

A synthesis of literature on the effectiveness of community orders

Robert Davis, Jennifer Rubin, Lila Rabinovich,
Beau Kilmer, Paul Heaton

TECHNICAL REPORT

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Prepared for the National Audit Office

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1776 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
1200 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202-5050
4570 Fifth Avenue, Suite 600, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-2665
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Preface

This report presents the findings of a review of the literature on the effectiveness of community orders in reducing re-offending. The National Audit Office (NAO) has begun research on a range of measures used by the government to divert offenders from prison and into community-based treatment and interventions. The NAO commissioned RAND Europe to conduct this review to identify and synthesize international research about the effectiveness of community orders in reducing re-offending.

In this report, we review research on ten of the common requirements contained in community orders. Through examining reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses we draw conclusions about the state of research in the areas of unpaid work, mental health treatment, education/skills training, drug treatment, anger management, alcohol treatment, programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse, regular probation, intensive probation and cognitive/behavioural programming. We also assess the strength of the evidence on whether each of these requirements affects the likelihood of re-offending.

We find that the quality of research on the effectiveness of community-based interventions for offenders is extremely variable. However, in two areas – cognitive/behavioural programming and drug treatment – rigorous research exists that points to a reduction in the odds of re-offending. In four other areas – programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators, unpaid work, education and basic skills training and intensive probation – existing studies have not suggested that the programmes have a positive effect on recidivism. Finally, in four areas – anger management, probation, and alcohol and mental health treatment – the question of impact on re-offending remains unsettled. This review highlights the need for more rigorous research – especially randomized trials – into the requirements that constitute community orders.

This report will be of particular interest to the NAO and relevant government departments, such as the Ministry of Justice and National Probation Service. It is also relevant for policy makers as well as a wider audience concerned with the challenge of designing and implementing effective and efficient interventions to divert offenders from prison and into the community.

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For more information about RAND Europe or this document, please contact:

Dr Jennifer Rubin

RAND Europe

Westbrook Centre

Milton Road

Cambridge, CB4 1YG

Tel: +44 1223 353 329

Fax: +44 1223 358 845

Email: jkrubin@rand.org

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Executive summary

This report reviews research on the effectiveness of ten of the common requirements contained in community orders – sentences that allow offenders to remain in the community, but under special conditions or requirements. Through examining reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses we draw conclusions about the effectiveness of unpaid work, mental health treatment, education/skills training, drug treatment, anger management, alcohol treatment, programmes for spouse abusers, regular probation, intensive probation and cognitive/behavioural programming. We also assess the strength of the evidence on whether each of these requirements affects the likelihood of re-offending.

The quality of research in the criminal justice field is variable

Many of the individual studies included in the reviews and meta-analysis examined in this report do not have strong methodological design. In criminal justice research, as well as research in other fields, experimental designs are the gold standard for evaluating interventions and policies. However, experimental design remains underutilized as a research method in the field. The use of other methods –notably quasi-experimental and non-experimental designs – provides less reliable evidence on the effectiveness of interventions in reducing re-offending.

There is strong evidence that community-based cognitive/behavioural programmes and some types of drug treatment work in reducing recidivism

We find that in two areas – cognitive/behavioural programming and drug treatment – rigorous research exists that points to a reduction in the odds of re-offending. There is a clear consensus that cognitive/behavioural programmes in general are effective in reducing the likelihood of re-offending. However, study methods are often weak and there are still few studies using random assignment. Also, data on which types of programmes work best for different classes of offenders is still sparse and will require more scientifically rigorous research. In terms of drug treatment, some programmes such as methadone treatment, appear to have stronger effects than others. However, because most of the evidence originates in the USA, it is important to take contextual differences in populations and other factors into account when drawing lessons for UK policy-making.

Available evidence suggests that some community-based interventions have no positive effects in reducing recidivism

In four areas – programmes for spouse abusers, unpaid work, education and basic skills training, and intensive probation – existing studies have not suggested that the programmes have a positive effect of recidivism. However, studies have shown that some of

these, notably education and skills training, may have positive effects when implemented in prison rather than the community.

For a number of community-based interventions the evidence is inconclusive regarding their effectiveness in reducing re-offending

In four areas – anger management, probation and alcohol and mental health treatment – the question of impact on re-offending remains unsettled. This is both due to limited research in the field and to low quality of research design in existing studies. This review highlights the need for more rigorous research – especially randomized trials – into the requirements that constitute community orders.

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Community orders, authorized by the 2003 Criminal Justice Act, allow judges and magistrates to customize community sentences for each offender. The Act requires judges to incorporate one or more of twelve provisions that are congruent with the seriousness of the offence, the purposes the court wishes to achieve through sentencing, the risk of re-offending and the availability of resources in the local area. During the last three quarters of 2005, community orders comprised slightly over half of all community sentences issued.

The components of community orders include:

- Unpaid work
- Participation in specified activities
- Accredited programmes aimed at changing criminal behaviours
- Prohibition from certain activities
- Curfew
- Exclusion from certain areas
- Residency requirements
- Mental health treatment
- Drug rehabilitation
- Alcohol treatment
- Supervision treatment
- Attendance centre requirements

The most commonly-used of these has been unpaid work, accounting for two in three community orders. Next most frequent is supervision, incorporated into one in four orders.¹ According to the 2003 Act, community orders can include a requirement that the offender return to appear before a judge or magistrate periodically to encourage compliance with provisions of the order. Also, electronic monitoring must accompany curfew requirements or exclusions unless it is locally unavailable or determined to be inappropriate by the sentencing judge. Because community orders were introduced

¹ The use of community orders. *The Sentence*, 5, June, 2006.

recently, there is not yet rigorous research on the impact of the orders.² There have been assessments of some components of what now constitute community orders, including an assessment of electronic monitoring by the National Audit Office (2006) and a study of drug treatment and testing orders by the Home Office.³

We have come a long way from the “nothing works” attitude toward rehabilitation of offenders in the 1970s to a presumption that rehabilitation efforts do bear fruit and that community sentencing is preferable to imprisonment for many classes of offenders. Just as was the case when the prevailing belief was that nothing works, today’s advocates of the beliefs that interventions can be effective and that community sentencing is often best can point to research findings. But, if the research findings of the 1970s proved wrong or at least incomplete, can we trust that research backing the ideas of rehabilitation and community sentencing is scientifically rigorous and robust?

We set out to review literature on the effects on community orders for the National Audit Office. We quickly realized that, since community orders often include multiple requirements (e.g., accredited programmes could include numerous types of programmes quite different in scope and intent) we would necessarily have to conduct our literature search on more well-defined topics. Therefore, in cooperation with the NAO, we defined ten areas that would be targeted in our investigation:

Unpaid work	Mental health treatment
Education/skills training	Drug treatment
Anger management	Alcohol treatment
Programmes for domestic violence perpetrators	Regular probation
Cognitive/behavioural programming	Intensive probation

While the research focused on these as individual interventions, it is important to note that not all of them consist of only one type of treatment. So even though cognitive/behavioural programming and anger management are discrete interventions, intensive probation can encompass a number of simultaneous treatments for an offender, such as education and skills training and treatment for drug addicts. In addition, many of these programmes are not exclusively community-based interventions for offenders but are offered in prisons as well. Finally, the research available provides limited evidence on the combination of different types of intervention – for example, cognitive/behavioural programming and education and skills training – in reducing re-offending.

1.1 Criminal justice research

Rigorous evaluation is instrumental for understanding the effectiveness of social policies and programmes. In criminal justice research, as well as research in other fields,

² A major study is underway at Cambridge University, but the results will not be available for over a year.

³ *Home Office research study 212.*

(<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors212.pdf#search=%22home%20office%20drug%20testing%20treatment%20orders%22>)

experimental designs are the gold standard for evaluating interventions and policies (Weisburd et al., 2001).⁴ Experimental – randomized – studies are a research methodology whereby a programme is implemented in one group but not in another, with participants randomly assigned to the groups. When the study is complete, “the researcher can argue with confidence that if a difference has been observed between treatment and comparison group, it is likely the result of the treatment itself (since randomization has isolated the treatment effect from other possible causes)” (ibid., 54).

Other types of study methods include quasi-experimental and non-experimental design. The former also study a treatment and control groups, but these are not randomly assigned; rather, they use matching to establish equivalence between the two, previously assigned, groups. The latter uses statistical methods to isolate the effects of the intervention under scrutiny from other confounding causes (ibid.). While all three methods attempt to ensure the internal validity of a study, the consensus amongst researchers is that randomized control trials are the most reliable design for studies to assess the effectiveness of a given intervention.⁵

Even among the studies using experimental designs, it has been noted that research in this field is plagued with methodological issues. The numerous problems include:

- Small sample sizes
- Inconsistent outcome measures, sometimes relying only on offender self-report
- Lack of long-term (six months or more) follow-up periods
- Failure to specify what sanction was received by comparison groups
- High rates of programme drop-out⁶
- Inability to generalize from very selective samples to the general population of offenders

While randomized studies are considered the ‘gold standard’ in criminal justice evaluations, they remain underutilized. This is due to a number of ethical, political and

⁴ Weisburd, D., Lum, C. and Petrosino, A. (2001) Does research design affect study outcomes in criminal justice? *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 578, 50-70.

⁵ In fact, a study by Weisburd et al (2001) suggests that in criminal justice, there is a “moderate inverse relationship between the quality of a research design, defined in terms of internal validity, and the study outcomes... The weaker a design, as indicated by internal validity, the more likely was a study to report a result in favour of treatment and the less likely it was to report a harmful effect of treatment.” (pages 64 and 66).

⁶ When there is a low rate of programme completion, researchers are faced with a dilemma: To include in their analyses only offenders who completed the programme (and therefore received the full dose of the treatment) or to include all offenders *assigned* to the programme, regardless of whether they finished it. Choosing the former increases the odds that the experimental group will differ on key characteristics from control cases (because those who complete programmes typically differ substantially from those who do not). Choosing the latter alternative, however, means including in the experimental group offenders did not receive the full treatment dose. In spite of this problem, most researchers opt for the latter method.

other considerations. For example, both experimenters and criminal justice practitioners are faced with the question: “Is it ethical to allocate criminal justice sanctions or treatments on the basis of research rather than legal criteria?” (Weiburd 2000, 184). Politically, it may be unacceptable for policy-makers to develop, for example, a criminal justice experiment that tests the effectiveness of community-based sentences for certain types of offenders.⁷

While not all the individual studies in the meta-evaluations and review papers examined here have an experimental design, the research available allows for a number of conclusions to be drawn about the different community-based interventions for offenders. This report finds that in two areas – cognitive/behavioural programming and drug treatment – rigorous research exists that points to a reduction in the odds of re-offending. In four other areas – programmes for spouse abusers, unpaid work, education and basic skills training and intensive probation – existing studies have not suggested that the programmes have a positive effect of recidivism. Finally, in four areas – anger management, probation, and alcohol and mental health treatment – the question of impact on re-offending remains unsettled. This review highlights the need for more rigorous research – especially randomized trials – into the requirements that constitute community orders.

