THE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE THROUGH-CARE

PART 1: INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

October 2013

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report forms Part 1 of a two-part review of the elements of effective through-care. It examines the international evidence in order to identify practice that appears to be effective, alongside areas that may hinder effective interventions. Part 2 examines this evidence alongside a review of practice in Scotland.

The available evidence, consisting of international research and practice evaluations, clearly highlights the practical issues that prisoners experience at the point of release and transition into the community. These issues often appear more entrenched for short-term prisoners for whom rates of reconviction are highest. The review confirms that already existing difficulties in areas such as accommodation, income, employment, drug and alcohol problems can actually deteriorate after release from custody, and imprisonment may serve to further marginalise particular groups (for example women, young and elderly prisoners, and minority ethnic groups).

While programmes in prison may help prepare prisoners for release, according to international research and evaluations these programmes will have greater impact if stable accommodation and employment opportunities are available in the community. Reductions in reoffending appear to be directly related to the availability of support following release, with international evidence suggesting that after-care may be as important as the provision of interventions during the period of custody.

Through-care is intended to ensure processes are in place to support prisoners as they move back into their local communities and, to some extent, mitigate the worst effects of detrimental social and economic factors which affect the lives of many people processed by the criminal justice system. There is significant variation regarding the legislative context of through-care provision which can consist of both policy and statutory bases; varying across countries but also across regions and local states within a national framework. The provision of support at this transitional stage can reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Internationally, challenges to the provision of through-care arise from fragmentation of services, under-funding and a limited evidence base for service development.

While this review drew on an extensive range of international literature, there are a number of limitations in the evidence available and very little evidence of *outcomes* obtained as a direct result of through-care services. Differences are evident between academic or independent reviews of through-care provision and project evaluations or policy analysis. Different methodological approaches can also hamper attempts to consider evidence comparatively and an over-reliance on reconviction data often obscures many of the 'softer' measures which are present in the process of (re)-integration. However, despite these caveats, there is sufficient evidence from which a number of conclusions may be drawn with regard to through-care provision.

Features of effective transition from prison to the community
The features of effective transition from prison to the community, according to research conducted internationally, include early contact with prisoners during the period of custody; involving prisoners in support plans and programmes aimed at meeting their needs; consistency in support/key workers thereby allowing a trusting relationship to develop between the prisoner and worker; flexibility in work practices allowing workers to respond to issues as they occur; maintaining support on release; and linking prisoners into community-based services.

Contact with outside agencies and workers to consider prisoner needs on release should start during the period of custody. Pre-release planning which involves both the prisoner and community agencies is likely to be more effective. It is also important that workers have a clear remit to ensure continuity of support and liaison across services and to facilitate effective inter-agency working.

According to international evaluations, the transition process will require different priorities at different points. Intensive contact may be beneficial in the period immediately following release (with particular attention to family contact and income support); while longer-term support can focus on employment and training. Support with accommodation, drug and alcohol treatment, mental health interventions and other needs may be required on an ongoing basis both in the short and longer-term. Ongoing support is likely to be required for prisoners with complex problems. Throughout this process, the importance of personal relationships between workers and ex-prisoners is significant, both in supporting the prisoner with practical challenges and maintaining client engagement and motivation.

Often, prisoners/ex-prisoners motivation will change over time; when practical issues arise (e.g. in relation to accommodation, benefits, medical care), they may start to realise the difficulty of their situation and become more motivated to engage with release planning, as impact evaluations from Europe have highlighted.

The availability of adequate resources is crucial in supporting transition since the lack of services (accommodation, mental health support, drug and alcohol interventions, employment and training) can cause problems and create serious inconsistencies in the provision of integrated care. Addressing the emotional needs of prisoners is also important. The role of families can be crucial in helping the individual rebuild self esteem and confidence; however available evidence indicates that families themselves may require support to do this.

Features of effective partnership working
There is consensus in the evidence available that multi-agency support at the right time is important for supporting the transition from prison to the community. Improving the continuity of support requires more than re-organisational change to be effective. It involves shared priorities between agencies and a willingness to work

together. Workers must also have sufficient resources since the ability of workers to intervene effectively may be hindered by large case-loads that can reduce effective liaison between services.

The appointment of a dedicated liaison person appears to be helpful in ensuring that joint working remains a priority and services may need to be co-ordinated around prisons to ensure all areas of need are addressed. Flexibility in service provision is important across agencies and in terms of agency remit. Tensions between staff in different agencies can result from poor communication and/or different underlying philosophies, highlighting the importance of effective leadership and policy commitment to ensure timely and appropriate information sharing and effective inter-agency working.

Addressing release gaps
Internationally, gaps appear evident in meeting the particular needs of prisoners serving short-term sentences and those on remand. Mentoring projects may be useful in building upon inter-agency co-operation, supporting individuals with practical issues while also fostering self-reliance and individual responsibility; however there is little evidence of actual outcomes in this area. Employment and day-release can ensure that prisoners are linked into work prior to release, thereby maintaining motivation following release and avoiding disruption at this point. Temporary accommodation (such as a half-way house) appears to be an important provision for prisoners, easing the process of obtaining more secure and stable accommodation, providing ex-prisoners with an address and phone number where they can be contacted and facilitating their attempts to access employment and training.

Release gaps can be created where workers have heavy case-loads and are subsequently only able to fulfil the basic requirements of their role: meeting minimum requirements rather than having the capacity to link in with other agencies and ensure continuity of services between agencies and providers. This situation is often exacerbated by limited or short term funding.

Staff selection, remit and skills
Whether volunteer or paid mentors or workers are employed, the important factors in effective interventions appear to be the consistency and availability of those providing the service and their ability to maintain contact with prisoners during the period of custody and on release, thereby ensuring that both support and practical assistance is available. This requires sufficient resources in the community to which prisoners can be linked prior to, or at the point of, release. Contact 'at the gate' or shortly after appears to be very important in supporting the prisoner as they move into the community.

Evidence suggests that workers, who are interested in the lives of their clients, focus on client strengths, are reliable and collaborative in their approach and clear about

their task are able to engage most effectively with prisoners and workers with these qualities are also associated with lower levels of recidivism among ex-prisoners.

Support perceived as addressing practical and personal needs is highly valued but the enforcement of statutory supervision requirements may create a barrier to open communication, suggesting that it may be better to have a separation of responsibility between the monitoring and support aspects of statutory supervision. The support element may be best provided by non-statutory organisations, leaving statutory agencies to focus upon the monitoring and enforcement of compliance. This would require formalised partnerships between relevant government and non-government organisations.

Targeting and the relationship between services and needs/risks assessment
The international evidence highlights different approaches to the targeting of prisoners for through-care interventions. While some interventions target prisoners in terms of offence severity (and therefore risk), others target provisions in relation to place of release (i.e. release into large urban areas or identified high risk neighbourhoods). Distinctions are also evident in the international literature between provisions for prisoners released unconditionally and those released subject to supervision.

There is no conclusive evidence on what mechanisms of targeting are most effective at a general level, though the evidence is reasonably consistent in indicating that more resources should go to prisoners assessed as 'highest risk'. In practice, however, high risk prisoners are often 'screened out' of eligibility for appropriate resources.

Funding structures
International experience indicates that where voluntary organisations have the main responsibility for providing support on resettlement they need to be sufficiently funded. Short-term funding can cause problems where projects do not have sufficient time to set up effective partnerships before their funding runs out. Funding practices that support the most efficient use of resources by allowing service providers to develop and implement long-term plans to address the long-term needs of released prisoners should be given greater attention.

Policy and practice implications
The evidence from international studies highlights the importance of ensuring sufficient resources are available for through-care providers to build relationships during the prison sentence and to support connections with outside agencies. Arrangements should be in place for contact between prisoners and outside agencies/workers during the period of custody. It is important to recognise the impact of imprisonment on different groups (women, young prisoners, elderly prisoners) and to recognise that they constitute groups with specific needs.

The complexity of providing appropriate services to short-term and remand prisoners may be considerable however there are likely to be significant benefits for prisoners and the wider community in doing so. For example the provision of support on release for prisoners with substance use problems may be as important as the provision of interventions aimed at addressing substance use during the period of custody. It is important that improved contact with families is facilitated to strengthen links which can be crucial on release, and this may require ensuring families are appropriately supported in their own right. Policy development should ensure that prisoners with highly complex needs will have these needs addressed both at the point of release and in the longer term. Policy considerations may focus on attaching resources to particular places, however this can also re-concentrate problems in these areas by encouraging releases to already high crime neighbourhoods. Finally, it is important to ensure those most in need of support are not excluded from service provisions on the basis of risk by acknowledging that specific attention may be required to tailor services to meet their needs.

INTRODUCTION

All prisoners experience challenges at the point of release from prison and re-entry to the community after a period of incarceration. Recognition of this underpins the emphasis placed on effective through-care, at an international level. However, this transitory experience is wide and the conceptual boundaries of 'through-care', 'reintegration' and 'rehabilitation' are often blurred. In some ways, through-care is an ambiguous concept, complicated by the very different forms that it can take (i.e. statutory, non-statutory; community-based, prison focused; needs-led, services-led). The challenges facing prisoners at the point of release are linked to a range of needs that feature widely in the experiences of prisoners **prior** to their incarceration, which affect their experiences while in custody, and which remain a challenge on release – both in the short and longer term. Through-care covers processes within the criminal justice system, but also relates to the transition of the individual from prison to the community in terms of wider services and resources (e.g. Decarpes and Dunescu, 2012).

This review describes evidence-based practice in through-care. The review is in two parts: Part One reviews international evidence on through-care practice while Part Two (Malloch, 2013) considers current provisions in Scotland, highlighting three case-studies to examine the operation and practice currently available. Part Two of the review will also consider the application of international findings in relation to good practice within the Scottish context – highlighting areas of good practice in Scotland, and potential areas where international lessons may be drawn.

This review (Part One) draws on findings from evaluations and wider international research and sets out (where evidence exists) to:
- Describe what is meant by statutory and non-statutory (informal) through-care in different contexts/jurisdictions;
- Identify international practice in through-care (voluntary and compulsory) and consider different models;
- Compare the funding arrangements adopted by different jurisdictions wherever possible;
- Assess the comparative effectiveness of these models in terms of effective and efficient arrangements and relationships, addressing offender needs and reducing reoffending.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on an international review of available research reports and policy documents (in English, Dutch and German) obtained from web-based searches and from correspondence with international colleagues following a request for information (see Annex One). Despite the breadth of the literature search, there is a limited amount of 'evidence' available on the effectiveness of through-care processes and practices internationally. This has resulted in a review that is rather more descriptive than analytical. However, Part Two will provide an opportunity to analyse these findings more specifically in relation to the Scottish context.

It should be noted that several caveats underpin this review. A great deal of available data is produced by service providers or government bodies, often taking the form of case-study presentations or reviews of pilot project initiatives. While illuminating in themselves, these documents are often less critical than academic writing on this topic. As a result, evidence obtained from academic or independent reviews often highlights the challenges of particular interventions while project evaluations tend to do this to a lesser degree.

Additionally, there is a growing evidence base in the UK and internationally of 'what works' to reduce re-offending. While an international comparative analysis is useful to consider lessons in 'good practice', there are difficulties in generalising across countries as the contexts surrounding offender reintegration may differ. In addition, the methods used in different studies to establish 'what works' can vary considerably, thereby influencing differences in the reported effectiveness of interventions. These difficulties are exacerbated by limitations in research design. In particular, the emphasis given to reconviction data can be problematic. This is often used as a key indicator of performance and remains the standard measure of re-offending. However there are a number of acknowledged shortcomings of these rates including: undercounting actual offending; effects of changes in police and prosecution practice; being an 'all or nothing' measure; failing to account for severity or frequency of offence; being a proxy for re-offending (Lloyd et al., 1994; Harper and Chitty, 2005). Additionally, many studies have sample size limitations thereby being less likely to detect the effects of an intervention; with small studies suggesting that an intervention has no effect, when in fact the sample size is insufficiently large to detect an effect. Harper and Chitty (2005) also note the difficulties of identifying outcomes from quasi- or non-experimental evaluations which make it difficult to attribute the outcomes to the effects of the intervention (as opposed to sample selection or other factors).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THROUGH-CARE

Summary:
- **The resettlement needs of prisoners have remained relatively constant over time**
- **Prisoners serving short sentences appear to have a greater degree of personal and social needs, account for the majority of prisoners and have higher rates of reconviction than long-term prisoners**
- **The importance of supportive relationships on release highlights the benefits of maintaining family ties during custody**
- **Provision in the community, particularly stable accommodation and employment, is important in supporting any interventions made during the period of custody**
- **The needs of particular groups require consideration in the development of through-care provision (notably women, young prisoners, elderly prisoners).**

There is a wealth of research into the backgrounds, characteristics and needs of prisoners which demonstrates the serious and chronic disadvantage and social exclusion that they experience and its association with reconviction (see for example, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002: 6). Through-care is intended to ensure processes are in place to support prisoners as they move back into their local communities and to some extent, mitigate the worst effects of detrimental social and economic factors which affect the lives of many people processed by the criminal justice system.

