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Tackling inequality in the Criminal Justice System

Seminar report

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Tackling inequality in the Criminal Justice System

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Executive summary

Many equality and minority groups are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and a large proportion of the people in the CJS face some form of discrimination or disadvantage because of being from an equality and/or minority group.

In November 2014 Clinks held a seminar for voluntary sector organisations to share learning on how different groups have advocated at policy, strategic and operational levels for the needs of offenders from these equality and minority groups.

This report summarises presentations given at the seminar by organisations working to tackle inequality in the CJS and highlights learning points for voluntary and statutory organisations. It presents discussions which took place during the seminar, highlighting solutions to challenges for policy makers and commissioners to tackling inequality in the CJS at each stage of the commissioning cycle.

Examples from the frontline

This section of the following report provides summaries of five presentations given at the event from organisations tackling inequality for different groups in the CJS including:

- Muslim young men
- Older people
- Gay and bisexual men
 - People with learning disabilities
 - Women.

These examples were selected to include a wide range of groups facing different challenges, some of which are less well understood within the CJS. However, we recognise that it by no means covers all equality and minority groups. We provide a list of resources at the end of the report which signpost to further information both on the issues we do cover here and others we have been unable to include.

The presentations highlighted a series of learning points for voluntary and statutory organisations:



- 1 Create partnerships between locally led community organisations and larger national organisations to create impact at the grassroots and policy levels.
 - 2 Influence public perception in order to tackle stigmatisation and negative stereotypes.
 - 3 Use creative activity and the arts to provide a space for people to explore complex issues and widen horizons.
 - 4 Use research and evidence to make the case for your service or activities - set up pilots in the first instance to demonstrate the value of your work.
 - 5 Demonstrate how your work can help statutory services fulfil their legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010) and highlight that the duty to make reasonable adjustments should be anticipatory and reactive.
 - 6 Make solutions easy for statutory services, especially prisons, to implement; fit in with their ways of working.
 - 7 Commitment and persistence is often necessary to communicate the importance and value of meeting the needs of equality and minority groups.
 - 8 Recognise the value and power of self advocacy – involve service users to ensure their voices are heard; they are the ‘experts by experience’.
 - 9 Use the information, knowledge and experience gained in delivering services to influence policy.
- 1 Criminal justice staff should be trained and provided with information to help them identify people who may have a protected characteristic¹ or be from an equality or minority group.
 - 2 To improve identification and needs assessments, information disclosed by a service user about their membership of an equality and minority group to any professional working in the CJS from either the statutory, voluntary or faith sectors, at any point in their journey through the system, should, with the service users’ permission, be recorded and their needs then met.
 - 3 In order to appropriately identify needs it is vital that the views and experiences of service users are sought and listened to. Service user involvement should be formally incorporated into needs assessments and development of strategy.
 - 4 Commissioning streams and programmes should be designed specifically, or with flexibility so that they can be adapted, to meet the requirements identified at the needs assessment stage.
 - 5 Leadership and improved training is required throughout the CJS, at national policy level all the way down to operational establishments, in order to emphasise the importance of equality and diversity.
 - 6 Service users from equality and minority groups should be involved in the delivery of training so that their experiences and perspectives can be directly communicated to staff.
 - 7 Partnership working with voluntary and community organisations that work specifically with particular equality and minority groups, or delivering services through peer support, can help to ensure that those delivering services reflect the diversity of service users.
 - 8 More qualitative information that draws on service user and practitioner experiences is needed to give a full and complete understanding of the success of services and interventions in improving outcomes for equality and minority groups.

Commissioning for equality

Group discussions at the seminar identified challenges to ensuring that equality groups receive appropriate services, in line with their legal rights and needs. Ways in which organisations have overcome these challenges were also shared. This report presents the challenges and solutions to them at each stage of the commissioning process starting with assessing needs, followed by designing services and purchasing them (procurement), and finally reviewing and evaluating impact.

The following solutions for statutory services, commissioners and policy makers were identified:

Introduction

Many equality and minority groups are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and a large proportion of the people in the CJS face some form of discrimination or disadvantage because of being from an equality or minority group.