It is worth noting, however, that while the reviews examined in this report include work from the UK, Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland and other countries, the majority of studies – especially those using experimental designs – have been conducted in the USA. In many cases, programme models have migrated from one country to another, so while research studies may be conducted in different countries, the programmes being evaluated are relatively similar.

Nevertheless, the local variation in the context of interventions renders international comparisons complicated, and reviews and meta-analysis do not necessarily take adequate account of such contextual differences. To date no comparative data are available that shed light on how well programmes that are effective in one country work when they are implemented in another. In thinking about the transferability of lessons from one country to another, “(a) judgement has to be made about what matters in terms of similarity, both in terms of the intervention method itself and in terms of the context in which it is introduced. The key question, therefore, is what conditions needs to be the same and why?” (Tilley 2001, 88). Thus, when attempting any kind of ‘programme-grafting’, it is important to take account of local, contextual differences in populations and other factors.

⁷ It is also worth noting that while this method is highly valued in evaluation studies for eliminating many biases, using them does not ensure that all of the relevant features of a given context are taken into account, making the transferability of findings from one context to another a challenging issue.

2.1 **Cognitive/behavioural programming**

Background

Cognitive/behavioural therapy or treatment (CBT) attempts to change dysfunctional thought patterns. Applied to offenders, it is intended to alter criminogenic thought patterns that colour the way that offenders view the world and prevent them from successfully transitioning to socially acceptable modes of behaviour. This is based on the notion that offenders engage in thinking that is self-justifying and based on flawed assumptions about the world (e.g., “everyone is out to take advantage of me”). CBT targets the thoughts and attitudes associated with anti-social behaviour and deviant lifestyles and replaces them with more adaptive thought patterns.

According to a recent report by the U.S. National Institute of Corrections (Milkman and Wanberg 2007), there are five types of CBT in common use with offenders:

- *Strategies for self-improvement and change (SSC)*
SSC is a long-term programme for changing the behaviour of substance-abusing offenders. Key components include producing in participants a commitment to change, assessment of areas where change is needed and development of a master profile to be used as a guide for change.
- *Moral recondition therapy (MRT)*
MRT presumes that criminal behaviour stems from deficits in moral reasoning. It attempts to change participants’ self-centred thought processes to ones that encompass concern for the welfare of others and societal rules.
- *Reasoning and rehabilitation (R&R)*
This programme focuses on developing self-control, interpersonal problem-solving and prosocial attitudes. Participants are taught to consider consequences before acting and consider alternative actions through role playing, modelling and group discussions.
- *Relapse prevention therapy (RPT)*
RPT is intended to teach drug addicts to anticipate and cope with relapse. RPT includes teaching coping skills, methods for recognizing and correcting distorted

thinking, lifestyle modification and “relapse road maps” for identifying and avoiding dangerous situations.

- *Aggression replacement training (ART)*

ART is used primarily with delinquent youths to train them in what to do in conflict-producing situations using social training, what not to do in conflict-producing situations using self-control training and to consider the perspectives of others using moral reasoning.

Evaluation reviews

Over the past 25 years, CBT has been well-studied and has been the topic of numerous reviews and meta-analyses. Because of the wealth of reviews available, we include in this discussion only recent quantitative reviews conducted from 2000 on. Meta-analyses during this period have consistently found that CBT has positive effects on re-offending. Joy-Tong and Farrington (2006) examined 16 studies from the UK, USA and Canada that evaluated Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R) programmes. The studies were of varying methodological rigor. They found a significant (14%) decrease⁸ in re-offending for R&R participants, an effect that held up across studies from each of the three countries. Little (2001) reported a 23% decline in recidivism for seven MRT evaluations reviewed. Allen et al. (2001) came to similar conclusions in their quantitative analysis of MRT and R&R programmes. However, they conclude that, applying the Maryland Scale for Scientific Rigor to the studies included in their analysis, it is too early to draw firm conclusions since the methods employed in the body of available research have “numerous limitations.”

Other meta-analyses have included a diversity of CBT programmes. Pearson et al. (2002) examined a diverse array of 69 CBT and behavioural programmes. The authors reported that CBT programmes on average reduced recidivism by 30%. They found larger effect sizes⁹ for better-designed studies, evidence that the effect is a real one and not due to poor research designs. Wilson, et al. (2005) reported a similar reduction in re-offending of 20-30% relative to control groups. These meta-analyses incorporated diverse studies that varied in CBT programme types and methodological rigor, as well as other variables.

A series of meta-analyses by Lipsey and Landenberger included only well-designed studies, viz. true experimental designs or quasi-experiments in which subjects in treatment and control groups were matched or statistically controlled using personal and criminal history variables related to re-offending risk. Lipsey et al. (2001) examined 14 studies meeting stringent methodological criteria and found that that the offenders who participated in a CBT programme were only 55% as likely to re-offend as offenders in control groups.

⁸ In this study, the 14% reported decrease was determined by dividing the difference in recidivism rates between experimental and control groups by the rate for the control group. In other studies that report percentage declines in recidivism, it is not always clear whether it is defined in this way or as a decline in absolute percentage points. The former definition is more characteristic of U.S. studies while the latter is more characteristic of U.K. studies.

⁹ An effect size is a measure of the magnitude association between an independent variable (e.g., whether an offender was sentenced to drug treatment or not) and an outcome measure (e.g., number of rearrests). Effect sizes range from 0 to 1, with larger values indicating that the independent variable exerts a stronger effect on the outcome measure.

Lipsey and Landenberger (2005) reported that recidivism among CBT participants was 27% lower than among controls. Lipsey and Landenberger also noted that treatment effects were greater for programmes with more highly-trained facilitators and for demonstration programmes; this led them to suggest that treatment effectiveness is correlated with the quality of the treatment programme. The third in the series (Landenberger and Lipsey 2005) reported a 25% decrease in recidivism for participants in CBT programmes. The latter study also reported no significant differences between different modalities of CBT.

An older Home Office review (Vennard et al. 1997) is useful because – unlike the meta-analytic studies – it attempted to examine the effects of CBT for various classes of offenders, including substance abusers, violent offenders and sex offenders. The review was generally positive about the use of CBT with each of these groups of offenders, while noting the need for studies with greater scientific rigor.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy has conducted a cost-benefit analysis of programmes for offenders based on 400 research studies conducted in the USA and Canada. The analysis weighed the costs of programmes against reductions in downstream criminal justice costs resulting from lower recidivism rates. MRT and R&R CBT programmes were among those examined in the analysis. The analysis showed that CBT programmes produced approximately \$8 in savings for every \$1 spent. That translated to a bottom line of about \$2,400 in net taxpayer benefits per participant. This amount was in the low to mid-range of types of programmes included in the analysis (Aos et al. 2001).

Synthesis

The Home Office review suggests that more research is needed to establish the effectiveness of CBT programmes for offenders. Later reviews, however, are far more positive and definitive in their assessments. There is a clear consensus in the field that CBT programmes in general are effective in reducing the likelihood of re-offending. However, study methods are often weak and there are still few studies using random assignment. Also, data on which types of programmes work best for different classes of offenders is still sparse and will require more scientifically rigorous research.

2.2 Programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators

Background

Intervention programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators (also called spousal abuser or batterer programmes) became popular in the 1980s. These programmes, typically designed for small groups of 10–20 intimate partner abusers, are intended as a way to sanction offenders in a manner that is relevant to their abuse issues. They provide a sanction that encourages offenders to accept responsibility for their behaviour and at the same time try to create the conditions conducive to changing unacceptable behaviour. Early programmes for domestic violence perpetrators used a variety of approaches including couples therapy, individual therapy and peer consciousness-raising or self-help. Over time, however, as referrals to programmes for domestic violence perpetrators became more common, many adopted a psycho-educational approach that teaches offenders that domestic violence is

rooted in social norms that support sexism and inequality between men and women. Through a structured curriculum, participants are encouraged to accept responsibility for their violent behaviour and to change their attitudes and beliefs about gender roles.

The idea to place offenders in treatment groups was at once practical and conceptually useful. Group treatment programmes cost far less than individual therapy sessions would. At the same time, placing intimate partner abusers in groups permits the change agents to use the group to help alter behaviour. Since group membership is never static (people are always beginning or leaving after fulfilling their requirements), there are always experienced participants who can instruct newcomers on the importance of taking responsibility and changing their beliefs and attitudes toward gender roles. Participants, who may be used to reinforcement for abusive behaviour from members of their social networks find support for altering their beliefs from others in the group.

Evaluations of programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators have been classified into four types based on the research designs used. The earliest evaluation studies used designs that tested a single sample of programme participants before and after undergoing the programme. Lower recidivism rates after treatment were taken as evidence that the programmes were effective. Another common design in the early evaluation literature compares participants who successfully complete programmes for domestic violence perpetrators with participants who drop out prior to completion. As the field became more sophisticated, later studies began to use quasi-experimental designs in which offenders assigned to programmes for domestic violence perpetrators were compared to similar offenders not sentenced to a programme. Typically, these studies used statistical controls to try to reduce selection bias. Finally, experimental studies randomly assign offenders determined to be eligible for programmes to either attend a programme for domestic violence perpetrators or not to attend.

Evaluation reviews

With these limitations in mind, we were able to find six published reviews of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. While different reviews have come to somewhat different conclusions about the effectiveness of programmes for domestic violence perpetrators, none has suggested that programmes have a large effect on repeat intimate partner abuse. Several of the early reviews (Rosenfeld 1992; Hamberger and Hastings 1993; Cromwell and Burgess, 1996) could not come to a conclusion about programme effectiveness. Davis and Taylor (1999) computed effect sizes for six quasi-experiments and two true experiments that were available at that time. Averaging the effect sizes, the authors concluded that programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence have a moderate effect on recidivism. They particularly called attention to the fact that the effect sizes were similar for the true experiments and the quasi-experiments. If the effect was not real, the authors argued, the effect size should be seen to diminish among studies with greater rigor.

The most recent reviews also conclude that programmes for domestic violence perpetrators have an effect, albeit a small one. Babcock et al. (2004) concluded that programmes for domestic violence perpetrators have a “minimal impact on reducing recidivism,” reducing the odds of a new intimate partner assault by just 5%. The most recent review, conducted by Feder and Wilson (2005), was even less optimistic. They agreed with Babcock et al’s conclusion when looking at official measures of recidivism (new reports to the police

and/or new arrests). However, when looking at victim reports of new incidents, Feder and Wilson concluded that programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence had no effect.

Two of the reviews not only compared programmes for domestic violence perpetrators to the absence of treatment, but also compared different models of such programmes. Neither of them found *any* study that reported a difference in recidivism between different programme modalities. Babcock et al (2004) reported no differences in effect sizes when comparing feminist psycho-educational programmes with programmes using a cognitive/behavioural approach. Davis and Taylor (1999) reported no difference between couples counselling, feminist psycho-educational programmes and other models in seven studies reviewed.

Since the last review was written, another study using an experimental design has been completed (see list of reviews in Appendix B). There are now five such studies in the literature. Of the five, only one (Palmer et al. 1992) has found a clear effect of programmes for domestic violence perpetrators on recidivism. Four of the others reported no programme effect and one was ambiguous (Davis and Taylor (1999)). The one experimental study finding an effect in favour of programmes for domestic violence perpetrators (Palmer et al. 1992) is the oldest of these and had a very small sample size.

