could include the development of organisational strategies for working with young adults, practical transition processes, different working practices, collaborative approaches, taking maturity into consideration. This should be supported by case studies of where good practice where it is already in place.

3.1.3. TRANSFERRING, CO-LOCATION AND INCREASED COLLABORATION

A strong theme raised by representatives of all Sectors was that a quality young adult approach requires clear transfer between services (where age barriers to services are set by legislation), co-location as a means to ensure inter-agency working, and increased collaboration to widen the scope of existing service provision that could benefit young adults.

There was clear good practice that had already been developed around transfer arrangements between youth justice services and probation, this was not apparent in all areas but in some it is highly developed. There was real praise for the benefits of co-locating or seconding staff between agencies, such as a probation member of staff seconded to a youth justice team to handle transfer arrangements between those two services. A lot of feedback highlighted the desire to go one step further and have services co-located in one building, thereby providing multiple services without asking service users to travel potentially long distances. It was strongly felt that these co-located services, or one-stop-shops, were not referral agencies but that services were physically based in the same location or had the ability to provide sessional workshops/interventions.

“Being located in both Youth Offending Service and Probation allows me to access support for the young person from both agencies. For example when a young person is released from custody they are able to access Integrated Resettlement Support in YOS following transfer this service could be lost, however due to transition process in my area my young people are able to continue to access this support.”

Practitioner

The collaboration that is already being modelled by youth justice services was felt to be the only way forward for dealing with the multiple needs of this age range. Other forms of collaboration were also mentioned, including the Communities First project (early intervention), Intensive Families Support Service (families with substance misuse issues), Team Around Families, and the Cardiff IOM model focussing on young adults. In areas where collaboration has not been developed, this was thought to be due to a lack of understanding about how it could be done, a lack of examples as to where it had already happened, a lack of allocated resource to develop the collaboration, or a lack of local leadership to push the agenda forward. This represents a development issue for local agencies, as well as a capacity issue that will need to be resolved.

Recommendation 4

IOM Cymru should provide guidance to areas on how local transfer arrangements, co-location and collaboration could be achieved. This should take the form of promoting existing/known good practice, clear guidance on developing these services, and identifying and supporting ‘champions’ or leads to push forward local service development and/or capacity building support.

3.1.4. THRESHOLDS

The issue of service thresholds was raised across multiple services as a real barrier for young adults accessing appropriate support. The issue was that youth services generally have lower thresholds or different criteria for accepting a new service user. For instance a young people’s drugs service may provide services to those suffering from issues of addiction related to cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, ketamine, legal highs, and alcohol (and often poly-drug use involving a number of these substances at any one time). Adult drug and alcohol services, however, might not recognise these drugs and have a tendency to focus on the use of opiates, a drug which is much less popular with young people nowadays. Young people run the risk of slipping through these gaps in services. Similar threshold issues apply to some providers across mental health, housing provision, education, and generic young people services.

“Prevent strategies seem to end when a person is 18. It would be great if preventative measures could be extended for those individuals who would benefit from them regardless of their age.”

Practitioner

An all-Wales IOM strategy for young adults will need to find a way to negotiate nationally how some of these thresholds could be altered, or else it will need to support providers to engage locally to change service provision at that level. This will require joint action by Welsh Government, in relation to devolved services and local authority commissioning, and UK Government agencies such as probation, prisons, police, as well as elected police and crime commissioners.

Recommendation 5

IOM Cymru and stakeholders will need to explore how thresholds that exist across services can be broken down, so that services become more flexible, existing provision is extended, or alternative provision sourced. Guidance may need to be provided to local areas to support a negotiation between services to encourage a more appropriate service for young adults.

3.1.5. SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT

As has already been explained, there was a low response rate to the service user consultation attempted by Clinks and IOM Cymru to feed into this consultation. The responses we did receive from Wales Probation Trust (two groups of male service users), however limiting, was illuminating and supported a lot of what practitioners had already said. They said that:

- Referrals to partner organisations for additional services had been of great benefit
- Home visits had made the service better
- Meetings outside of the probation offices were preferred to allow for a less formal setting, helping young adults to relax
- IOM meetings that weren't held in police stations were preferred due to the stigma/embarrassment of needing to go to the police station
- Youth justice services and probation service explaining what was expected of them after transitioning between the services made the process easier
- IOM was felt to be a supportive environment, practically good, and similar to that of youth services
- The most difficult aspect of the transition was the more stringent enforcement from probation as opposed to youth justice services
- They wanted more support around employment

Service user involvement was commonly expressed as critical to the design and delivery of effective services. Many organisations stressed that positive young adult services are the result of quality service user involvement and that they need to be service user led at all times. It will be critical for IOM Cymru and other stakeholder to have a clear strategy as to how this will be delivered and what sort of service user involvement would be required. Clinks and Revolving Doors Agency have produced a guide to service user involvement in the CJS that could prove useful in guiding the debate about what level of service user involvement is required.⁴

Recommendation 6

IOM Cymru should establish a clear service user involvement strategy that applies to the wider development of IOM across Wales. Furthermore it should establish a benchmark for young adult service user involvement that local IOM teams can be measured against.