Many of these groups are defined as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act (2010).¹ The statistics below highlight this:

- 26% of prisoners² and 15% of offenders in the community under probation supervision self identify as Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) compared to 14% of the general population.³
- A study of Irish Travellers in prison found that they represent between 0.6% and 1% of the entire prison population, compared to between 0.1-0.2% of the general population.⁴
- Muslim prisoners account for 13.4% of the prison population but only 4.2% of the general population.⁵
- People aged 60 and over and those aged 50-59 are respectively the first and second fastest growing age groups in the prison population.⁶
- Fewer than 1% of all children in England are in care, but looked after children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody.⁷
 - 20-30% of all offenders have learning disabilities or difficulties that interfere with their ability to cope with the CJS.⁸
 - 60% of young people in custody have suffered a brain injury.⁹
 - Women represent 4.6% of the overall prison population, but their turnover is much higher than male prisoners¹⁰ because they are more likely to serve shorter sentences.
 - 25% of prisoners have suffered from anxiety or depression (49% for women, 23% for men)¹¹
 - An estimated 36% of 1,435 prisoners interviewed for the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction study, were considered to have a disability when survey answers about disability and health, including mental health, were screened. This compares with 20% of men and 18% of women in the community.¹²





Outcomes experienced by these equality and minority groups are often significantly poorer than the wider population:

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are often subject to increased isolation, harassment, violence and assault when in prison.¹³
- Muslim prisoners report the worst perceptions of prison life compared to other prisoners.¹⁴
- In prison, Black or mixed origin service users are subject to higher adjudication rates, spend more days than average in segregation and are more frequently subject to the use of force.¹⁵
- Women accounted for 26% of all incidents of self-harm in the 12 months to March 2014, despite representing just 4.6% of the total prison population.¹⁶

In November 2014 Clinks held a seminar for voluntary sector organisations to share learning on how different organisations have advocated at policy, strategic and operational levels for the needs of offenders from these equalities and minority groups.

This report is divided into two sections. In section one we summarise the presentations given at the

seminar by five organisations working on different equality issues and provide learning points for frontline staff, statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations to ensure that services are appropriate for the needs of these service users.

The report includes examples covering issues affecting young Muslim men, older people, gay and bisexual men, people with learning disabilities and women. These issues were selected to include a wide range of groups facing different challenges, some of which are less well understood within the CJS. The report also draws on findings from the Young Review on improving outcomes for young Black and Muslim men in the CJS,¹⁷ which was launched shortly after the November event. However, we recognise that this by no means covers all equality and minority groups. We provide a list of resources at the end of the report which signpost to further information both on the issues we do cover here and others we have been unable to include.

The second section reflects discussions which took place during the seminar and highlights solutions to challenges for policy makers and commissioners to tackling inequality in the CJS at each stage of the commissioning cycle.

Examples from the frontline



Young Muslim men

Presented by Raheel Mohammed and Akikur Rahman from Maslaha

What group do you work with and what issues do they face in the CJS?

Maslaha's All We Are project responds to the disproportionate numbers of young Muslims in the CJS. We seek to address the root causes connected with youth offending and re-offending in Muslim communities, which underline the urgent need for support, access to resources and skills development, and activities which resonate with the needs of young people at risk of offending.

The young Muslim men that Maslaha work with describe frustration at feeling trapped in a cycle of reoffending, and difficulty in finding a job and new sources of inspiration. However, they also have a strong will to try to change, and an entrepreneurial and creative spirit. All We Are aims to foster this spirit and enable young men to develop new skills and improve their prospects.