Synthesis

On the whole, then, there is little evidence at present to suggest that programmes for domestic violence perpetrators reduce re-offending. Although the largely negative findings are mainly based on studies that evaluated the feminist psycho-educational model, studies have so far failed to identify any other programme domestic violence perpetrators models that show promise of being more effective.

2.3 Drug treatment

Background

The use of the criminal justice system to direct drug-related offenders into treatment throughout Europe, North America, New Zealand and Australia has been increasingly studied in recent years. The idea behind the initial expansion of court-mandated drug treatment was that community-based approaches to rehabilitation would break the cycle of addiction, crime and repeated incarceration to which most drug-related offenders were victim. The expectation was that court-mandated drug treatment would lead both to improved outcomes for the individual offender (particularly lower recidivism) and to public gains such as reduced costs to the criminal justice system and increased public safety (Rempel et al. 2003).

Some researchers and policy-makers have questioned whether drug treatment mandated by the criminal justice system can succeed since it is coercive and therefore participants will lack the motivation of those who undergo treatment voluntarily (Hunter et al. 2005). Others, by contrast, have argued that the voluntary/coerced dichotomy fails to acknowledge the complex set of circumstances and motivations of those who enter treatment, and stress the need to examine the views of drug users about the extent to which they feel 'coerced' into treatment by the criminal justice system. Further, there is evidence

that retention in treatment is a key predictor of positive outcome, and that initial ‘coercion’ can help drug users stay in treatment longer. ‘Coercion’, some studies found, is no less effective than treatment entered into ‘voluntarily’. However “the lack of any long-term outcome studies, particularly in the UK and European context, on the effects of ‘coerced’ versus ‘voluntary’ treatment make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions at present” (ibid., 346).

Evaluation reviews

A review of international research on the effectiveness of drug treatment for drug-dependent offenders that is motivated, ordered or supervised by the criminal justice system and takes place outside prisons, states that there is limited evidence that offenders coerced into treatment inevitably have worse outcomes than those who attend treatment voluntarily (Steven et al. 2005). Several studies reviewed in this paper suggest that motivation is more important than source of referral in predicting outcome. While the focus of this review is not merely on recidivism but includes completion of treatment, ‘positive results on addictive behaviour’ and other outcomes, this finding highlights the complexity of the relationship between ‘coercion’ and motivation in determining the effectiveness of treatment.¹⁰

A significant number of studies conducted in various countries seek to assess the effectiveness of court-mandated drug treatment programmes. These studies use different indicators of effectiveness, such as recidivism, sexual risk behaviour, drug dependence and retention in and completion of programmes. The studies also vary in methodological approach; while a number use robust design, the findings of many of the studies are unreliable due to weak design, for example lack of a comparison group (Holloway et al. 2005).

Nevertheless, the available studies with strong methodological design provide interesting and useful insights into the effectiveness of court-mandated drug treatment for drug-related offenders, particularly in reducing recidivism. The UK Home Office, for example, commissioned a number of reviews and evaluations of court-mandated drug treatment for offenders. One of these, a systematic review of research on drug treatment programmes in reducing re-offending, examined studies from the UK, USA, Australia, Switzerland and other countries (ibid.). The evaluation included programmes in the criminal justice setting that aimed to reduce drug-related crime by putting drug misusers into treatment. The review found that most interventions work in reducing crime, but some are more effective

¹⁰ However, another review of three decades of research into the effectiveness of coerced substance user treatment yielded a mixed, inconsistent, and inconclusive pattern of results. Findings from some studies suggest that mandated and non-mandated clients do not differ in terms of treatment outcomes. However, other studies have found that voluntary clients have better treatment outcomes, while still others show that mandated clients are more likely to successfully complete treatment compared to voluntary clients. Finally, some earlier findings suggest that legal pressure is either unrelated or negatively related to treatment outcomes. A key weakness of the studies is that the understanding of ‘coercion’ does not commonly account for the complexities of the coercion construct. Clients who appear to enter voluntarily may in fact join treatment programmes to escape external pressure from non-legal sources. For example, “evidence suggests that some addicts view their legal mandate as significantly less influential in their decision to quit their drug habit and to seek treatment compared to pressure from their social networks” (Klag et al, 1998: p. 1783. Also: Farabee et al, 1998)

than others. The more effective interventions include methadone treatment, heroin treatment, therapeutic communities, psychosocial approaches, drug courts and probation and parole supervision. There is less evidence of success in relation to supervision and aftercare, other treatment approaches, drug testing and other criminal justice approaches. Unlike meta-analysis, this systematic review, however, does not estimate the treatment effect.

The review also found that for all studies, males allocated to the treatment programme under investigation were twice as likely as those allocated no treatment or an alternative treatment to reduce their offending. However, females were not more likely to reduce their offending. In addition, younger people appeared to be more responsive to interventions than older people. The review also found that high intensity treatments – for example, methadone treatment with higher dosage and longer length – were 50% more likely to lead to a reduction in criminal behaviour than low intensity ones. Finally, while no conclusive results were obtained on this, the review suggests that interventions have different impacts on particular target groups (such as ethnic minorities) (ibid.).

A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) in reducing illicit drug consumption, HIV risk behaviour and criminality examined twenty four relevant studies (Marsch 1998). The research demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between MMT and a reduction in all three behaviours. The author states that “[t]he effectiveness of MMT is most apparent in its ability to reduce drug-related criminal behaviours” (ibid. 515).

The study also finds that MMT seems to have negligible effects on non drug-related crime. This suggests that “treatment effects are restricted to those crimes that are associated with drug use, and that some opiate-dependent individuals may have a propensity to engage in certain criminal behaviours not directly related to drug use” (ibid., 527). While this meta-analysis does not specify whether it looks at treatments provided within the criminal justice system to sentenced offenders or only to those who volunteer or both, its conclusions nonetheless provide an insight into the impact of different types of drug-treatment on drug-related offenders.

In the United States, drug courts were established in 1989 as a diversion programme for drug offenders. The essential features of the drug courts are: “(a) integration of drug treatment and justice system case processing, (b) a non- adversarial courtroom approach, (c) random urine drug screens or other monitoring of abstinence, (d) judicial monitoring of a participants progress via status hearings, and (e) a system of sanctions and rewards for programme infractions and achievements” (Wilson et al. 2007). While drug courts are now widespread throughout the USA, their expansion has proceeded in spite of relatively limited available evidence on their effectiveness in reducing drug use and recidivism (ibid.).

Nonetheless, in a recent systematic review, the US Government Accountability Office reported that while adult drug courts lead to a reduction in recidivism while participants are on the programme, reductions in drug use have not been conclusively found. In addition, this review stated that, in terms of cost-benefit of the intervention, drug courts do not yet yield a net benefit (US General Accountability Office 2005). Another review concluded that both drug use and criminal activity are reduced while participants are on the programme (Belenko 2001). The review also found that post-programme recidivism is

also reduced, although the extent of the reduction varied across jurisdictions, possibly reflecting different follow-up periods, local law enforcement practices and client populations. Similarly, a meta-analysis of studies of drug courts conducted in 2006 also found reductions on re-offending compared to similar offenders sentenced to traditional correctional options.¹¹

Synthesis

To sum up, the available evidence seems to suggest that some types of diversion drug treatment interventions for drug offenders can reduce recidivism during and after the programme. Some programmes, such as methadone treatment, appear to have stronger effects than others. There is limited research on the effect of drug treatment on other outcomes, such as employment. However, because most of the evidence originates in the USA, it is important to take contextual differences in populations and other factors into account when drawing lessons for UK policy-making (Rubin et al. 2006).

2.4 Alcohol treatment

Background

While the effectiveness of court-mandated treatment for drug-related offenders has been the subject of significant numbers of studies, alcohol treatment for offenders as an alternative to incarceration has not received the same amount of attention. The only exception to this is the treatment of DWI (driving while intoxicated) offenders, which a number of researchers have evaluated.

In spite of interest in the rehabilitation of drink-driving offenders in the last few decades, there is no consensus amongst practitioners regarding the effectiveness of rehabilitation in changing their behaviours. In addition, comparisons of voluntary versus coerced treatment outcomes are more common among drug than alcohol intervention studies.¹²

Evaluation reviews

A number of earlier reviews of – mostly American – literature on interventions for DWI offenders yielded ambiguous results. One review of studies on DWI rehabilitation concluded that “there is yet no definitive evidence in the literature that any treatment programme for convicted drinking drivers is effective in reducing the subsequent recidivism of those participating” (Foon 1998). This might be due to the fact that many of the interventions evaluated failed to differentiate between the habitual DWI offender from the social drinker who rarely drives under the influence; programmes might be more effective if targeted to particular types of offender (Pratt et al. 2000). Interventions evaluated included long-term treatment programmes to address pathological drinking,

¹¹ However, this meta-analysis also suggests that caution is warranted in interpreting the findings, due to the wide variability in methodological quality of the studies reviewed and the limited availability of high quality studies. (Wilson et al 2006).

¹² As mentioned in the drug treatment section, however, most evaluations of substance-dependence treatment fail to account for the complexity of the coercion construct, and the complex set of circumstances and motivations of those who enter treatment.

educational programmes to correct poor judgement and short-term interventions to prevent the offender from driving.

A later meta-analysis identified in this literature review examined the efficacy of remediation with drinking/driving offenders (Wells-Parker et al. 1995). The meta-analysis attempts to discern some pattern in the findings of the studies reviewed, in spite of their variable methodological quality. In the studies reviewed, most of which are from the USA, brief education interventions were the most commonly evaluated treatment in the DWI remediation literature. Recidivism was the most common measure of treatment effectiveness.

The review found that the effect of remedial interventions both on DUI recidivism and alcohol-related crashes was in the range of 7–9% reduction: “This effect was found in spite of the fact that most ‘no remediation’ groups were not ‘no treatment’ groups; control groups received license sanctions often more severe than the remedial group and frequently received contact with intervention personnel either for screening or outcome monitoring purposes” (ibid., 923).

Within the range of interventions evaluated, the meta-analysis reports that the combination of remediation with licensing action appears most likely to affect positively both alcohol-related traffic events and more general traffic safety outcomes. Education, psychotherapy/counseling and some follow-up, such as contact probation, showed larger effect sizes than other approaches, for example contact probation on its own.

Nonetheless, this review suggests that further research is still needed to confirm these findings, and also to establish the types of interventions that work for specific types of offenders. The meta-analysis also states that few studies evaluated the effect of AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) on DWI recidivism.

We were unable to find meta-analysis or systematic reviews of the literature on the effectiveness of court-mandated alcohol treatment on alcohol-related, non-DWI offenders. Indeed, there appears to be very little research on the effectiveness of court-mandated treatment for non-DWI offenders with alcohol dependency problems (Hall 1995). Only one paper was identified which provides an overview of research on the use of disulfiram on alcohol dependent offenders, without specifying whether these had committed DWI or other type of offences (Chick 1998). The research cited suggests that disulfiram treatment amongst offenders can reduce the rate of re-offence relative to alcohol-dependent offenders sentenced to prison or probation without treatment.

