



This analysis looked at the re-offending behaviour of 83 adults who took part in the Making Connections mentoring programme. The results show that those who took part in the programme were less likely to re-offend in the 12 months following release from custody, and had a lower frequency of re-offences than those who did not take part. However, participants who committed a re-offence did so more quickly than non-participants.

The Making Connections mentoring programme is offered to all women approaching release into the community from HMP Send. Its aim is to improve prisoners' confidence and capability to access support, to adapt to life outside the prison, and to reduce reoffending.

This analysis of Making Connections measured proven re-offences in a one-year period for a 'treatment group' of 83 offenders who took part in the programme and for a much larger 'comparison group' of similar offenders who did not take part. These measurements were used to estimate the impact that the programme would be expected to have on the re-offending behaviour of any people who are similar to those in the analysis.

The 83 people who were eligible to be included in the main analysis were from a group of 142 records submitted to the Justice Data Lab. The effects of the programme on those who were not analysed may be different to the effects on those who were.

Overall measurements of the treatment and comparison groups

For any **100** typical people in the **treatment** group:

16 people committed a proven re-offence within a one-year period (a rate of 16%), **12 people fewer** than the comparison group.

31 proven re-offences were committed by these 100 people during the year (a frequency of 0.31 offences per person), **74 offences fewer** than in the comparison group.

75 days was the average time before a re-offender committed their first proven re-offence, **68 days sooner** than re-offenders in the comparison group.

For any **100** typical people in the **comparison** group:




28 people committed a proven re-offence within a one-year period (a rate of 28%).

106 proven re-offences were committed by these 100 people during the year (a frequency of 1.06 offences per person).

143 days was the average time before a re-offender committed their first proven re-offence.

Overall estimates of the impact of the intervention

For any **100** typical people who would receive the intervention, compared with any **100** similar people who would not receive it:

-  The number of people who would commit a proven re-offence during one year after release could be **lower by between 4 and 20 people**. This is a **statistically significant result**.
-  The number of proven re-offences committed during the year could be **lower by between 53 and 96 offences**. This is also a **statistically significant result**.
-  On average, the time before a re-offender committed their first proven re-offence could be **shorter by between 21 and 115 days**. Again, this is a **statistically significant result**.

What you can say about the one-year re-offending rate:

- ✓ "This analysis provides evidence that, for every 100 participants, the Making Connections programme may decrease the number of proven re-offenders during a one-year period by between 4 and 20 people."

What you cannot say about the one-year re-offending rate:

- ✗ "This analysis shows that the Making Connections programme reduces re-offending by 44%."

What you can say about the one-year re-offending frequency:

- ✓ "This analysis provides evidence that, for every 100 participants, the Making Connections programme may decrease the number of proven re-offences during a one-year period by between 53 and 96 offences."

What you cannot say about the one-year re-offending frequency:

- ✗ "This analysis shows that the Making Connections programme reduces the frequency of re-offending by 71%."

What you can say about the time to first re-offence:

- ✓ "This analysis provides evidence that, for participants who re-offend during a one-year period after release from custody, the Making Connections programme does not lengthen the average time to first proven re-offence. The evidence suggests that participants who re-offend may do so more quickly than those not on the programme."

