

Transition News

Working together to build new, quality probation services

Issue 6
April
2021

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Welcome

An update from Gabriel, Melanie and Denise

Welcome to the latest edition of our Transition News. This is where we will bring you key updates and messages on our move to the unified model. For this edition, we cast the spotlight on some of the excellent work from employees both in the NPS and CRCs. The first of which looks at the development of an Autism Spectrum Disorder workbook completed as part of a work-based learning project during the employee member's PQiP training. The second explores the role of the Veteran and Volunteer Peer Mentor Coordinator in Hampshire and Isle of Wight CRC.

This Transition News also features the latest information on resettlement, the Dynamic Framework, nDelius changes, the latest PQiP recruitment campaign and how to access information and support around the Civil Service success profiles.



Gabriel Amahwe
Regional Probation
Director, NPS



Melanie Pearce
Director of Operations
Hampshire and IoW
CRC



Denise Butt
Director
Thames Valley CRC



A personal message from Gabriel Amahwe

Introducing our Senior Leadership Team

We have recently passed the one year anniversary of the first UK lockdown, and for many of us this has led us to reflect on the challenges we have all experienced and remember those who have sadly passed away. I am very proud of all my colleagues both in the NPS and the CRCs who continue to play critical and vital roles in leading the three organisations in South Central. We must of course continue to remain focused and optimistic over the next few months as the restrictions are lifted and we move ever closer to unification in just under 10 weeks.

In January, the nationwide ACO placement process commenced to confirm roles for NPS and CRC operational Heads from 26 June 2021. The process has now concluded, and I am delighted to confirm the outcomes for South Central are as follows:

- Head of Service, East Berkshire PDU – Melanie Smith
- Head of Service, Oxfordshire PDU – Lou Everatt
- Head of Service, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes PDU – Jas Pejatta
- Head of Service, West Berkshire PDU – applications now closed
- Head of Service, Hampshire South and Isle of Wight PDU – Sarah Beattie
- Head of Service, Hampshire North and East PDU – applications now closed
- Head of Service, Hampshire South West PDU – Barbara Swyer
- Head of Interventions, South Central – Emma Myatt
- Head of Public Protection, South Central – Linda Pickering
- Head of Unpaid Work – [vacancy details here](#)
- Head of Accredited Programmes – [vacancy details here](#)

Please note, there will be no changes to staffing or Heads of Service roles until 26 June 2021, and current arrangements will remain in place until this date. We will ensure that robust handover and support arrangements are in place so we can continue to maintain service delivery throughout the transition period.

I am now also happy to introduce my Senior Leadership team and those who will be reporting directly to me.



Geoff Davis
Head of Operations



Sarah Moore
Head of Corporate Services



Sue Gale
Head of Community Integration



Laura Jones
Head of Performance and Quality



Emma Myatt
Head of Interventions

A spotlight on your work

Getting to know your colleagues and the breadth of work that goes on across our organisations

In this spotlight piece, we'd like to introduce you to Jessica Sheard. Jessica is a Probation Officer who works at HMP Bullingdon. In this piece, we're highlighting some work Jessica did as part of her work-based learning project (the final piece of work to complete before qualifying as a Probation Officer). Jessica's work has received national attention and demonstrates the innovation and impact that a practitioner can have within South Central and the wider probation service.

Tell us about the ASD workbook?

"It's the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) workbook for men who have committed sexual offences." Jessica went on to explain that the workbook is aimed to "help people be more ASD informed in their practice by looking at social stories. These provide a guide map to social situations."

Why did you develop this workbook?

"I had originally thought to do a work-based learning project on self-harm and suicide, however I had reflective supervision with my SPO at the time (Duncan Hume) and recognised that I seemed to have a high number of ASD service users. Duncan put me in touch with Andrew Bates (the South Central NPS Regional Psychologist) who has an interest in this area." Jessica also explained: "I have some personal experience with ASD. My half-brother has ASD and so does my cousin, so there was some personal relevance for me."

"I had noticed that when I talked to colleagues about working with ASD service users, I was told by some that they were 'hard work', or 'aggressive' or 'difficult' and 'resistant to challenge'." From Jessica's initial experiences working with ASD service users, she described that she learned 'not to confuse lack of understanding with denial or justification' and that if she avoided challenging the service user directly by talking about the 'risk [they] present', and focused on how to 'protect [themselves]' in a risky situation, that this elicited a more positive and engaging response."

How did you develop it?

"After being put in touch with Andrew Bates, Jessica read material around the subject of 'social stories', which helped her work with Andrew to design the ASD workbook. Jessica reflected on the material that she read and how it helped present ASD service users as people '(who have a) misunderstanding of social interactions' and recognised the need to create a strong 'practitioner alliance' based on ways in which ASD service users may 'decode information... interact socially... (have a need for) clarity of language, explanation and purpose'."

