

SUBMISSION TO THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION

SUBJECT: Parole Question Paper 4

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This submission addresses the following questions:

Question 4.5: How could in-custody case management for offenders serving shorter sentences be improved to reduce reoffending and improve their prospects for reintegration on parole. ?

Question 4.6: how could pre-release leave programs be improved to

- 1) prepare offenders sufficiently for life on parole; and

Question 4.9: day parole

- 1) how could a day parole scheme be of benefit in NSW.
- 2) If a day parole scheme were introduced, what could such a scheme look like.

Question 4.11: How could release preparation be changed or supplemented to ensure that all offenders are equipped with the information and life skills necessary to be ready for release to parole?

Proposal

It is proposed that a community mentoring program be initiated to assist with the re-integration of parolees. Development of the program would be conducted and trialed at City District Office - Drug Court Program.

Background

Community Corrections Officers (authors of this document), Sandra Narayan and Julian Watling, have conducted significant research into world wide mentoring programs designed to reduce offender recidivism. This research indicated that a properly designed and supported program would have positive outcomes for offenders and the community, particularly in the reduction of crime and subsequent returns to custody. This has short and long term financial and social benefits.

The City Drug Court Program has a high percentage of participants with accommodation issues, lack of social support, and various other significant issues affecting their ability to re-integrate into the community.

Comments

This type of program has been implemented in several jurisdictions both in Australia and overseas. This enables CSNSW to review these programs and address some of the implementation issues experienced. The following is a basic framework; further detail will be presented in a full proposal.

It is suggested that a mentoring program could be utilised to address many of the issues raised in Discussion Paper 4, particularly reintegration through social supports (question 4.5); assistance with reparation for life on parole through a relationship with a mentor (question 4.6); progression from day-parole to regular parole with ongoing mentor contact (question 4.9); and formalizing a mentor/mentee relationship as part of an holistic case management strategy to improve the likelihood of a positive outcome while subject to parole (question 4.11). Please see the attached document "Mentoring Program Framework" for further details.

Basic Framework

Offenders:

The initial target group will be parolees being released from imprisonment who will be supported after release particularly during the critical first three months. A relationship with an appropriately matched mentor would begin just prior to release. After release, the mentee would then have a mentor to assist him/her with the practical and social aspects of reintegration such as life skills and a support network.

Mentors:

Mentors will be community members who have a willingness to engage with and assist offenders to reintegrate into the community. It is intended that mentors will be rigorously selected for their appropriate attitudes, behaviour and commitment. Initial training, ongoing support and monitoring will be provided.

Governance:

The project will be overseen by a steering committee comprising the authors, a community representative, a correctional centre representative, city drug court unit leader and Drug court Director.

Evaluation:

Evaluation of outcomes is critical to the success of the project and will be done in conjunction with university research staff from the social science faculty.

Recommendation

It is recommended that this proposal be supported by the Law Reform Commission so that a pilot can be developed in greater detail with the aim of developing a working model, initially for Drug Court participants.



Stephanie Button

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCD – Community Corrections Division

CCO – Community Corrections Officer

CSNSW – Corrective Services New South Wales

PPO – Probation and Parole Officer

SCOPE OF PILOT PROGRAM

The MENTOR pilot program is confined to offenders under the current supervision of Corrective Services NSW.

Following the successful completion of the pilot program involving this high risk, high needs group it is anticipated that the program will be rolled out on a widescale community level to incorporate other identified areas of need.

MENTORVISION

Our vision is “the successful reintegration of offenders into the community for the benefit of all stakeholders” through implementing the MENTOR.

MISSION

Our mission, in line with the NSW State Plan (NSW 2021) is to prevent and reduce the level of crime, reduce the level of re-offending and improve community confidence in the justice system.

To achieve this our aim is to introduce a statewide mentoring program for offenders in the criminal justice system in line with international best practice for mentoring, coupled with the new Rewards concept.

