



Summary

This analysis assessed the impact on re-offending of women who participated in the CHANGES (Creating Hope Achieving New Goals Experiencing Success) programme, a women's community service provided by Nottingham Women's Centre.

The one year proven re-offending rate¹ for 80² offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme was 14%, compared with 18% for a matched control group of similar offenders. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference is not significant³; suggesting that at this stage there is insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion about the impact of persons who participated in the CHANGES programme on re-offending. However, the results of the analysis do not mean that the CHANGES programme failed to make an impact on re-offending.

A regional analysis was also performed with Nottingham being located in the East Midlands area. The one year proven re-offending rate¹ for 79⁴ offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre was also 14%, compared with 18% for a matched control group of similar offenders from the East Midlands area only. As with the matched control group of similar offenders from England and Wales, statistical significance testing has shown that this difference is not statistically significant⁵.

What you can say: There is insufficient evidence at this stage to draw a conclusion about the impact of persons who participated in the CHANGES programme on re-offending.

What you cannot say: This analysis shows that persons who participated in the CHANGES programme decreased proven re-offending by 13 percentage points, or by any other amount.

¹ The **one year proven re-offending rate** is defined as the proportion of offenders in a cohort who commit an offence in a one year follow-up period which was proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning during the one year follow-up or in a further six month waiting period. The one year follow-up period begins when offenders leave custody, start their court sentence, or from receipt of their caution.

² 80 individuals were matched from a cohort of 130 individuals, whose details were sent to the Justice Data Lab, as described on page 4 of this report.

³ The difference was non-significant, $p = 0.23$. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

⁴ 79 individuals were matched from a cohort of 130 individuals, whose details were sent to the Justice Data Lab, as described on page 4 of this report. 1 individual from the national analysis did not match to individuals in the regional control group.

⁵ The difference was non-significant, $p\text{-value} = 0.34$. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

Introduction

The CHANGES programme was delivered from Nottingham Women's Centre - a community based charity that was established in the early 1970s. Nottingham Women's Centre is run by women, for women. It exists to help women to achieve their aims, become stronger and more independent, and to provide a safe and supportive environment in which women can do this. It runs a regular programme of training courses and other support services from within the Centre, making it a 'one-stop shop' for women in Nottingham. The services are available to all women, without exclusion.

In 2010 the service (CHANGES Project) received 2 years' worth of funding from the Corston Independent Funders Coalition as part of the Women's Diversionary Scheme aimed at preventing women from re-offending and receiving short custodial sentences. Nottingham Women's Centre offered support based on each woman's individual needs, within the 9 resettlement pathways highlighted by Baroness Corston's report⁶, which was based on vulnerable women in the criminal justice system. The 9 resettlement pathways are; Accommodation; Attitudes, Thinking & Behaviour; Education; Finance, Benefit & Debt; Family & Children; Health; Substance Misuse; Abuse; Prostitution. After a referral was received, they would carry out an initial assessment of the woman's needs alongside those highlighted by their Offender Manager. Depending on the number of needs highlighted the caseworkers would work supporting the woman from 1 month to more than 12 months in some cases. The team consisted of caseworkers, a welfare rights worker and a facilitator for basic literacy and numeracy skills. There were also two offender managers co-located at the Centre, where they also saw women for their general reporting appointments. Alongside this team, Nottingham Women's Centre offered weekly clinics for substance abuse support; sexual health screening and advice and parenting. Also based in the Centre were Women's Aid; Rape Crisis; Roshni; Women's Counselling Service and OFSTED approved childcare. The WEA (Worker's Educational Association) offered various courses that the women could access, including: Building Self Confidence; Counselling Skills; Computing (from beginners to ECDL) and Level 1 & 2 in English and Maths. They could offer unpaid work placements in admin; gardening; painting and in childcare.