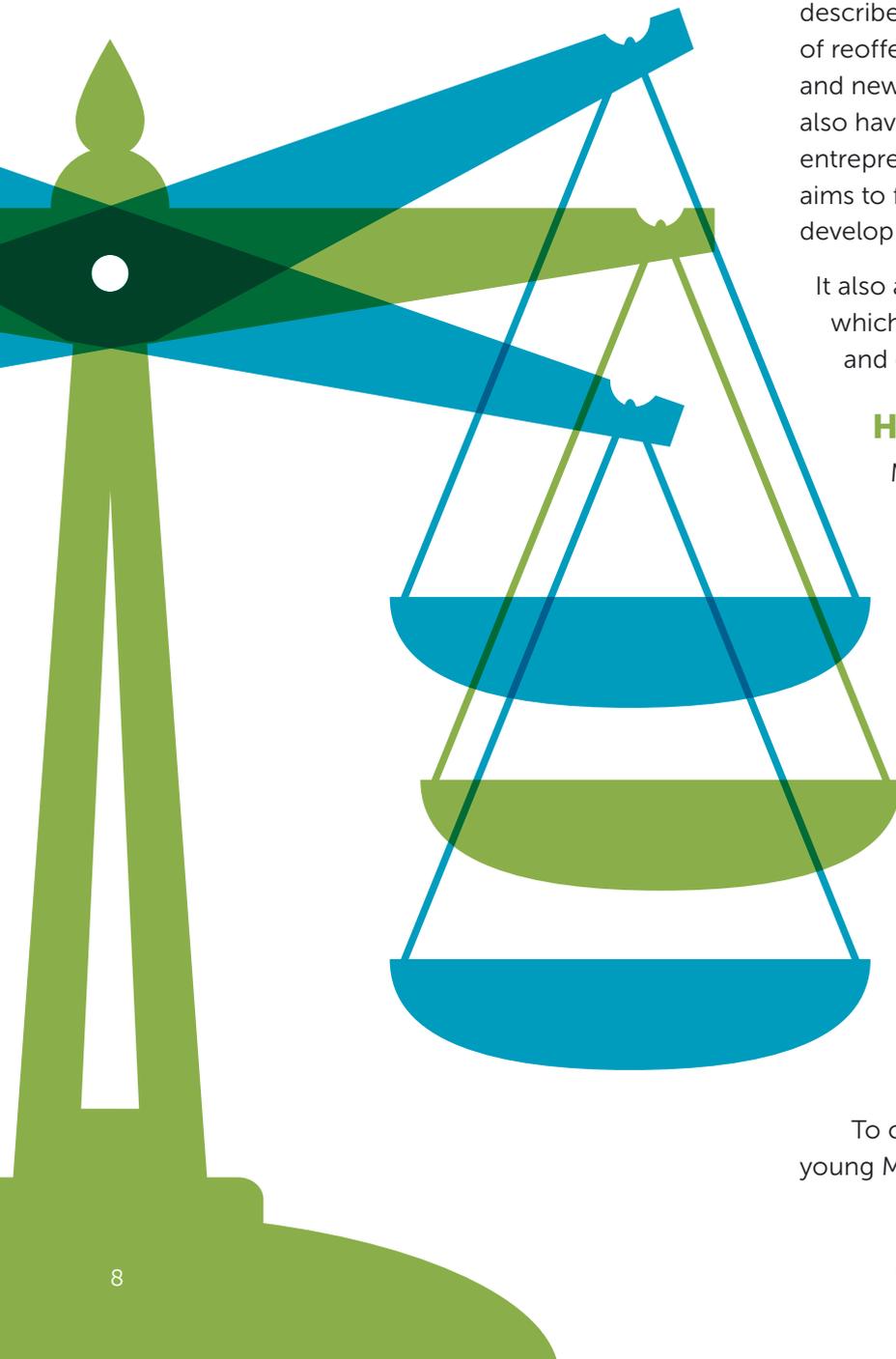
It also aims to challenge negative stereotypes which can act as a barrier to opportunity and engagement for these young men.

How do you tackle this?

Maslaha works at the grassroots, policy and public perception levels. We form partnerships at local and national level to maximise the impact of our work. By using faith as a positive tool and publicising this work at a time when Islam is viewed negatively, we aim to change the way the religion is understood by all communities.

Maslaha partnered with the Mile End Community Project (MCP) to deliver All We Are. It emerged that the ways in which MCP's service users are understood by wider society is shaped by public agencies and media portrayal and MCP had little resource to influence policy makers or public opinion.

To combat this we worked with a group of young Muslims to recreate a painting that spoke to



their identity. This allowed the young men to explore their experiences of school, their identity, religion and relationships with their family and peers.

The project received coverage on the BBC, providing an opportunity to re-shape the narrative about these young men.

VIEW FROM A SERVICE USER

“ All We Are took me out of the little box I was in...

Every person is different so the justice system needs to cater for every individual not the whole lot. I have four things counting against me: I'm young, Muslim, from an ethnic minority and I have a criminal record. But the All We Are project made me see myself differently. The creativity inspired me to start my own company to support young people in school to have different opportunities and to work with them on creative projects to give them a voice.

The police response to my first crime wasn't too great, it didn't give me a chance or prevent me from offending again and I think they treated me differently to my white counterparts.

It didn't feel to me like there were opportunities provided for me by the statutory services. Probation and the careers service just seemed interested in box ticking. They were more interested in sanctioning me than supporting me. ”

Learning points

- Create partnerships between locally led community organisations and larger national organisations to create impact at the grassroots and policy levels.
- Influence public perception in order to tackle stigmatisation and negative stereotypes.
- Use creative activity and the arts to provide a space for people to explore complex issues and widen horizons.

For more information visit:
www.allweare.org.uk

“ Older people Presented by Jane Wilkes from RECOOP

What group do you work with and what issues do they face in the CJS?

The number of older people entering the UK's CJS has trebled in the last 20 years, and they now represent the fastest growing section of the prison estate.

Older prisoners are defined as those over the age of 50, which can seem like a low threshold. This arises from an acceptance that people within the CJS often present health needs up to 10 years earlier than expected.

Older prisoners are a group that doesn't 'fit' with the prison regime. Most services, especially resettlement, are aimed at people of working age, whereas older prisoners have a different set of needs. For instance, retirement planning rather than employment planning.