The workbook evolved from Jessica's early use and refinement alongside the work of Andrew Bates and was also shared with colleagues across the region to help test how useful the material was in engaging ASD service users and reducing risk. This work, as well as Andrew Bates suggesting the workbook was put to a national Effective Intervention Panel, helped to gather national interest in the project.

Where could this lead to?

Jessica hopes to continue her professional interest in working with ASD service users. Her aspirations for the ASD workbook remain, although as she is due to start her maternity leave in shortly, this may wait a while! Jessica and Andrew will continue to pursue the national interest in the workbook to develop a final version, alongside a training package which can be delivered to employees.

Jessica's thoughts on what this means for NPS 'culture

Jessica said that being in a position where she felt she was helping colleagues and having a 'significant impact on service users' lives" had reignited my passion for the NPS. Jessica went on to say how Geoff Davis, Head of Operations, had contacted her 'out of the blue' to speak to her about the workbook, and to ask her how she felt it could best be taken forward in the region, which left Jessica feeling 'validated' and 'that she has a voice' to make a difference.

Want to find out more about the ASD Workbook?

If you would like to find out more about the ASD workbook, please contact the SC NPS Regional Psychologist Andrew.Bates2@justice.gov.uk

A spotlight on your work

Getting to know your colleagues and the breadth of work that goes on across our organisations

In this spotlight we would like to introduce Ernie Grendall (Major Retired) who works as a Veteran and Volunteer Peer Mentor Coordinator in Hampshire and Isle of Wight CRC. Ernie joined the Army to make his father proud, after working various jobs and getting into trouble with the law as a teenager. “With the immortal words of my father ringing in my ears on leaving to go to basic training, “He won’t last five minutes”, I left and went through basic training.” Ernie ended up serving 36 and a half years.

Can you tell us about the role of the Veteran and Volunteer Peer Mentor Coordinator?

“Currently, I manage 24 active volunteers who include the veteran peer mentors, of which six are ex-service users. There are another 19 potential volunteers on the waiting list. I have three volunteers in the women’s group at Highbury Community Centre assisting the female service users specifically.

All volunteers complete detailed contact reports which are saved into the service user’s file. I read all the reports and, where necessary, offer further advice to support the service users. We use the outcome monitoring star to assist service users in understanding where they are and help them address their various issues and look at ways of resolving them through empowering them to address their respective issues. Once completed, we then use a Progress Report which I designed to highlight progress or any relapses.

At team meetings, all volunteers attend and discuss their current cases and we all share best practice. Study days are conducted to improve the team’s knowledge on report writing, GDPR and safeguarding, and any other major training issues. And I share a network of contacts with them, so they are fully aware of how to provide the most needed support to the service users.

I also run two peer support groups in Hampshire and Isle of Wight CRC. Volunteers support me at these groups which

provide service users with a place they can come every week to get further support and mix with their peers, which assists with isolation issues.

Nine of the volunteers agreed to take part in a pilot to contact service users who still had Unpaid Work hours to complete, to get them to access Education, Training and Employment (ETE) online courses.

I attend the Veteran Liaison Diversity Peer Mentoring Scheme chaired by Hampshire County Council. Attendance at this meeting is vital to maintain support to the ex-forces’ service users through the group connection. When working with NPS service users I attend professionals’ meetings as part of our commitment to our ex-forces community and offer advice to get support for the service user.

I’ve developed a Veteran Booklet which is issued to all ex-forces service users when they engage with the veteran mentoring scheme. It contains a vast array of support they can access through charities, focus groups, breakfast clubs, mental health, and addiction support. It contains a diary they can use to write down their day-to-day living and things that may trigger episodes of drinking, drug-taking or Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These are then discussed with the mentor and they look at how best to resolve the issues, provide coping mechanisms or signpost to professionals.

We must have a balance of ex-service users as volunteer mentors as they bring additional valuable advice. Having been through the journey of probation, they have an understanding and can provide valuable information to us all, which in turn offers us the ability to understand more in-depth and provide the best approach to address their issues.”

Can you tell us about how the work has changed during COVID?

“During the pandemic, I’ve kept regular contact with all the volunteers by either daily phone calls or providing a weekly update as things progressed. This included the updates on how we were continuing to support service users safely, health and safety updates, safeguarding information, and I designed some exercises on mentoring they could complete and return for inclusion in their training folder.

The volunteer mentors have encouraged service users to get involved with local community charities, to help vulnerable people and some have been assisting at food centres. This has helped those who have addiction or mental health issues and by becoming more involved and appreciated, building confidence as often they

are discarded by some of the community. Many of the service users I have spoken with have said that they enjoy volunteering and find it satisfying to know they are helping other vulnerable people, and this has given them a feeling of self-worth.