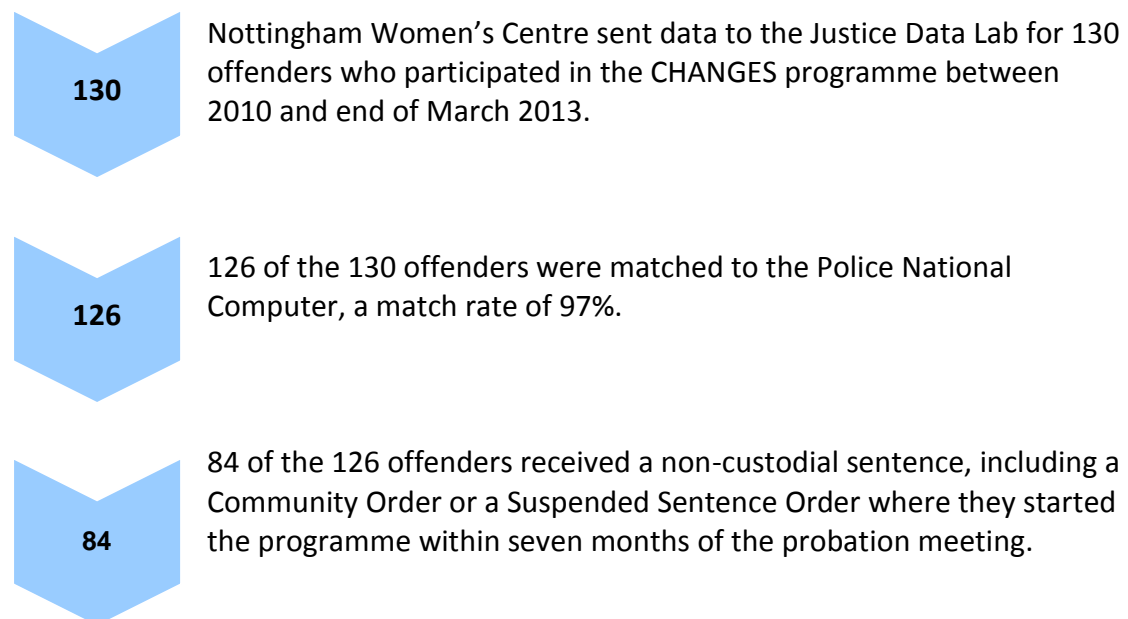
The largest percentage of referrals into the CHANGES Project came from the Nottinghamshire Probation Trust, but also included some from the Adult Offending Team (AOT) and the Criminal Justice Intervention Team (CJIT). The majority of the women they worked with received Community Supervision Orders ranging from 6 - 24 months, along with a few with Suspended Sentence Orders. Women were generally referred into the service soon after having their initial Probation appointment. There were some women who were referred from the field teams and they often came to the project further into their sentence. The women from AOT and CJIT were generally referred later, sometimes whilst they were attending clinics at the Centre for sexual health or substance misuse. There were also a few self referrals from women who had offended in the past and felt they were at risk of re-

⁶ www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/corston-report-march-2007.pdf

offending, but weren't currently on any order from court. The criteria for accessing the service were that the woman had committed an offence and were at risk of re-offending.

The general route into the service was via the co-located Offender Managers (OM's) as the Probation Trust's aim was for them to hold all the female cases in the city. Once a woman had received her sentence, she would attend her initial probation appointment at Nottingham Women's Centre. The women would then be introduced to a member of the team and given an appointment with them for the following week, unless there was an urgent need of support (i.e. accommodation crisis). Once the woman had attended her first appointment with her caseworker, a support plan would be developed with the woman to help support her with her needs; these were reviewed regularly as circumstances could change on a weekly basis. Along with regular appointments women could drop-in for crisis support anytime.

Processing the Data

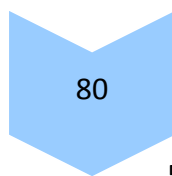


Analysis of the 42 unmatched individuals revealed the following:

- There were 18 individuals who participated in the programme but the given start date for the programme was almost a year after the index date.
- There were 6 individuals who did not have a community order or suspended sentence order for a proven offence, according to the administrative datasets.
- There were 4 individuals who self-referred onto the programme with their previous offence occurring more than a year before they started the programme.
- There were 4 individuals who re-offended before they completed the programme.