Service user consultation has revealed concerns about health and a lack of appropriate activities. It also reveals a feeling that their voice is not heard and their needs are often forgotten. Older prisoners may suffer from a lack of confidence or suffer from age related cognitive decline, such as dementia, meaning their voices are not heard and their needs go unknown and unaddressed unless formal consultation processes are in place.

How do you tackle this?

RECOOP promotes the care, resettlement and rehabilitation of older people in the CJS through: the provision of support services, advocacy, financial advice; mentoring on issues such as employment and training; and advice on housing and health. This enables service users to take control of their lives and remain free from offending, and becoming socially excluded.

We are a small organisation working in seven prisons in the South West but we have widened our impact by working closely with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to ensure issues for older offenders are on the agenda.

We have delivered training on the needs of older prisoners to prison officers, probation staff,

staff providing through the gate support, and those working in supported accommodation.

We have developed a model of older prisoners' forums – formal bodies within the prison where offenders can raise issues and explore solutions. For instance, in one prison staff reported that the older prisoners were reluctant to shower and this was becoming a hygiene issue. This was raised at the forum and through discussion it emerged that this was because the time given to get to and from the showers was not sufficient for older prisoners with mobility issues. The prisoners came up with the solution of being provided with dressing gowns, allowing them to move between the cells and the showers with dignity within the allotted time. Once implemented this resulted in all the men showering regularly.

Learning points

- Use research and evidence to make the case for your service or activities – set up pilots in the first instance to demonstrate the value of your work
- Involve service users and ask their views to ensure that you're addressing actual rather than perceived needs
- Demonstrate how your work will help statutory services fulfil their legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010)
- Make solutions easy for statutory services, especially prisons, to implement; fit in with their ways of working
- Commitment and persistence is often necessary to communicate the importance and value of meeting the needs of equality and minority groups.

For more information visit:

www.recoop.org.uk



Gay and bisexual men

Presented by Andy Holmes from HMP Stafford, gay and bisexual men's group

What group do you work with and what issues do they face in the CJS?

LGBT people make up 5-7% of the general population.¹⁸ Translated into the prison population this represents 4,000-6,000 prisoners.¹⁹ As this is a very small group it can be difficult to make the case for meeting their needs. However, they can be the victims of isolation, homophobic bullying, harassment, and hate crime.

How have you tackled this?

In establishing the group we worked with two local LGBT organisations whose knowledge and expertise was vital. The group is open to anyone interested in LGBT issues, both prisoners and staff, and while the first few meetings had only a handful of people present it has steadily increased to 58 attendees.

Encouraging men to openly discuss sexuality within a regimented prison regime setting has been extremely challenging. It is necessary to create an environment which is safe, where people can be open. To facilitate this we worked with members of the group to produce terms of reference and did not start this process until we had met three times. We hold monthly meetings with guest speakers, from comics to MEPs to the Director of Stonewall, encouraging open discussion.

We developed a Health Charter for the prison meaning that there is now a HIV clinic, access to sexual advice and free access to condoms, rather than on request.

The group has won an award for equality best practice and 12 other prisons have visited us with a view to replicating the model.

Learning points

- The group was initially opposed by some staff and prisoners and was perceived as an unnecessary box ticking exercise, but with commitment and persistence it has gone from strength to strength
- To encourage participation it is important that group members are given ownership and able to set their own agenda.

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People with a learning disability

Presented by Graham Keaton
from Working for Justice and Catriona MacIvor from Prison Reform Trust

What group do you work with and what issues do they face in the CJS?

Members of the Working for Justice Group have learning disabilities and are in contact with the CJS as suspects, defendants or offenders. These individuals are 'experts by experience' and meet four times a year.

The group was set up in partnership with the KeyRing Living Support Networks²⁰ as an integral part of the Prison Reform Trust's No One Knows²¹ programme. No One Knows undertook and reported on a number of studies into the experiences of people with learning disabilities and difficulties in the CJS.

No One Knows identified a number of key issues in relation to individuals with learning disabilities and difficulties in the CJS including disability discrimination, poor identification of individuals with learning disabilities and difficulties, and a lack of appropriate services and support.

How do you tackle this?

The group have recently won an award at the National Learning Disabilities Awards (2014). This was for our work in making the CJS more accessible for people with learning disabilities through developing a series of Easy Read documents about the CJS. Approximately 50% of prisoners have a reading age of 11 or under, so such documents with less jargon and pictorial representations are vital to helping them understand the system.

We have delivered awareness raising training for up to 600 prison officers. One outcome from these was an increase in the numbers attending prisoner meetings, after prisons installed digital as well as analogue clocks which prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties found easier to read.