Synthesis

In synthesis, there is very limited evidence on the effectiveness in reducing recidivism of alcohol treatment for offenders. Most of the evidence available assesses the outcomes of treatment for DWI offenders, concluding that the provision of education, psychotherapy and some follow-up simultaneously appear to have the strongest effects in reducing DWI recidivism. One paper which summarizes research on the use of disulfiram treatment with alcohol-dependent offenders suggests that it can reduce re-offending relative to other sentences such as prison.

2.5 Mental health treatment

Background

Although exact numbers are unknown, available research indicates that in developed countries, notably in the UK and the USA, individuals with mental health problems (such as psychosis, schizophrenia, depression and anti-social behaviour personality) are more likely than others to enter into contact with the criminal justice system in the course of their lives (Seltzer et al. 2005). While research shows that there are numerous interventions in different countries to deal with mentally ill inmates in prison, research on the use of community-based mental health treatment for offenders is lacking (Loveland and Boyle 2007).

Numerous mental health programmes have been developed in the United States over the last decades to divert offenders from jail (ibid.). For example, criminal justice and social service agencies divert young offenders with mental health problems to community-based mental health treatment, in the hope of reducing recidivism amongst this group (Evans Cuellar et al. 2006). Case management is another American approach to dealing with offenders with mental illness. While specific models vary across the country, traditional case management consists of a social or mental health worker who secures continued social, mental health, medical and other services for offenders (Healy 1999). Case management aims thus to reduce recidivism amongst the target criminal justice population. Mental Health Courts are a recent development in the American criminal justice system. Established in 1997, mental health courts are a means of diverting offenders (particularly of minor offences) from the criminal justice system to mental health treatment (Stefan 2005).

Evaluation reviews

There is very limited empirical data assessing the effectiveness in reducing recidivism of adult mental health diversion programmes (Pertila 2005; Evans Cuellar *et. al.* 2006). The expansion of mental health courts around the United States, for example, relied on anecdotal reports that they are a promising development rather than on evidence of their efficacy, which is as yet lacking (Stefan 2005). No meta-analysis or systematic reviews of adult mental health diversion interventions which synthesize the findings from relevant evaluations were identified in this research.¹³ A small number of individual studies from

¹³ The High Security Psychiatric Services Commissioning Board commissioned a literature review on the epidemiology of mentally disordered offenders in the UK, which covers studies of mentally disordered offenders in the general population, in special hospitals, in the Criminal Justice System and in the General Psychiatric Services System. The paper, however, includes very limited information on the effectiveness of community-based mental health treatments in reducing re-offending (Badger, D. et al. (1999) *Systematic Review of the International Literature on the Epidemiology of Mentally Disordered Offenders*, NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, England). One study mentioned in the review assessed recidivism amongst offenders sentenced to a non-specialized community-based mental handicap service, and found a high rate of recidivism (10 out of the 17 subjects committed a further offence) (Thomas, D. and Singh, T. (1995) *Offenders referred to a learning disability service: a retrospective study from one county. British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 23, 24-27; in Badger, D. et al. (1999) *Systematic Review of the International Literature on the Epidemiology of Mentally Disordered Offenders*, NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, England).

the United States, however, have been identified that attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of community-based court-mandated mental health treatment in reducing recidivism.

Synthesis

Mental health treatment in the community for mentally ill offenders has not been subject to strong evaluations. While there is a lack of meta-analysis or systematic reviews, a small number of recent studies from the United States suggest that diversion and treatment reduce recidivism amongst offenders with mental illness compared to traditional prosecution.

2.6 Education and basic skills training

Background

Abundant evidence exists that unemployment represents a particularly acute problem for ex-offenders in the UK, both because the offending population possesses relatively weak job-related skills and because potential employers have negative attitudes towards hiring individuals with criminal records (Metcalf et al. 2001; Fletcher et al. 2001). Given the close link between unemployment and criminal participation, improving the job prospects of offenders through education and basic skills training represents a natural focus of rehabilitation efforts both in and outside of prison. Although a number of comprehensive assessments of the efficacy of educational and job training programmes are available (eg, Bushway and Reuter 1997; Wilson et al. 2000; Lipsey 1995), most existing studies focus primarily on programmes during confinement.

In the community sentences context, education and employment training programmes take a number of forms. Often participation in education, training and employment (ETE) programmes is a mandated condition of community release. Typical programmes combine job search counselling, remedial education and occupational skills training, although there is substantial heterogeneity in the duration and intensity of individual programmes. Some programmes combine both in-prison training and community-based follow up. For example, the PS Plus programme, which focuses on individualized skills training plans and was expanded to 15 English probation areas in January 2007, includes provision for services both within prison and after release. Others, such as Progress2Work, focus on particular populations such as the previously drug-involved. Given the substantial variation in operational details across ETE programmes, generalizing across interventions has proven challenging. In addition, the majority of studies focus on recidivism as the primary outcome, with less attention devoted to the nature and quality of employment obtained by those served by training programmes.

Evaluation reviews

Recent UK studies Within the UK, several recent evaluations of community-based employment and skills training programmes have been completed. Although informative, no study incorporates a sufficiently strong research design to clearly measure the effects of its programme on employment or recidivism. Sarno et al. (2000) present evidence that participants in two probation-based job training programmes, Advice and Support Services

for Education and Training (ASSET) and the Surrey Springboard Project had low recidivism rates. Participants in ASSET, which included job search courses and referral programmes to other training providers, had a statistically lower 43% reconviction rate relative to the 56% rate among eligible non-participants. The overall reconviction rate among Springboard entrants, who received job placement assistance and sheltered employment opportunities, was 32%. However, the comparison group for the ASSET study was chosen primarily for convenience, there was no effort to control for pre-existing differences across the groups, and there was no comparison group in the Springboard study. Haslewood-Pócsik et al. (2003) report an evaluation of the Employment Pathfinder programme, a group training initiative instituted in 2001 as part of the National Probation Service's Pathfinder project. Due to administrative delays in rollout an insufficient number of participants had completed the programme to allow credible estimates of the programme's effect on recidivism, but survey evidence revealed general satisfaction with the programme. An evaluation of the second phase of the Employment Pathfinder is scheduled for release in 2007. Partridge et al. (2005) present an evaluation of the Intensive Control and Change Programme, a community-based sentencing pilot that combined electronic monitoring, curfews, ETE and mentoring. Unfortunately, their evaluation does not separately assess the contribution of ETE to reduced recidivism relative to other programme components and does not incorporate random assignment.

High quality experimental studies Visher et al (2005) present the most complete analysis of skills training programmes for offenders not in custody, focusing on eight programmes with randomized evaluations. Original evaluation studies for each of these eight programmes are cited in the bibliography. All eight programmes were introduced in the USA with implementation dates ranging from 1971 to 1994. The majority of programmes provided occupational skills training and job placement services, with two programmes including cash assistance to participants and one providing minimum wage employment. One study focused exclusively on probationers and three included programmes also available to non-offenders. Notably, only one of the original evaluations of the eight programmes found evidence of a statistically significant effect of programme participation on re-offending, and for this programme the effects appear related to programme elements other than job training.¹⁴ Those programmes available to non-offenders that produced evidence of a programme effect on crime among the general population generated no effects among those with a prior criminal history. Visher et al.'s meta-analysis also concludes that there is no effect of employment interventions on subsequent re-arrest, both for the overall offender population and for less serious offenders.

Comparison with findings on employment in custodial settings Belief that sentences-based education and training represent an effective means to address recidivism may reflect the findings of past review studies that focus on training within a custodial setting. Lipsey (1995), for example, argues that among treatment programmes, employment-focused ones were most productive among juveniles in reducing future offending. Gerber and Fritsch

¹⁴ Uggen (2000) does argue that one programme, the National Supported Work Demonstration Project, had beneficial effects for offenders 26 and older.

(1995) claim that the weight of evidence suggests that employment-oriented programmes for prisoners can reduce recidivism. Chappell's (2004) meta-analysis focusing on correctional post-secondary education also suggests that effect sizes may be large, with programme participation generating an average drop in recidivism of 20 percentage points across 15 studies.

The quality of existing research on training programmes within prison is low, however. In the meta-analysis of Wilson et al. (2000), for example, the large majority of the 33 studies examined had poor comparison groups and/or limited available controls. These authors concluded that the methodological weakness of existing studies precluded a finding that sentences-based education and training programmes impacted re-offending despite overall lower recidivism rates among programme participants. Similarly, Webster et al. (2001) state at the conclusion of their analysis of educational and training programmes within UK prisons that, "The scarcity and generally poor quality of previous research means that it is difficult to come up with firm advice about 'what works'..."

Synthesis

The Employment Pathfinder and other recent expansions of ETE programmes for offenders under community sentence reflect optimism regarding the usefulness of such programmes in reducing re-arrest. The literature on the value of employment and training in a correctional context is at best mixed, however, with some evidence of an effect of prison-based education and skills training but little evidence of programme effectiveness in a community setting. Given that the high-quality experimental studies cited examined a range of offender types and programme design features and encompassed the most commonly used training interventions (basic education, job skills training, job search/placement assistance), it seems doubtful that conventional community-correctional approaches to education and training can appreciably reduce recidivism. Discovering methods to extend any beneficial effects of prison-based ETE into the community context remains an important area for future research.

2.7 Anger management

Background

Assaultive or violent behaviour leading to arrest is often associated with anger. Research has shown that violent individuals are more angry and hostile than non-violent individuals. Thus, it is logical that one of the responses of the criminal justice system to violent offenders has been to develop programmes to teach them how to manage their anger. In fact, these programmes have such appeal that they are now used alone – or more commonly in conjunction with other forms of cognitive/behavioural therapy – to treat disparate classes of offenders ranging from domestic violence perpetrators, familial abusers, sex offenders, juvenile delinquents, abusive parents, substance abusers and perpetrators of hate crimes. Anger management with these and other classes of offenders is a form of *tertiary prevention*, i.e., an intervention intended to prevent recurrence of violence.

Anger management is also commonly used in both *secondary prevention* programmes, most commonly with teens or younger children at risk of delinquency. In school settings, anger

management often becomes part of anti-bullying programmes or delinquency prevention programmes, in combination with training in conflict resolution and/or communication skills. Anger management programmes are less commonly used in *primary prevention* programmes aimed at the larger community. In fact, anger management is also used in many other settings – sports psychology training, management training and road rage prevention – in which the goal is not avoidance of criminally violent behaviour, but rather the ability to maintain focus and engage in desired activities free from emotional distractions.

Generally, anger management programmes are designed to increase clients' inhibitory processes and control of their emotions. Whether anger will lead to aggression depends on situational cues, how people appraise the situations they find themselves in, and how they evaluate the likely effects of their actions. There are a number of anger management techniques, but all are aimed at intervening between emotional arousal and a violent response. Some of the common techniques include relaxation methods (in which subjects are taught to reduce their level of physiological arousal); communication skills (in which participants are taught to defuse conflict situations through language skills); cognitive restructuring (which teaches participants to redefine stressful or anger-provoking situations); and stress inoculation (which teaches participants to develop and use an array of coping skills). Thus, the lines between anger management and CBT become quite fuzzy.