- There were 5 individuals who could not be included in the analysis for modelling purposes. These individuals could not be included in the analysis as they had criminal histories that were significantly different from the remainder of the matched group, in that they had much more complex criminal histories compared to the matched group. In order to allow for the statistical modelling to work, and achieve reasonable matching quality it was necessary to remove these 5 individuals at this stage. The 5 individuals did not re-offend in the one year follow up period.
- Sentences could not be found on the administrative datasets for the remaining 5 individuals.

Creating a Matched Control Group



Of the 84 offender records for which re-offending data was available, 80 could be matched to offenders with similar characteristics, but who did not participate in the programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre. In total the matched control group consisted of 53,643 offender records.

In the regional analysis, 79 of the 84 offender records for which re-offending data was available could be matched to offenders with similar characteristics, but who did not participate in the programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre. The regional matched control group consisted of 4,642 offender records from the East Midlands region.

The Annex B provides information on the similarity between the treatment and control groups. Further data on the matching process is available upon request.

As this analysis refers to those that participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre after the start of a community sentence or a suspended sentence, additional checks were imposed on the control group to ensure that the matched individuals had similar characteristics. All members of the matched control group could not have committed a proven re-offence before the intervention start date for the matched Nottingham Women's Centre counterparts. Any matches where the control group had committed a proven re-offence prior to the intervention start date of the Nottingham Women's Centre counterpart were excluded from the analysis.

Results

The one year proven re-offending rate¹ for 80² offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre was 14%. This compares to 18% for a matched control group of similar offenders. (see Figure 1).

There were similar results for the regional analysis, where the one year proven re-offending rate¹ for 79⁴ offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's centre was 14%. This compares to 18% for a matched regional (East Midlands) control group of similar offenders (see Figure 2).

Figures 1 and 2 presents the 95 per cent confidence intervals for the re-offending rates of both groups, i.e. the range in which we can be 95 per cent sure that the true re-offending rate for the groups lie. For the analyses we can be confident that the true difference in re-offending between the treatment and control groups is

- between a 13 percentage point reduction and a 3 percentage point increase for the national analysis
- between a 13 percentage point reduction and a 5 percentage point increase for the regional analysis

These ranges are based on comparing each set of confidence intervals showed in Figures 1 and 2.

However, because both these differences cross 0, we cannot be sure either way that participating in the CHANGES programme led to a reduction or an increase in re-offending and thus cannot draw a firm conclusion about its impact. It is important to show confidence intervals because both the treatment and matched control groups are samples of larger populations; the re-offending rate is therefore an estimate for each population based on a sample, rather than the actual rate.

Figure 1: The best estimates for the one year proven re-offending rate for offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's centre, and a matched national (England and Wales) control group