OBJECTIVES

1. Reduce re-offending
2. Increase offender’s ownership of criminogenic behaviour
3. Develop offender’s ‘stake’ in the community
4. Improve life skills of offender
5. Form positive relationships within community
6. Develop network of organisations in the community
7. Increase community awareness of mentoring
8. Improve relationship between CCD and community

TARGET GROUP

Inmates over the age of 18 years of age who are due to be released from custody within three months and will be supervised by the Probation and Parole Service for at least 12 months.

The introduction of Probationers will be gradually phased into the Mentor program after the successful completion of the parolee pilot program

PARTNERSHIPS

The Mentor Program will work in partnership with:

CSNSW

Government agencies

Community Based Service Providers

Business Partners

The mentee’s own personal support network

The community

INTRODUCTION

Definition of mentoring

Mentoring has been defined as “a mutually beneficial relationship that involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person”¹. Mentoring has also been defined by the Commissioner of CSNSW as “a learning process that develops partnerships between people to facilitate an exchange of professional skills and experiences”.

Mentoring is a volunteer service by willing community members. MENTOR aims to establish partnerships with volunteer organisations that have access to trained mentors; therefore the cost to the sponsor of MENTOR is minimal. Additionally the nature of the relationship between mentor and mentee means that the program is portable. Statistics from various countries show that mentoring is a successful way to reduce re-offending.

Additionally, some of the benefits of mentoring include but are not limited to:

- Pro-social role modelling
- Empowerment
- Cost effective way of addressing criminogenic factors in a real and pragmatic way
- Flexible and simple to implement in custodial and community settings
- Proven to be effective in other countries
- Can be culturally specific and culturally sensitive
- Can be issue specific

Creating a Mentoring culture²

It is beneficial to focus on the creation of a mentoring culture in which individuals are encouraged to embrace and work towards creating readiness for mentoring within the organisation, facilitation of multiple mentoring opportunities and building in support mechanisms to ensure success.

Eight key areas have been identified that will ensure that the mentoring experience is effective and remains sustainable. These areas are accountability, alignment, communication, value and visibility, demand, multiple mentoring opportunities, education and training, and safety nets.

Accountability Shared intention, responsibility and ownership as well as commitment to action and consistency of practice. Accountability includes setting goals, expectations, defining roles and responsibilities, monitoring and measuring, gathering feedback and formulating action.

Alignment A shared understanding and vocabulary of mentoring practice exists that fits naturally with the organisations values, practices, mission and goals.

Communication Communication is key to achieving positive results by enhancing relationships and providing learning opportunities.

Value and Visibility Sharing personal experience, role modelling, reward and recognition are high leverage activities that create and sustain value and visibility

Demand Demand for mentoring has a multiplier effect, creating further interest in mentoring and increasing the profile of the experience. Multiple mentoring relationships can then occur, often simultaneously, where mentees can become mentors or mentors can have multiple mentees.

¹ ARTD. 2001b,p.iv cited in Early Intervention: Youth Mentoring Programs (2003)

² OHS Risk Management – Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy (2010, p103-104)

Multiple mentoring opportunities It is important to remain open to the idea of various types of mentoring such as group mentoring or one on one mentoring. This multiple approach can reinforce what is learnt in one when explored further in another.

Education and Training A well designed and implemented system of education and training for mentors will further enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

Safety Nets Safety nets provide just in time support that enable mentoring to move forward coherently. Organisations that proactively anticipate challenges are more likely to establish resilient and responsive safety nets.

RESEARCH

There is an abundance of material available outlining the benefits of mentoring in many different situations. Likewise, the volume of material available that highlights the success of mentoring in other countries to reduce recidivism is immense. A short summary follows in Appendix A of research papers from various sources.