There have been numerous studies of the effectiveness of anger management. However, as might be surmised by the diverse populations and situations in which it is used, most of the empirical work has not focused on offenders. Even where offenders have been the subjects of research, the studies often are of programmes in prison rather than programmes for offenders in the community. With these caveats in mind, we present the results of narrative reviews and meta-analytic studies.

Evaluation reviews

General literature on anger management programmes Early narrative reviews were generally positive about the effects of these programmes. As far back as 1985, Anderson reviewed existing work and concluded that any direct intervention for treatment of maladaptive anger is better than none, and a multifaceted training programme combining a number of techniques is best. This conclusion has basically been repeated by later narrative reviews (e.g., Howells 1998). However, a review of anger management programmes for youth was less decisive. Smith et al. (2000) concluded that there was such diversity in content and delivery of anger management programmes that it is difficult to assess what works and what does not.

Recently, meta-analyses have begun to appear providing systematic assessments of the effects of anger management programmes. Tafrate (1995) reported that cognitive, relaxation, and skills training approaches are effective in the frequency and intensity of angry feelings. However, he restricted his analysis to subjective reports of anger and physiological measures. Moreover, he did not include information on the quality of studies he reviewed. Later meta-analyses concluded that various types of anger management treatment – relaxation, cognitive, problem-solving and social skills training all had positive effects with medium to large effect sizes (Edmondson and Conger 1996; Beck and Fernandez 1998). DiGiuseppe and Tafrate (2003) reached similar conclusions (although

they note substantial differences in effect sizes across different outcome measures), and also report that effects are maintained over a period of time. Del Vecchio and O'Leary (2003) included only studies using true experimental designs in their meta-analysis. The authors again reported medium to large effect sizes across therapies.

Literature specific to anger management for offenders Literature that deals specifically with offenders is much sparser and we were unable to locate any systematic reviews or meta-analyses. Hollenhorst (1998) reviewed four studies, all showing beneficial effects of anger management programmes for offenders, including reductions in self-reported anger, improved social skills and lower rates of recidivism. However, she does not discuss the methods employed by the studies nor assess their scientific rigor. A third review of studies on offenders by Howells et al. (2002) was less positive. The review noted that positive effects were found in some studies (for example a reduction in recidivism that was sustained over a three-year period). However, two other studies reviewed found no difference between treated violent offenders and controls on a range of measures, including self-reported anger, prison misconduct and observed aggressive behaviour. The authors conclude that rigorous, large-scale outcome studies using a comprehensive set of outcome measures are needed to generate reliable information on the effectiveness of anger management programmes for offenders.

There is also evidence that anger management techniques, in combination with CBT, are effective in reducing recidivism. Goldstein and Glick (2001) reviewed Aggression Replacement Training which combines anger control techniques with cognitive/behavioural therapies including social skills training, problem-solving and moral education. They report some evidence of reduction in re-offending. Landenberger and Lipsey (2005) in their review of CBT programmes note that inclusion of anger control in treatment programmes is associated with larger effect sizes.

Finally, Gondolf and Russell (1986) have argued that, even though anger management programmes have often been ordered for spouse abusers, the use of such programmes for these offenders is inappropriate. They present a variety of arguments to support this position, the most cogent of which are that intimate partner violence is often about power and control (not anger per se) and that anger management implies that the victim somehow precipitated abusive incidents. However, there are no empirical data to support their position that anger management programmes for spouse abusers are less effective than other approaches.

Synthesis

The general literature on anger management programmes shows a consistently positive effect on anger levels, with medium to large effect sizes. However, studies using offender populations have had weak designs and less consistent findings, especially with respect to reducing recidivism. Thus, while anger management programmes may reduce anger in many segments of society, their utility in reducing recidivism among offenders has yet to be established with confidence. Moreover, it may be that lengthier, more intensive programmes are needed for offenders than those that are appropriate for the general population.

2.8 Unpaid Work

Background

Unpaid work (or, in the community service) is one of the oldest community sentencing options. Tonry and Lynch (1995) date modern use of unpaid work back to the 1960s in Alameda County, California, where judges imposed work in the community as a sentence for low-income traffic offenders unable to pay fines. The California project attracted much attention as a sentence that was inexpensive to administer, produces public value, and was met with widespread public approval. Pilot projects in England began in the early 1970s, followed by Scottish projects a few years later.

Originally intended to replace custodial sentences, the rationale for unpaid work has been couched heavily in terms of offender rehabilitation. Reformers in the 1960s and 1970s saw the sentence as a way to halt the development of criminal careers and convert an offender's arrest from a losing to a winning experience. Unpaid work provides offenders with an opportunity to start on a legitimate career and to transition to a working employee and a taxpayer. Often, charges were dismissed upon successful completion of the court mandate. Frequently, however, instead of replacing custodial sentences, unpaid work schemes were used to augment the sanctions of those already bound for a community sentence. Although reformers have discouraged this use of unpaid work, this process of "net-widening" is a frequent topic of concern expressed in studies from the UK, USA, Netherlands and elsewhere.

Unpaid work mandates have spread to Switzerland, Italy, Belgium and most Western European countries as well as to other parts of the British Commonwealth. They remain popular sentencing options in Britain, where they have been combined by the Probation Service with some training in literacy skills and other components deemed necessary for offenders to gain maximum benefit from the sentence.

Evaluation reviews

We were unable to find any systematic reviews of the effects of unpaid work on re-offending. This is likely because there have actually been few empirical studies that have examined the effect of this sanction on recidivism and – for the most part – those that do exist are quite old. Pease (1985) reviews two British studies conducted in the 1970s and concludes that re-offending rates for unpaid work are neither higher nor lower than the rates for offenders sent to prison. Zimring (1974) reports on two well-designed US studies using matched comparison groups, and also finds no effect on re-offending of unpaid work. Tonry and Lynch review a handful of somewhat more recent studies in the USA and the Netherlands and come to the same conclusion: that is, offenders sentenced to community service recidivate at about the same rate as those incarcerated.

Although we were unable to find any recent syntheses of the literature on unpaid work, several recent individual studies support the conclusions of the earlier reviews indicating no difference in re-offending between persons sentenced to unpaid work in the community and those sentenced to incarceration. These include a study in the Netherlands (Spaans 1998). The lone exception to the confirmation of the null hypothesis is a Swiss study which is the only example we could locate in which offenders were randomly assigned to community service or to short-term imprisonment. In that study, one of four recidivism

measures showed a significant treatment effect in favour of the unpaid work group (Killias et al. 2000).

There are suggestions, although usually not based on rigorous research, that unpaid work is positively viewed by offenders. HM Inspectorate of Probation (2006) reports that roughly eight in ten participants felt that there had been a big improvement with their problems. Caputo (1999) reported that nine in ten U.S. offenders sentenced to community service reported benefits from the sentence. The only rigorous attempt to evaluate the effects of unpaid work orders on offender attitudes found that offenders sentenced to unpaid work were more likely to believe that the sentence was fair and that the sentence made recidivism less likely (Killias et al. 2000). On the other hand, Rex et al. (2002) reported that less than one in five offenders interviewed three months after completion of an unpaid work programme felt that the experience had helped them into employment or training.

Synthesis

Research on unpaid work is sparse and dated. There is little evidence that unpaid work lowers re-offending relative to short-term imprisonment. However, limited evidence exists to suggest that offenders perceive it as a positive experience.

2.9 Probation supervision

Background

Probation supervision is a common sanction for both adult and juvenile offenders in the UK and USA. Probationers are typically ordered to a combination of conditions which usually fall into three categories: Standard (e.g., reporting to the probation office, not leaving the jurisdiction without permission); punitive (e.g., drug testing, house arrest); or treatment (e.g., drug treatment, family counselling) (Petersilia 1997). Compliance with these conditions and monitoring by the probation officer is supposed to reduce the probability of re-offending and reduce costs by diverting offenders from jail or prison. Those who violate the conditions of probation may be subject to sanctions, which can range from more stringent conditions to incarceration.

Probation supervision is built on the idea that contacts between an offender and the supervising agent will provide direction to the offender. These contacts are seen as important to managing offender behaviour and compliance with conditions of supervision.

Evaluation reviews

Experts conclude that we know little about the effect of regular probation supervision as “Evaluators have tended to ignore traditional probation practices in favour of focusing on newer alternatives such as Intensive Supervision Programs and house arrest” (Clear and Braga 1995). This lack of research on regular probation is evident in MacKenzie’s (2002) recent meta-analysis of sanctions intended to prevent crime.

A meta-analysis of the effect of prison sentences and intermediate sanctions concludes that, “Prisons and intermediate sanctions should not be used with the expectation of reducing criminal behaviour” (Smith et al. 2002). The authors identified 31 studies that compared the effect of incarceration with community sentences; 43% of the comparison groups were

regular probationers. The meta-analysis found that incarceration was associated with a small increase in recidivism when compared to community sentences, but the effect disappeared when the results were weighted by the sample size.

A recent Campbell review assessed the effects of custodial versus non-custodial sentences on re-offending through examination of 23 high-quality studies using randomized designs, matched-pair designs, or quasi-experiments (Villettaz et al. 2006). The meta-analysis reported that in 11 cases, re-offending was lower after non-custodial sentencing; in two cases, it was lower after a custodial sentence; and in 14 cases, there was no difference. However, the meta-analysis included many studies that had non-custodial conditions other than straight probation. The review concludes that it is unable to determine whether custodial sentences are more effective than non-custodial sentences in reducing recidivism.

There is just one study that we found which compared offenders on probation supervision to offenders released in the community, but who had no reporting requirements. That study randomly assigned offenders to regular probation supervision or no-contact probation.¹⁵ It did not find any statistically significant differences with respect to the frequency or timing of re-arrests (Austin et al. 1990).

Synthesis

Very limited evidence presents a mixed picture of the effects of regular probation supervision on re-offending when compared to offenders sent to prison. However, even if offenders on probation supervision recidivate at the same rate as offenders sentenced to prison, the lesser costs of probation still make a strong case for using this option.¹⁶ There is a need for more scientifically rigorous studies to determine whether and what kinds of reporting requirements on probation may affect re-offending.

2.10 Intensive probation supervision

Background

Intensive probation supervision is an alternative to incarceration and differs from traditional probation supervision in that there is more monitoring and lower case loads for probation officers. This increased surveillance can take many forms, ranging from face-to-face meetings to electronic monitoring to urinalysis, and intensive probation supervision programmes often utilize a combination of these options. In many jurisdictions, intensive probation supervision tends to be more stringent and punitive compared to regular probation supervision.

The extra surveillance and reduced case loads are supposed to make it easier for probation officers to identify the needs of the probationer and help them get appropriate services. Additionally, increasing the probabilities of detecting and sanctioning probation violations

¹⁵ it had a third condition of intensive probation, but for the purposes of this study only the findings of the first two are reported here

¹⁶ Although it is worth noting that offenders could commit further crime while in probation, whereas offenders in prison cannot. In this sense, public safety is a concern when sentencing offenders to probation in the community rather than prison.

may deter probationers from breaking the rules and/or committing a new offence. Of course, the deterrent effect depends on the sanctions for violating the condition, and more importantly, the probationer's expected sanction (which depends on their subjective probability of being sanctioned for a violation as well as what they think the sanction will be).