Across the UK, the resettlement needs of prisoners have remained essentially consistent over time. Common among short-term prisoners are problems to do with accommodation, employment, family and other inter-personal relationships, mental health and financial difficulties (Morris, 1965; Holborn, 1975; Corden et al., 1978; Corden, 1983; Haines, 1990; Macguire et al, 1997; Loucks, 2007). A NACRO (2000) survey of 350 prisoners which included 215 serving less than 12 months highlighted employment and accommodation as key problem areas while prisoners who participated in the Resettlement Pathfinders in England and Wales, tended to have multiple problems (Lewis et al., 2003). In a similar vein, in MacRae et al.'s (2006) study of Transitional Care for short-term prisoners in Scotland almost two-thirds of ex-prisoners reported health problems (including drug and alcohol use) immediately after release, half reported accommodation problems and just under two-fifths said that they had problems related to employment.

Prisoners sentenced to less than 12 months imprisonment account for the majority of prisoners and have the highest rate of re-conviction among released adult prisoners. Due to the time-frame of their sentences, these prisoners have limited opportunity to participate in prison-based programmes and are not generally subject to statutory post-release supervision. As a result, they are often dependent upon voluntary after-care services to meet their needs.

There is evidence that short term prisoners experience personal and social problems to an even greater degree than longer-term prisoners; many of which are exacerbated as a direct result of the experience of short term incarceration. Paylor (1992), for example, found that prisoners' housing status was poorer following release while in MacRae et al.'s (2006) Scottish study, ex-prisoners were more likely to report problems related to employment, money and family relationships seven months after release from prison than they were shortly after release, suggesting that in these respects their personal circumstances had deteriorated over time. Harding and Harding (2006) highlight the causes of widespread housing difficulties among ex-prisoners, such as lack of both appropriate advice in prisons and co-ordination between prison and probation services. They also highlight the unwillingness of social landlords to meet ex-prisoner housing needs due to perceived concerns about community safety.

Additional challenges faced by prisoners as a direct result of their offending behaviour and the incurred criminal record are evident in their attempts to find suitable employment (Edgar et al. 2012; in relation to women see Equal Opportunities Committee, 2009). This is an issue which appears to be experienced internationally (e.g. Hertzog-Evans, 2011a and 2011b).

Given the apparent importance of supportive relationships on release, the impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families cannot be ignored. Shaw (1992), for example, has documented the impact of imprisonment on prisoners' children while Paylor and Smith (1994) underlined the diversity and complexity of prisoners' family ties.

A significant amount of crime is economically motivated (to support drug use or as a means of surviving poverty) (Women in Prison, 2006; Rosenfeld and Messner, 2013) and given that individuals may end up in prison because they have been unable to pay financial penalties imposed by the courts, it is not surprising that financial difficulties can impinge upon prisoners' ability to re-establish themselves in the community after prison. Debts may worsen during the period of imprisonment and prisoners may also find themselves having to replace possessions in the community that they have lost while serving their sentence (Wilkinson, 2004). Ex-prisoners are often confused about their entitlement to benefits when released from prison thereby exacerbating financial difficulties at the point of release (Edgar et al, 2012).

Harper and Chitty (2005) note that efforts to cease offending constitute a long-term process. While prison-based programmes may be part of this process, factors such as employment and stable accommodation are important in ensuring that any learning from prison is maintained after release. Lewis et al (2003) highlight the importance of early and ongoing prison planning for appropriate aftercare and support prior to release.

While challenges exist for all prisoners, a number of additional difficulties have been identified for specific groups of prisoners. As noted earlier for many prisoners, these difficulties existed prior to their incarceration and may have worsened during the period of imprisonment (for example, mental health and wellbeing). This may result in reconviction shortly after release thereby perpetuating the 'revolving door' of custody and release:

Women
Research conducted in the UK suggests that women released from prison face significant difficulties reintegrating into society and that imprisonment may serve to further marginalise already socially excluded women (Malloch and McIvor, 2011; Malloch and McIvor, 2012). The existing literature on women in prison indicates that female prisoners have a complex range of problems and needs (e.g. Loucks, 2004) that are not usually addressed while they are in prison.

Indeed, there is evidence that women's circumstances can deteriorate further while they are in prison. This is particularly true in relation to accommodation, where it has been estimated that around one-third of women lose their accommodation (and possessions, often as a result of burglary or vandalism) while in prison (Eaton, 2003; Carlen, 2003; Niven and Stewart, 2004). As Gelsthorpe and Sharpe (2007) note, being imprisoned far from home makes it difficult for women to negotiate with local housing providers to retain existing tenancies or to obtain alternative accommodation if they cannot or do not wish to return to where they were living before being sentenced. If women lose their accommodation while in prison, some local authorities will refuse to assess them under the homelessness legislation until they are released (Women in Prison, 2006) and there is scant provision of supported accommodation for women (Gelsthorpe and Sharpe, 2007). The precarious (and often totally unsuitable) nature of women's post-release accommodation has been highlighted consistently by research (e.g. Niven and Stewart, 2004). MacRae et al. (2006) found that 67% of female ex-prisoners accessing transitional care services (community-based drugs through-care) in Scotland were identified by staff as having housing-related needs.

Homelessness legislation offers no guarantees of housing unless a woman is pregnant or has children, but imprisoned women are likely to find that they are unable to resume care of children looked after by the local authority while they have been in prison until they have somewhere suitable to stay. Although most mothers resume

care of their children on release from prison, social services may be reluctant to relinquish care to women whom they perceive to be unable to provide adequate care.

The need for a local connection can prevent women from resettling in a different area, perhaps to escape abuse or to avoid temptations to resume the use of drugs (Wilkinson, 2004; Women in Prison, 2006). Given that a high proportion of female prisoners report prior substance misuse (e.g. Singleton et al., 2005), successful resettlement will require that they avoid further drug use when they return to the community. However there are a number of barriers – apart from its availability - to women accessing appropriate drug treatment and support when they leave prison. These include the high proportion of female prisoners who are remanded or are serving very short sentences, where the high turnover of prisoners makes prison-based drug assessments particularly challenging and prevents the establishment of pre-release relationships with community-based workers that female prisoners appear to value (Fox et al., 2005; MacRae et al., 2006). Women are generally considered by drug agencies to be a hard-to-reach group who are reluctant to engage with drug services (MacRae et al., 2006) fearing removal of their children (Fox et al., 2005) though, MacRae et al (2006) found that despite the widespread perception that they were less willing to engage with services, women in Scotland were as likely as men to take up the offer of transitional care on release, suggesting either that practitioners' perceptions were misguided or that workers were making particular efforts to encourage take-up of services by women ('going the extra mile'). Relationships can also serve as a barrier to women's resettlement and reintegration. In many cases pre-existing relationships with partners break down while women are in prison (Morris et al., 1995).

Wilkinson (2004) has argued that employment can provide women with a route to economic independence. As she comments, "[the] inability to obtain some autonomy on release through employment enhances women's dependency, both on benefits and on the men with whom they form relationships" (p.165). However, studies of employment, training and education (ETE) for women in prison suggest that it is ill-suited to equipping women for the outside job market. For example, Hamlyn and Lewis (2000) found that prison employment typically entailed relatively menial and unskilled tasks that were associated with the running and maintenance of the prison, did not usually involve a vocational qualification and did not enable women to utilise existing skills while O'Keefe et al. (2007) found that women were generally critical of prison-based ETE citing, among things, a disproportionate emphasis on basic skills and a lack of tailoring of ETE to the external employment market. As Wilkinson (2004) points out, the length of most women's sentences means that opportunities for skills acquisition while in prison are limited.

The need to make suitable arrangements for childcare may prove a barrier to women's employment, though the impact of a criminal record consistently emerges as the greatest perceived impediment for women (Hamlyn and Lewis, 2000; O'Keefe et al.,

2007). However, for many women employment will not be regarded as an immediate need on release from prison since other pressing issues (such as drug use, accommodation and regaining custody of children) will need to be resolved first (Gelsthorpe and Sharpe, 2007; MacRae et al., 2006; O'Keefe et al., 2007). In their discussion of projects aimed at supporting women in exiting from prostitution, Hester and Westmarland (2004) found that training and education were unhelpful to women before other basic concerns had been met. They suggested that the sequencing of services and support was crucial: women required an appropriate range of multi-agency support at the right time.

Young prisoners
The needs of young people on release from prison are similar in many ways to those of adult prisoners with young people experiencing significant difficulties in securing appropriate accommodation, financial support, health and addiction services and discordant family relationships. Many of these problems characterise their experiences prior to, as well as on release from, prison – with the experience of imprisonment often service to exacerbate existing difficulties and worsening opportunities to access employment and training. While people aged 18-24 make up 10% of the UK population, they account for 33% of those sentenced to prison each year; 33% of the probation service caseload and account for 33% of the total economic and social costs of crime (Prison Reform Trust, 2012: 45). Recorded rates of re-offending are high for young prisoners and mental health problems, drug and alcohol problems are common amongst young people aged 16-20 in prison. This group (16-20) are also more likely to take, or try to take, their own life than both younger and older prisoners (ibid). Of concern is the fact that less than 50% of young adults surveyed in prison knew where to get help with accommodation, drug treatment or continuing education on release (Prison Reform Trust, 2012: 45).

Nacro (2003) highlighted the significance of intensive resettlement support for you people in prison. Projects aimed at providing intensive settlement for young prisoners were particularly important in targeting young people who were considered to be 'extremely vulnerable' on release. Key factors appeared to be:

- The development of tailor-made programmes aimed at addressing the needs of the young person and doing this in consultation with them;
- Appointing a specific key-worker based within the prison to oversee the young person's individual resettlement programme;
- Continuing a high level of support on release;
- Establishing links with outside agencies;
- Responding to needs immediately in order to support young people to take up opportunities to make a 'fresh start' at the point of release.

While support in dealing with practical issues was seen as crucial in intervening with young people, the importance of building relationships in prison that could continue during the prison sentence and support connections with outside agencies was pivotal (see also Hagell, 2004; Ipsos Mori, 2012).

Elderly prisoners

The particular needs of elderly prisoners are of note given the increasing number of elderly prisoners who make up the prison population in England and Wales, and increasingly, in Scotland (Davies, 2011; Wahidin 2005). Older prisoners appear to encounter particular challenges with re-integration as a result of the psychological experiences of imprisonment, reduced support network in the community and an increased likelihood of health problems and limited mobility. The problems of ageing and the psychological impact of ageing in prison require specific considerations for both men and women in prison (Wahidin, 2004; Wahidin and Aday, 2005). Attempts to provide targeted practice for older prisoners tend to be driven by local prisons and voluntary agencies. While this supports pockets of 'good practice' it can also result in considerable variation in practice across different areas and establishments. In some prisons, lack of adequate facilities and staff expertise can exacerbate the difficulties faced by older prisoners. The role of voluntary agencies may be particularly suited in the provision of an integrated system of care in the community for older prisoners, however there needs to be policy recognition that elderly prisoners constitute a group with specific needs.

Report

UK PRACTICE IN THROUGH-CARE

Summary:

Partnership working between the prison and community-based agencies is recognised as crucial

Resettlement Pathfinders highlighted the challenges of maintaining contact with prisoners post-release but indicated that providing after-care provision in a structured format was more effective than relying on voluntary provision

Ex-prisoners who had post-release contact with mentors on release appeared to do better than other groups of prisoners (Lewis et al, 2007)

Prisoners with drug problems benefit from appropriate services on release, that continue provisions initiated in prison

Family support is crucial in helping individuals rebuild their lives

Peer support may be helpful while mentoring provisions can build on inter-agency developments (Edgar et al, 2012)

England and Wales

In England and Wales, around 90,000 people are released from prison each year with almost half (47%) of all released prisoners and over half (57%) of those serving sentences of less than 12 months being reconvicted within one year of release (Prison Reform Trust, 2012: 26). In preference to 'through-care', the term used in England and Wales to describe the re-integration of people after prison in England and Wales is 'resettlement' due to the focus of this term on 'outcomes rather than processes' (HM Prison Service, 2001: 1).