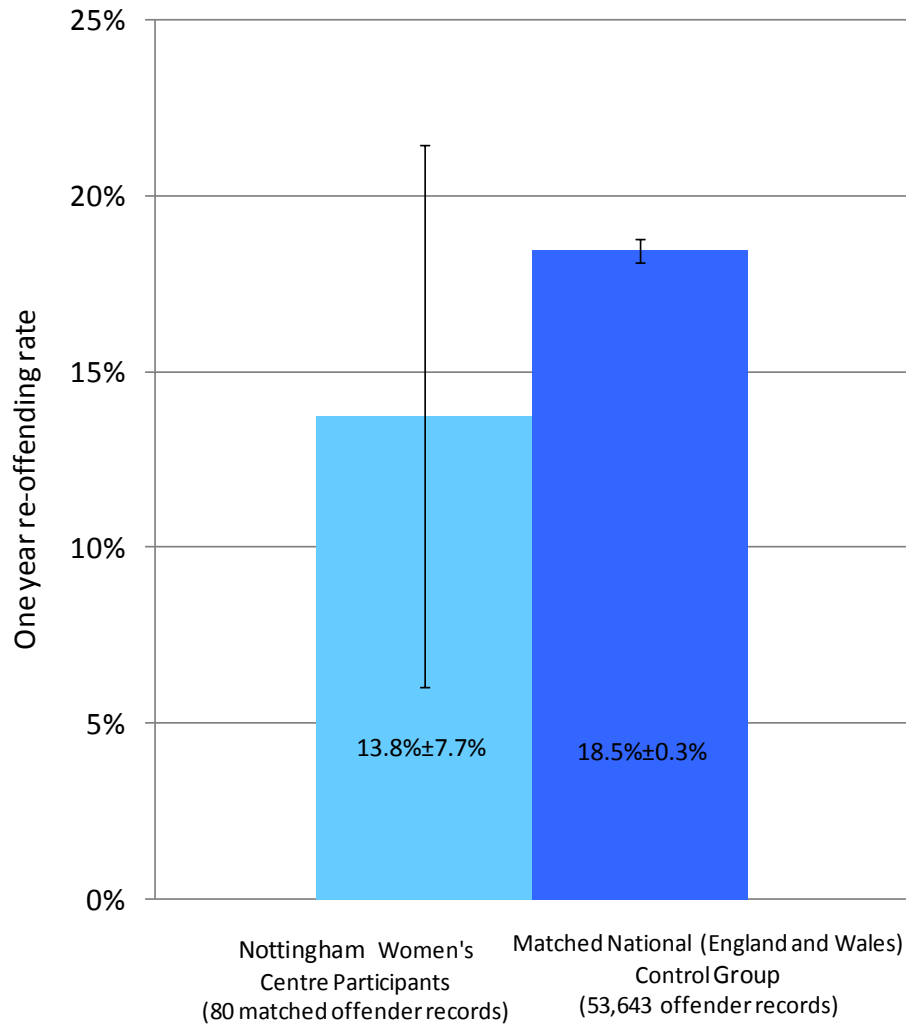
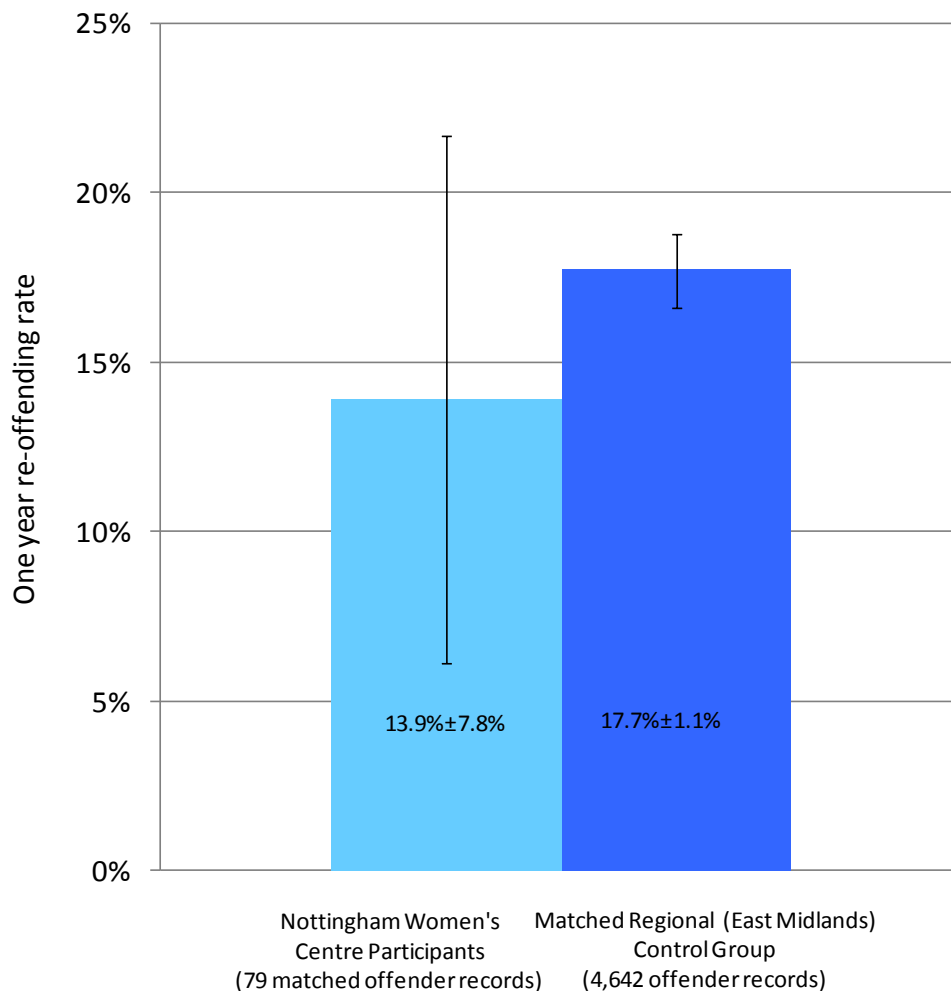