⁴ Clinks & revolving Doors Agency (2010), Service User Involvement, bit.ly/19SsqQU

3.1.6. INVOLVING FAMILIES

Practitioners at all events and in the online consultation were clear that a missing aspect of services for 16-25 year olds was family engagement; which includes the parents or carers of young adults as well as young adults as parents themselves starting families of their own. Families tended to be better engaged within the youth system but poorly engaged within adult services, with a significant gap which was seen as an obvious gap in service design and flexibility. It was felt critical for this age group that services are both allowed to think about the role and impact of family and relationships on the young adult, as well as the ways in which they can practically involve them in the planning of services and assessment of need.

Recommendation 7

Family engagement needs to be built into the service design for IOM Cymru and guidance provided locally as to how appropriate engagement could be facilitated. This should include guidance on involving the carers of young adults as well as the possibility that they may be fathers or mothers in their own right.

3.1.7. GIRLS AND WOMEN

Those organisations surveyed were clear that within existing services for young adults very few gender specific services were being developed or delivered for this age range. The needs of girls and women are different from those of boys and men in the CJS, so a specific approach is required. The needs of girls and women was last given prominence by *The Corston Report* in 2007 which highlighted a number of recommendations to divert women from the CJS.⁵ The recommendations of this report have been progressed by the Corston Independent Funders Coalition as well as the Ministry of Justice who have supported the development of women specific services.

A unique approach to young girls and women should be developed in conjunction with existing women's services and organisations, as well as the IOM Cymru Women Offender Pathfinder, to ensure that appropriate services are developed for young adults that takes into consideration issues of maturity and transitions between services. More recent examples of promising practice in services for girls and women in the CJS can be found in Clinks' publication, *Breaking the cycle of women's offending: A system redesign*.⁶ These examples, as well as the practice endorsed by organisations such as Women's Resource Centre⁷, Women's Breakout⁸ and Women in Prison⁹, should be explored in greater detail.

Recommendation 8

The IOM Cymru strategy for young adults should establish clear links with the IOM Cymru Women Offender Pathfinder, other developing women's strategies, including domestic and sexual violence, and local service providers to explore what distinct young adult service for female offenders are needed.

⁵ Home Office (2007), The Corston Review, A review of women with particular vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System by baroness Jean Corston: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/corston-report-march-2007.pdf>

⁶ Clinks (2012), *Breaking the cycle of women's offending: A system redesign*: <http://www.clinks.org/criminal-justice/women>

⁷ Women's Resource Centre (WRC): <http://thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk/>

⁸ Women's Breakout: <http://www.womensbreakout.org.uk/>

⁹ Women in prison: <http://www.womeninprison.org.uk/>

3.1.8. MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION

Many practitioners mentioned a notable gap in service provision around mental health for this age range, with clear issues around the differentiation between Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) which often means that vital services are no longer available for service users who are 18 or older. This was a particular issue for people entering adult services and finding that they were no longer able to access support around their mental health issues because adult services deal with ‘more serious’ diagnosed mental ill-health. Not only were services notable in their absence to support young adults, it was also felt that mental health services were absent from local IOM partnerships in their current format. Even where these were more developed the engagement of mental health services was often an issue for local agencies.

The extent to which mental health is a serious issue for young adults needs to be explored in more depth, and services should develop appropriate responses to that need.

Recommendation 9

Mental health needs to be represented at the national IOM Cymru Board level to ensure that connections can be made with local areas to advocate for more appropriate approaches to young adults, whether through access to on-going service provision in CAMHS or alternative provision that can support the needs of this age group.

3.1.9. USE OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

A number of practitioners from the VCSE and statutory Sectors commented that they would like to see the increased use of restorative justice for the young adult age group, such as the introduction of voluntary restorative justice orders. There wasn’t a great deal of detail offered through the consultation as to what exactly should be provided within this intervention, or how it would look in practice, although some areas expressed that they were already introducing more restorative justice services. It would be advisable to assess what the range of provision already is and how it could be targeted at young adults.