The outcomes of resettlement sought by HM Prison Service are:
- "To reduce reoffending by prisoners following release from custody, thereby protecting the public from harm.
- Helping prisoners to participate effectively in society as law-abiding members of the community" (HM Prison Service, 2001: 1).

These outcomes are sought by helping prisoners to maintain and develop appropriate community ties and prepare for their release, particularly in securing employment and accommodation. It is acknowledged that while the Prison Service has a role to play in this process while the individual is in custody, but that partnership with key agencies is crucial.

There have been ongoing attempts in England and Wales to provide an effective process for the 'end-to-end management of offenders' (e.g. Carter, 2003; Home Office, 2004; House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2004; Secretary of State, 2005; Ministry of Justice, 2010). The established National Offender Management Service (NOMS), an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice was set up in 2008 to support prison and probation services to work together to 'manage' offenders through their sentences. The NOMS reintegration and resettlement framework was based on the work of the Social Exclusion Unit on prisoner resettlement and social exclusion. Their report (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001) proposed a 'needs-based "pathway" approach' through which the needs of offenders would be addressed by cross-government action. Seven rehabilitation 'pathways' were formed as part of this framework and each pathway aimed to address areas of work that were critical to resettlement; requiring prisons and probation areas to work closely together to ensure continuity from custody to community. Four of these projects were led by the probation service and three by voluntary organisations with experience of working with offenders in custody and the community. All of the projects were expected to address practical resettlement issues and those where the voluntary sector was expected to play a key role were focused on social and personal problems relating to accommodation, finances, low educational attainment, unemployment and substance abuse. Probation-led projects were expected to provide both practical assistance and cognitive/motivational programmes designed to address offending behaviour.

The Resettlement Pathfinders were: accommodation; education, training and employment; mental and physical health; drugs and alcohol; finance, benefit and debt; children and families of offenders; attitudes, thinking and behaviour. A number of implementation problems were experienced initially (Lewis et al., 2003) - getting off to a slow start and failing to meet target numbers - but with some success in the take-up of post-release assistance and significant positive change in criminal attitudes and self-reported problems. What worked best appeared to be a combination of facilitating access to resources relevant to prisoners' needs and taking some steps to address their thinking and motivation (Maguire and Raynor, 2006). Interestingly, voluntary-led projects identified accommodation as the most significant problems for ex-prisoners while probation-led projects placed greater emphasis on thinking skills, attitudes, education and training (Lewis et al., 2003). Post-release, the probation projects were all more successful than the voluntary projects in maintaining contact with individuals and in the numbers with whom meaningful work was carried out. However the level of post-release contact achieved by most of the Pathfinders suggested that they were at least five times more successful than probations service delivery of 'voluntary after-care' had been in the recent past (Lewis et al., 2003). Less positive was the finding that of the 526 ex-prisoners initially found to have a significant drug problem, only 40 were known to have attended a drugs agency post-release while of 535 identified as having significant accommodation problems, only 77 were known to have found housing with the direct help of the projects. These low figures reflect the

real difficulties agencies experienced in establishing and maintaining contact with prisoners post-release.

Two of the Pathfinder projects in England and Wales gave prisoners the opportunity to work with a volunteer mentor pre and post release (Lewis et al., 2003). The mentors provided a wide range of practical help and support, including gathering information about local education and employment opportunities; helping to complete application forms; and accompanying offenders to their accommodation or to meetings with service providers on release. Ex-prisoners who had post-release contact with mentors on release did better in terms of recidivism than any other groups of prisoners in the study (Lewis et al., 2007). In Scotland, a similar approach is being adopted by trained ex-prisoners in the Routes out of Prison (RooP) project (Schinkel et al., 2009) and through funding of Public Social Partnerships with a focus on mentoring for young, prolific and/or women offenders (discussed further in Part 2).

While there are limited evaluations of mentoring, those which exist highlight particular issues for women indicting that women valued contact with support workers who appeared to take a genuine interest in them and who were open, easy to talk to and 'down to earth' (McIvor et al., 2009). They did not value services that challenged them or focused on their offences or on the things they did badly but valued services that were delivered by workers who were reliable, holistic, collaborative, clear about their purpose, understood the women's perspective and focused on their strengths and services with these characteristics were associated with lower levels of recidivism. (Trotter et al., 2012).

Burrows et al, (2001) examined the nature of drugs through-care for prisoners with serious drug problems in England; considering the treatment and support offered to prisoners making the transition from prison to the community. The research examined the impact of these interventions on ex-prisoners' drug taking and offending behaviour on release. Their tracking study indicated that almost all ex-prisoners had taken drugs since their release and that 45% of their participants were taking heroin daily, although the number taking heroin daily had fallen from 66% of the sample to 45% and 14% had stopped taking drugs altogether for four months. Spending on drugs had fallen by 50% and while half of the participants reported committing crimes to support their habit, half said they had not returned to crime following their release.

While the complexity of providing appropriate services to short-term and remand prisoners is considerable, it has been acknowledged that the benefits of providing effective services to these groups would be significant for both the individual prisoner and wider community (Ramsay et al, 2005; Burke et al, 2006).

The importance of ensuring released prisoners with drug problems are linked into appropriate services on release was highlighted by Burrows et al (2001) who noted that reform of the through-care system could be best achieved through designation of

responsibility to one specific service and the ring fencing of funds for this purpose. They also noted the need to ensure that those needing support on release had arrangements put in place in their home area (with local area services taking responsibility for this).

PricewaterhouseCoopers (2008) set out guidance for good practice based on a review of prison-based drug treatment funding. Their review highlights the difficulties of comprehensive evidence in this area and in relation to prison indicates the problems created by an over-reliance on Key Performance Targets (KPTs) which measure quantity and throughput (i.e. volume of activity) rather than quality and outcomes[2]. This concern is also reflected by Borrill et all (2003) and noted in the Scottish Government audit of Through-care Addiction Services (Scottish Government, 2008). PricewaterhouseCoopers (2008) note that: "There is a need for more research evaluating care pathways and combinations of treatments" (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008:7).

The review of drug treatment and interventions in prisons and for people on release from prisons in England was published in 2010 (Patel, 2010), highlighting the need to: improve the quality of drug treatment for people in prison and on release from prison through the development of clear standards and outcomes; increase innovation to reduce re-offending and drug-related deaths; achieve efficiencies and improve cost-effectiveness in treatment provisions in prison and for people released from prison.

Aftercare was identified as necessary to ensure that effectiveness of interventions was maximized. Without this, prisoners may benefit from the intervention at the time it is accessed, however without aftercare its impact is likely to diminish significantly over time (Fox et al, 2005; Home Office, 2005). Holloway et al (2005) also found that reductions in reoffending were directly related to levels of aftercare. Indeed, Ramsay et al (2005) suggest that after-care following release from prison of drug users is probably as important as providing interventions during custody on the basis of reviews of the evidence base. Similarly, Martin and Players (2000) draw on research from the USA which evidences the importance of after-care, notably residential aftercare and transitional treatment facilities to reduce drug relapse and the likelihood of recidivism. Pelissier et al (2007) argue that more systematic research is needed to identify the most effective type and intensity of aftercare. However, as Martin and Players (2000) point out, there is a need for systematic support structures which can address the relationship between material deprivation associated with unemployment and poor housing, and the opportunities for crime and substance misuse that are

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[2] For example, some staff participating in the Review of Prison-Based Drug Treatment Funding (PricewaterhouseCooper, 2008) indicated that pressure to reach output based KPTs led to the selection of programme users based on their availability to complete the programme rather than on the severity of their dependence or the timeliness of the intervention for the individual.

evident in such environments; evidence of the multi-faceted effects of social exclusion.

Edgar et al (2012) provide a number of recommendations from their extensive study of resettlement conducted for the Prison Reform Trust. They highlight the importance of engaging prisoners in the resettlement process and supporting opportunities to encourage responsibility on the part of the prisoner. In this process, peer support workers are seen as helpful while mentoring projects are able to build on inter-agency co-operation, supporting individuals as appropriate while also fostering self-reliance and responsibility. The role of families is seen as crucial in helping the individual rebuild self esteem and confidence while employment and training opportunities are crucial in giving individuals a sense of direction on return to the community.

Prisoners' recommendations (in Edgar el al, 2012) included:
- Individual approach to resettlement that starts at the point of custody
- Improve information and open lines of communication with support outside
- Motivate and inspire prisoners to get involved in their resettlement
- Enhance the use of open conditions and Release on Temporary Licence
- Focus training on employable skills
- Target help with finding housing
- Facilitate improved contact with families
- Put in place reliable support following release.

The Offender Rehabilitation Bill, introduced into Parliament on 9 May 2013, makes a number of changes to release arrangements set out by the Criminal Justice Act (2003). It aims to ensure that all adult prisoners can be supervised on release for a period of at least 12 months. In particular, it enacts arrangements for release under licence for prisoners serving sentences of less than 12 months and introduces new arrangements for supervision of prisoners serving sentences of less than two years who will be supervised in the community for at least 12 months. In addition the Bill introduces a new drug rehabilitation requirement for periods of licence and supervision, new court process and sanctions for breach of supervision requirements, an extended period of supervision for prisoners sentenced to an extended determinate sentence, and the requirement that any young prisoner (who reaches the age of 18 prior to release from a fixed-term custodial sentence) should spend at least 12 on licence and/or supervision in the community. The Bill aims to address high re-offending rates, in particular, amongst prisoners released from short custodial sentences, and also aims to provide greater flexibility in the delivery of community orders and suspended sentences.

EUROPEAN PRACTICE IN THROUGH-CARE

Summary:
- **Legislative frameworks for probation and through-care vary across Europe**
- **Prisoner motivation may change over time as they become aware of the likelihood that they will face difficulties on release; thus provision should be flexible and available at different points in time**
- **Where prisoners had regular contact with workers prior to release, they were more likely to engage with services in the community**
- **Short-term funding of voluntary services with responsibility for providing resettlement could mean that many prisoners did not receive a service appropriate to their needs**
- **Employment provision for ex-prisoners can support them to make changes in their lives**
- **Where workers have heavy case-loads, gaps in resettlement provision are evident.**

The following discussion gives an overview of positive and negative aspects of practice in the resettlement of prisoners in Europe. Not all European countries were included in this literature review; we concentrated on those for which the most material was readily available, as well as relying on feedback from other academics to ascertain where practice might be appreciably better than in Scotland (see Annex Two). Countries for which academic research was available in English, Dutch or German were prioritised over others, although it needs to be noted that there was a tendency for such research to be critical of national practice, leading to more negative descriptions of practice here than for countries where only policy- or project documents were available. While not all examples of good practice will have been captured, those that we did come across resembled each other sufficiently to feel that we are able to describe the most important features of good practice.

A variety of legislative frameworks for probation, and for through-care, exists in Europe. In some countries, like France, probation is a matter for the central government and its responsibilities in relation to through-care are set out in law (Pelissier & Perrier, 2008). In other countries, like Germany, probation work is defined by a mixture of federal legislation and state-level decisions, with through-care being largely a matter for each individual state (Mutz, 2008). There are also more idiosyncratic arrangements. For example, in Austria, where probation work is carried out by non-profit organisation NEUSTART, the responsibilities of the latter are defined by the General Contract of 1994, but this Contract itself has its basis in legislation (Koss, 2008).

From the literature it was clear that internationally, there appears to be greater recognition than currently exist in the UK, that the moment of release constitutes an interruption of routines, relationships, space and everything that is familiar. For example, an Austrian project document characterises release as 'a dramatic and sudden change of almost all life circumstances, from complete dependence … to the necessary self-responsibility'. As a consequence, more attention is paid to allowing at least some domains of life to remain constant and to overcoming the problems that result from this interruption. There is also more acknowledgement of the importance of the way ex-prisoners sees themselves and their situation. For example, in Switzerland, preparation for release includes 'existential help' (Bruni, 2008, p. 1063), which involves helping the individual to understand themselves and their past in order to make reoffending less likely. In Estonia one of the main aims of support provided by volunteers is to allow the released prisoner to develop a 'pro-social' self-image.