Figure 2: The best estimates for the one year proven re-offending rate for offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's centre, and a matched regional (East Midlands) control group



In both cases, the confidence intervals are quite wide; this is to be expected when the size of the treatment group (in this case, participants in the CHANGES programme) is small. It is important to show confidence intervals because both the treatment and matched control groups are samples of larger populations; the re-offending rate is therefore an estimate for each population based on a sample, rather than the actual rate. The precision of this estimate could be improved if the size of the Nottingham Women's Centre programme group used in the analysis was increased. It is recommended that the analysis is repeated on a larger sample⁷, including previous years of information, and when additional years of data become available.

⁷ For the difference of the one year proven re-offending rates to be statistically significant for this report, a minimum size of 713 individuals participating in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's centre would need to be in the matched treatment group. The figure is 1,467 for the regional analysis.

Additional proven re-offending measures

Frequency of re-offending

The frequency of one year proven re-offending⁸ for 80² offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's centre was 0.30 offences per individual, compared with 0.49 per individual in the matched control group. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the frequency of re-offending is not statistically significant⁹.

Similarly, in the regional analysis, the difference in the frequency of one year proven re-offending⁷ between the 79⁴ offenders participating in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre and the matched regional control group is not statistically significant¹⁰ (0.30 offences per individual compared with 0.47 per individual respectively).

Time to re-offending

The average time to the first offence within a year of the start of the probation sentence for the 11 individuals who were matched and re-offended, after participating in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women's Centre was 206 days. This compares to 158 days for the 13,035 individuals who re-offended from the matched control group. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the time to first re-offence within a year is not statistically significant¹¹.

For the regional analysis, the difference in the time to first re-offence within a year is also not statistically significant¹². For the 11 individuals who were matched and re-offended, the average time to the first offence within a year, after participating in the CHANGES programme was 206 days and for the 964 individuals who re-offended from the matched control group it was 159 days.

Both of the above results are in line with the findings around the indicator of one year proven re-offending; the subject of this report. The same caveats and limitations apply to these findings, which are described below.

⁸ The **frequency of one year proven re-offending** is defined as the number of re-offences committed in a one year follow-up period which were proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning during the one year follow-up or in a further six month waiting period. The one year follow-up period begins when offenders leave custody, start their court sentence, or from receipt of their caution.

⁹ The p-value for this significance test was 0.12. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

¹⁰ The p-value for this significance test was 0.19. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

¹¹ The p-value for this significance test was 0.19. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

¹² The p-value for this significance test was 0.20. Statistical significance testing is described on page 10 of this report.

Annex A

Caveats and Limitations

The statistical methods used in this analysis are based on data collected for administrative purposes. While these include details of each offender's previous criminal, benefit and employment history alongside more basic offender characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity, it is possible that other important contextual information that may help explain the results has not been accounted for.