The Restorative Justice Council recently published a report on behalf of the Transition to Adulthood Alliance on how restorative justice could be used with young adults (both victims and offenders). This may provide useful insight into how this service could be further developed.¹⁰

Recommendation 10

IOM Cymru should consider the use of Restorative Justice interventions with young adults, possibly first time entrants, and whether this could be implemented more widely to divert young people from the Criminal Justice System and support victims to address the impact of the crime committed against them.

¹⁰ Restorative Justice Council and Transition to Adulthood Alliance (2013), Restorative Justice for Young Adults: factoring in maturity and facilitating desistance, http://www.t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/m589_untapped.pdf

3.1.10. DATA SHARING

Organisations from all Sectors had clear issues about the availability of data and the difficulty of sharing this data between agencies, especially between statutory and VCSE Sector organisations. It was clear from the consultation that this was still a very live issue which needed to be resolved if a wide range of agencies are to be meaningfully involved in IOM Cymru nationally as well as local services. In addition it was felt that the issues of data transfer were unique, and problematic, in custodial settings. The fact that the VCSE Sector collects a lot of data on this cohort should be taken into consideration; it would be beneficial to all agencies to share data more openly to better understand need, and the services being provided to young adults.

Separately, it was felt that there had been progress in relation to the Y2A portal being rolled out by the Youth Justice Board, this was seen as a positive step. However, this only covers data transfer between youth offending and probation.

Recommendation 11

Explore, through direct engagement with stakeholders, how a range of partners including Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations could access and contribute to data and needs analysis on young adults in IOM, community and custodial services.

3.1.11 TRAINING FOR PRACTITIONERS

A number of practitioners commented on the lack of training around working with young adults to support the professional development of front line staff as well as more senior staff to understand how best to work with this age group. The areas of training that were raised included:

- Training, or briefings for senior strategic leads and/or commissioners to make the case for why they should target young adults as a priority group in the CJS.
- Training for probation practitioners to assess the maturity of a young adult, particularly as the sentencing guidelines for England and Wales now include “Age and/or lack of maturity where it affects the responsibility of the offender” as an express mitigating factor for young adults.¹¹ Guidance on this matter has been produced by the University of Birmingham on behalf of the T2A Alliance.¹²
- Training for youth practitioners that explained and assisted a better understanding of adult services, approaches, risk assessments, thresholds, and potential gaps for service users
- Training for adult practitioners that explained and assisted a better understanding of youth services, approaches, risk assessments, thresholds, and potential gaps for service users
- Professional development training on working with the age group and the different approaches that could/should be taken
- Clear guidance on developing practical collaboration and partnership working between agencies that is necessary to better support the needs of young people transitioning to adult services

¹¹ Sentencing Council (2011) Assault: Definitive Guideline, London: Sentencing Council

¹² University of Birmingham & T2A (2013) Taking account of maturity: a guide for probation practitioners, http://www.t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/T2A-Maturity-Guide_online1.pdf

This could provide a suite of training, briefings, and guidance to support practitioners working specifically with young adult offenders, or strategic leads and commissioners to better understand the need and the benchmark for quality service provision.

Recommendation 12

IOM Cymru should explore what the support needs are for local practitioners, service managers, strategic leads, and commissioners, with a view to developing a training and development package to support a more consistent understanding of young adults in the Criminal Justice System, and guidance on how best to support them.

3.2. THE ROLE OF IOM IN SUPPORTING YOUNG ADULTS

The attempt of IOM Cymru to create a specific provision for young adults was welcomed by the practitioners and service managers who attended the consultations and responded to the online surveys. It was felt that the multi-agency approach needed to support young adults was well reflected in the IOM approach, in particular the desire to pull together both youth and adult services within this model was welcomed. Furthermore, many practitioners felt that this age group would benefit from an intensive package of support that has typically characterised the IOM approach.

“IOM is set up similarly to YOS in that it is a multi-agency set up which allows for quick access to other services and a dedicated team established to target a set of offenders. The buy in from partnership agencies allows all services to pool resources to efficiently manage offenders and provide in effect a ‘one stop shop’ to meet most of their needs. Particularly when it comes to risk management IOM operates on a shared approach to risk management and will help effectively manage transition cases.”
Practitioner

Below we have summarised the way in which people felt that IOM would have to develop in order to be able to provide effective services to young adults.