The Working for Justice group have also worked with the Prison Reform Trust and Rethink Mental Illness²² to develop a resource for magistrates, district judges and court staff to raise awareness

about individuals with mental health and learning disabilities in the CJS, in response to the recommendations made by the Bradley Report.²³

Learning points

- Recognise the value and power of self-advocacy – involve service users to ensure their voices are heard
- Work with champions – for instance the Magistrates Association now has local 'champions' to help raise awareness of vulnerable defendants and what can be done to support them
- Highlight statutory services' duties to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act (2010) and that these should be anticipatory and reactive.

For further information visit:

www.keyring.org/wfj



Women

*Presented by Rachel Halford
from Women in Prison*

What group do you work with and what issues do they face in the CJS?

Equality is not about equal treatment but equal outcomes; the experience of prison is different for men and women and they have different needs. For instance:

- Women are 5% of the prison population but turnover is higher than in the male prison population because they are more likely to receive shorter sentences than men.
- More women than men commit crime to support a drug addiction.
- Women have a higher rate of mental ill health and report more experiences of domestic violence and sexual violence.
- Rates of self-harm are much higher than male prisoners – women's anger is internalised – women in prison are 36 times more likely than the general population to commit suicide on release from prison, male prisoners are eight times more likely.
- Women are also subject to higher rates of adjudication than male prisoners which is often due to mental ill health, making them less able to conform to prison regimes.
- Female prisoners' links with their families are often lost or not there in the first place – only 9% of children with a mother in prison are looked after by their fathers. Women in prison are 39% more likely to reoffend if they do not receive visits.

How do you tackle this?

Women in Prison acts as a vehicle for the voices of women in prison because we strongly believe that the only people who know what it's like are the women in there.

Although we began as a campaigning organisation we quickly became involved in service delivery, providing through the gate support and advice services. Through this service delivery we proactively encourage women to shout about their views. We respond to government consultations based on our service users views and facilitate women to directly respond to consultations.

In addition, we produce traffic light reports on, for instance, the Corston Report²⁴ recommendations, in order to assess progress and hold the government to account. We believe that keeping the issues on the agenda in a planned and measured way can ultimately result in systems change.

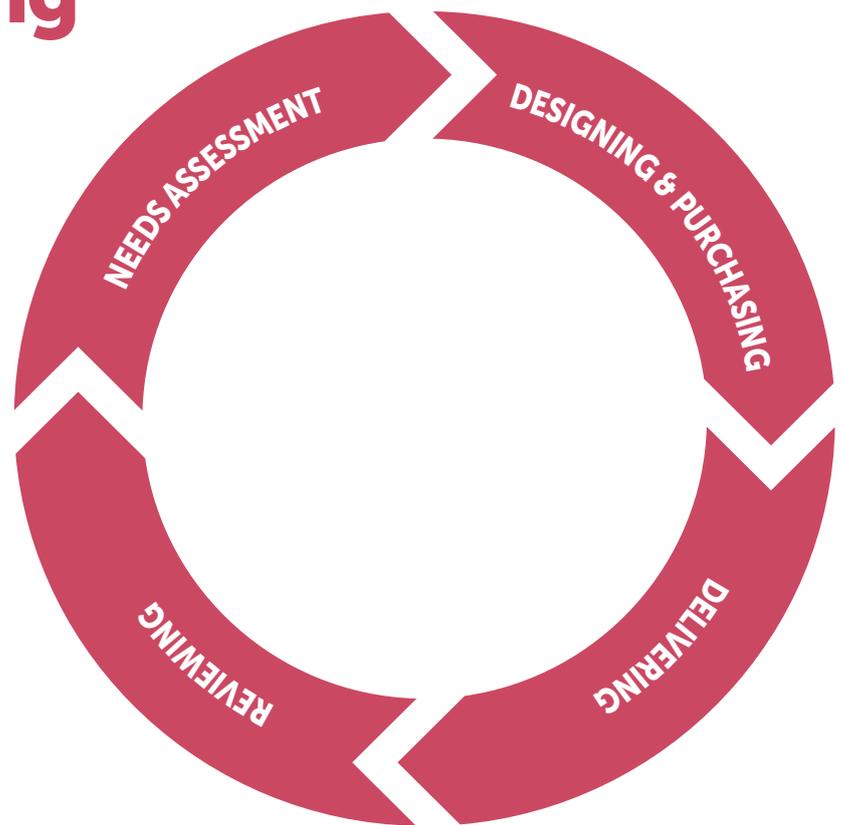
Learning points

- Use the information, knowledge and experience gained in delivering services to influence policy.
- Alongside delivering interventions, support your service users to have a voice – they are the 'experts by experience.'