Conclusions from our research were:

1. Studies have proven that mentoring is a successful method of reducing re-offending when combined with other intervention such as case management by Probation and Parole. Mentoring on its own has been proven to have no effect on reducing recidivism
2. Organised sport does prevent re-offending. However, there is limited evidence regarding a direct causal relationship. Further research is required to determine this relationship (For this reason we suggest that an organised sport component NOT be included in a pilot program at this stage)
3. Studies show that using other offenders and ex-offenders as mentors is successful in reducing re-offending
4. Mentoring is most effective when mentors and mentees meet face to face at least once a week. Additionally mentors must make a long term commitment as well as ongoing training and a 'partnership' approach with CSNSW
5. Mentoring is more successful when mentors and mentees are 'matched'.
6. Ongoing research must be a component of any mentoring program in order to scientifically test success or failure of the program

M.E.N.T.O.R

What is MENTOR?

Our simple concept involves core staff developing a network of business partners and mentors for the purpose of creating a Rewards Based System of Mentoring (similar to the “frequent flyer” program or Woolworths’ “Everyday rewards” program) in which mentors and mentees receive “points” for each mentoring session that they conduct with a client. These “points” can then be exchanged for goods or services with our business partners.

MENTOR Background

Our research and networking has highlighted to us that a major problem with rehabilitating offenders, and indeed implementing mentoring programs in general has been lack of funding, lack of organisation and lack of appropriate evaluation to determine what works. Essentially, the result of this is no reduction in re-offending and increased cost to the community due to social services required.

We realise that for any mentoring program to work a number of things are required. These are, willing mentors and mentees, adequate staffing, funding, and a detailed evaluation framework.

With this in mind we believe that it is possible to use charitable monies in such a way that we can increase the possibility of rehabilitating offenders and successfully re-integrate them into the community not just here in Australia but worldwide through a mentoring concept unlike any currently in existence today.

The basis of this concept is centred around the standard mentor/mentee relationship with a financial incentive for mentees to succeed. We believe that lack of incentive is a primary reason why more successful people do not become mentors. They see no reward in doing so, even though there is documented evidence that there are definitely other benefits to both mentors and mentees besides financial remuneration.

We believe that we can create a win-win situation for governments, communities, the business community, mentors and mentees and increase social capital and economic benefit through our program.

What we propose is a mentoring program funded by charitable means where mentors and mentees are matched according to best practice guidelines. However, what we also propose is that mentors receive financial reward for their services based on the success of the mentoring relationships that they have.

This is a simple concept that can be applied to prison populations around the world and then to communities at large. One of the biggest problems that we as Community Corrections Officers have identified lies not just with offenders but with the support networks that they have. This extends to many sectors of the community, not just offenders.

We believe that mentoring should be something that we, as a society, strive to make mainstream and benefit all areas of our lives. It should not be something that is known only by some and accessed by a fortunate few.

Mentoring is a valuable tool for anyone wishing to succeed. The benefits are endless and should not be underestimated.

This simple concept would revolve around mentoring best practice which includes mentor/mentee relationships that are ongoing (minimum once a week for 12 months or more) and the idea that some form of reward whether it be remuneration or other incentive is more likely to attract mentors with a wealth of knowledge and experience that they can impart onto others.

Our research has shown that nearly all mentoring programs currently operating suffer from a lack of suitable mentors and we believe that this could be reversed with a rewards program such as we have suggested. We also believe that this concept is sustainable as opposed to simply paying mentors for their services because there is no cash outlay required from our business partners, just a willingness to honour the rewards.

We believe that our concept will provide a win/win situation for everyone and we will have an advantage over other non-government organizations because we have a more attractive, more professional scheme that can demonstrate reportable benefits to the community.

In addition to all this, we firmly believe that this concept could be applied to volunteer issues in all forms of charitable organization thereby creating a sustainable support network for those who need it the most.

Rewards Program

The MENTOR concept is based on the theory that successful mentoring relationships can be built by utilizing a rewards based system for both Mentors and Mentees who have experienced successes in their relationships. This system will utilize a 'points' system similar to "Frequent Flyers" or "Everyday Rewards".

Based on a predetermined scale, participants will receive 'points' for participation and success. These points can then be redeemed with our business partners for goods or services.