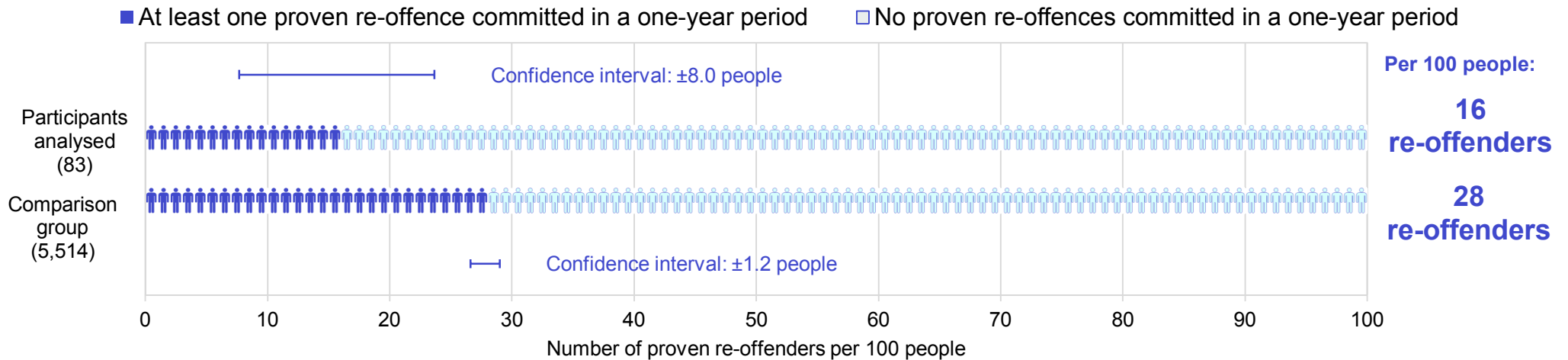
What you cannot say about the time to first re-offence:

- ✗ "This analysis shows that, for participants who re-offend during a one-year period, the Making Connections programme shortens the average time to first proven re-offence by 48%."

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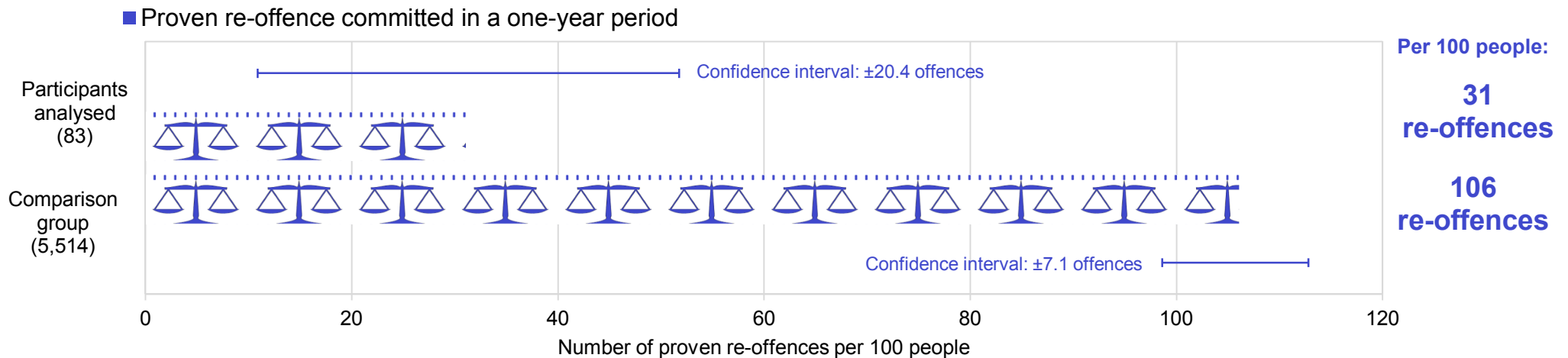
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One-year proven re-offending rate after participation in Making Connections



