The Scaled Approach: improving positive outcomes for young people in the Youth Justice system

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The Scaled Approach

Major changes nearly 10 years on….

- Youth Justice systems preparing for biggest changes since establishment of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in 2000

- Introduction of the Scaled Approach and Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO) from November 2009

Principles of the Scaled Approach

- Aims to ensure interventions are tailored to the young person, with more resources directed to those most likely to reoffend and/or pose a risk of serious harm to others

- Framework for assessment, proposals to court and youth offender panels, interventions and review

- Overall revised *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* incorporating the Scaled Approach should not result in additional demands on YOTs

Principles of the Scaled Approach

- Assessment determines **frequency** of YOT contact and **type of intervention** appropriate (quality is paramount)

- Focus on:
  - likelihood of reoffending (using *Asset* dynamic and static factors)
  - risk of serious harm to others (using *Risk of Serious Harm Asset*)

- Professional judgement can be used to amend the assessed intervention level but this decision must be:
  - defensible
  - discussed and agreed with a manager
  - clearly recorded

- Assessment of vulnerability should influence multi-agency input

Why introduce the Scaled Approach?

- Audit Commission (2004) recommendation:
  - ***'YOTs should make better use of Asset to determine the amount as well as the nature of interventions with individuals using a scaled approach'***

- Recent review of evidence to develop the revised *Key Elements of Effective Practice* tells us that interventions are more effective when:
  - the level and intensity of intervention is matched to an assessment of the likelihood of reoffending
  - it is focused on the risk factors associated with offending

Why introduce the Scaled Approach?

- YOT interest in a risk-led approach and existing practice in some YOTs
- Supported by the risk-based pilot that the YJB ran with four YOTs to inform the development of the Scaled Approach
- Already a tiered framework of interventions in the adult sector from which we could gather learning
- The YRO will require a more tailored and targeted approach to the proposals made in court reports

Anticipated benefits

- More efficient and effective allocation of YOT resources
- Fewer young people in custody
- Strengthened case management across the youth justice system
- Improved practice in assessment quality, pre-sentence reports and intervention planning
- Tailored interventions based on an the young person's risks and needs

Reduced reoffending

Reduced risk of serious harm

Increased public confidence

How did we develop the Scaled Approach?

- Used all available evidence (e.g. *Asset* Research, Juvenile Cohort Study data, etc)
- Sought approval from Ministry of Justice lawyers
- Piloted risk-based approach to interventions with four YOTs (Neath Port Talbot; Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin; Suffolk; and Wessex)
- Commissioned a process evaluation of the pilots (awaiting publication)
- Consultation – invited key people from the youth justice system to take part and provide feedback
- Developed and published the latest draft model in February 2009

The Youth Rehabilitation Order

- Designed to combine existing community sentences into one generic sentence – the YRO
- Will enable sentencers to tailor sentences to individual risk and needs
- Provides menu of interventions to tackle offending behaviour
- Provides robust community sentence that can be returned to on multiple occasions adapting the menu to minimise the use of custody
- The Reparation Order and Referral Order remain as interventions below the YRO
- The Detention and Training Order remains for serious or persistent offenders where an intensive YRO is not deemed appropriate

The Scaled Approach and the YRO

- The Scaled Approach will enable and encourage YOTs to tailor the content of orders to the individual risk factors and needs of the young person

- For example, those at higher risk of reoffending and/or causing serious harm to others receiving the most intensive interventions

- This approach will align closely with the YRO, as the menu of requirements will enable the order to be better tailored to the individual

- Scaled Approach contacts will only be applied to the Supervision Requirement of the YRO. Assessed level of intervention will help YOTs determine proposals for appropriate requirements

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Thank you!

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