SUPPORTING PEOPLE AFTER REMAND OR CONVICTION (SPARC): AN INNOVATION IN PRE-CUSTODY CARE

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IMAGINE
You’ve been locked in a room
No belongings
How would you feel?
What would you need?
Presentation Plan

• Prison context
• The SPARC model
• Theoretical background
• Case example
• Evaluation
• Conclusion
• Questions
Prison Context

*Early days in custody = turbulent for many*

- Distress and frustration resulting from the court system (Jacobson, Hunter & Kirby, 2015)
- Offence Related Trauma (McNair, 2002)
- Heightened risk of suicide and self harm (UK Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, 2016)
- Imported vulnerabilities (Liebling, 2005)
- Deprivation (Sykes, 1958; Crewe, 2011)
- Family ties, accommodation, employment, finances, health (Jacobson, Edgar & Loucks, 2008).
- Better support required for vulnerable people in CJS (Bradley, 2009)
Lincolnshire Action Trust Practitioners based in Court custody suites

- Support to newly sentenced or remanded prisoners while in the court cells
  - keep safe interview

- Address immediate welfare needs: referrals to prison healthcare, mental health and substance misuse teams; contact families; securing pets and properties; information sharing with the prison in relation to risk and security; provide information to prisoners and their families about regime, rules and ways to keep in touch

- Ongoing follow up support in the prison the day after arrival
"My children are expecting me to pick them up from school this afternoon."

"I've got the bank card and my girlfriend has no money."

"My boss doesn't know I'm in court - now I'll lose my job."

"I'm going to prison - I'll lose my flat."

"My girlfriend was crying in court - I'm so worried about her."

"There's no-one to look after my cat."
Theoretical Background

- Wise Intervention (Walton 2014)
- Maslow’s Hierarchy of Need (1943)
- Procedural Justice (Tyler, 2007)
- Good Lives Model (Ward & Stewart, 2003)
- Hope Theory (Snyder, 1995)
- Crisis Intervention (Rogers, 2005)

Miles (2015)
Theoretical background 2

• Increased wellbeing:
  • Dodge et al (2012)

• Behavioural Nudges (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008)
  • Individual needs approach
Case Example

**DEAN**

- Remanded to prison – very distressed.
- Needs identified during keep safe interview: statements of intent to commit suicide, depression, alcohol dependent, pet dog, tenancy
- Suicide and self harm alert completed in court and handed over to reception staff, urgent mental health and substance referral – mental health substance misuse nurses met him in reception; dog located and safe – arrangements made for ongoing care; liaison with Auntie to provide information and secure tenancy, attendance at ACCT reviews.
- Engagement in sentence, completion of courses and has not returned to custody
Evaluation

Part 1 – Keep Safe Interviews

- 1,302 interviews over a 2 year period
- 1035 interviews at Magistrates Court, 267 Crown
- 1093 different people (209 people were seen more than once*)
- **Needs:** 46% physical health, 43% mental health, 16% suicide and self-harm concerns, 50% substance misuse concerns, 14% learning need, 15% language needs, 27% security concerns, 54% immediate concerns
- **History:** 20% no GP, 46% no mental health support, 54% no substance misuse support, 59% substance misuse related to offending
- **Activity:** 328 physical health referrals, 491 substance misuse referrals, 443 mental health referrals, 177 suicide alerts, 295 security alerts, 175 families contacted, 31 pets secured, 14 safeguarding referrals made.

*2nd appearances excluded from needs and history data
289 respondents, volunteers within local prison served by SPARC

SPARC (N=71) vs Non-SPARC (N=218) no significant differences in demographics of 2 groups

87.3% found SPARC helpful. Helpful across all age groups, whether previous custody experiences and residential location

SPARC clients scored significantly more positively on Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation (CORE; Evans et al, 2002) than non-SPARC

SPARC clients scored significantly more positively on the wellbeing, functioning and problems subscales of the CORE

Less feelings of panic, terror, despair, hopelessness, tension, anxiety and isolation; more feelings of being happy and being able to do things they needed to.
Evaluation

*Part 3- Focus groups*

- 11 participants across vulnerable prisoner and ‘main’ populations.
- Positive feelings e.g. reassurance, calming
- Support ‘outside the system’
- Better prepared for prison
- Support with practicalities & impact on release
- Help for families
- SPARC as a quality service (e.g. accountability and action planning
- Immediacy and continuity
Conclusion

• SPARC is a Wise Intervention which aims to support people during their transition into custody though a series of behavioural nudges unique to each individual, embedded within theoretical underpinnings from Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Procedural Justice and the Good Lives Model

• SPARC works to decrease challenges while increasing resources

• SPARC provides an opportunity to monitor the needs of people at the specific point of entry into prison custody from court

• SPARC clients display higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not receive the intervention

• Further research is required to ascertain long term impact.
QUESTIONS

Thank you