In particular, in these analyses we have been unable to statistically control for the 9 resettlement pathways mentioned in Baroness Corston's report (Accommodation; Attitudes, Thinking & Behaviour; Education; Finance, Benefit & Debt; Family & Children; Health; Substance Misuse; Abuse; Prostitution). This is important as Nottingham Women's Centre highlight which of these needs are important to each woman in the hope that once a woman has addressed these issues it can reduce the likelihood of them re-offending. The control group against which re-offending rates for those participating in the CHANGES programme have been compared will therefore include offenders both with and without the specific needs that Nottingham Women's centre are seeking to address. It is also possible that there are additional underlying characteristics about the individuals included in the analysis which were not captured by the data, for example attendance at other interventions targeted at offenders, that may have impacted re-offending behaviour. Therefore, there remains a possibility that any difference in re-offending behaviour after matching reflects differences in underlying characteristics between the two groups, which are not recorded in the data, rather than differences in re-offending behaviour.

Many organisations that work with offenders will look to target specific needs of individuals; for example improving housing, or employability. However, how the organisations select those individuals to work with could lead to selection bias, which can impact on the direction of the results. For example; individuals may self select into a service, because they are highly motivated to address one or more of their needs. This would result in a positive selection bias, meaning that for these persons we would generally expect a better re-offending outcome as they are more motivated. Alternatively, some organisations might specifically target persons who are known to have more complex needs and whose attitudes to addressing their needs are more challenging. This would result in a negative selection bias, meaning that for these persons we would generally expect a poorer re-offending outcome as they are not motivated. However, factors which would lead to selection bias in either direction are not represented in our underlying data, and cannot be reflected in our modelling. This means that all results should be interpreted with care, as selection bias cannot be accounted for in analyses.

Furthermore, only 80 (79 in the regional analysis) of the 130 offenders originally shared with the MoJ were in the final treatment group. The section "Processing the Data" outlines key steps taken to obtain the final group used in the analysis. In many analyses, the creation of a matched control group will mean that some individuals,

who will usually have particular characteristics – for example a particular ethnicity, or have committed a certain type of offence, will need to be removed to ensure that the modelling will work. Steps will always be taken at this stage to preserve as many individuals as possible, but due to the intricacies of statistical modelling some attrition at this stage will often result. As such, the final treatment group may not be representative of all offenders who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women’s Centre. In all analyses from the Justice Data Lab, persons who have ever been convicted of sex offences will be removed, as these individuals are known to have very different patterns of re-offending.

The re-offending rates included in this analysis **should not** be compared to the national average, nor any other reports or publications which include re-offending rates – including those assessing the impact of other interventions. The re-offending rates included in this report are specific to the characteristics of those persons who participated in the CHANGES programme provided by Nottingham Women’s centre, and could be matched. Any other comparison would not be comparing like for like.

For a full description of the methodology, including the matching process, see www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/justice-data-lab/justice-data-lab-methodology.pdf.

Assessing Statistical Significance

This analysis uses statistical testing to assess whether any differences in the observed re-offending rates are due to chance, or if the intervention is likely to have led to a real change in behaviour. The outcome of the statistical testing is a value between 0 and 1, called a ‘p-value’, indicating the certainty that a real difference in re-offending between the two groups has been observed. A value closer to 0 indicates that the difference in the observed re-offending rates is not merely due to chance. For example, a p-value of 0.01 suggests there is only a 1 per cent likelihood that any observed difference in re-offending has been caused by chance.

For the purposes of the analysis presented in this report, we have taken a p-value of up to 0.05 as indicative of a real difference in re-offending rates between the treatment and control groups.

The confidence intervals in the figure are helpful in judging whether something is significant at the 0.05 level. If the confidence intervals for the two groups do not overlap, this indicates that there is a real difference between the re-offending rates.