For further information visit:
www.womeninprison.org.uk



Commissioning for equality



This section is based on discussions in response to two questions posed during the seminar:

- What challenges have you faced in ensuring the needs of equality groups are met in the CJS – how have you overcome them?
- Based on today's event and your own experiences, what recommendations would you make for statutory services, commissioners and policy makers on tackling inequality in the CJS?

The seminar identified a number of challenges to ensuring that equality and minority groups receive appropriate services in line with their legal rights and needs, as well as sharing ways in which organisations have been able to overcome these. This section presents the challenges and solutions to overcome them, at each stage of the commissioning process, starting with assessing needs, followed by designing services and purchasing them (procurement), and finally reviewing and evaluating impact.



Needs assessment

The challenge

Identifying individuals from equality and/or minority groups

In order to provide appropriate services and ensure that everyone is treated equally and with fairness, there must be equal access to all but with an awareness that members of various groups may have at some time suffered from discrimination. To ensure that such groups are treated fairly and equally, it may be necessary to make separate provision available to ensure equality of opportunity. It is therefore necessary to identify when a service user has a protected characteristic or belongs to an equality and minority group.

Participants in the seminar highlighted existing ways that agencies try to collect this data for instance through asking prisoners to disclose the information by using screening questionnaires at prison reception. However, it is frequently the case that this information is difficult to obtain, and there are a number of challenges which organisations regularly need to overcome. These challenges include:

- Individuals will not always disclose their membership of equality and minority groups which may be stereotyped, stigmatised and discriminated against in society. This may particularly be the case for learning disability or sexual orientation because of fear of bullying, harassment or further discrimination.
- Disclosure of information may also be affected by who asks the question and how it is asked. In some prisons peer support is used at reception, but this may not always overcome the issue as it will depend on who the individual feels comfortable disclosing information to.
- Low literacy levels can be a challenge to individuals filling out forms and this should be considered, particularly with regards to learning disability and English as a second language.
- The categories used to describe people from certain protected characteristics do not always reflect the ways in which they describe their own identity or can be too wide to sufficiently help determine their needs. For instance the term BAME covers a wide range of ethnicities and nationalities

when in fact the needs of a Gypsy or Traveller may vary greatly from those of a Somali person.

Solutions

Participants pointed to potential ways in which collection of this data and information could be strengthened.

Criminal justice staff should be trained and provided with information to help them identify people who may have a protected characteristic or be from an equality and minority group, for instance learning disabilities. Voluntary sector organisations working with such groups may be able to provide training or information that assists staff to do this.

EXAMPLE

The Learning Difficulty and Disability screening website

provides information on the signs that someone may have a learning difficulty or disability and information on what action to take.

www.lddnavigator.org.uk

If service users know that a specific service is available for people from the equality or minority group they belong to, they may be more likely to disclose. It is therefore important that the availability of these services are well publicised.

Opportunities for disclosing, and recording, this information need to be available beyond a single point in an individual's journey through the CJS or within any particular establishment or agency. In order to improve identification and needs assessments, information disclosed by a service user to any professional working in the CJS from either the statutory, voluntary or faith sectors (such as the chaplaincy), about their membership of a protected characteristic, needs to be recorded with the service users' permission, and their needs then met.

However, in some cases there may be good reason for an individual not to disclose information or for it not be recorded. For instance, if it may result in further stigmatisation and discrimination towards them in the future. It is therefore important that individuals are still free to choose not to disclose information that they are from a particular equality and minority group or for it to be shared with other agencies.

The challenge

Understanding the needs of individuals from equality and minority groups

To ensure that everyone receives fair and equal treatment, it is critical to understand the needs of equality and minority groups and identify what separate provision may be needed for them. This is likely to be different not just across different protected characteristics but within them. Indeed, one of the key things highlighted by attendees at the event was the importance of not assuming homogeneity amongst the needs of all individuals from a particular group.

Solutions

In order to appropriately identify needs it is vital that the views and experiences of service users are sought and listened to. Service user involvement should be formally incorporated into needs assessments and development of strategy. It is also important to recognise that some needs may be less obvious than others and some groups less likely to assert them. Therefore, the knowledge and experience of practitioners with a track record of working with a particular group, often from the voluntary sector, should also be engaged in delivering better needs assessments.

EXAMPLE

RECOOP's older prisoner forum,

the Working for Justice Group who have learning disabilities and HMP Stafford's **gay and bisexual men's group** are all examples of service user involvement.