For example, success could be defined as the mentee not re-offending or remaining in the program for 12 months or longer. Success could also be defined as the mentee obtaining work or establishing their own business or even going back to school. It is our belief that if mentors and mentees receive financial reward for their services then they will try harder to help their mentee succeed.

Financially, this could represent liabilities of several million dollars for some participating organisations. However, because the mentor program is a charitable organization, honouring "points" will effectively be viewed as a charitable donation, thereby reducing our partner's tax liabilities.

The benefit for the mentee is that he/she is more likely to get a mentor with some knowledge and life experience that he can learn from. The benefit to the mentor is that he gets a financial reward from giving up time and knowledge. The benefit to the business partner is that the redemption of the points will count as a charitable donation. The benefit to the community will be that the mentee will get a job or improve education and contribute to society. This will also benefit our partner organisations because the mentees will have more money to buy goods or services off them or will have new skills hence becoming more employable.

The benefit to us (the MENTOR organisation) will be that we can recruit mentors on a large scale because there is a reward involved which will in turn attract organisations that want to donate to us to keep the administration and business afloat.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

CSNSW and the State Plan 2021

The NSW State Plan 2021 identifies three goals for the criminal justice system. These are (relevant to the Mentor Program):

1. Prevent and Reduce the Level of Crime
 - Reduce domestic Violence
 - Reduce alcohol related assaults
 - Reduce other personal crime by 10% by 2015-16
 - Reduce property crime by 15% by 2015-16
2. Prevent and reduce the level of re-offending
 - Reduce juvenile and adult re-offending by 5% by 2016
3. Increase community confidence in the justice system
 - Increase victims and community understanding of the justice system

The MENTOR program assists to address each of these goals. Johannesen (2006) states that —“when an offender knows that someone cares enough to introduce him to the community and support him without payment he develops a stake in and a sense of belonging to that community”. Mentoring aims to establish a long term trusting relationship between mentor and mentee to address specific issues with each individual in line with best practice research from around the world.

Research shows (See Appendix 1) that mentoring programs around the world have successfully aided in reducing recidivism by 4-11% (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2007)

Funding and cost

Due to the nature of the “mentor” being a volunteer, cost to the MENTOR sponsor is relatively small. However, due to the nature of the project requiring staffing in key positions there is still a need for funding.

In order to meet funding needs a range of sources will be utilized.

1. Philanthropic investment
2. Government grants
3. Non-government organization (NGO) grants

Formal and Naturalistic Mentoring Programs

A formal program is regimented and involves structured tasks and activities that are focused on particular interventions.

A naturalistic program is more informal. Activities may include having coffee together, doing sporting activities or just ‘hanging out’.

Given the specific objectives of the MENTOR program the defined structure will have a focus on achieving specific interventions in line with the case plan developed by the mentee’s Community Corrections Officer

Stand-Alone versus integrated program

Research shows that mentoring is more likely to be successful when integrated into a range of other services. For that reason the Mentor program will be linked with numerous other service providers in order to ensure that individual mentees receive the level of support necessary for them to re-integrate successfully into the community.

Mentor staff will actively seek out partnerships with other government and non-government organisations.

Additional support will include access to services for:

- —Alcohol and other drugs eg relapse prevention, detoxification
- —Mental health eg Taking medication, managing emotions
- —Employment, writing resumes, attending interviews, writing applications
- —Education eg applying for TAFE, motivation, literacy
- —Health eg, Diseases, nutrition,
- —Self Confidence eg motivation, empowerment
- —Housing eg Applying for housing, finding accommodation
- —Parenting eg Parenting skills, morals, beliefs
- —Responsible Driving eg Traffic offenders courses, driver training
- —Life Skills eg personal hygiene, time management
- —Finances eg Banking, organising finance for purchases, budgeting, managing debt

Staffing

Staff managing the MENTOR program must be skilled appropriately and have clearly defined job descriptions. The success of the MENTOR program will be dependent upon a strong team to ensure it's ongoing success.