Evaluation reviews

There is a significant amount of research on intensive probation supervision. Early reviews did not yield strong conclusions because of methodological concerns with the existing evaluations (Banks 1977; General Accounting Office 1990). To address these concerns, a large randomized field experiment of intensive supervision was conducted in 14 jurisdictions in nine American states. The results of the demonstration suggest that "intensive probation did not decrease the frequency or seriousness of new arrests but did increase the incidence of technical violations and jail terms" (Petersilia and Turner 1993). The additional surveillance and urinalysis made it easier to detect those not complying with the conditions of probation. The increased number of violations increased court and jail costs for the jurisdiction, thus making intensive probation much more expensive than traditional probation.

Reviews of intensive probation supervision that incorporate experimental evaluations from England and Wales (Tonry and Lynch 1996) and update the American literature do not find any difference in recidivism rates for those assigned to intensive and regular probation (MacKenzie 2002). Similar results are also observed in juvenile settings, as Lane et al. (2005) note in their literature review: "Recent studies of individual juvenile probation programmes often find small or no differences in recidivism between experimental programmes and those to whom they are compared."

Tonry and Lynch (1996) note that "the one tantalizing positive finding" from the intensive probation supervision literature is that it increases participation in treatment programmes in some places. MacKenzie's meta-analysis finds support for the contention that intensive supervision in conjunction with treatment services can reduce recidivism rates for probationers (MacKenzie 2002). However, MacKenzie cautions that these studies do not involve randomized experiments to treatment, thus selection effects may be driving the results. An experiment that randomly assigned juvenile probationers to additional contacts, an interagency case management team, and on-site access to treatment services (instead of referrals) found that they did not fare better than those assigned to traditional probation with respect to recidivism or substance use (Lane et al. 2005).

Experimental evaluations have also been used to compare intensive probation supervision with incarceration. Two experimental studies which directly compared intensive supervision with incarceration yielded differing results. One found no difference in re-offending at 24 months between those assigned to ISP and those assigned to the state for placement (mostly incarceration; Barton and Butts, 1990), but the other found those assigned to intensive probation fared better than those who were incarcerated at 12 months (Bergman 1976).

Synthesis

We have evidence based on strong designs that intensive probation supervision does not reduce recidivism rates when compared to regular probation supervision. This conclusion is supported by several randomized controlled trials in many different settings. Much less is known about the effect of sentencing an offender to intensive probation supervision instead of incarceration. More experimental studies are needed comparing probationers assigned to regular probation supervision, intensive probation supervision with no treatment services, intensive probation supervision with treatment services and incarceration.

In the course of this research, we discovered that the quality of research is uneven and varies substantially across the ten topic area that we investigated. The table below synthesizes the findings of our research. The first row of the table depicts the quality of existing research in each area, while the second row assesses the impact of each community order requirement on re-offending based on existing research. The table suggests that in two areas – cognitive/behavioural programming and some types of drug treatment – we can have confidence that their use will reduce the odds of re-offending. The quality of studies is high, and the studies indicate that the programmes work (evidence of positive impact on reducing offending is *strong*). In four other areas – programmes for spouse abusers, unpaid work, education and basic skills training and intensive probation – existing studies have not suggested that the programmes have a positive effect of recidivism (evidence of positive impact on reducing reoffending is *weak*). In the case of the spouse abuse and intensive supervision literature, a number of the studies are of high quality. The body of work on EBST and unpaid work is less scientifically rigorous, but the findings to date have not given much reason to argue for pursuing more sophisticated research. Finally, in four areas – anger management, probation, and alcohol and mental health treatment – the question of impact on re-offending remains unsettled (evidence of positive impact on reducing reoffending is *inconclusive*). In each of these areas, there are at least some positive findings, but the body of research is not yet at a high enough level to place full confidence in the rehabilitative effect of these programmes.

Table 1: Quality of studies and evidence for impact on re-offending

	Abuse programmes	CBT	Unpaid work	Anger Mgmt	EBST	Probation	Intensive probation	Drug treatment***	Alcohol treatment	Mental health treatment
Quality of studies*	High	High	Low	Low	High	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
Evidence for impact on re-offending**	Weak	Strong	Weak	Inconclusive	Weak	Inconclusive	Weak	Strong	Inconclusive	Strong

* Studies were judged to be of high quality if there were at least a half a dozen studies using randomized designs.

** Evidence for impact on re-offending was judged to be high if there was consensus among the best-designed studies that the intervention was effective.

*** Strong evidence of effectiveness for *some* types of treatment on reducing reoffending, for example methadone replacement therapy.

The review we have completed points out the need for more rigorous research into the requirements that constitute community orders. Randomized controlled trials are the best way to determine “what works” in community sentencing. In some circumstances, randomized trials are hard to conduct. For example, if the research question is, “Does probation or community sentencing in a generic sense result in an equal or lower rate of re-offending than a prison sentence,” there are significant ethical issues raised by random assignment. If community sentencing is the norm for certain classes of offenders, then randomly sentencing some to prison raises serious equity concerns. If, on the other hand, incarceration is the norm, then randomly sentencing some offenders to non-custodial sentences raises concerns about jeopardizing public safety.

Alternatively, if the question is, “does a particular requirement reduce re-offending relative to its absence among offenders already mandated to serve a non-custodial sentence,” the ethical issues involved in random assignment are less consequential (although certainly not insignificant). We would argue for more randomized trials that try to address this question for those community order requirements where we have indicated that the question of effectiveness remains unsettled. Moreover, we believe that such research ought not only to examine effects on re-offending, but also on health, employment and other indicators of social adjustment.

But, even in the absence of better evidence on how community orders affect re-offending, it is worth remembering that community sentencing can be justified on grounds other than reducing recidivism. Cost, fairness and humanitarian considerations all suggest that non-custodial sentences should continue to be the norm for offenders who do not pose a significant threat to public safety.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Methodology

In agreement with the NAO, RAND Europe examined review papers, systematic reviews and meta-analyses in each of these ten areas. Our reviews were not based on an exhaustive reading of the literature in the ten areas, but rather on a synthesis of conclusions from the review papers examined. To find relevant reviews, six sources were consulted including Home Office and Probation Service reports, Campbell Collaboration Reviews, Criminal Justice Abstracts, the Social Science Citation Index, and the Cambridge University Library catalogue.

The research team's members were selected on the basis of their familiarity with the relevant area and their experience in analyzing and synthesizing large bodies of information. The team defined the focus of the selective review in cooperation with the NAO in the early stages of the project, and agreed with the NAO project team an outline for the final report. The cooperative definition of focus and the agreed outline for the final report ensured best use of the project team, reduced the potential doubling of effort between the NAO and RAND project teams and tailored the review to the specific needs of the NAO in the context of its study of anti-social behaviour.

The research team summarized the research in a series of headlines, conveying the key findings emerging from the literature, to present to the NAO in advance of the submission of the final report. The headlines were presented in a PowerPoint presentation and discussed with the NAO. Through the discussion, the RAND and NAO teams clarified their understanding of certain key issues and discussed some of the conclusions that could be drawn from the findings.

Following this presentation, the RAND research team completed the final report, highlighting the key findings in an executive summary.

The research presented a number of challenges. The first is that many reviews include studies with different types of treatments. For example, reviews of "community sentencing" might include studies of straight probation, intensive probation, unpaid work and so forth. Thus, their conclusions are, for our purposes, not as clear as we might like.

Second, although we were primarily interested in the effectiveness of sentences in the community as alternatives to imprisonment, many reviews include both studies conducted on treatments in the community and treatments conducted on prison samples. While there is no reason to think that the effectiveness of a treatment such as cognitive/behavioural programming might be different when administered in prison versus in a community setting, we do not know for sure whether results will be consistent across settings. Related

to this complication is the question of counterfactuals when assessing effectiveness of community orders. That is, what can the effectiveness of the requirements in a community order be measured against? For studies using prison samples, the counterfactual is typically the absence of a treatment. However, for community samples, treatments may be compared to incarceration, to the absence of treatment, or to another type of treatment. Thus, we have studies of the effectiveness of intensive supervision that compare samples to offenders released after prison sentences, offenders in the community on straight probation and/or offenders in the community participating in a cognitive/behavioural therapy programme. Therefore, it is important when considering the effectiveness of community orders to keep in mind the question, “Effective compared to what?”

The NAO was interested in understanding the effects of community orders from a number of different perspectives including re-offending and perceptions of sentences by offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community. However, reviews typically have focused only on the question of re-offending and, even more narrowly, on the prevalence of new offences only – not the severity, incidence, or timing of new offences. Where we have found it, we have included information on perceptions of sentences. More on perceptions could be gleaned from examining individual studies rather than reviews, but this is not an area rich with research, and especially not rigorous research.

Appendix B: Reviews by topic

Cognitive/behavioural programming

Allen, L.C., MacKenzie, D.L., & Hickman, L.J. (2001). The effectiveness of cognitive behavioral treatment for adult offenders: A methodological, quality-based review. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 45, 498-514.

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Batterer programmes

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Drug treatment

Belenko, S. 2001. *Research on drug courts: A critical review, 2001 update*, The National Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University, USA.

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Alcohol treatment

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Education and basic skills training

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Wilson, D., C. Gallagher, and D. MacKenzie. 2000. A meta-analysis of corrections-based education, vocation, and work programmes for adult offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime & Delinquency* 37: 347–368.

Anger management

Andersen, C.L. 1985. *Treatment of anger: A review of the current literature*. www.eric.ed.gov (ERIC #ED273895).

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Del Vecchio, T., and K.D. O’Leary, 2004. Effectiveness of anger treatments for specific anger problems: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review* 24: 15–34.

DiGiuseppe, R., and R.C. Tafra 2003. Anger treatment for adults: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice* 10 (1), 70–84.

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Landenberger, N.A., and M.W. Lipsey. 2005. The positive effects of cognitive-behavioural programmes for offenders: A meta-analysis of factors associated with effective treatment. *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 1: 451–476.

Novacco, R., M. Ramm, and L. Black. 2001. Anger treatment with violent offenders. *Handbook of offender assessment and treatment*, ed. C.R. Hollin, Wiley: Chichester.

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Tafra, R.C. 1995. Evaluation of treatment strategies for adult anger disorders. In *Anger disorders: Definition, diagnosis, and treatment*, ed. H. Kassinove, 109–128. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.

Unpaid work

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Tonry, M., and M. Lynch. 1995. Intermediate sanctions. In *Crime and justice: A review of the research*, vol. 20, ed. M. Tonry, 99–144. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zimring, F.E. 1974. Measuring the impact of pretrial diversion from the criminal justice system. *The University of Chicago Law Review* 41: 224–241.

Probation

Clear, T., and Braga, A. 1995. Community corrections. In *Crime*, ed. J. Wilson and J. Petersilia. San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies.

