

Background

A coordinated, person-centred approach to supporting 'persons of concern' in a prison setting. HMP Perth runs a daily meeting to co-ordinate targeted and joined-up support for people identified as at risk of drug related harms. The Persons of Concern Group (POCG) evolved through recognition that people in prison needed more targeted and responsive support. The group have been meeting since April 2021 with multidisciplinary representation from NHS Tayside and the Scottish Prison Service, including the prison chaplaincy.

The POCG receives referrals from staff who have identified concerns about a person during the previous night's report. Input from all members of the group creates a unique level of insight from which plans offering a range of recovery focused services are then formed for each person. If a person does not wish to take up the offer of support, the group always reviews and considers what more they can do to offer the right support at the right time.

Impact

The POCG has supported 1,622 people since April 2021, with 45 people currently in receipt of their services. 90% of the people in their care are experiencing challenges with substance use. The group always seeks to engage with people even if they are referred on multiple occasions as it is recognised that recovery is not always a linear process.

Learning

The group's collaborative approach results in more meaningful interventions, improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for those supported. It also improves communication across staff groups which creates a more positive working environment.

Top Tips

- Strong leadership is needed to maintain an outcomes focused approach to each meeting.
- Keep meetings brief with a core membership that represents all relevant disciplines.
- Keep meeting administration to a minimum focused on capturing key personal details, agreed actions and final outcomes.
- Set up a separate meeting when a complex case arises.

Next Steps

HMP Perth are now looking to increase their selection of recovery interventions to include a gym and exercise programme. They are keen to collect more data to quantify the positive outcomes they are seeing within the people they are supporting. They have recently developed a harm reduction recovery pack which they plan to launch in the coming months.