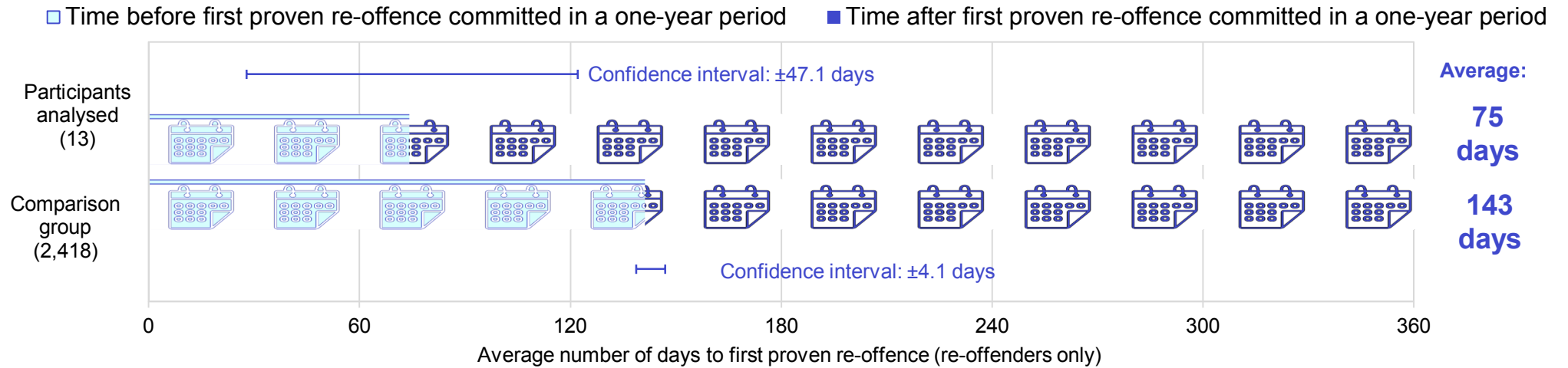
Significant difference between groups

One-year proven re-offending frequency after participation in Making Connections



Significant difference between groups

Average time to first proven re-offence after participation in Making Connections*



Significant difference between groups

*As this test on the average time to first proven re-offence was based on a small group of only 13 participants (those in the 'treatment group' who committed a proven re-offence within 12 months), the effects were verified using additional statistical tests.

The Making Connections mentoring programme: in their own words

“ Making Connections (MC) is a mentoring programme offered to all women approaching release into the community from HMP Send. Its aim is to improve prisoners’ confidence and capability to access support, to adapt to life outside the prison, and to reduce reoffending as part of the NOMS attitude, thinking and behaviour pathway.

This is achieved by positive encouragement, developing problem solving capability, signposting and connection to internal and external support, and to help build confidence that will positively impact their life and their future. This service is provided for up to six months pre-release from HMP Send. Where possible, the prisoners are linked to a community-based mentoring scheme, by either partner organisations, or in a limited number of local releases, by MC mentors, which provide continuity of care from the day of release from HMP Send. In addition, particularly where women are regarded as vulnerable, transport to their destination may be provided to minimise the risk of an early breach of licence conditions.

MC is a Chaplaincy-based programme, staffed by volunteers. The MC team promote the scheme to prisoners, and referrals are also received from the Offender Management Unit, Mental Health staff and other prison staff. All prisoners who are due to leave HMP Send and return to the community are contacted by the team six months prior to release and invited to participate in the programme. If they wish to proceed, they are matched with a volunteer mentor who then delivers a one-to-one mentoring programme until their release, adapted to the specific needs of the individual.

The data provided to the Justice Data Lab included all prisoners who joined the programme and continued until release from HMP Send, including those with learning difficulties, mental health issues, or less than full engagement. As such, those who did not sign up for the programme, prisoners who transferred to another prison part way through, or left the programme for other reasons, are not included. Neither are those who were deported at the end of their sentence.”

Making Connections' response to the Justice Data Lab analysis

“ Making Connections is grateful for the opportunity to work with the Justice Data Lab and welcomes their findings. The Government's own assessment of the prison system is that the cost of re-offending stands at around £15 billion per year (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmworpen/58/5803.htm>).

Making Connections is committed to reducing re-offending person by person through effective mentoring support and these positive results, together with the unquantifiable human impact we see at the local level, encourage us to stay on track and indeed to look for opportunities to widen its scope. The report will be a great encouragement to the mentors and to all who have supported the scheme at HMP Send.

We are particularly heartened that the statistical measurements suggest a comparatively lower one-year re-offending rate for those who participated in the Making Connections programme (16% vs 28% for non-participants) with fewer re-offences committed than their comparators in the same period (31 vs 106 re-offences, for 100 typical participants).