The European country with the most support available for those leaving prison without statutory supervision appears to be Austria. The resettlement of offenders there is carried out by a non-profit company, NEUSTART, whose services are purchased by the Federal Ministry. All prisoners in Austria are invited to meet with a social worker 3 to 6 months before their release. Most prisoners accept at least a first meeting in order to relieve boredom, even when they are otherwise reluctant to work with social workers. In this first meeting, the prisoner is asked to describe what things will look like for them when they are released. Often, this results in a positive description of life outside, but when practical questions are raised about accommodation, benefits, medical care and any prescriptions, they start to realise the difficulty of their situation and become more motivated to engage with the social worker in planning for their release. This same social worker will then work with them until they are released, and for up to a year thereafter. While still incarcerated, the prisoner is offered short-term counselling and able to leave the prison for brief periods to familiarise themselves with the services they will work with upon release.

In addition, a 'holding environment' is set up for the post-release period, which includes a place to stay, enough money for the released prisoner to sustain themselves, medical care and activity to occupy them during the day. In some cities, NEUSTART is able to offer prisoners vocational training and education that starts while they are still incarcerated and continues 'through the gate'. Some are given release passes to attend workshops in the community, which they can continue to attend after release. All these measures avoid the interruption of structure and relationships that often happens at the point of release. An evaluation found that those who had six or more contacts with their social worker before they were released were more likely to significantly engage in the community, with only 15 percent disengaging. Of those who significantly engaged with the support on offer after their release 48 percent considered their needs to have been fully or largely met, with 12 percent feeling they had been largely unmet (Hammerschick & Krucsay 2007).

In many countries, such as Estonia, Germany, Italy and France, the resettlement of those without statutory supervision falls to voluntary organisations. Where these are under-funded or not present in all areas, as in France and Germany, this means that many prisoners do not receive any or enough support. Furthermore, short-term funding can be a problem, as reported in Germany, where projects often do not have the time to set up effective partnerships before their funding runs out.

In some countries such as Italy, voluntary organisations in turn rely to a large extent on volunteers. In Switzerland, public probation services, as well as voluntary organisations use volunteers to support those who are released from prison. Sometimes volunteers provide the continuity of support that is necessary to avoid total interruption of relationships at the point of release. In Estonia, trained volunteers start visiting prisoners three months before their release and continue to support them for 6-24 months after release. These volunteers work in partnership with trained social workers, both within the prison and outside. The prison social worker and volunteer help the prisoner to prepare for their release through re-building pro-social relationships, trying to arrange benefits and accommodation where necessary, and looking into employment possibilities. After release, the volunteer contacts the local government social worker in order to discuss any outstanding needs. They also meet the prisoner at the gate, help them to arrange necessary appointments and services and are an important source of support in overcoming the culture shock of adjusting to the outside world in the first days and weeks after release.

Some attempts to improve the continuity of support through structural changes to services have largely back-fired. In France, community-based probation services and prison-based services were merged into one service, ostensibly to increase continuity. However, in practice continuity of support from prison to the community is seldom achieved and probation workers in the community focus on supervision and control rather than on rehabilitation, due to their large caseloads (Herzog-Evans, 2011). In the Netherlands, the responsibility for 'voluntary through-care' or the support for those who are not under any form of statutory supervision was transferred to local councils, which were required to have a designated person to receive the information sent by the prisons around issues of reintegration, in order to improve through-care. However, in practice many councils either did not install such a person or were too small to do so. Others already had their own processes in place and did not welcome having to change these, especially considering there had been little consultation before the transfer of responsibility. In practice, many councils only take an administrative responsibility and do not provide any voluntary support post-release.

In Denmark, coordination between local councils and prisons seems to work better, with a dedicated liaison person for the councils in each prison, which tend to be small. Links with the local area to which the prisoner will return are strengthened two months before their release. A more all-encompassing approach was piloted in a regional project in Italy, where networks of the local council, social services and

voluntary organisations were established around each prison, which then coordinated services and allowed for the sharing of the files of individual prisoners across the network.

Employment is often focused on as the main need to be addressed in order to avoid reoffending. In a Scottish context, with so many ex-prisoners being long-term unemployed (compared to, for example, 35 percent in Austria) seeking employment before or upon release might be overly ambitious for some, with other issues which need to be addressed first, but lessons learned elsewhere might still guide practice. In one area in Germany, a project called MABIS provided one-to-one employment guidance for all prisoners who were interested. They were then helped to contact potential employers and to set up placements which started after their release. In Italy, a similar project had the advantage that those who were still imprisoned were often granted day release to attend their placements, so that these remained the same before and after their release. How employers might be motivated to offer places to (ex) prisoners is demonstrated by a project in Denmark. High:five invites businesses to set up jobs and traineeships for young people with a criminal record by emphasising the benefits to the business, such as employee pride in the social commitment of their company and gaining a committed, motivated and loyal employee. A mentor is appointed in the workplace, whose role is financed by the project. High:five also trains the mentor and provides general support to the workplace. It has been reported that High:five has found jobs or training places for 700 young people since 2006, 70 percent of whom stayed in employment or education, with only 5-6 percent returning to crime. For those who are not yet employable but would like to find a job in the future, workshops in which they can gain further experience and which provide a structure to their daily lives, like those ran by Neustart in Austria, may well be a good solution, especially where they provide continuity through the gate.

Accommodation, while a problem for many ex-prisoners, has not nearly received as much attention in projects aiming to improve the resettlement of prisoners. However, in Italy a project funded accommodation for ex-prisoners where this was necessary and the accommodation was deemed appropriate. In the Netherlands, a special office was set up in one prison to assist those without suitable accommodation. Staff attempt to find a safe place to stay that is available on the day of the prisoner's release and for at least two months thereafter. Upon release, they accompany the prisoner to the arranged accommodation and are available as a source of support and advice if any problems arise. In several countries (Denmark and Germany) halfway houses are provided for prisoners before they become eligible for parole. The impact of this on their accommodation after release is not clear, but it might be easier for prisoners to engage with housing providers once they are able to attend appointments in the community and have an address and phone number where they can be reached. Ideally, a 'holding environment' upon release should be provided, as by Schritt fur Schritt in Austria, including suitable accommodation, enough money to live on and daily activity.

For those who are not motivated to engage with support on offer in the prison, or feel they do not need to, help centres like the ones set up in the North of Italy might be part of the answer. There, ex-offenders can come in and request help within their communities and the opportunity to engage is always there. This means that later moments of motivation to change can be capitalised upon, and also that unforeseen problems can be resolved long after contact with other 'through-care' services would usually have come to an end.

A situation to be avoided, reported in several countries, is the strict delineation of responsibility of those working with prisoners or such heavy caseloads that staff are only able to fulfil their most basic tasks. For example, in Estonia probation workers can only focus on the prevention of reoffending, while in the Netherlands support staff in the prison are not supposed to leave the premises with prisoners, while those who work in the community seldom come in. In Germany case loads mean that there is little contact between those working inside and outside prison, leading to what they call 'release gaps'. Successful resettlement of offenders is likely to require either that providing continuity of support is someone's clear remit, or a degree of flexibility and willingness to go the extra mile on the part of staff working in one location.

AUSTRALIAN PRACTICE IN THROUGH-CARE

Summary:
- **Although through-care policies are formalised across jurisdictions, there is limited information on outcomes**
- **Prisoners with complex problems will require long term support to address these problems**
- **Personal relationships between workers and participants appeared to be crucial to successful interventions**
- **Lack of services can provide a barrier to effective through-care provision particularly in relation to accommodation, mental health, employment and training**
- **Timely sharing of information between agencies is important**
- **Separation of monitoring and support provision appeared to be particularly significant for women**
- **Effective multi-agency service delivery requires policy commitment and leadership**

The concept of through-care was imported to Australia from the UK. South Australia was the first state to introduce through-care legislation and has been described as having the most active through-care policy (Baldry, 2007). As in other jurisdictions the underlying principles of through-care in Australia include assistance and support to offenders while in custody and in the community; whole sentence planning; integrated case management; effective working partnerships; and the community of programme provision across custody and community (Baldry, 2007).

As Borzycki and Baldry (2003) have observed, the through-care arrangements for Australian offenders vary across jurisdictions but tend to represent a mixture of legislated provision (for example via parole licences) involving statutory supervision by correctional officers and the provision of post-release services to offenders who are released unconditionally by non-governmental and faith-based organisations.

Although all Australian jurisdictions have formalised through-care policies, there is limited information on how they are operating in practice. Borzycki (2005) reported that all jurisdictions indicated that they had through-care policies that embraced case management and acknowledged the need for governmental inter-agency working and the establishment of partnerships with non-governmental organisations. All emphasised the importance of employment and training opportunities for former prisoners but there was less consistent emphasis upon services addressing social support needs, mental health issues and drug and alcohol misuse.

There is even less research that addresses the outcomes achieved by through-care services (Baldry, 2007; Borzycki, 2005). As Kinner (2006, p.5) has observed, "[a]t present, the few programs for ex-prisoners in Australia are fragmented, often under-funded and usually based on limited evidence".

One of the few published evaluations of through-care is the Bridging the Gap programme in Victoria that provided intensive support to offenders with drug or alcohol problems through a combination of direct service provision by five community-based agencies and support in accessing a range of other services (Melbourne Criminology Research and Evaluation Unit, 2003). The programme involved pre-release planning by the community agencies, intensive contact in the period immediately following release (with an emphasis on finding accommodation, re-establishing family connections and income support) and longer term support focused on securing employment, stabilising accommodation, engagement in drug treatment and dealing with physical and mental health problems. Involvement typically lasted for between 4 and 6 months, though some participants remained in contact with the service for up to a year or longer, highlighting the need for long term support to address complex problems and marginalisation. In comparison to those who dropped out or who declined to participate, participants in the programme were found to have better outcomes in relation to drug dependence, participation in treatment programmes and accommodation stability. Participants also had lower return to prison rates in the first 120 days following release, though recidivism rates across the study groups became similar in the longer term. The researchers make the observation that personal relationships established between workers and participants were fundamental to the success of the programme.

Some small scale exploratory studies have, however, identified a gap between the rhetoric of through-care and its practical operation. A study reported by Baldry (2007) found, for example, that although probation and parole offenders believed that the development of through-care had brought about improved relationships between partner agencies, improved information sharing, enhanced consistency and continuity of care for offenders and some improvement in services, there was still scope for implementation to be improved. Barriers to effective implementation included a lack of services in relation to issues such as accommodation, mental health, employment and training; difficulty in ensuring consistent and integrated care; limited or short-term funding; tensions between staff in different agencies resulting from poor communication and/or different underlying philosophies; a lack of appropriate retaining and leadership; and difficulties maintaining client engagement and motivation. The importance of meaningful and timely sharing and exchange of information is emphasised by Stevens (2002).

There is a particular lack of research on prisoners released following sentences of less than 12 months or following a period of remand. Walsh (2007) notes that in Queensland, pre and post-release plans are only available for prisoners serving

sentences of 12 months or more, while only prisoners serving sentences of two years of more are entitled to supervision on release. Baldry (2011) argues, however, that the post-release needs of prisoners serving short prison sentences are not the same as those serving longer sentences since the former are more likely to have mental health problems and to be convicted and sentenced repeatedly for relatively minor offences. Baldry describes repeated short prison sentences as "a form of serial institutionalisation that is even more disruptive to positive engagement with the community and maintains more chaotic living that a longer sentence" (p. 256). Through-care policy and practice in Australia is based on assumptions that there is time for the development of a care plan in prison; that the release date is known and that prisoners will have spent longer in custody than is actually the case. She is particularly critical of through-care for women – who typically serve short sentences or are held on remand - which, she argues, has been developed in the basis of flawed data on throughput and on research on men leaving prison in other jurisdictions.