See Older people (page 9) and Gay and bisexual men (page 10)



Designing and purchasing services

The challenge

Purchasing services that are appropriate to service users from equality and minority groups

Many attendees emphasised that programmes and services were not always appropriate for service

users from equality and minority groups. For instance, resettlement services are often aimed at offenders of working age and do not take into account the retirement planning, health information or grief counselling that might be required by older offenders. Offending behaviour programmes are not always appropriate for people with learning disabilities or age related cognitive decline and are often geared towards male offenders, without taking into account the different needs of women.

Solutions

Commissioning streams and programmes should therefore be designed specifically for equality and minority groups or with flexibility so that they can be adapted to meet the requirements identified at the needs assessment stage. Desistance theory²⁵ tells us that interventions must be able to meet individual's specific needs to support their journey away from crime. Doing this will not only ensure that they meet the needs of individuals from equality and minority groups but of all service users.

It is also vital that services are able to work in partnership with each other in order to provide signposting in cases where they will not be able to meet an individual's needs.

EXAMPLE

Prison Radio Association

has a dedicated programme for Gypsy and Traveller prisoners because they tend to have low literacy levels so oral communication is more appropriate.

www.prisonradioassociation.org



Delivering services

The challenge

A lack of cultural competence and understanding of how inequality and stereotypes impact upon people and how this might affect their desistance from crime

The seminar heard from several participants that staff in criminal justice agencies are not always equipped

to understand the experiences of offenders from equality and minority groups and how these might have affected both their offending history, their current behaviour and their future desistance from crime and resettlement opportunities. In particular, it was felt that there is a lack of institutional recognition about how society perceives offenders from BAME backgrounds and how this affects outcomes for them in the CJS. In some instances it was felt that CJS staff themselves, employed stereotypes and negative labels towards certain groups.

Solutions

To address this it was felt that leadership was required throughout the CJS, at national policy level all the way down to operational establishments in order to emphasise the importance of equality and diversity.

Many participants cited prison and probation officer training as an area that requires significant improvement in order to ensure cultural competence. One suggestion for improving this was to involve service users from equality and minority groups in the delivery of training so that their experiences and perspectives can be directly communicated.

EXAMPLE

RECOOP and the Working for Justice Group have both delivered training on the needs of the groups they work with and represent (see Section 2). Statutory agencies should consider including sessions such as these in core staff training.

See Older people (page 9) and People with a learning disability (page 11)

The challenge

Staff and volunteer diversity does not reflect the diversity of service users

This was highlighted as a challenge for both statutory criminal justice agencies and voluntary sector organisations alike. It was felt by participants that there was more likely to be trust in the CJS if the make up of staff and volunteers reflected that of its service users. The Young Review²⁶ found that where community representatives were involved in criminal justice settings and

interventions offenders' experiences were improved and they had more confidence in decision making processes and other procedures.²⁷

Solutions

One participant highlighted their organisation's efforts to recruit Muslim volunteers in order to better reflect their service user group and ensure that individuals working with those service users had a better understanding of their life experiences. Partnership working with voluntary and community organisations that work specifically with particular equality and minority groups and are often led by individuals from those groups, can address this issue. Similarly, working with offenders and ex-offenders themselves to deliver services via peer support can overcome this challenge.



Reviewing services

The challenge

Getting the full picture from statistics

The CJS collects a vast amount of quantitative data on its services, interventions and their outcomes. However it was felt by attendees that this quantitative data, while giving clear statistics on what is happening in the system, is unable to tell us why. Participants felt that despite data pointing to poor outcomes for certain equality and minority groups the same systems and the issues that they create are repeated time and again, rather than learning from what works, what does not, and the reasons for this.

Solutions

In order to address this it was felt that there needed to be improved sharing of good practice with regards to working with equality and minority groups, which is fed into the needs assessment stage of the commissioning cycle.

It was suggested that more qualitative information that draws on service user and practitioner experiences is needed to give a full and complete understanding of the success of services and interventions.

Conclusion

The seminar highlighted a wide variety of good practice and innovation taking place to ensure that the needs and legal rights of people from minority and equality groups within the CJS are addressed. This activity is taking place in both the voluntary and statutory sectors and in many cases is the result of excellent partnership working between the two.

However it also highlighted that there is striking over-representation of some groups with protected characteristics within the CJS and that many minority and equality groups experience significantly worse outcomes than other service users. While some progress is being made towards addressing these issues serious challenges remain. We hope that the learning points and solutions identified by participants at the seminar and presented in this report will support voluntary organisations, statutory services, commissioners and policy makers to overcome these challenges.