Annex B

Table 1: Characteristics of offenders in the treatment and national (England and Wales) control group

	Treatment Group	Matched Control Group	Standardised Difference
Number in group	80	53,643	
Ethnicity			
White	74%	74%	0
Black	20%	20%	0
Asian, Other + Unknown ¹	6%	6%	-1
Nationality			
UK Citizen	63%	60%	4
Unknown Nationality	38%	40%	-4
Gender			
Proportion that were female	100%	100%	0
Age			
Mean age at Index Offence	33	33	-1
Mean age at first contact with CJS	23	24	-2
Index Offence²			
Violent offences including robbery	34%	34%	-1
Theft and handling	20%	19%	3
Fraud and Forgery	18%	18%	0
Drugs related ³	14%	13%	2
Miscellaneous ⁴	9%	9%	0
Other	6%	8%	-6
Type of Sentence			
Individuals on community sentences	66%	66%	0
Individuals on Suspended sentences	34%	34%	0
Criminal History⁵			
Mean Copas Rate	-1.61	-1.63	3
Mean total previous offences	10	9	5
Mean previous criminal convictions	4	4	4
Mean previous custodial sentences	0	0	7
Mean previous court orders	2	1	9
Employment and Benefit History			
In P45 employment (year prior to conviction)	28%	28%	-1
In P45 employment (month prior to conviction)	18%	18%	-1
Claiming Out of Work Benefits (year prior to conviction) ⁶	74%	72%	4
Claiming Job Seekers Allowance (year prior to conviction)	28%	26%	2
Claiming Incapacity Benefit and/or Income Support (year prior to conviction)	56%	55%	3
Notes:			
1 Groups combined due to low numbers			
2 Index Offence is based on OGRS categories. Further details on make-up of categories available upon request.			
3 Drug related offences including importation, exportation, possession, and supply of drugs.			
4 Miscellaneous offences including Burglary, Criminal or Malicious damage and Motoring offences, including theft of			

and from Vehicles
5 All excluding Penalty Notices for Disorder. All prior to Index Offence.
6 Out of Work Benefits include people on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefits (IB) and Income Support (IS) but it does not count people whose primary benefit is Carer's Allowance (CA).
All figures (except mean copas rate) are rounded to the nearest whole number, this may mean that percentages do not sum to 100%.
Standardised Difference Key
Green - the two groups were well matched on this variable (-5% to 5%)
Amber - the two groups were reasonably matched on this variable (6% to 10% or -6% to -10%)
Red - the two groups were poorly matched on this variable (greater than 10% or less than -10%)

Table 2: Characteristics of offenders in the treatment and Regional (East Midlands) control group

	Treatment Group	Matched Control Group	Standardised Difference
Number in group	79	4,642	
Ethnicity			
White	73%	75%	-2
Black	20%	20%	0
Asian, Other + Unknown ¹	6%	5%	4
Nationality			
UK Citizen	62%	61%	2
Unknown Nationality	38%	39%	-2
Gender			
Proportion that were female	100%	100%	0
Age			
Mean age at Index Offence	33	33	-1
Mean age at first contact with CJS	23	24	-2
Index Offence²			
Violent offences including robbery	34%	34%	0
Theft and handling	20%	19%	3
Fraud and Forgery	18%	17%	1
Drugs related ³	13%	13%	-1
Miscellaneous ⁴	9%	9%	0
Other	6%	8%	-5
Type of Sentence			
Individuals on community sentences	66%	66%	-1
Individuals on Suspended sentences	34%	34%	1
Criminal History⁵			
Mean Copas Rate	-1.64	-1.62	-2
Mean total previous offences	9	10	-5
Mean previous criminal convictions	4	4	-6
Mean previous custodial sentences	0	0	-2
Mean previous court orders	1	1	3
Employment and Benefit History			
In P45 employment (year prior to conviction)	28%	30%	-4
In P45 employment (month prior to conviction)	18%	19%	-3
Claiming Out of Work Benefits (year prior to conviction) ⁶	73%	72%	3
Claiming Job Seekers Allowance (year prior to conviction)	28%	26%	3
Claiming Incapacity Benefit and/or Income Support (year prior to conviction)	56%	55%	2
Notes:			
1 Groups combined due to low numbers			
2 Index Offence is based on OGRS categories. Further details on make-up of categories available upon request.			
3 Drug related offences including importation, exportation, possession, and supply of drugs.			
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All figures (except mean copas rate) are rounded to the nearest whole number, this may mean that percentages do not sum to 100%.
Standardised Difference Key
Green - the two groups were well matched on this variable (-5% to 5%)
Amber - the two groups were reasonably matched on this variable (6% to 10% or -6% to -10%)
Red - the two groups were poorly matched on this variable (greater than 10% or less than -10%)

We assess whether the treatment group and the matched control group are balanced and well matched through a comparison of the standardised differences generated for every variable included in the matching process.