A number of commentators have suggested that the needs of women, young offenders, indigenous offenders (who have higher recidivism rates than non-indigenous offenders, (Willis, 2008)) and offenders with mental health problems tend to be most poorly addressed as a result of their marginalisation, the complexity of their problems and the absence of holistic approaches that are capable of meeting their needs (Baldry, 2007, 2011; Borzycki, 2005; Walsh, 2007). The importance of pre and post release programmes and services for short term prisoners with substance misuse and mental health problems has been highlighted by higher recidivism rates among ex-prisoners with a history of injecting drug use (Kinner, 2006) with the period immediately following release being identified as particularly important given that it is particularly stressful for ex-prisoners and associated with a high risk of recidivism (Kinner, 2006; Walsh, 2007).

A study of women released from prisons in Victoria between December 2003 and December 2004 (Trotter et al., 2006) examined their experiences of accessing services in custody and their experiences of resettlement on release. It illustrated how barriers to resettlement could impact upon women's success in desisting from crime. There were clear differences in the experiential accounts of women who had successfully desisted since leaving prison and those who had continued to offend. Women variously attributed their desistance to: success in avoiding drug use since leaving prison, in some cases prompted by self-reflection about how they had been affected by drugs; personal resolve to achieve and sustain a 'better' or 'normal' life; dissociating from former lifestyles and associates and finding new interests and friends; the existence of supportive relationships; and concerns about the impact of continued offending on their children. Women who had continued to offend, on the other hand, often attributed this to the resumption of drug use precipitated by '*hanging around with the wrong crowd*', boredom or drug use by a partner or friend. However women also recounted a range of stressful experiences that had resulted in them turning to drugs, such as bereavement, redundancy, homelessness and

relationship breakdown. Other factors related to re-offending after release included financial hardship and mental health issues (McIvor et al., 2009).

Most women when interviewed in prison before release were confident that the services they needed to assist their resettlement would be available. However, the reality was often very different, with women often expressing disappointment at the response of organisations – especially public sector agencies - to their problems. Although 62 women interviewed after 12 months had had some contact with welfare agencies since their release from prison, the greatest support the women had received was usually said to have come from family members (most often mothers), partners and friends (Trotter et al., 2006). Women valued contact with support workers who appeared to take a genuine interest in them and who were open, easy to talk to and 'down to earth' (McIvor et al., 2009). They did not value services that challenged them or focused on their offences or on the things they did badly but valued services that were delivered by workers who were reliable, holistic, collaborative, clear about their purpose, understood the women's perspective and focused on their strengths and services with these characteristics were associated with lower levels of recidivism. (Trotter et al., 2012).

Although women who were subject to statutory supervision on parole were not universally positive in their appraisal of supervision following release from prison, the support and structure provided by their community corrections officers and by staff from other non-statutory agencies were highly valued when they were perceived to address their practical and personal needs. However, they often expressed wariness with respect to the role of community corrections officers in enforcing parole requirements, suggesting that this created a barrier to open communication and helped to develop an atmosphere of mistrust (McIvor et al. 2009). This perhaps indicates that effective engagement for women may be better achieved through voluntary take-up of services or through a separation of responsibility between the monitoring and supporting aspects of statutory supervision, with the latter being provided by non-statutory community-based organisations[3].

Borzycki (2005) argues, on the basis of an international literature review undertaken for the Community Safety and Justice Branch of the Australian Government's Attorney-General Department, that the provision of post-release services should be the concern of government agencies responsible for housing, health and education (see also Walsh, 2007, who argues for a 'whole of government' approach); voluntary and statutory social services providers; local business and industry; and the communities to which prisoners return. She identifies a number of areas requiring further attention including:

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[3] This is the model being developed in Scotland through the Public Social Partnerships approach.

- The need for a comprehensive register of post-release and through-care services;
- Exploration of the potential role for private industry especially in relation to employment and housing;
- The establishment of formalised partnerships between all relevant government and non-government organisations;
- Funding practices that support the most efficient use of resources and allow service providers to develop and implement long-term plans to address the long-term needs of released prisoners;
- Policy development that allows for the needs of prisoners with highly complex needs and 'high stakes' prisoners (such as sex offenders) to be met;
- Education of the broader community about the role that they can play in helping to re-integrate prisoners.

The complexity of ex-prisoners' needs is further highlighted by Borzycki and Baldry (2003) who argue that challenges they face on release include both personal barriers to integration (such as mental health problems) alongside more systemic ones (such as unemployment, lack of education and debt). Reporting on a roundtable discussion on through-care convened in 2002 they emphasise the potential of 'strengths-based approaches' as a mechanism for drawing upon personal and community assets to address ex-prisoners' challenges and disadvantages. The discussions, based on the experiences and expertise of those working in the area, highlighted the importance of proving a continuum of services from prison to the community that focused on the whole person and their wider social context, drawing upon effective partnerships. A number of important elements of post-release service delivery were identified including the need for services to be individually tailored; the development of case plans for during and after sentence; service brokerage; demarcation of staff responsibility for supervision and for social and other supports; the limiting of reporting requirements to avoid overwhelming the ex-prisoner; and genuine engagement between worker and ex-prisoner (Borzycki and Baldry, 2003). In proposing a model of service delivery based on the concept of 'floating care' (see Figure 1) they point out that the co-ordination and funding of services is dependent upon an understanding of the risks and needs of prisoners and that effective multi-agency service delivery requires policy commitment and leadership.

Figure 1: A model of through-care service delivery to ex-prisoners (Borzycki and Baldry, 2003)
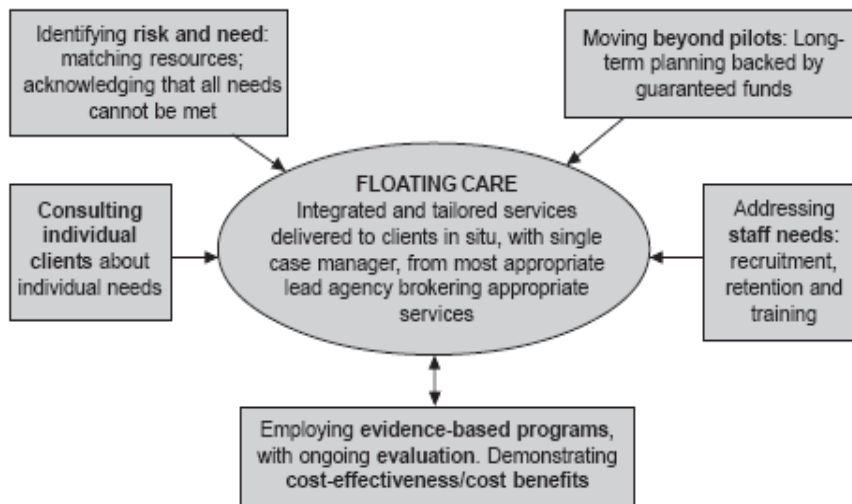
The Government of the Australian Capital Territory recently published proposals for the development of an extended through-care system that takes a 'person-centred approach' whereby rather than 'fitting in' with a service, the individual "shapes the services and supports they use to suit their needs, circumstances and lifestyle" (ACT Government, 2011, p.9). The underlying principles are that:

- Risk of recidivism is reduced through meaningful integration in the community;
- Prisoners need skills and resources to live independently in the community;
- People receive the supports and services that meet their and their families' needs;
- Services are co-ordinated and continuous across correctional and community settings and meet the needs of the most marginalised offenders.

It is argued that successful implementation of the strategy will be dependent upon strategic high level governance; effective service co-ordination; improved data and research to provide a strong evidence base; and continuous improvements in service delivery with regard to the structure and delivery of prison-based programmes and streamlined assessment and case management across organisations, supported by training and professional development (ACT Government, 2011).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 'RE-ENTRY

Summary:
- **Through-care provision in both the USA and Canada combines central and local government and voluntary sector provision**
- **Release preparation needs to begin during custody**
- **High-risk prisoners are often excluded from community programmes, while they may require services that give specific attention to their needs**
- **Emotional distress and depression is likely to be exacerbated during custody**
- **Re-entry courts assist ex-prisoners to reintegrate into local communities, but there is currently limited outcome data available**

Recent American and Canadian research on reintegration or through care for offenders[4] tends to use the term, 're-entry'. Re-entry is studied not only through evaluations of particular programmes or cases but as a major policy problem. With the largest prison population in the world, America releases around 600,000 people from prisons and jails every year. The numbers involved led to the enactment of The Second Chances Act (2005, 2007, 2008) and partly as a result of this legislation there has been a surge in financial and informational resources on improving integration of prisoners. Funds and advice are available to individual states through federal government. States apply for this money and use it to implement policies appropriate to their state practice. America's exceptionalism of extremely high imprisonment rates, high average length of sentences, racial and ethnic overrepresentation in criminal justice and disparities in sentencing, are important considerations in attempting to compare or apply models from this jurisdiction. Nevertheless it may be useful to have access to a large knowledge base, particularly the increasing focus on 'justice reinvestment' as a means of tackling both the high costs and rates of reoffending in the criminal justice system. Research carried out in both Canada and the U.S. points to the same factors affecting a person's ability to reintegrate and the consequent demands on criminal justice provision of through-care. Summarising much of the research from Canada and the US, these key factors are:

- *Employment* – training and ease of finding and keeping work
- *Substance misuse* – having access to good quality, non-criminalised options of recovering from drug and alcohol dependency

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[4] This section merely highlights a small number of useful resources and evaluations. It is not meant to be representative of all that is available or to suggest there are not evaluative issues which could be explored. The field is much too vast to survey comprehensively in this brief review.

- *Family and social support* – not interfering with and where possible supporting the maintenance of stable and constructive kinship structures
- *Housing* – having access to reasonable quality, non-stigmatising housing and avoidance of homelessness

As in the UK, reintegration (re-entry) services and programmes are operated by a mixed economy of central and local government and voluntary sector provision. Non-public service provision may be operated by non-profit or in some cases, for profit organisations.

Academic research on re-entry has identified important considerations sometimes neglected in case study presentations and pilot project initiatives. One summary of issues to pay attention to is taken from an article by Byrne and Taxman (2004) in which eight model programmes funded through re-entry legislation are reviewed:

1. The status of released prisoners: Whether someone is released under supervision or at the expiry of their sentence (and thus not required to participate in services) will affect both the likelihood of receiving support and the offender`s willingness to engage with services.
2. Addressing problems that existed prior to or were acquired in prison: Many offenders bring to prison problems that will hinder their ability to reintegrate at the end of their sentence including mental health, substance abuse, family and relationship issues. However, they might also gain new ones. Hence, through-care may also involve attention to in prison care and pre-prison decision making.
3. Recognition that through-care begins in prison: Many of the re-entry programs studied began release preparation at least a month and sometimes more before release.
4. Targeting criteria for re-entry programmes: Programmes studied not only targeted groups based on offence severity but also *place* of release (focusing on those going into large urban areas or into identified high risk neighbourhoods) and targeting also separated offenders who were released unconditionally and those who were released subject to supervision.
5. Targeting high and low risk offenders: Byrne and Taxman observed that, in contrast to recommendations in the academic literature, that rather than most resources going to the highest risk cases, high risk cases were often screened out of eligibility. Sex offenders, for example, faced almost blanket bans on participation in reintegration initiatives. Violent offenders, people with more than a very minor criminal history and those with mental health issues also were frequently screened out of many programmes.

They conclude that location based targeting may make sense, but policy makers should also be aware that while this approach reflects that many offenders come from

a concentrated number of places, it could also re-concentrate this pattern by encouraging releases to particular high crime neighbourhoods. The second conclusion is that targeting which excludes offenders who are perceived to be particularly threatening to public safety or the ability of the programme to achieve its hoped for levels of success is excluding precisely those offenders who are most in need of support. In addition, these often excluded offenders, those who are – high risk, sex offenders, repeat offenders, and offenders with mental health and substance dependency – require specific attention to tailor services to their needs, and to design each phase of re-entry accordingly (and recognising that there are overlaps in these groups).

A point which is often overlooked, is that one of the problems acquired (or worsened in prison) is emotional distress and depression. At least one recent piece of research concluded, following a rigorous statistical analysis of validated emotional status inventory tools, that community reintegration may depend to a significant extent on adequate providing emotional support in order for other interventions to be engaged and successful for the offender (Shinkfield and Graffam, 2010). Another study of reintegration in a small city, also pointed out that the psychosocial dimension of reintegration was crucial to success, and that well known factors of effective through-care, like employment, had importance beyond its ability to secure financial stability (Garland et al., 2010).