Further resources

Statistics on the CJS

- The Bromley Briefings – Prison Factfile is a compilation of criminal justice statistics published by the Prison Reform Trust quarterly. www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile

People from BAME backgrounds in the CJS

- The Young Review into improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the CJS. www.youngreview.org
- Clinks resources on people from BAME backgrounds in the CJS. www.clinks.org/criminal-justice/black-asian-minority-ethnic-bame
- The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain Traveller equality project. www.irishchaplaincy.org.uk/Groups/160519/Irish_Chaplaincy_in/Our_Work/Traveller_Equality/Traveller_Equality.aspx
- The StopWatch coalition works to: promote effective, accountable and fair policing; inform the public about the use of stop and search; develop and share research on stop and search and alternatives; organise awareness raising events and forums; and provide legal support challenging stop and search. www.stop-watch.org

Women in the CJS

- Clinks resources on women in the CJS. www.clinks.org/criminal-justice/women
- The women and girls at risk alliance is focused on bringing the voices of women and girls at risk to a central place in the policy agenda. www.lankellychase.org.uk/initiatives/women_and_girls_at_risk
- Women Centred Working is an initiative to encourage the design and delivery of more effective services for women facing multiple disadvantages. www.womencentredworking.com

Young people and young adults in the CJS

- Clinks resources on young people and young adults in the CJS. www.clinks.org/criminal-justice/young-people-and-young-adults
- The T2A Alliance evidences and promotes distinct and effective approaches for young adults throughout the criminal justice process. www.t2a.org.uk

People with disabilities in the CJS

- Working for Justice is a group of people with learning disabilities that helps the CJS to support people with learning disabilities better. See more at www.keyring.org/cjs including Examples of Easy Read Publications used in the Criminal Justice System.
- LDD Navigator website about learning disabilities and difficulties in the Criminal Justice System. The website includes screening questions on how to assess people's needs, and lots of resources and information. www.iddnavigator.org.uk
- National Autistic Society resources on the CJS and autism. www.autism.org.uk/working-with/criminal-justice

Older people in the CJS

- RECOOP's Online Resource Library on older offenders (registration required but free to join). www.recoop.org.uk

LGBT people in the CJS

- The Bent Bars Project is a letter-writing project for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, gender-variant, intersex, and queer prisoners in Britain. The project aims to develop stronger connections and build solidarity between LGBT communities outside and inside prison walls. www.bentbarsproject.org

End notes

- 1 Protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex, Sexual orientation.
- 2 NOMS (2013) 'Offender Equalities Annual Report 2012-2013', Online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/noms-offender-equalities-annual-report-2012-2013> p7.
- 3 Mullen, J. (2014) 'The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System, Final Report' Online: <http://www.youngreview.org/reports> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p21.
- 4 Prison Reform Trust (2014) 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile, Autumn 2014' Online: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p41.
- 5 Mullen, J. (2014) 'The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System, Final Report' Online: <http://www.youngreview.org/reports> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p20.
- 6 Prison Reform Trust (2014) 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile, Autumn 2014' Online: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p5.
- 7 Ibid p6
- 8 Ibid p7
- 9 Williams, H. (2012) 'Repairing Shattered Lives: Brain injury and its implications for criminal justice, Transitions to Adulthood Alliance' Online: <http://www.t2a.org.uk/new-t2a-report-underlines-risks-to-young-people-with-brain-injuries/> p3.
- 10 Prison Reform Trust (2014) 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile, Autumn 2014' Online: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p35.
- 11 Ibid p55
- 12 Ibid p61
- 13 www.bentbarsproject.org
- 14 Mullen, J. (2014) 'The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System, Final Report' Online: <http://www.youngreview.org/reports> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p24.
- 15 Prison Reform Trust (2014) 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile, Autumn 2014' Online: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile> (last accessed 12.03.2015) p57.
- 16 Mullen, J. (2014) 'The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System, Final Report' Online: <http://www.youngreview.org/reports> (last accessed 12.03.2015).
- 17 Ibid
- 18 www.stonewall.org.uk/at_home/sexual_orientation_faqs/2694.asp
- 19 Based on the prison population in the week of 27 February 2015 online: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2015
- 20 www.keyring.org
- 21 www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/ProjectsResearch/Learningdisabilitiesanddifficulties
- 22 www.rethink.org
- 23 www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/ProjectsResearch/Mentalhealth/TroubledInside/BradleyReport
- 24 www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/projectsresearch/women/corstonreport
- 25 Drinkwater, N. (2013) 'Introducing Desistance: A guide for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Organisations' Online: <http://www.clinks.org/resources-dij-desistance> (last accessed 12.03.2015)
- 26 www.youngreview.org
- 27 Mullen, J. (2014) 'The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System, Final Report', Online: <http://www.youngreview.org/reports> (last accessed 12.03.2015) pp35-6.



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