Program staff will be required to:

- Select appropriate mentors
- Provide on ongoing monitoring and support of mentoring relationships once established
- Develop and monitor an effective network
- Provide strong structure and co-ordination of the program

Minimum staffing should consist of a Project Team as follows:

1. Project Co-Ordinator

- Ensure project is on budget and on target
- Building relationships with stakeholders and forming partnerships
- Sourcing funding
- Liaising with community based organisations
- Liaising with UWS for evaluation
- Developing policy and enhancing framework and guidelines
- Liaising with community steering committee
- Ensuring program parameters remain in line with current political and social expectations

2. Administrative assistant

- Assist project co-ordinator to liaise with community stakeholders
- Prepare advertising materials to promote the project
- Support team with day to day administrative duties

3. Mentoring Co-Ordinator

- Key contact for all individual mentors
- Matching mentors and mentees
- Monitoring and support of mentors

- Liaising with mentors
 - Liaising with PPO's
 - Liaise with Project Co-Ordinator to review program on a regular basis
 - Liaising with Correctional Centre staff
4. Educational Co-Ordinator
- Organising training for mentors
 - Formulation and dispersion of feedback tools
 - Monitoring of effectiveness of training
 - Liaise with Project CO-ordinator to review program on a regular basis
5. Marketing Co-Ordinator
- Organise marketing to CSNSW
 - Identify and market to targeted mentors
 - Identify and market to business partners

Steering Committee

Adequate scoping and research is paramount to the success of the program. Therefore the establishment of an advisory group to assist the project team is essential to ensure that:

1. The correct target group is identified
2. Ensuring project objectives reflect community needs and achievable outcomes
3. Maintaining a link between project and community
4. Ensuring the ongoing success of the program through ongoing consultation and advise to the Project team
5. Ensure that program remains up to date with current political environment and meets the needs of the community

THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING

There are a myriad of benefits of a mentoring program for both the community at large, mentees and mentors. These include but are not limited to:

Mentees:

- feel accepted and embraced by the community and develop a stake in the community.
- Re-Introduced to the community and community service providers by a community member.
- Embraced by trained non-judgmental and pro-active mentors that assist in their re-integration and builds their self-esteem and confidence.
- Involved in an “objective” relationship that promotes healthy lifestyle choices, pro-social influences and promotes fast-tracked change without the need of professional assistance.
- Develops pro-social attitudes, has negative attitudes challenged in a safe environment, and has a positive role model.
- Alleviates mentees from burdening their families/associates further particularly if their relationship is already strained.
- Rewards Program based on points for participation and successes as outlined in “Rewards”

Mentors:

- Builds community awareness and understanding of the management of offenders both in custody and in the community.
- Develop and train the community to effectively engage with offenders to enhance community safety.
- Assists reduction of offending without significant expense.
- Promote the viability of Community Corrections within the community as opposed to a custodial correction environment that is a far more expensive option.
- Rewards Program based on points for participation and successes as outlined in “Rewards”

Benefits Experienced

Many studies have recorded some of the known benefits gained by the offenders who engaged in mentoring programs. These included:

- Reduction in crime and or seriousness of criminal activity
- Improved relationships between family members/associates.
- Reduction in substance abuse and or mental health issues.
- Reduction in antisocial behaviour.
- Improved performance/participation in education/training and employment.
- Improved self esteem and interpersonal skills.
- Improved compliance with bail and supervised Orders.

MENTORS

Role of Mentors

Essentially the role of a mentor is to assist an offender re-integrate into the community. Their task will be multifaceted and will include:-

- Supporting parole supervision, law enforcement and community safety.
- Encourage mentees to become self sufficient, self-respecting and productive community members.
- Assist mentees develop pro-social attitudes and engage in pro-social community networks.
- To be a positive role model and friend to the mentee and help them link with local community services and assist in their re-integration and rehabilitation back into the community.