Table 1 shows that the two groups were reasonably matched on most variables found to have associations with receiving treatment and/or re-offending. The standardised differences are highlighted as amber (i.e. between 6% to 10% or -6% to -10%) in a few cases. Similarly for the regional analysis, Table 2 shows that the two groups were reasonably matched on most variables found to have associations with receiving treatment and/or re-offending. The standardised differences are highlighted as amber (i.e. between 6% to 10% or -6% to -10%) in one case, suggesting that the control groups could have been slightly better matched in these cases, but were still indicative of a control group who exhibit similar characteristics.

Annex C

Glossary of terms

95% Confidence Intervals

If we were to repeat this analysis numerous times then 95% of the time the confidence intervals surrounding the re-offending measure would contain the true mean.

Copas Rate

The Copas rate controls for the rate at which an offender has built up convictions throughout their criminal career. The higher the rate, the more convictions an offender has in a given amount of time.

Community Sentence

This term refers to all court orders except suspended sentence orders and deferred sentences which may have a custodial component to the sentence.

Custodial Sentence

An individual is sentenced to serve time in custody as a result of being convicted of an offence.

Follow-up period

This refers to the time period of which re-offending is measured from the index date of the index offence. This is 12 months for the one year follow-up period.

Frequency of one year proven re-offending

The number of re-offences committed in a one year follow-up period which were proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning during the one year follow-up or in a further six month waiting period. The one year follow-up period begins when offenders leave custody, start their court sentence, or from receipt of their caution.

Index Date

The set point from when proven re-offences are measured. This is defined as the date of prison discharge, date of court conviction for non-custodial sentences, date of receipt for a caution, reprimand or final warning or the date of a positive drug test.

Index Offence

The offence of which an individual has been convicted of, and consequently the re-offending behaviour will be measured from.

One year proven re-offending rate

The proportion of offenders in a cohort who commit an offence in a one year follow-up period which was proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution,

reprimand or warning during the one year follow-up or in a further six month waiting period. The one year follow-up period begins when offenders leave custody or start their probation sentence.

P-value

A value between 0 and 1 of which indicates the certainty that a real difference in re-offending between the two groups has been observed. Statistical significance testing is described on page 14 of this report.

Re-offence

An offence committed following conviction of the index offence which was proven through receipt of a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning. The first re-offence refers to the first offence committed after conviction for index offence.

Severity

The Ministry of Justice and the Home Office have developed a severity classification system to identify three tiers of offences, with Tier 1 offences being the most serious and tier 3 offences being the least serious. Annex A of the “measurements and definitions” document, which accompanies proven re-offending quarterly statistics, gives the latest classification for tier 1 and tier 2 offences – please see the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368435/proven-reoffending-definitions-measurement-oct13.pdf

Standardised Differences

The standardised differences shown in Annex B measure the effect sizes for the comparison of the treatment and control groups. Each of these effect sizes represent the quality of the matching between the two groups for each individual variable.

Suspended Sentence Order

A court order made up of the same requirements as a community order and, in the absence of breach is served wholly in the community supervised by the Probation Service.

Time to re-offending

Time to re-offending is defined as the average number of days between the index date (release date from custody or start of probation date) and the offence date of the first re-offence within the one year follow-up period described in the definitions above. This measure is only calculated for individuals that re-offended in the one year follow-up period.

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General information about the official statistics system of the United Kingdom is available from statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system

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