Against this background it is surprising that those Making Connections participants who do re-offend, appear to re-offend more quickly than their comparators (75 days vs 143 days). We will seek to analyse the re-offenders in more depth in an effort to identify whether there are any factors that are significant in this group, such as availability of /agreement to engage with post-release mentoring, or the length of time that individuals connected with the programme. We are committed to a process of continuous improvement as evidenced by the continuing development of our programme and our recent reaccreditation as an approved provider of mentoring services by NCVO, and hope that our results will encourage others working in the field of offender and ex-offender mentoring. ”

The results in detail

Two different analyses were conducted to account for different types of characteristics. The 'treatment' groups were almost identical in each analysis, but the comparison groups differed slightly:

- **National complex analysis:** a treatment group of 83 people compared with a comparison group of 5,514 from England and Wales, matched on offender demographics, employment history, criminal history and **individual risks and needs**.
- **National standard analysis:** a treatment group of 84 people compared with a comparison group of 6,203 from England and Wales, matched on offender demographics, employment history and criminal history **only**.

The complex analysis controlled for the following risks and needs: accommodation status, employment history, relationships, lifestyle and associates, drug and alcohol misuse, emotional wellbeing, thinking and behaviour, and attitudes.

A regional analysis was not completed because the offenders in the treatment group were from across England and Wales, so a control group restricted to these areas only would not have differed much from those in the national analyses. In addition, there was not a sufficient number of offenders to construct a well-matched comparison group from closed female training prisons only (i.e. the same prison category as HMP Send).

In each analysis, the **three headline measures** of one-year re-offending were analysed (see results in Tables 1-3):

1. One-year re-offending rate
2. Frequency of re-offences
3. Time to first re-offence.

Further measures regarding the severity of re-offending and of re-offences resulting in custody have not been included in this report. This is because the numbers within each category were too small to make reliable estimates for these measures.

Significant results

All 3 measures show significant results in both analyses, showing the following results:

- Both analyses provide significant evidence that **fewer participants than non-participants commit a re-offence within a one-year period** (Table 1).
- Both analyses provide significant evidence that **participants commit fewer re-offences within a one-year period than non-participants** (Table 2).
- Both analyses provide significant evidence that **participants who commit a re-offence may do so more quickly than non-participants** (Table 3).

Tables 1-3 show the overall measures of reoffending in both the complex and standard analyses.

The average time to first re-offence includes reoffenders only. Rates are expressed as percentages and frequencies expressed per person.

Table 1: Number of participants in the Making Connections programme who committed a proven re-offence in a one-year period, compared with comparison groups

Analysis	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	One-year proven re-offending rate				p-value
			Treatment group rate (%)	Comparison group rate (%)	Estimated difference (% points)	Significant difference?	
Complex	83	5,514	15.7	27.8	-20 to -4	Yes	0.00
Standard	84	6,203	15.5	27.5	-20 to -4	Yes	0.00

Table 2: Number of proven re-offences committed in a one-year period by participants in the Making Connections programme, compared with comparison groups

Analysis	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	One-year proven re-offending frequency (offences per person)				p-value
			Treatment group frequency	Comparison group frequency	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	
Complex	83	5,514	0.3	1.1	-1.0 to -0.5	Yes	0.00
Standard	84	6,203	0.3	1.1	-1.0 to -0.5	Yes	0.00

Table 3: Average time to first proven re-offence in a one-year period for participants in the Making Connections programme who committed a proven re-offence, compared with comparison groups

Analysis	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Average time to first proven re-offence within a one-year period, for re-offenders only (days)				p-value
			Treatment group time	Comparison group time	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	
Complex	13 *	2,418	75.0	142.9	-115 to -21	Yes	0.01
Standard	13 *	2,790	75.0	134.8	-107 to -13	Yes	0.02

*As these tests were based on a small group of only 13 participants (those in the ‘treatment group’ who committed a proven re-offence within 12 months), the effects were verified using additional statistical tests.

Profile of the treatment group

The Making Connections programme takes place at HMP Send, a closed female training prison in the South East of England. All prisoners who are due to leave HMP Send and return to the community are contacted by the team six months prior to release and invited to participate in the programme.