MacKenzie, D. 2002. Courts and corrections. In *Evidence-based crime prevention*, ed. L. Sherman, D. Farrington, B. Welsh, and D. MacKenzie. New York: Routledge.

Petersilia, J. 1997. Probation in the United States. *Crime and Justice*, 22.

Smith, P., Goggin, C., and Gendreau, P. 2002. *The effects of prison sentences and intermediate sanctions on recidivism: General effects and individual differences*. (User Report 2002-01). Ottawa: Solicitor General Canada

Villettaz, P., Killias, M., and Zoder, I. 2006. The effects of custodial vs. non-custodial sentences on re-offending: A systematic review of the state of knowledge. *Report to the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Group* (Accessed on July 23, 2007: <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/doc-pdf/Campbell-report-30.09.06.pdf>)

Intensive probation

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General Accounting Office. 1990. *Intermediate sanctions: Their impacts on prison crowding, costs, and recidivism are still unclear*. Washington, DC: GAO.

MacKenzie, D. 2002. Courts and corrections. In *Evidence-based crime prevention*, L. Sherman, D. Farrington, B. Welsh, D. MacKenzie. New York: Routledge.

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Mair, G., C. Lloyd, C. Nee, and R. Sibbit. 1994. *Intensive probation in England and Wales: An evaluation*. London: HMSO.

Nuttal, C. 2003. The Home Office and random allocation experiments. *Evaluation Review* 27: 267–289.

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Appendix C: Significant individual studies by topic

Cognitive/behavioural programming

Caan, J., L. Falshaw, F. Nugent, and C. Friendship. 2003. *Understanding what works: Accredited cognitive skills programmes for adult men and young offenders*. Home Office Research Findings 226. London: Home Office.

British quasi-experiment comparing 2195 offenders who received combined R&R and enhanced thinking skills (ETS) programme in prison with 1534 matched control offenders. No difference in recidivism between subjects assigned to treatment vs assigned to controls at 12 or 24 months.

Falshaw, L., C. Friendship, R. Travers, and F. Nugent. 2004. Searching for what works: HM Prison Service accredited cognitive skills programmes. *British Journal of Forensic Practice*. 6: 3–13.

British quasi-experiment comparing 649 offenders in prison R&R/ETS programme with 1947 matched controls.

Friendship, C., L. Blud, M. Erikson, and R. Travers. 2002. *An evaluation of cognitive behavioural treatment for prisoners*. Home Office Research Findings 161, London: Home Office.

British study using quasi-experimental design which compared reconviction rates for 667 incarcerated offenders who received R&R and ETS programming. Found 11–14 percentage point lower recidivism rates for programme participants.

Ross, R.R., D.H. Antonowicz, and G.K. Dhaliwal. 1995. *Going straight: Effective delinquency prevention and offender rehabilitation*. Ottawa, Canada: Air Training and Publications.

Canadian study randomly assigned 550 offenders to R&R programme, 207 to control group. No difference in reconvictions after 9 months.

Van Voorhis, P., L.M. Spruance, P.N. Ritchey, S.J. Listwan, and R. Seabrook. 2004. The Georgia cognitive skills experiment. *Criminal Justice and behaviour*, 31: 282–305.

Randomly assigned 368 parolees to R&R treatment or comparison group. Slightly lower recidivism rates for treated offenders at 9 months.

Wilson, J.A., and R.C. Davis. 2006. Good intentions meet hard realities: An evaluation of the project greenlight reentry programme. *Criminology and Public Policy* 5: 303–338.

Randomly assigned 344 offenders about to be released from prison to reentry programming that included cognitive skills development that focused on changing antisocial behaviours and thinking; 278 others randomly assigned to a control condition. Intervention subjects performed significantly worse on multiple measures of recidivism after one year.

Batterer programmes

Labriola, M., M. Rempel, and R.C. Davis. 2005. *Testing the effectiveness of batterer programmes and judicial monitoring: Results from a randomized trial at the Bronx misdemeanor domestic violence court.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

Compared 202 offenders randomly assigned to batterer programme and judicial monitoring to 218 offenders sentenced to only judicial monitoring. No difference in re-offending six months after sentencing based on either official records or victim interviews.

Feder, L., and L. Dugan. 2002. A test of the efficacy of court-mandated counseling for domestic violence offenders: The Broward Experiment. *Justice Quarterly* 19: 343–375.

Randomly assigned offenders on probation to either attend a batterer programme (n=216) or not (n=188). No difference in re-offending based on either police records or victim surveys up to 12 months after assignment.

Davis, R.C., B.G. Taylor, and C.M. Maxwell. 2000. *Does batterer treatment reduce violence: A randomized experiment in Brooklyn.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

Sentenced convicted offenders by lottery to either batterer programme (n=190) or community service (n=186). Found significant difference in re-offending based on police records (not victim surveys) up to 12 months after assignment. However, men who attended all sessions of the batterer programme re-offended at the same rate as those who attended some sessions or those who attended no sessions at all.

Dunford, F.W. 2000. The San Diego Navy experiment: An assessment of interventions for men who assault their wives. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 68: 468–476.

Randomly assigned 861 batterers identified by U.S. Navy to batterer programme, couples counselling, rigorous monitoring, or victim safety planning. No difference found in re-offending between any of the conditions up to 24 months after assignment.

Palmer, S., R. Brown, M. Barrera. 1992. Group treatment programme for abusive husbands: Long-term evaluation. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 62: 276–283.

Randomly assigned 59 offenders sentenced to probation to either attend batterer programme as part of probation or not. Found large positive effect of batterer programme at 12 months based on police data (no surveys of victims were conducted).

Drug treatment

Coid, J., A. Carvell, Z. Kittler, A. Healy, and J. Henderson. 2000. *Opiates, Criminal Behaviour and Methadone Treatment*, research funded by Home Office.

Research commissioned by the UK Home Office on the effectiveness of methadone treatment amongst opiate addicts, many with past or present criminal behaviour. The sample studied in the context of this research included offenders in treatment due to probation order. The study suggests that, on the basis of self-report, "the Methadone Treatment Programme had contributed to a significant decrease in both illicit drug consumption and the criminal activities that were associated with supporting their drug consumption." p.81).

Anglin, M.D., M.L. Brecht, and E. Maddahian. 1989. Pretreatment characteristics and treatment performance of legally coerced versus voluntary methadone maintenance admissions. *Criminology* 27: 537–557.

Study conducted to determine whether addicts coerced into methadone maintenance treatment by the criminal justice system had different outcomes following treatment than addicts who entered treatment voluntarily. The study sample was drawn from male addicts admitted into treatment for the first time. Coerced versus voluntary status was established during interviews. Both groups showed reduced criminal activity during treatment and remained improved following treatment. The level of improvement did not appear to be related to coerced versus voluntary entry into treatment.

Goldkamp, J.S., and D. Weiland. 1993. *Assessing the impact of dade county's felony drug court*, National Institute of Justice, Washington, D.C.

This study examined the effectiveness of drug court programmes comparing offenders in the programme with similar offenders not in the programme. The study found that those in the drug court programme had lower incarceration rates and fewer arrests.

Gottfredson, D., S. Najaka, and B. Kearley. 2003. Effectiveness of drug treatment courts: Evidence from a randomized trial, *Criminology and Public Policy* 2: 171–196.

This study randomly assigned drug offenders to drug courts or 'treatment as usual'. It reports that drug court subjects were less likely to recidivate than the comparison group at 24 months after admission into the programme.

Turnbull, P.T., T. McSweeney, R. Webster, M. Edmunds, and M. Hough. 2000. *Drug treatment and testing orders: final evaluation report*. Home Office Research Study 212, Home Office, UK.

18-month evaluation of DTTOs in three pilot areas in the UK. Results include an evaluation of the type of offenders sentenced to a DTTO, how well they met the treatment, testing and review elements of the order, and how successful the pilot projects were in reducing their drug use and related offending. Research methods included data on offenders and interviews with offenders and with those involved in the delivery of DTTOs.

Alcohol treatment

Zhang, S.X., R.E.L. Roberts, and V.J. Callanan. 2006. The cost benefits of providing community-based correctional services: An evaluation of a statewide parole programme in California. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 34: 341–350.

Cost-benefit study of a statewide programme involving multiple community-based services for offenders on parole in California. Programme effectiveness was assessed by comparing programme costs to incarceration costs avoided due to decreases in recidivism. During the first year following parole release, programme participants on average stayed out of prison longer than the comparison population. The reductions in re-incarceration yielded a 47% net return on each programme dollar invested.

Deyoung, D.J. 1997. An evaluation of the effectiveness of alcohol treatment, driver license actions and jail terms in reducing drunk driving recidivism in California, *Addiction* 92: 989–998.

This quasi-experimental study examines the effectiveness of alcohol treatment, driver license actions and jail terms in reducing drunk-driving recidivism in the state of California. Results of the analyses showed that for all levels of prior DUI convictions, combining alcohol treatment with either driver license restriction or suspension is associated with the lowest DUI recidivism rates.

Brewer, C., and J. Smith. 1983. Probation linked supervised disulfiram in the treatment of habitual drunken offenders: results of a pilot study, *British Medical Journal* 287: 1282–1283.

This paper describes a pilot study of disulfiram treatment for habitual drunken offenders in London, where participants were followed for 12 weeks after their first dose of disulfiram. Of the 16 participants, three defaulted, but of the rest only two committed further offences. The pilot study did not have a control group.

Mental health treatment

Gurrera, M.M. 2005. *One mental health court's impact on re-arrest*, Southern Sociological Society, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Defendants' outcomes assessed for a 12-month period after entry into either a mental health court or a traditional court. Results suggest that mental health court offenders have a lower rate of re-arrest than do traditional court subjects. In addition, among those re-arrested, participation in the mental health court, regardless of whether treatment was completed or not at the time of re-arrest, is associated with less severe offences as compared to traditional court subjects.

Christy, A., N.G. Poythress, R.A. Boothroyd, J. Petrila, and M. Mehra. 2005. Evaluating the efficiency and community safety goals of the Broward County mental health court. *Behavioural Sciences and the Law* 23: 227–243.

This study investigated the efficiency and safety goals of a mental health court in Florida. The study's treatment and control groups were not randomly assigned, and

used a quasi-experimental design. The re-arrest rate slightly favoured the mental health court clients, although that difference was not found to be statistically significant.

Evans Cuellar, A., L.S. MacReynolds, and G.A. Wasserman. 2006. A cure for crime: can mental health treatment diversion reduce crime among youth? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 25: 197–214.

This study examined the impact of mental health diversion on improvements in arrest outcomes among youth with mental disorders. The study found that individuals enrolled in the mental health diversion programme had lower probabilities of being re-arrested for any offense. The control group used in this study consisted of young offenders identified as eligible for treatment but were placed on a waiting list.

Lamb H.R., L.E. Weinberger, and C. Reston-Parham. 1996. Court intervention to address the mental health needs of mentally ill offenders, in *Deinstitutionalization: Promise and Problems*, ed. H.R. Lamb, E. Richard, and L.E. Weinberger. Jossey-Bass Inc, San Francisco.