A major problem facing all the states studied, (which is shared with Scotland and internationally), is tackling the problem of breaches and technical violations of probation or parole as a driver of prison populations. Details from a case study of Arizona included:

- Changes to policy which means '[p]eople on probation may be eligible to earn up to twenty days off their term of supervision for every thirty days they demonstrate positive progression and compliance with their conditions of supervision, participate in their community service assignments, and adhere to court-ordered restitution payments' (National Summit Report, p. 63)
- Allowing the localities where revocation of probation rates fall to receive a portion of the savings these avoided revocations represent (National Summit Report, p. 64).
- Impact of these and other changes: (1) a 28% drop in revocations throughout the state; (2) leveraging these savings and other funds, one county collaborated with experts from a local university to better work together to support 'substance abuse, mental illness, and poverty' among probationers; (3) And state and local governments 'worked with social workers, churches, and other community groups to provide job training, counselling, and other social services to people on community supervision' (p. 65).

Re-entry courts

An important development in the through-care of prisoners in the USA has been the introduction of re-entry courts. Based upon the drug court model, re-entry courts typically involve intensive judicial oversight (via regular court-based review), supervision and services for a specified period time following release followed by traditional parole supervision during which ex-prisoners may continue to access services through the re-entry court on a voluntary basis. The aim of re-entry courts is to assist ex-prisoners in the initial period following release to find jobs and accommodation, remain drug-free and assume familial and personal responsibilities.

Because they are a more recent innovation than drug courts, there is still limited data on the outcomes of re-entry courts. A study of the Harlem Parole - Court, using a matched comparison groups of ex-prisoners subject to standard parole supervision, found that those who attended the re-entry court had lower levels of recidivism (as measured by re-arrests and reconviction), however they also had higher rates of revocation, in particular for 'technical violations', suggesting that the more intensive scrutiny of ex-prisoners has resulted in the detection of violations that would previously have gone undetected (Hamilton, 2010).

Miller (2007), in a review of literature on re-entry courts, has voiced concern that the focus of these courts tends to be on providing "interventionist emotional support backed by sanctions" (p.133) that individualises offender accountability while "minimizing governmental responsibility for a range of institutional failures in the areas of health care, education, housing, and employment". He nonetheless concludes that re-entry courts show some promise through using the "collateral authority of the judge to influence community leaders, law enforcement officials, and service providers to tend to the needs of ex-inmates" that might allow for the development of "a holistic response to the diverse range of social problems facing ex-inmates" (p.133).

CANADIAN PRACTICE IN THROUGH-CARE

Reintegration thinking in the UK has been greatly influenced by Canadian practice and scholarship. In terms of practice, the aboriginal dimension has allowed for innovative development in the area of restorative justice (for an example of reintegration programs among First Nation groups using restorative practices, see Clairmont, 2008). Further, Circles of Support and Accountability, involving the use of community volunteers to support and monitor high risk sex offenders, is a scheme pioneered in Canada and adapted elsewhere (including in Scotland and England). Finally, Canadian researchers have made significant contributions to shaping the contemporary what works debate including, for example, the development of the widely influential `risk, need and responsivity` model (Andrews and Bonta, 2010).

A literature review of practices in the US, UK and Australia but applied to the Canadian context concluded that the following factors are tied to successful reintegration of offenders (Griffiths et al., 2007: 41):

1. focus on a specific target group of offenders and their specific challenges;
2. rely on sound methods for assessing the needs and risk factors of offenders;
3. hold the offenders accountable and responsible for their own choices and their actions;
4. begin while the offender is in confinement in the correctional institution and continue throughout the offender's transition to, and stabilization in, the community (through-care);
5. strike a balance between surveillance and control, on the one hand, and support and assistance on the other;
6. offer assistance in an integrated and comprehensive manner and address the many inter-related challenges faced by offenders (e.g. wrap-around interventions);
7. are offered as a coordinated effort of all the agencies involved and supported by strong agency cooperation (supported by partnerships and interagency cooperation and information protocols, clear definition of respective roles and responsibilities; and a clear articulation of the services to be provided and the relevant time frames) are supported by sound case management practices and adequate information management systems;
8. reflect the public safety priorities of the community in which they are developed, engage the community in both the planning and the delivery of the intervention and fosters strong community ownership;
9. have a robust evaluation component that allows the program to evolve, self improve, and remain accountable to the community for crime reduction results.

Three initiatives run specifically in Canada, through the federal prison system, are CORCAN, LifeLine and the Canadian Families and Corrections Network:

CORCAN is the Correctional Service of Canada`s Prison Industries programme. It is mandated by law to provide employment training and employability skills to federal prisoners in Canada. According to one evaluation, statistical comparisons of those involved and not involved in prison industries concluded uninterrupted participation in CORCAN prison industry programs immediately prior to release may have a positive impact on offender post-release recidivism (Motiuk and Belcourt, 2006). CORCAN also operates 31 community employment centres across Canada to provide job counselling and training to released prisoners (http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/prgrm/corcan/cec-eng.shtml).

The *LifeLine* programme is a voluntary programme designed to provide support to offenders who are serving life or indeterminate sentences (http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/pblct/qf/22-eng.shtml). Support is provided through in-reach workers who themselves are lifers or long-term offenders who are on parole and who have been living in the community without incident for at least five years (Olutu et al., 2009: 1). There are three components to the service comprising helping the life sentenced prisoner adapt to prison, helping the person integrate back into the community and improving public awareness of offender integration initiatives. The evaluation generally produced favourable results for the programme concluding that the service was responding to the main identified areas of offender need, though there were areas where cost effectiveness and clarity of procedure could be improved.

The *Canadian Families and Corrections Network* (CFCN, http://www.cfcn-rcafd.org/) is an initiative partly funded by CORCAN, to improve efforts to involve and recognise the importance of families in the reintegration process. CFCN provides information and support to families with a member in prison, works in prison to assist families and support parent-child bonding and runs something called Family Group Decision Making for Reintegration, which is a restorative practice that uses a family group conference to prepare a family-based reintegration plan (http://www.cfcn-rcafd.org/#story3). The family is mentored by a community mentoring team for up to one year, post release, ensuring a successful family and community reintegration plan. It is currently available only to families in Quebec.

CONCLUSIONS

Although there is a considerable amount written about through-care, there is a limited amount of 'evidence' available in terms of robust evaluations of effective through-care processes and practices internationally. International experiences highlight the limited attention that is given to the evaluation of programmes to identify the effectiveness of models of intervention. While this is unsurprising given the limitations of financial provision it also leaves uncertainty about the most useful methods of through-care provision. However, despite the lack of robust empirical data there would appear to be sufficient consistency across countries to draw some general conclusions regarding the elements of effective through-care.

Features of effective transition from prison to the community
- early contact with prisoners during the period of custody;
- involving prisoners in support plans and programmes aimed at meeting their needs;
- consistency in support/key workers thereby allowing a trusting relationship to develop between the prisoner and worker;
- flexibility in work practices allowing workers to respond to issues as they occur; maintaining support on release; and linking prisoners into community-based services.
- The availability of adequate resources is crucial in supporting transition since the lack of services (accommodation, mental health support, drug and alcohol interventions, employment and training) can cause problems and create serious inconsistencies in the provision of integrated care.
- Addressing the emotional needs of prisoners is also important.
- The role of families can be crucial in helping the individual rebuild self-esteem and confidence; however available evidence indicates that families themselves may require support to do this.

Features of effective partnership working
- multi-agency support at the right time is important for supporting the transition from prison to the community;
- shared priorities between agencies and a willingness to work together are crucial;
- workers require sufficient resources to intervene effectively;
- a dedicated liaison person appears to be helpful in ensuring that joint working remains a priority;
- flexibility in service provision is important across agencies and in terms of agency remit;
- effective leadership and policy commitment are needed to ensure timely and appropriate information sharing and effective inter-agency working.

Addressing release gaps

- although evidence is limited to date, mentoring projects may be useful in building upon inter-agency co-operation;
- employment and day-release can ensure that prisoners are linked into work prior to release
- temporary accommodation (such as a half-way house) appears to be an important provision for prisoners

Staff selection, remit and skills

- consistency and availability of workers, either voluntary or statutory are important;
- contact 'at the gate' or shortly after appears to be very important in supporting the prisoner as they move into the community;
- effective workers appear to be those who are interested in the lives of their clients, focus on client strengths, are reliable and collaborative in their approach and clear about their task;
- the separation of monitoring and support aspects of statutory supervision seems important, requiring formalised partnerships between relevant government and non-government organisations.

Targeting and the relationship between services and needs/risks assessment

- there is no conclusive evidence on what mechanisms of targeting are most effective at a general level, though the evidence is reasonably consistent in indicating that more resources should go to prisoners assessed as 'highest risk'. In practice, however, high risk prisoners are often 'screened out' of eligibility for appropriate resources.

Funding structures

- short-term funding can cause problems where projects do not have sufficient time to set up effective partnerships before their funding runs out.
- funding practices that allow service providers to develop and implement long-term plans may be worthy of greater attention.

While practical supports provided by both statutory and non-statutory sectors are significant, the importance of establishing a relationship (based on trust) between the prisoner and service-provider from the onset of imprisonment, continuing throughout the sentence and supporting links with agencies in the community, has been shown to be crucial across countries. This is particularly important in relation to groups such as women, young and elderly prisoners. While this may take the form of volunteer or professional mentoring, it would appear to be the continuity and clarity of this role that makes a difference to engaging the prisoner. Personal relationships appear to be of major importance. Research has consistently identified the benefits of skilled case-

management, and the importance of allocating a key worker, with the capacity to co-ordinate agency contacts and ensure access to appropriate services.

The evidence available indicates that prisoners who engage with the through-care process prior to release are more likely to continue to do so following release. Those who maintained contact with mentors post-release consistently showed better outcomes in terms of their ability to access support and, where measured, reductions in recidivism. The complex needs of some individuals do however, highlight the importance of providing long-term support as appropriate particularly when problems are entrenched and individuals marginalised.

The distinction between statutory or enforced parole or supervision and voluntary take-up of services requires further research to establish evidence of different pathways through systems and the benefits of varying intensity in after-care provision. However, it would appear that there would be some useful effects of separating out the monitoring and support aspects of statutory supervision, particularly in relation to women prisoners.

Given the importance of engagement, it is crucial that resources across the criminal justice spectrum provide available, accessible and effective interventions. In particular, it is necessary that interventions link together to ensure that once engagement takes place, service users do not fall through gaps in services when they move between different criminal justice institutions (i.e. from prison to the community) (MacRae et al, 2006). Interventions must be strategic and accessible at the point of need.

Through-care is intended to ensure processes are in place to support prisoners as they move back into their local communities and to some extent, mitigate the worst effects of detrimental social and economic factors which affect the lives of many people processed through the criminal justice system. Clearly, there are unlikely to be any simple solutions to the complexities of re-establishing prisoners into society. Matters that led to imprisonment may be unresolved and can continue to influence their lives on release, while other new problems may have arisen as a direct result of imprisonment itself. Poverty, especially when linked to problems of substance abuse may continue to feature in the lives of the individual and it is crucial that these social issues are addressed if the individual is to be able to support him/herself (and any dependents). The over-representation of black and ethnic minority groups; and indigenous/aboriginal communities in the criminal justice system requires serious consideration and meaningful responses. Entrenched, long-term problems require deeper solutions and go far beyond the scope of the criminal justice system.

The consensus view, evident internationally, is that a partnership approach is required in assuming responsibility for resettlement, drawing together both government and non-government sectors. Challenges can arise however, when the non-government

sector, which has a crucial role in the support of prisoner's on-release, is not adequately resourced or supported and when an over-reliance is placed on volunteer labour. Creating expectations in prisoners that can not be substantiated on release will limit the effectiveness of relationships and could create a lack of trust.

It would appear to be crucial that prisoners are involved in their own resettlement process to take account of their individual needs and circumstances; that, where appropriate, families, and even the wider community have some involvement in this process as it develops.

A number of practical initiatives can be considered which appear likely to support resettlement in the community and which may enhance through-care provisions. For example, Vanstone (2007) identifies a number of barriers to the take up of services on release which include prisoners' social isolation; a lack of coordination in resettlement work; low priority given to resettlement work by key agencies; inaccessibility; and negative appraisal by prisoners. Steps that might encourage
improved engagement with services include consistent contact arrangements; gate pick-ups; follow-up contacts in the event of missed appointments; active advocacy on behalf of clients; reinforcing relapse prevention strategies; and helping to establish a sustainable network of support in the community (Vanstone, 2007).