3.2.1. CHALLENGING & CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

There was a clear perception that IOM was only for the most serious and prolific offenders, this was a generally held belief and led some participants to question how the service would be practically re-directed from that cohort. In addition it was felt that the IOM service had traditionally been for adult male offenders, and furthermore that it was unclear exactly what the structure of IOM should be in a local area because it differed so much from area to area.

“in our area they [young adults] cannot go to the IOM team if they do not fulfil various criteria, which a lot of them don’t.”
Practitioner

There was also clear feedback that IOM at its best brought with it significant positives, for instance it:

- has the potential to access a range of skills and expertise from different agencies
- broke down barriers between services

- offered a more intensive support and supervision model
- assessed and addressed need holistically
- improved information sharing between agencies
- encouraged co-location
- brought together organisations with very different working cultures
- could think outside the criminal justice environment

Organisations had a very set understanding of IOM as working with prolific and other priority offenders, which needs to be addressed, but they were also able to articulate why they thought it was a good approach for young adults. In order to get buy in for the development of a young adult IOM service it is likely that a clear communications strategy will need to be developed to engage the necessary providers in the delivery of the IOM service.

Recommendation 13

Develop a clear communications strategy for national, regional and local use that can clearly show that IOM is a service for young adults and ensure that a diverse range of organisations have the opportunity to engage both strategically and operationally. The fact that young adults are part of the cohort will need to be clearly laid out and communicated.

3.2.2. NATIONAL CONSISTENCY & LOCAL FLEXIBILITY

IOM was seen as a locally responsive service that could adapt to the needs of a specific area, however, one of the main frustrations from CJS agencies and VCSE partners was that the service provision was dramatically different from one area to the next, often with a different lead agency, a different way of working, different cohorts, and variable engagement with the other sectors. In order to avoid this confusion and maximise the involvement of other agencies it will be essential that the young adult model for IOM is prescriptive on some issues, whilst also allowing other aspects to be locally defined.

"I have had feedback that some of the young people appreciate the transfer process as they feel they are treated like an adult and not a child. I think a shared approach by all services to transitioning youth to adult would provide the individual with the best opportunity to engage with interventions. IOM provides the base for this to happen where the young person continues to access support from multiple agencies."
Practitioner

There should be aspects of the service for young adults that are the same in each area so that service providers can align with diverse IOM teams across larger geographical areas to provide more consistent support to young adults.

Recommendation 14

Provide a benchmark for the type of young adult service that should be expected from an IOM service, and ensure that there is clear communication and transparency as to how that operates and which agencies are involved in the strategic development and operation of the IOM service locally.

3.2.3. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The most common criticism of the IOM approach from local agencies in the CJS and in the VCSE Sector was that local partnerships were under-developed, and that it was difficult to know how to practically engage with local IOM provision. Many stressed that there were significant gaps around engaging with health services, children's services, leaving care teams, adult social services, housing providers, drug and alcohol providers, family services, youth justice services, prisons, and a whole range of VCSE organisations providing different services. Many of the agencies such as leaving care teams would be particularly pertinent to this age group, however, they will not have traditionally been involved in IOM and may have a very poor understanding of why they should engage with it. The consultation highlighted a desire to make representation around the IOM table much more representative, inclusive and consistent.

*"We need a better understanding of the role and skills available in the Third Sector (VCSE Sector), and an acceptance that third Sector agencies can complement the work undertaken by statutory services."
Practitioner*

The need to develop effective partnerships with a wide range of organisations will require significant development nationally, regionally and locally. Feedback from VCSE organisations was that there needed to be:

- a much clearer communications strategy for IOM Cymru at a national, regional and local level, outlining how to get engaged in IOM
- a clear place for the VCSE strategically at national, regional and local level in designing services
- a clear route into becoming a provider under IOM services, allowing equality of access for a range of organisations to work with the client group in a co-ordinated way
- a clear understanding of the local delivery models and what services are currently being provided
- pro-active outreach to engage the VCSE Sector with IOM services
- clarity on the available resources available to commission or contract services from external organisations

In order for this service to be successful it will be necessary for a wide range of partners to be engaged within local IOM partnerships who may not have been involved previously. The requests made by the VCSE Sector for better communications and more operational and strategic engagement would doubtless be mirrored by devolved services in Wales who would also need to explore their role in delivering under an IOM approach. In order to do this effectively, a partnership development programme will need to be initiated by IOM Cymru to ensure the right partners are able to come round the table.

