Workshop:
Advice to courts, case allocation, risk assessment and sentence planning

Market Engagement – 11th September 2018
Laura Fairweather & Roz Evenden

Protecting and advancing the principles of justice
Advice to Courts

• The National Probation Service (NPS) will continue to hold the statutory responsibility for advice to Courts

• The drive to reduce the number of full Pre Sentence Reports (PSRs) remains

• There has been a significant reduction in the number of PSPRs requested (22% fewer in 2016 – 2017 compared with 2012 – 2013)

• The NPS has an ongoing improvement programme which is aimed at improving quality of PSR, standard templates for short format reports and oral reports

• An Effective Proposal Framework has been introduced and is being used in many NPS Divisions

• Providers will continue to be responsible for providing information on progress of sentences supervised by them and breach packs for the enforcement proceedings

• Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation have reported that the NPS and Sentencers are not always aware of the current provision locally

• Confidence in community sentences needs to improve
Workstream; Advice to Courts, Case Allocation, Risk Assessment & Sentence Planning

Questions

• What role can providers play in improving advice to court?

• How could providers communicate and exchange information quickly and efficiently with report writers given the tight timescales involved?

• How can providers develop constructive and meaningful relationships with sentencers that improves the level of confidence in the delivery of community sentences and post sentence compliance with the sentence?

• What role could providers play in increasing public and Sentencers confidence in community sentences?
Workstream; Advice to Courts, Case Allocation, Risk Assessment & Sentence Planning

Case Allocation, Risk Assessment & Sentence Planning

• The NPS will continue to be responsible for the allocation of cases and there are no plans to change the cohort of offenders retained by the NPS or allocated to the providers

• New guidelines and criteria are planned in relation to the type and level of risk and needs assessments

• Contract compliance, Operational Assurance Audits and HMIP inspections have found that sentence plans have lacked quality by not identifying or addressing all the risk and needs of an offender

• Findings have shown that often reviews have not taken place, needs and objectives that have been identified in the initial assessment have not been acted upon during the sentence.

• There has an inconsistent approach to the assessment of standalone UPW requirements with a lack of regard to identifying ETE needs which could be addressed by using up to 20% of the hours

• Evidence supports the practice of involving the service user/individual in the assessment process can lead to better outcomes.

• Risk Review is not being used effectively and Risk Escalation has attracted a number of concerns

• Serious Further Offence reviews reveal that in some cases a change in circumstances and behaviour that should have instigated a review has not happened and acted upon.
Questions

What system improvement would assist the timeliness and quality of case allocations?

What should the new guidelines and criteria contain for the assessment of risk and needs?

Do we need to review or introduce National Standards?

What role could providers play in ensuring service users input to sentence planning?

How can we ensure consistency in Sentence Planning for stand alone Orders?

What improvements can be made to the risk review and escalation or de-escalation processes and practice?

How can we ensure the learning from SFOs is implemented?
Important points to note

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