In their recent review of the prisoner resettlement literature, Décarpes and Durnescu (2012) suggest that support for prisoners on release can be made more effective by:

- Offering prisoners a list of agencies to which they can be referred and establishing links with post-release workers at the pre-release stage (see also MacRae et al., 2003).
- Providing market place sessions – a 'one stop shop' - in which representatives of agencies are brought into the prison to meet with groups of prisoners, affording prisoners the opportunity to obtain information and make appointments with a range of agencies.
- Putting in place mechanisms to minimise the impact of imprisonment on prisoners' circumstances outside – for example, protecting accommodation and belongings, preventing rent arrears and making suitable arrangements for the care of children.
- Providing opportunities for training and education (including vocational skills) to enhance employability and employment opportunities.
- Providing access to mental health support systems.
- Providing access to resources and services to deal with drug and alcohol problems.
- Liaising with families and other key social contacts.
- Making available, on an ongoing basis, information about employment, education and housing opportunities and benefits.

- Responding to the needs of men and women who have suffered sexual or physical abuse.
- Securing the involvement of relevant community organisations (including religious groups) for prisoners from minority ethnic groups.

Structural factors within and beyond the criminal justice system are of significance in terms of provision of support for prisoners, but also the deleterious effects of prison overcrowding (Home Affairs Committee, 2005) which can result in a high level of transfers between prisons, thus disrupting intervention programmes and damaging rehabilitative work. Limited community-based resources can also impact on services to provide appropriate and adequate levels of support to prisoners at the point of release and/or in the longer-term. Problems of stigma and concerns about community safety can also have a negative impact on the ability of ex-prisoners to resettle in the community; issues which require careful consideration and appropriate responses.

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ANNEX ONE

Dear Colleagues,

I wonder if you could perhaps spare 10 or 15 minutes to assist me (and the Scottish Government)? The Government here faces a problem in that our system offers very little support to short-term prisoners (meaning in this context those serving less than 4 years), who serve half of their sentence before being released under licence (i.e. to be of good behaviour) but without supervision. The rates of re-offending for such prisoners are thought high.

In the context of a wider Reducing Reoffending Programme, the Scottish Government have asked us here at SCCJR to conduct a rapid review of through-care/resettlement/re-entry systems and services, and this includes a comparative element. If you could spare a few minutes to respond briefly to the five questions below about your jurisdiction, we would be very grateful (and will, of course, happily share our report in due course).

We're interested especially in arrangements for and practices with those prisoners serving determinate sentences of less than 4 years, and particularly in what pre-release planning and post-release support and/or supervision is provided for this group, rather than in release-decision-making. Bearing that in mind:

1. What are the legal or statutory provisions or arrangements for prisoner through-care/resettlement/re-entry in your jurisdiction? What aspects of pre-release planning and post=release supervision and support are voluntary and what are compulsory?

2. What is the practice model of through-care/resettlement/re-entry in your jurisdiction?

3. How are pre-release planning and post-release supervision and support funded and organised (for example, are these functions of the prison service, the probation service, local authorities, the voluntary sector, etc.)?

4. Can you direct us to any evidence (either from government or organisational sources or from independent academic research) about the effectiveness (however defined or measured) of through-care/resettlement/re-entry arrangements (legal, organisational, practical) in your jurisdiction?

Please reply to **m.schinkel@ed.ac.uk**

ANNEX TWO: European Countries

Austria:

In Austria, the resettlement of offenders is carried out by a non-profit company, NEUSTART, whose services are purchased by the Federal Ministry. NEUSTART provides supervision for those who are conditionally released and voluntary aftercare for other post-release prisoners. For the last two years, Austria has been using electronically monitored house arrest as an alternative to imprisonment for sentences of less than one year or the last year of a prison sentence, if certain conditions are met. These include a stable living environment, no objections from those they will be living with and a sufficiently well-paying job to support themselves. Those on this type of house arrest also receive support from NEUSTART.

A resettlement project that ran under the EU's EQUAL initiative was Schritt für Schritt, which ran in 7 of the 28 prisons in Austria. An Action Plan was drawn up with prisoners 3 to 6 months before release that included what help the prisoners themselves felt they needed. Support started within the prison, with the prisoner being prepared for their release and receiving short-term counselling. They also were allowed to leave the prison for brief periods to get to know the services they would be working with once released. In addition, a 'holding environment' was set up for after their release, which included a place to stay, enough money to sustain themselves, medical care and something for them to do during the day. Prisoners had the same case worker, a professional social worker, within the prison and after release in order to provide continuity of support. This was seen as crucial considering the major changes entailed in release, including the loss of structure, loss of relationships with services and people in the prison and the sudden increase in responsibility for their own lives.

Schritt für Schritt consisted of 4 modules. The first, planning and development, has been described above. Initially, it was anticipated that this would include a groupwork element, but after feedback from prisoners it was decided to do all this work individually. The second module focused on qualifications and basic education. This work started within the prison and continued after release in training centres, with participants attending for the length of time they needed. For module three, low level employment training, prisoners who were not yet ready for employment were given release passes to work in Schritt für Schritt workshops in the community, and continued to work there after their release in order to increase their job skills. The fourth module aimed to improve the learning environment in the prisons, by improving the IT infrastructure and linking the classrooms there to the education server of the Technical University of Vienna.

An evaluation of the project (Hammerschick & Krucsay 2007) described its clients as 20% female, an intentional over-representation compared to the prison population, and on average just over 30 years old. Although they reported problematic lives,

compared to the Scottish prison population Austrian prisoners may be relatively well off. While 60% reported a past addiction problem, only 22% said their offence was caused by their addiction. Sixty-three percent had completed basic education and only 33% had been unemployed for longer than a year previous to their imprisonment (75% were unemployed at the time of their imprisonment). On the other hand, almost all had offended before (92%) and 68% had served previous sentence(s). All the 443 participants were offered help with planning and development (module 1), regardless of their participation in modules 2 and 3.

On average, the first contact with the social worker took place 4 months before release, and 6 more contacts took place within the prison. Fifty-five percent then continued to engage in the community (of whom 11% only briefly), while 25% chose not to engage. With others, either the goals agreed upon had already been reached within the prison (9%), they were not released when expected, or contact had been stopped while they were still imprisoned, e.g. because they had been transferred to another prison. The more intensive the contact in prison, the more likely participants were to engage in the community: of those who had 6 contacts or more with their social worker while incarcerated only 15% disengaged upon release.

In terms of outcomes, for 29% of all participants the planned goals were fully or mostly achieved, for 33% they were partially achieved and for 40% they remained largely unmet. However, taking into account only those who engaged meaningfully in the community (on average 8 contacts over 6 months) goals were mostly or fully achieved for 43%, with only 12% leaving the project with their needs largely unmet. Accommodation goals were reached for 86% of all clients, and 25% of those who meaningfully engaged found employment.

Since the end of EQUAL in 2007, Schritt für Schritt has been implemented in all 28 prisons. Every prisoner in Austria is now offered aftercare. They are invited to meet with a social worker 3 to 6 months before their release. It is felt that by offering support early most prisoners will accept a first meeting as a way to relieve boredom, which overcomes the reluctance to meet with social workers that sometimes exists. In the first meeting, the prisoner is asked to describe what things will look like on their day of release. Often, this results in a positive description of life outside, but when practical questions are raised about accommodation, benefits, medical care and any prescriptions, prisoners start to realise the difficulty of their situation and become more motivated to engage with the social worker in planning for their release. The same social worker will then work with them until they are released, and for up to a year thereafter. In some cities, NEUSTART is also still able to offer prisoners vocational training and education 'through the gate', whereas elsewhere this is now provided by third sector partners and/or has to be arranged on a case-by-case basis (Priechenfried, personal communication).

Sources:

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Denmark:

In Denmark, the responsibility for the supervision of ex-prisoners falls to the Probation service, which is part of an integrated Prison and Probation Service, which in turn is part of the Ministry of Justice. In Denmark, prisoners with sentences of longer than 3 months and who have served two thirds of their sentence are eligible for parole. Parole is also possible after ½ the sentence for prisoners with stable personal circumstances and those who have made special efforts to turn away from crime during their term of imprisonment. Day release is available every working day for those who want to attend a job or a course of education. Prisoners can also be allowed to go to a halfway house before their parole. Some prisoners are supervised while they are on parole, but for many the only condition is that they do not commit another offence.

All prisoners with sentences of over four months have an action plan, which covers issues such as employment, training/education, housing, substance abuse etc. This is drawn up by prison staff, prison social work staff and the prisoner within the first month of imprisonment and reviewed every three months thereafter. The plan is geared towards facilitating the prisoners' reintegration upon release, and where cooperation with the council the prisoner will return to is necessary, this will be highlighted. In every prison, there is a dedicated staff member who liaises with the councils where appropriate.

Two months before they are released prisoners take part in pre-release programmes. These are based on the principle of 'Good Release' which aims to strengthen the links between the prisons and the councils to which they will return and ensures that the responsibility for the prisoner is transferred seamlessly from one to the other.

An example of good practice, High:five helps young people with criminal records who are committed to going straight and are either free of substance abuse problems or are receiving treatment to find work. They invite businesses to set up jobs and traineeships for these young people, emphasising not only the benefits to the young person, but also the benefits to the business, such as employee pride in the social commitment of their company, gaining a usually very committed, motivated and loyal employee. A mentor is appointed in the workplace, whose role is financed by High:five. High:five trains the mentor and provides general support to the workplace. It has been reported that High:five has found jobs or training places for 700 young people since 2006, 70% of whom stayed in employment or education, with only 5-6% returning to crime. The project is publicly financed.

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Estonia:

In Estonia, the probation system is part of the Ministry of Justice and integrated in the Prison Department, under its Division of Social Rehabilitation. Prisoners convicted of less serious crimes can be released after serving half their sentence (two thirds for more serious crimes). Earlier release on electronic monitoring is also possible. Probation supervision then continues until the end of the sentence. However, probation workers' role is to exclusively focus on the prevention of reoffending. For other needs, the ex-prisoner is referred to mainstream services, as no aftercare services are funded by the Ministry of Justice.

In Estonia, volunteers are used in order to facilitate the reintegration of prisoners. The Prison Service website states that volunteers visit with prisoners during their detention to maintain social ties between the prisoners and the community and to provide religious input and support. Décarpes & Durnescu (2012) note much more extensive use of volunteers pre- and post-release. They describe a situation in which trained volunteers start visiting prisoners three months before their release and will continue to support them for 6-24 months after release. These volunteers work in partnership with trained social workers, both in the prison and outside. Prison social workers contact the project coordinators to request volunteers. With the input of prison officers, the prison social worker, the volunteer and the prisoner himself, a release plan is agreed upon. This includes the prisoners' own goals and the role the volunteer will play in working towards these. The prisoner signs a waiver allowing the volunteer to access relevant information about them. Together, the prison social worker and volunteer then help the prisoner to prepare for their release, through re-building pro-social relationships, trying to arrange benefits and accommodation where necessary, and looking into employment possibilities. After release, the volunteer contacts the local government social worker in order to discuss any outstanding needs. They also meet the prisoner at the gate, help them to arrange necessary appointments and services and are an important source of support in overcoming the culture shock of adjusting to the outside world in the first days and weeks after release. Meeting regularly thereafter, one of the main aims of the volunteer is to allow the person to develop a pro-social self-image. Volunteers are supported through a system of local volunteer coordinators, captains and a project coordinator, some of whom are paid.

Sources:

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Prison Service Website: http://www.vangla.ee/ . Accessed August 31, 2012.

France:

In France, community-based probation services were merged with prison-based services in 1999. Since then, the combined service is called 'the rehabilitation and probation prison service' and accordingly is part of the prison service, which in turn is part of the Ministry of Justice. However, each 'département' has its own service. Part of the service's stated purpose is to help prevent the 'dissocialising' effect of

imprisonment. Within the prison probation workers focus on rehabilitation while the prisoner is still incarcerated, with prison officers in charge of supervision and control. These two parties cooperate, along with others, to work on the sentence execution plan, which 'must value the prisoner and limit the desocialising effects of imprisonment by giving him an active role and making him responsible for himself during his time in prison' (Pelisier & Perrier 2008, p. 359). Parternships with community-based organisations are developed and coordinated by probation services in order to maximise the opportunities for reintegration. After release from prison, the probation service works with anyone whose sentence is still active. In addition, those who have served their sentence can request help from the probation service for six months after their release. However, it has been noted that probation services in France now operate more along a supervision and control than along a rehabilitation and support model, due to their large caseloads (Herzog-Evans, 2011). Charities take on some of the work previously executed by probation services, but only have the resources to work with a small minority of those leaving prison. Although the merger of the previously separate probation services was ostensibly to ensure the continuity of support from the prison to the community, this is actually seldom achieved.

