

17th June 2008

BOURNEMOUTH THRESHOLD DIALOGUE

Where everyone learns
but nobody teaches

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Tuesdays 6:15-7:45pm Clubhouse, Bournemouth

Are we going to fill up with people on the swerve?

3 Agency Staff and 1 from PD took part

Learnings

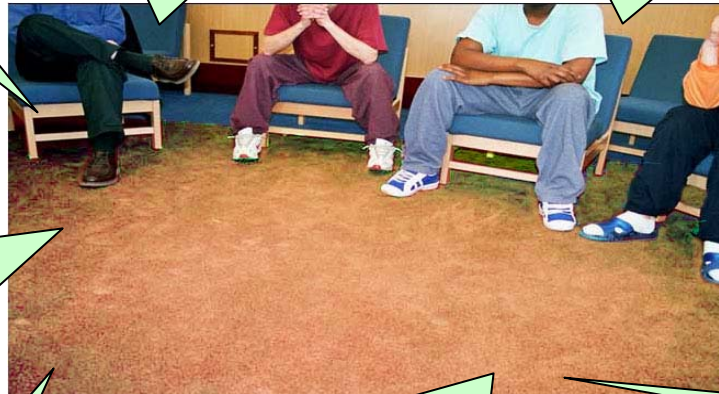
"The second prison coming online in July will pick up the numbers. My concern is that the non-voluntary compulsion thing and requirements would just lead to sessions filling up with people on the swerve." (Agency)

"Today's been my first time in a prison and it's been a big learning curve for me. In my job I don't deal directly with offenders and there's been jargon that I haven't understood." (Agency)

'It's all about getting that core group started, even if it's 2 or 3 people so it's not just one of them and us. We need to ask them what THEY want – maybe help with filling out forms, it'll be different for everyone.' (Agency)

There are many ways to be creative about the incentives needed to encourage regular attendance.

"My counter to that would be: does it matter? If we can even get them through the door in the first place they can benefit from the sessions and the contact, even if their motivation isn't 100% sound. I'd be more concerned that we'd get swamped. What we really need is 10 people coming regularly to make a difference." (Agency)



Compulsion and enforcement can work both ways. Basic attendance can be useful in it's own right, even if it's perceived by the offender as a 'swerve'.

Feedback sheets are critical to ensuring that participants know their comments are being listened to.

"We're not going to get into writing reports for people. It should at most be a standard letter saying 'X has been addressing his offending behaviour by attending Y number of sessions and is due to achieve a certificate in 2 weeks time', that kind of thing." (Agency)

"Feedback sheets are really, really important. It shows everyone, especially offenders, that their voices are being listened to. I don't mind being quoted and distributed – just make sure you brush up on my grammar!" (Agency)

"What we need covered in the facilitator training is the systemizing of the process. If it's different facilitators every week, the write-ups and handover needs to be standardised and clear, regardless of who's running it that week." (Agency)

Bournemouth Threshold Dialogue brings Bournemouth offenders together in open conversation with the agencies responsible for their supervision and support. Dialogues are themed on the issues affecting re-offending. The process starts in custody and continues post-release in the community, emphasising support, challenge, responsibility and early intervention. Threshold Dialogue is supported by Bournemouth Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.