There were concerns raised about possible duplication of multi-agency partnerships. It was felt that services were becoming more multi-disciplinary in a number of areas, as well as some VCSE Sector organisations forming consortia or formal partnerships to better address the needs of their service users. The consultation highlighted a request from all Sectors to avoid duplication which could be created by adding another layer of service provision in a local area. Rather, they were keen that duplication was avoided by assessing the shape and scope of service provision in consultation with local statutory services and VCSE organisations.

The strategic and operational engagement of VCSE Sector partners has already been explored by Clinks with funding from the Home Office. A suite of resources were published to assist statutory and VCSE Sector partners to develop effective partnerships which can be found on the Clinks website.¹³

Recommendation 15

IOM Cymru to explore the viability of a partnership development programme to assist with the necessary creation of diverse service delivery partnerships that can meet the diverse needs of young adults. This would include local exercises to assess what existing service provision was already available to avoid duplication.

3.2.4. THE CLIENT GROUP – IDENTIFYING A COHORT

The organisations consulted were clear that young adults were rarely considered to be in scope for IOM schemes locally. Therefore, it will be important to develop tools to support local areas to make the case for young adults. The consultation highlighted that there was support for broadening the cohort for IOM schemes to include young adults, and even looking at developing services more upstream to support the early intervention and prevention agenda.

Recommendation 16

Provide information to local areas on the range of young adults in any given area of Wales to support the case for a young adult cohort within the IOM service (where applicable). Support areas with a concise case for why young adults should be targeted alongside the previously recommended benchmarks for quality service design

¹³ Clinks (2012) Building
Voluntary and Community
Sector Involvement in Integrated
Offender Management: [http://
www.clinks.org/iom-resources](http://www.clinks.org/iom-resources)

4. CONCLUSION

There is overwhelming support from practitioners across Sectors to engage more strategically to support young adults, and they are recognised as an important and distinct service user group. It is also clear that Integrated Offender Management is seen as a vehicle through which to implement a different, multi-agency, and more coherent approach to supporting young adults in the CJS.

The recommendations in this report are intended to spur on the development of national, regional and local change in Wales, led by IOM Cymru, its statutory delivery partners and the local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. The practical ways to take them forward will include minor changes in operational behaviour and staff training, although others will need a more collaborative approach that changes the way in which services inter-relate strategically and how they best design a new system that patches over the current gaps that have been identified between youth and adult services.

In order to fully realise this change it is our recommendation that IOM Cymru should seek to resource several aspects of this work going forward. These could include, but are not limited to,

- Maintaining high-level strategic buy-in to the young adult agenda across police, criminal justice, community safety, health, and social services.
- Ensuring the development of effective and transparent representation of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector at a strategic level nationally, regionally and locally.
- Providing clear guidance and support to local IOM teams (and within other services) about the creation of strategic and delivery partnerships that are representative of all the Sectors and interested parties.
- Providing on-going audit as to the make-up of national, regional and local IOM teams to ensure the right organisations are represented and that young adult services are delivered where appropriate.
- Create a minimum standard, or operational guidance, for IOM teams on what appropriate young adult provision is and how it can be developed.
- Support the development of effective transition protocols to ease the transition between youth and adult services.
- Support the design and delivery of professional development opportunities for staff that work with young adults in order to change working practices in line with recognised good practice.
- Maintain a bank of effective practice and ensure this is well promoted.
- Clearly communicate the services IOM Cymru are providing to all Sectors and ensure that there is an easily identifiable route to engage both operationally and strategically with IOM Cymru nationally, regionally and locally.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that IOM Cymru and key stakeholders consider their priorities in relation to this report's recommendations, and assign appropriate resources to assist in the undertaking of these activities.

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Clinks

Clinks is the national umbrella body that supports the work that Voluntary and Community Sector organisations undertake within the Criminal Justice System of England and Wales. Clinks' vision is of a vibrant and independent Voluntary and Community Sector working with informed and engaged communities to enable the rehabilitation of offenders for the benefit of society.
www.clinks.org

The Transition to Adulthood Alliance

The T2A Alliance is a broad coalition of organisations and individuals which identifies and promotes the need for a distinct and radically different approach to young adults in the Criminal Justice System; an approach that is proportionate to their maturity and responsive to their specific needs. Convened by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, its membership encompasses leading criminal justice, health and youth organisations. Since 2008, the T2A Alliance has produced more than 40 research and policy reports, which support the campaign priorities and recommendations. In addition, six T2A projects, including three main T2A pilots, have been running since 2009, demonstrating effective interventions for young adults in the Criminal Justice System.
www.t2a.org.uk

Feedback or further information

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