The 83 people in the national complex treatment group were between 21 and 65 years old at the beginning of their one-year re-offending period, with an average age of 35 years. 100% of them were female, 72% were ethnically white, 20% were black and at least 98% were UK nationals. The majority of offenders had a custodial sentence of 1-4 years (65%), with 28% having a custodial sentence of more than 4 years and 6% with less than 12 months.

By comparison, 46 people whose details were found on the PNC but who could not be included in the national complex treatment group were 100% female, 70% ethnically white, 22% black and at least 65% UK nationals.

Information on individual risks and needs was available for 75 people in the national complex treatment group (90%), recorded near to the time of their original conviction. Among these people, it is estimated that:

- 76% had previously misused drugs, with 35% using drugs at least once per week;
- 68% were unemployed, or would have been unemployed on release;
- 49% had significant problems with problem solving skills;
- 36% had no fixed abode;
- 28% had significant current psychological problems;
- 21% had significant problems with current misuse of alcohol;
- 21% had significant problems with their family relationships.

The data provided by Making Connections to the Justice Data Lab included all prisoners who joined the programme and continued until release from HMP Send, including those with learning difficulties, mental health issues, or less than full engagement. As such, those who did not sign up for the programme, prisoners who transferred to another prison part way through, or left the programme for other reasons, are not included. Neither are those who were deported at the end of their sentence.

Matching the treatment and comparison groups

Each of the analyses matched the treatment group to a suitable comparison group. A summary of the matching quality is as follows:

- Almost all of the characteristics used in the **national complex** model were well matched between the treatment and comparison groups. The characteristics that were reasonably matched were the age that offenders first entered the Criminal Justice System, and the COPAS rate, which indicates the rate of convictions for an offender.

In addition, the treatment and comparison groups were reasonably well matched on ethnicity characteristics (people with a White ethnicity), and poorly matched on sentence length characteristics (people with a custodial sentence of less than 12 months). However, neither of these variables were statistically significant in predicting re-offending behaviour in the national complex model.

- Almost all of the characteristics used in the **national standard** model were well matched between the treatment and comparison groups. The only characteristic to be reasonably matched was the proportion of people with a sentence length of less than 12 months.

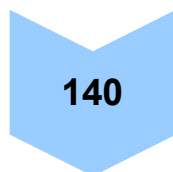
Further details of group characteristics and matching quality, including risks and needs recorded by the Offender Assessment System (OASys), can be found in the Excel Annex accompanying this report (link below).

This report is also supplemented by a General Annex (link below), which answers frequently asked questions about Justice Data Lab analyses and explains the caveats associated with them.

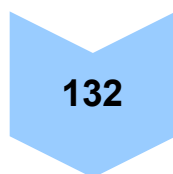
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/justice-data-lab-february-2017

Numbers of people in the treatment and comparison groups

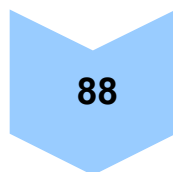
142 records, corresponding to 140 individuals, were submitted for analysis by Making Connections.
2 duplicate records were removed.



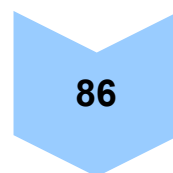
8 people (6%) were excluded from the overall treatment group as they could not be identified on the Police National Computer (PNC).



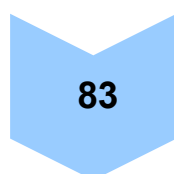
44 people (31%) were excluded because they did not have a record in the re-offending database that corresponded to their period of participation on the Making Connections programme.



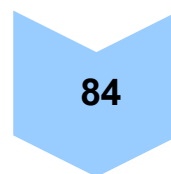
2 people (1%) were excluded because they had committed at least one proven sexual offence before starting the programme. They were excluded because the re-offending patterns of sex offenders are generally very different to those of non-sex offenders.



3 people (2%) were excluded from the complex analysis, and 2 people (1%) were excluded from the standard analysis, because they could not be matched to any suitable individuals in the comparison group.



**National Complex
treatment group**
(comparison group:
5,514 records)



**National Standard
treatment group**
(comparison group:
6,203 records)

Contact points

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