This research compared one-year outcomes of defendants who received mandated court-monitored treatment with the outcomes of those who did not. It showed that a significantly higher percentage of defendants who received this treatment had positive outcomes (59% compared with 28%), as defined by fewer arrests as well as psychiatric hospitalizations, and less homelessness and violence.

Education and basic skills training

Anderson, D., and R. Schumacker. 1986. Assessment of Job Training Programmes. *Journal of Offender Counseling, Services, and Rehabilitation* 10: 41–49.

Comparison of 216 probationers, half of whom were randomly assigned to participate in a job skills programme.

Berk, R., K. Lenihan, and P. Rossi. 1980. Crime and poverty: some experimental evidence from ex-offenders. *American Sociological Review* 45: 766–786.

Reports results of the Transitional Aid Research Project (TARP), an experiment in Texas and Georgia providing job counseling and unemployment benefits to approximately 2000 randomly assigned subjects.

Bloom, H., L. Orr, G. Cave, S. Bell, F. Doolittle, and W. Lin. 1994. *The National JTPA Study Overview: Impacts, Benefits, and Costs of Title II-A*. Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates, Inc.

Large-scale randomized evaluation of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), an employment skills programme not specifically oriented towards ex-offenders.

Cave, G., H. Bos, F. Doolittle, and C. Toussaint. 1993. *JOBSTART: Final Report on a Programme for School Dropouts*. New York: Manpower Demonstration and Research Corporation.

Evaluation of a 13-site programme providing employment training to economically disadvantaged high school dropouts; arrest analysis separately examines outcomes for those with prior criminal records and finds no programme effect.

Mallar, C., and C. Thornton. 1978. Transitional aid for released prisoners: evidence for the LIFE experiment. *Journal of Human Resources* 13: 208–236.

Evaluation of a Baltimore-based programme providing income maintenance and placement assistance to recently released theft offenders.

Piliavin, I., and R. Gartner. 1981. *The impact of supported work on ex-offenders*. New York: Manpower Development Research Corporation.

Evaluation of the National Supported Work Demonstration (NSWD), a 9-city programme providing jobs to unemployed men with an incarceration history.

Rossman, S., S. Sridharan, C. Gouvis, J. Buck, and E. Morley. 1999. *Impact of the Opportunity to Succeed (OPTS) aftercare programme for substance-abusing felons: comprehensive final report.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Evaluation of a 5-city programme providing employment services to offenders with drug histories involving 398 experimental subjects.

Schochet, P., J. Burghardt, and S. Glazerman. 2001. *National job corps study: The impacts on job corps participants' employment and related outcomes*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Examination of a wide variety of measures of criminal justice involvement across groups randomly assigned to eligibility for the Job Corps programme; find beneficial effects of the programme on crime for the overall population but not for prior offenders.

UK-based evaluations

Haslewood-Pocsik, I, L. Merone, and C. Roberts. 2003. *The evaluation of the Employment Pathfinder: Lessons from Phase I, and a survey for Phase II*. Online Report 22/04. London: Home Office.

Description of survey and observational evidence collected on the implementation of the Employment Pathfinder in 2001–2003.

Partridge, S., J. Harris, M. Abram, and A. Scholes. 2005. *The intensive control and change programme pilots: a study of implementation in the first year*. Online Report 48/05. London: Home Office.

Evaluation of a recent intensive community order initiative.

Sarno, C., I. Hearnden, C. Hedderman, M. Hough, C. Nee, and V. Herrington. 2000. *Working their way out of offending: an evaluation of two probation employment schemes*. Research Study 218. London: Home Office.

Evaluation of two local education/training programmes for ex-offenders.

Other cited studies

Fletcher, D., A. Taylor, S. Hughes, and J. Breeze. 2001. *Recruiting and employing offenders*. Work and Opportunity Series No. 27. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Report of a 22-month study including surveys and interviews regarding employer attitudes towards hiring of ex-offenders.

Metcalf, H., T. Anderson, and H. Rolfe. 2001. *Barriers to employment for offenders and ex-offenders*. DWP Research Report No. 155. Leeds: CDS.

Study reviewing different factors contributing to the high unemployment rate among ex-offenders in the UK

Uggen, C. 2000. Work as a turning point in the life course of criminals: a duration model of age, employment, and recidivism. *American Sociological Review* 65: 529–546.

Re-examination of findings from the National Supported Work Demonstration Project stratifying by age of offender.

Webster, R., C. Hedderman, P. Turnbull, and T. May. 2001. *Building bridges to employment for prisoners*. Research Study 226. London: Home Office.

Home Office report of survey of ETE programmes within UK prisons.

Anger management

Ireland, J.L. 2004. Anger management therapy with young male offenders: An evaluation of treatment outcome. *Aggressive Behaviour* 30: 174–185.

Assesses effectiveness of 50 young UK offenders in a brief group anger programme compared to wait-listed offenders. Significant improvement for programme participants on standardized measure of aggressive behaviour.

Watts, Bruce D., and K. Howells. 1999. Skills training for aggression control: An evaluation of an anger management programme for violent offenders. *Legal and Criminal Psychology* 4: 285.

Compared 39 Australian violent offenders enrolled in anger programme with wait-listed offenders. No difference found in trait-anger level according to standardized test.

Hunter, D., and Hughes, G.V. 1993. Anger management in prison: An evaluation; anger management outcomes. *Corrections Research Forum* 5: 3–9.

Assessed effect of anger programme consisting of written exercises, individual counseling, relaxation therapy, and stress management on 28 Canadian adult male offenders. Compared to control group, programme participants were rearrested less often for violent crimes and took longer to be rearrested.

Dowden, C., K. Blanchette, and R. Serin. 1999. *Anger management programming for federal male inmates: An effectiveness intervention*. Ottawa: Correctional Service Canada.

Matched sample of 110 male offenders who completed cognitive/behavioural anger programme were compared to an untreated group. Large difference in recidivism rates observed (25% vs. 4%).

Escamilla, A.G. 1998. Cognitive approach to anger management treatment for juvenile offenders. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 27: 199–208.

Study compares 15 juvenile offenders enrolled in a STOP anger management programme with controls matched in age, gender, and criminal history. No significant difference in re-arrests were found.

Unpaid work

Baker-Hillsman, Sally, and Susan Sadd. 1980. *Diversion of felony arrests: An experiment in pretrial intervention*. Washington: National Institute of Justice.

Study randomly assigned cases to unpaid work or court prosecution. They found no differences between experimentals and controls in the likelihood of rearrest, the number of new arrests, or the severity of the new offence after four months and after twelve months.

Killias, M., M. Aebi, and D. Ribeaud. 2000. Does community service rehabilitate better than short-term imprisonment? Results of a controlled experiment. *The Howard Journal* 39: 40–57.

Randomly assigned Swiss offenders to either community service (n=84) or brief (less than 14 days) jail terms (n=39). Found significant difference in favor of community service group on measure of incidence of new arrests, but no difference on measures of prevalence of new arrests, incidence of new convictions, or prevalence of new convictions.

McDonald, D. 1986. *Punishment without walls: Community service sentences in New York City*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Case study of New York's Community Service Sentencing Project.

Spaans, E.C. 1998. Community service in the Netherlands: Its effects on recidivism and net-widening. *International Criminal Justice Review* 8: 1–14.

Compared 879 Dutch offenders sentenced to community service with 946 offenders sentenced to short-term prison sentences, matched on age, sex, and offense. Found lower rate of re-offending among community service sample, but noted that this was likely due to substantial differences between the two groups in criminal histories.

Probation

Austin, J., K. Joe, B. Krisberg, and P. Steele. 1990. *The impact of juvenile court sanctions: A court that works*. San Francisco: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

Randomly assigned probationers to no-contact probation, regular probation and intensive probation and did not find any statistically significant differences with respect to the type and timing of rearrest.

Kraus, J. 1974. A comparison of corrective effects of probation and detention on male juvenile offenders. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 25: 130–138.

Used a matched-pair design based on seven demographic variables to create a control group for 223 male juvenile probationers aged 8 to 18. For the full sample, the five year recidivism rate was slightly higher for the imprisoned group. For first time offenders, the recidivism rate for property offenses was much lower for those on probation.

Petersilia, J., S. Turner, and J. Peterson. 1986. *Prison versus probation in California: Implications for crime and offender recidivism*. Santa Monica: RAND.

Evaluated the recidivism results for a sample of comparable adult prisoners and probationers in California. After controlling for a host of factors, prisoners has significantly higher rates of being charged with a new offence and reconviction compared to the probationers.

Intensive probation

Bergman, G.R. 1976. The evaluation of an experimental programme designed to reduce recidivism among second felony criminal offenders. Wayne State University, Detroit, PhD diss. (77-9368).

Randomly assigned 109 adults convicted of their second felony to prison or an innovative probation programme with extensive community treatment. Those assigned to prison were more than twice as likely to recidivate when compared to those assigned to probation (22/67 vs. 6/42).

Brownlee, I. 1995. Intensive probation with young adult offenders. *British Journal of Criminology* 35: 599–612.

Observational study that evaluated the effect of intensive supervision for high risk offenders in Leeds. Compared to individuals with similar characteristics who were sentenced to custody, those participating in intensive probation “did not exhibit significantly different rates of recidivism.”

Burton, W., and J. Butts. 1990. Viable options: Intensive supervision programmes for juvenile delinquents. *Crime & Delinquency* 36: 238–256.

Approximately 500 juveniles were randomly assigned to intensive probation or a correctional institution. Two years after replacement the recidivism rates were not significantly different.

Folkard, S., D.E. Smith, D.D. Smith and G. Walmsley. 1976. *IMPACT: Intensive Matched Probation and After-Care Treatment, Volume II: The Results of the Experiment*. Home Office Research Study No. 36. London: HMSO.

Randomly assigned 900 probationers in four areas of England to traditional and intensive probation. There was no significant difference in the reconviction rates for these two groups, but there was some evidence supporting an interaction effect by offender type.

Lane, J., S. Turner, T. Fain, and A. Sehgal. 2005. Evaluating an experimental intensive juvenile probation programme: Supervision and official outcomes. *Crime & Delinquency* 51: 26–52.

Randomly assigned 539 juveniles to intensive or regular probation. Those assigned to intensive probation did not fare better than those assigned to traditional probation with respect to recidivism or substance use.

Petersilia, J., and S. Turner. 1991. Evaluation of intensive probation in California. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 82: 610–658.

Randomly assigned probationers to intensive or routine probation in two jurisdictions (in one jurisdiction the probationers were drug offenders and in the other they were felons). Intensive probation was not more effective at reducing recidivism and sub-analyses did not find any statistically significant interaction effects with random assignment and various background characteristics.

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales 2004. *ISSP: The initial report*. London.

This publication summarizes a report on Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) written by the Probation Studies Unit at the Centre for Criminological Research, University of Oxford. In terms of the 12-month recidivism rate, “when the ISSP groups are measured against the comparison groups (young people who were eligible for ISSP, but who received a Detention and Training Order or Supervision Order/Community Rehabilitation Order without ISSP), the latter performed just as well or slightly better.” The Youth Justice Board notes that the sample size of the comparison group was too small for definitive conclusions.