Introduction

- The Safer Living Foundation, a charity dedicated to reducing sexual (re)offending, began running Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) for young people aged 10-21 in 2017 (YPCoSA).
- CoSA are made up of a circle of volunteers that provide psychological, social and practical support to a core member (CM) who has a sexual conviction as they begin to reintegrate back into the community over approximately 12-18 months.
- CoSA are found to be effective in reducing sexual recidivism by 83% (Wilson, Cortoni & McWhinnie, 2009).
- Around a third of child sexual abuse is committed by other young people (Hackett, 2011).
- The establishment of YPCoSA could address this need, therefore the current research aims to provide the outcome and process evaluation required to validate this CoSA model.

This poster therefore presents preliminary data from an ongoing longitudinal study. This evaluation aims to:
1. Examine the effectiveness of YPCoSA across a range of outcome variables, including dynamic risk factors for young people with harmful sexual behaviour and reoffending rates.
2. To explore the experiences of those involved in the YPCoSA.
3. To contribute to best evidence-based practice for the implementation and evaluation of YPCoSA.

Method

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Member</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Circle started</th>
<th>Estimated end date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Rape &amp; sexual assault</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Accessing prohibited images</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dd</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Penetrative sex with girl aged 13-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Indecent images of children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative data has been collected and will be analysed using SPSS. Plans for analysis include statistical tests to determine changes in psychometric scores and measures of risk over time, and the significance of these will be complimented by descriptive statistics on demographic data.

Qualitative data

- Interviews with YPCoSA volunteers have begun and interviews with the Young People (core members) are planned.
- Qualitative analysis is underway.
- Thematic analysis (TA) will be used to understand and interpret the individual’s experience of being involved with a YPCoSA.

Preliminary Results

Engaging with the young person’s potential.
The importance of training and supervision.
The issues with public perception.
The balance between support and accountability.

It's someone for the YP to text, to share good news with.
I've learnt to deal with challenging behaviour.
You have to be committed...provide emotional support.
You have to build a lot of rapport.

Potential Implications

Intended outcomes:
- That we uncover whether YPCoSA have an effect on psychological and social wellbeing, and both sexual and general (re)offending rates.

Applications:
- The quantitative strand could validate the effectiveness and reliability of the YPCoSA model as a rehabilitative intervention;
- The qualitative strand could inform a process evaluation to reform the model.

Extended impact:
- Improved knowledge and awareness of rehabilitating people with sexual convictions;
- Reduction in rates of (re)offending;
- Adoption and establishment of more YPCoSA nationally and internationally;
- Dissemination and funding to achieve these aims.

References


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