During this time: I received a Butler Trust Award, one volunteer who is an ex-service user also received a Butler Trust Award, another volunteer was awarded a commendation by The Hampshire Police Commissioner, volunteers received a special recognition certificate and other volunteers have been awarded an Anytime Award for their commitment and dedication to assisting service users in offender management.”

What does the work look like going forward?

“I am transitioning across to the probation service in June 2021. My aspiration is to expand this scheme and make it even bigger to support more service users in a variety of ways. I feel we can expand this, and with the support of senior management, make this something we as an organisation can be proud of. I want to get more ex-service users on board as volunteer mentors as well and more veteran mentors. I would be more than happy to also assist in every way to develop this scheme, using my knowledge and experience and to have the opportunity to expand this prior to me retiring (that’s if I ever do).”

Resettlement events:

There will be a national event on 27 April 2021, 11am to 1pm for all Through the Gate (TtG) employees. This is led by the change work stream. Content will include input from two Regional Probation Directors, looking cultural change, Resettlement Approach and a Q&A.

Over the past month, employees in Thames Valley and Hampshire and Isle of Wight CRC (TtG) teams will have been given the opportunity to attend local briefings.

[Follow this link for some frequently asked questions which were produced following these events.](#)



Dynamic Framework update

Revised timescales: Accommodation and ETE

You will be aware that the contracts for Accommodation and ETE for South Central were not awarded at the first run. The central contract team are re-running these tenders and the evaluation and moderation process is currently ongoing. Additional moderation has been required to ensure the decision is robust. We are expecting to know the outcome by the end of April.

We are aware this area remains a source of anxiety for some employees who are eager to know the outcome of contracts and what will happen/who they will work with. South Central have received high confidence assurances from senior contract managers that the re-running of these contracts will produce a successful bid. In the low probability that contracts are not awarded in either/both areas, South Central will meet with senior contract managers to understand contingencies and alternatives.

Catch 22 were awarded the Personal Wellbeing contract, and Advance were awarded the Hampshire Women's Services contract. There was no successful bidder for Women's Services in the Thames Valley area, so discussions ongoing with providers about taking this on. We are told there should be an outcome by the end of the month.

Commissioned Rehabilitative Services

You may have seen the term Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) being used recently, so we wanted to clarify the distinction between this and the Dynamic Framework. Simply put, the Dynamic Framework is the sourcing mechanism being used to commission rehabilitative services, with CRS being used to refer to any rehabilitative services which are commissioned through this mechanism from external providers (rather than those being delivered in-house by the NPS).

Ahead of the introduction of the CRS, we want probation practitioners to feel trust and confidence in the 'day one' services overall and to know what will be available in their area. Learning resources are being designed that will support practitioners through the rehabilitative services referral journey, including selecting the right intervention, undertaking a referral and working together with the provider to ensure service users experience seamless support.

The suite of learning resources and support will be made available to all employees via MyLearning in May, with relevant communications on how to access and complete required learning. This will include a comprehensive CRS Learning Toolkit for practitioners, which will provide a blended approach combining guidance on best practice along with practical resources on the process and the underlying digital platform. It will allow busy practitioners to learn on the job – and to tailor their learning for their own needs and circumstances.

More information on the CRS can be found on the [NPS Welcome Hub](#).

nDelius changes: Hampshire Probation Delivery Unit structure

[Follow this link](#) for information on the technical changes made to NPS team/PDU structures in Hampshire, South West and Hampshire South and Isle of Wight.

PQiP recruitment campaign

- ◆ Our latest PQiP recruitment campaign commenced on 6 April 2021.
- ◆ You may know people who would be interested in a career in the probation service, so tell your colleagues, friends and family.
- ◆ [Follow this link for more information](#)

Civil Service success profiles

The new probation service will be using Success Profiles as part of the recruitment process.

Success Profiles are the new recruitment framework used within the Civil Service. [Further information and support can be found here.](#)

New on the Welcome Hub

- ◆ [Pay Assimilation](#)
- ◆ [How you'll be paid in June](#)

Get in touch

If you've got questions about anything you've read in this newsletter, or more widely about the transition, simply email the address for the organisation you currently work for listed below.

We'd also love to hear what you've got to say about this newsletter, and how useful you find the other updates you receive about the transition:

- What's useful? What's not?
- How would you prefer to hear updates?
– emails, teleconferences, videos, group discussions etc.
- What ideas have you got for how we might improve our transition communications?
- What else do you want to hear about?

Hampshire and Isle of Wight CRC:
HIOWTransformation@interservejustice.org

Thames Valley CRC:
Transition@mtcgroup.org.uk

NPS:
UMTransitionboardSCentral@justice.gov.uk



Transition News



With the wellbeing and safety of our employees and service users firmly in our minds, we are committed to sharing our transition plans and the contents of this newsletter with our union colleagues.