Sources:

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Germany:

In Germany, in 2006 the power to legislate on issues of imprisonment was moved from the national level to the level of the federal state. Each federal state has its own probation service, with its own organisation structure. Early release is decided in individual cases, on the basis of risk assessment, rather than being granted automatically, and is not used as much as elsewhere. When early release is granted and when this is ordered especially by the courts (usually only for dangerous offenders), the prisoner is given support by the probation service. In all other cases,

they are dependent on 'Voluntary Ex-offender Services', but there is no uniform provision of these (some are run by churches, while others are funded by local municipalities) and they are often under-funded and unable to meet all ex-prisoners' needs.

Joint-up working is made more difficult by the separate responsibilities of the different agencies involved, which are strictly adhered to. Social workers in prison are responsible for release preparation and should be carrying out this responsibility in collaboration with other relevant authorities, but due to large case loads often fail to resolve problems before the prisoner's release. 'Release gaps' are common, because outside agencies cannot come into the prison and day release to meet with agencies is rarely granted.

It should be easier to set up continuous care for those who are supported by the Probation Service, but in most states probation does not fall under the same ministry as the Prison Service, which hinders cooperation and means social workers within the prison work in different ways and use different tools than their counterparts outside. One state where a progressive piece of law-making has been drafted is Brandenburg, where a 'Social Rehabilitation Act' aims to make it possible for prisoners to stay in halfway houses before conditional release, where they will receive intensive and individual support to prepare them for life outside.

Against this background, there are numerous projects and programmes in the different federal states, many of which target specific groups (young offenders, female offenders etc) and are often focused on employment. In many, the first contact takes place within the prison, but given their short-term funding these projects struggle to make the necessary changes in prison structures before their funding runs out. Consequently, their 'integration managers' or similarly titled staff do not have the power to make the decisions necessary to aid integration, such as sending a client to the open regime or enabling him to take a place in drug treatment.

One project that is no longer operational is Zubilis, funded through the EU's EQUAL initiative and operating in one federal state, North Rhine-Westphalia. It was borne out of a recognition that education and training in prison often focused on traditional vocational work, for which there are few vacancies in current job markets. A further problem was that there was a lack of support 'through the gate'. On their own, those leaving prisons often failed to make contact with services or training providers in the community, which could mean that the training they had started in prison came to nothing. Zubilis combined with earlier initiatives, MABIS and MABIS.net. Taken together, these led to a greater focus on preparing prisoners for the actual labour market. The training programmes on offer in the prison were changed to be more relevant to the job market. Prisoners were offered individualised vocational and employment guidance and were helped to make contact with potential employers outside in the months before release in order to arrange a placement. In total, 50% of

those who engaged with this part of the initiative gained a placement, of which 80% led to employment, with many others leading to a place in education or training. In addition, across the state a network of aftercare agencies was developed, that worked closely with the personnel providing guidance in the prison and put the plans developed within the prison into practice, ensuring that support was consistent across both settings. Importantly, the links across the network meant that support was also on offer to ex-prisoners who were returning to different areas. It was found that most who used this part of the initiative were those who had not found a placement while still in prison, or for whom this placement had failed. Most accordingly wanted (new) placements, which were secured for 50% of them. Over a third also requested support with others issues, such as health, accommodation and debt. Only 16% disengaged from the aftercare programme before results had been achieved.

Sources:

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Italy:

In Italy, probation services are part of the Ministry of Justice. Probation services work with offenders who are still under some form of sentence, whether a community sanction or a part of the prison term served in the community (semi-detention, semi-liberty, home detention, conditional release etc.). While officially they also have a duty to assist those whose sentence has been completed, in practice this duty is not fulfilled, although those released from prison can ask for support. In reality, it falls to local authorities and voluntary organisations to provide support in the resettlement of prisoners, including housing and help with the search for employment. In the South, where voluntary organisations are less present, there is little support for released prisoners who have no statutory support. Voluntary organisations often use volunteers

to carry out much of their remit. The extent to which the probation service or voluntary organisations can start to work with prisoners before they are released varies from area to area.

In the North of Italy, the Piedmont region ran a successful project to improve the resettlement of prisoners under the EU's EQUAL initiative. Called Car.Te.S.I.O, the project had three aspects. Around each of the twelve prisons in the region a local network (or GOL) was established, which brought together the local council, social services, voluntary organisations and any other relevant partners. Within each GOL, services were coordinated so that a comprehensive support system was developed for those leaving the prison. Files on individual prisoners were shared amongst GOL partners in order to provide more joined up support. The second aspect of the project focused on employment. In Piedmont before the start of the project, less than 5% of prisoners were working while imprisoned. Through Car.Te.S.I.O, prisoners were offered help to develop a 'work insertion plan', in which they were expected to play an active part. They were offered vocational training, helped to find placements with local employers and were often allowed to attend these placements on day release from prison. During the project, a restaurant was opened in which prisoners could work before and after release. Finally, the project focused on creating wider social support, through financing accommodation for released prisoners where appropriate and the establishment of a help desk in each of the prisons. These help desks also provided support for prisoners' families, including with psychological problems that might accompany the release from prisoner of a family member. Help Centres were also established in local communities, offering assistance and counselling to ex-offenders who had already been released.

Sources:

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Netherlands:

The reintegration of prisoners is the responsibility of Ministry of Justice during the imposition of sentences (whether within or outside of prison), but when prisoners are released without statutory supervision, 'voluntary through-care' is the responsibility of the local council to which the prisoner returns. This arrangement was made to

improve the continuity of support from the prison environment into the community, with local coordination centres for through-care set up. However, when this happened it was done without much preparation or consultation with the councils, which has led to problems (see below). Within the prison the new function of medewerker maatschappelijke dienstverlening (mmd –societal support provision officer) was created. The Ministry of Justice has issued guidelines that all prisoners should have adequate ID, an income, accommodation and (where necessary) support upon release; it is the job of the mmd to assess on which of these domains the prisoner is in need of help. The gathered information is then passed to councils once the prisoner is released. However, at the time of writing, many councils did not yet have a designated person to deal with this information, meaning that the mmd gets no response from these councils. Other councils already had their own processes set up and did not welcome Justice interference in these. Finally, many councils only take an administrative responsibility and do not provide any support post-release.

Where support and/or supervision are provided, both the Ministry of Justice and the councils purchase the services of one of three big organisations in 'reclassering': Reclassering Nederland (the Dutch Probation Foundation), which has no specific target group, Social Rehabilitation of Addicted Offenders (SvG), which works with offenders with substance misuse issues and the Salvation Army, which focuses on clients who are homeless and young offenders.

In current Dutch practice, 'through-care' is delivered by many different people. The mmd is not allowed to leave the prison, and considering their high case loads would struggle to do so more than very occasionally, meaning that there is no support 'through the gate'. Once released the assessment of risk/need, providing advice and supervision tasks have been disconnected and are carried out by different people. This means that there is very little continuity of relationship. Recently a pilot has explored what happens when workers are given a more free hand. It turned out that they chose to work in much more continuous ways. They often started to support clients in the police cells, and continued to do so through their detention, their release and even after the end of their period of supervision. They were also more creative in accessing other sources of help. Best practice advice is to give through-care workers a GP-like role, in which they accompany offenders on their journey towards desistance, providing both support and referrals to other, more specialist, services.

A project that also aims to provide more joined-up care is the Salvation Army's Prison Gate Office, which operates in one prison (Veenhuizen). Its service is intended for those prisoners for whom the mmd has not been able to arrange accommodation. The Prison Gate Office staff attempt to find a safe place to stay that is available on the day of the prisoner's release and for at least two months thereafter. Upon release, they accompany the prisoner there and are they also available as a source of support and advice if any problems arise.

In all the 13 custodial institutions for young people in the Netherlands a programme called Work-Wise operates. It is aimed at boys and girls aged 12-24 who will be in the institution for more than three weeks and offers them support in three domains: Work and Education; Living Independently and Coping with Leisure Time; and Creating a social network. The young people are offered intensive and individual support by a member of staff of the institution, who will continue to work with the young person for the duration of their stay and for up to six months after their release. Where possible and appropriate, the support is delivered in partnership with other organisations, including youth services, probation, schools, employers and the council to which the young person will return.

Sources:

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Switzerland:

In Switzerland, probation services are the responsibility of the individual cantons, rather than a federal matter, and as such the way probation services are organised differs across the cantons. In most cantons, probation is delivered by public organisations, which are either part of the Justice Department (more usual) or the Department of Social Services. In two cantons, private organisations deliver probation services, but these too are funded by the canton.

Statutory support is there for those who are conditionally released or for whom the court orders this, while care and counselling is available on a voluntary basis for all those who leave prisons, organised by the probation service, often in concert with private social organisation. Publicly run probation services make extensive use of volunteers, who largely fulfil supportive rather than supervisory roles.

Within the prison, social workers are proactive in making links with the outside world in order to prepare prisoners for release, which includes establishing contact with their families, their wider environment and their social worker in the community. The work focuses on two areas: practical support and 'existential help' (Bruni, 2008, p. 1063), which involves helping the offender to understand themselves and their past in order to make reoffending less likely.

Sources:

CEP (n.d.) Summary Information on Probation in Switzerland. Available from http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Summary%20information%20on%20Switzerland.pdf. Accessed September 14, 2012.

Bruni, H.-U. (2008) Switzerland. In A. M. van Kalmthout and I. Durnescu (eds.) *Probation in Europe*. Nijmegen: Wolf Legal Publishers, pp. 1047-1076.

Sources used for several countries:

Décarpes, P. & Durnescu, I. (2012) *Study Regarding the Development of an Integrated Inter-Institutional Mechanism for the Social Reintegration of Former Convicts.* Available from http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Decarpes-Durnescu_2012_Study_regarding_the_social_reintegration_of_former_convicts.pdf. Accessed August 30, 2012.

ANNEX THREE

Useful Re-entry Related Websites from the U.S.

- Council of State Governments Reentry policy Council: http://www.reentrypolicy.org/
- National Reentry Resource Center: www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org
- Pew Center Public Safety performance Project: http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/initiatives_detail.aspx?initiativeID=31336
- Urban Institute Resources: http://www.urban.org/center/jpc/returning-home/index.cfm#findings
- National Parole Resource Center: http://nationalparoleresourcecenter.org
- Center for Effective Public Policy (Criminal Justice Policy): www.cepp.com
- National Institute of Corrections Reentry Resources: http://nicic.gov/TPJC

All of these sites offer a mixture of resources from links to published research, advice manuals, case studies, funidng opportunities and tool kits (e.g. *Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry Coaching Packet*, at www.cepp).

Highlights of Specific U.S.-focussed Resources

National Criminal Justices Initiative Map (online resource): A resource of the council of state governments, this map is an interactive resource listing examples of through-care (and other) services available to offenders. It is a useful way to locate specific examples of practice. It is online at: http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/national-criminal-justice-initiatives-map

Justice Reinvestment Initiative (Bureau of Justice Assistance, US DOJ): This initiative builds on growing favour in the US for reintegrative efforts to focus on the high costs and low returns of imprisonment as a strategy of reducing reoffending, and to target efforts therefore on reducing imprisonment and using cost savings for community-based solutions. This particular JR initiative offers financial assistance to localities to conduct JI pilot projects. Details of what JR involves and links to pilot projects and early results are online at: https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=92

Case studies of specific jurisdictions: The websites listed above all include information about particular programmes and case studies. A particularly useful document containing evaluation standards, principles of practice and case studies on JR as a model of reintegration is *The National Summit on Justice Reinvestment and Public Safety Addressing Recidivism, Crime, and Corrections Spending* (January 2011). Several states` experiences are reviewed and include information about the particular cause of high prison populations in a given place; the strategies adopted to address the challenge; and, documentation of the impact of change.