Recruiting Mentors

Interested applicants will be recruited via different forms of advertising including not limited to:

- Word of Mouth- which studies have indicated to be the most effective strategy utilized by most mentoring programs. (Sipe 1996, pg 2)
- Presentations and links with community organizations, educational facilities, church groups and services already involved in mentoring.
- Media advertising with the use of brochures and similar publications to recruit persons from the wider community and prospective mentors whose cultural and demographics will be represented in the mentee group.
- Banners and fliers placed in public areas such as shopping centres, government offices, community centres and educational facilities.

Criteria for Prospective Mentors

The main criteria required by prospective mentors is the ability to listen, maintain a non-judgmental attitude, be reliable, have good communication skills and be pro-active.

Other qualities desired to be endowed by prospective mentors include the ability to be patient, non reactive, passionate, enthusiastic and demonstrate a commitment to the program. They must have an ability to convey dignity and respect towards mentees and be able to comply with confidentiality issues.

Screening Procedures

Prospective mentors will be subject to thorough screening to ensure that they have the required personality, qualities and character to engage with mentees.

The screening process will include:

- Completion of an application form
- Police check
- Attend a personal interview with selection committee
- Two character references

- Referee check
- Letter of intention
- NSW drivers license

Excluding prospective mentors who have a criminal record

A person who has been convicted of a sex offence or who has been convicted of a criminal offence within the last five years is not eligible to become a mentor. However, a person who has a criminal conviction(s) exceeding 5 years may apply and will be considered on an individual basis. It is widely known that some persons who have been convicted of criminal offences, who have undergone rehabilitation can develop into great mentors as they generally show empathy and build rapport well.

Introductory meeting between mentor and mentee

The initial meeting held between the mentor and mentee is significantly important as it sets the foundation for their future relationship. It is recommended that at this meeting they discuss: the aim and length of the relationship, meeting venues and times; activities and procedures to be carried out in the event that the mentor/mentee is sick. Both participants should swap their contact details. However, the mentor should only provide their personal mobile number not their home phone number.

This meeting may also discuss the interests of the mentee, what type of activities he/she enjoys and confidentiality issues.

It is recommended that the initial meeting not be of long duration or too formal and should relax the mentee in which he/she looks forward, in anticipation for future meetings.

Matching

Mentors will be “matched” to mentees preferably before they are released from a correctional centre. The major factors in determining “match” will be their demographic characteristics; i.e. their interests, personality, preferences and the desired activities that they would like to engage in. Moreover, practical considerations such as geographical location and mentor mobility and age will also be taken into account.

In some circumstances, mentors will be matched with mentees of same ethnicity or cultural background as this is particularly important for some offenders of Indigenous identity. This assists as the mentor respects and understands the mentees lifestyle, beliefs and culture.

If during the program either participant is not comfortable with the match, it can be dissolved and another match found.

Activities Undertaken by the Pair

The activities in which the mentor and mentee engage in will be largely dependent on the pair’s personal preferences. However, it is necessary that the meeting not be held at the mentees/mentor’s home but in a public place due to safety concerns.

It is important to meet at a venue that will provide a positive environment for both the mentor and mentee. For eg. A public library would not be recommended if the mentee has literacy deficits. Studies have revealed that mentees are more likely to be motivated toward change when they feel accepted, have built rapport and trust with their mentor and are in an environment where they feel comfortable and not threatened.

It is recommended that the activities are of low cost and that their conversation considers the objectives of the program. It is also important to note, the conversation does not always need to revolve around reduction of offending or addressing “antisocial attitudes” as the mentors positive “role modeling” will do the speaking for him/her.

As one objective of the program is re-integration into the community, the mentor may assist the mentee obtain membership in a local gym or library or help him/her study to obtain a drivers license.

Nature of the relationship

Studies of previous relationships between mentors and mentees have recorded that many mentors perceived that their relationship with their mentees developed into a friendship over a period of time. Whilst this is good in part as it indicates that a positive bond was developed, it also suggests that “familiarity” may sabotage the relationship unknowingly. It is always important for the mentor to be reminded that they are the “leader” in the relationship and must stay “true” to the objectives of the program and be able to challenge or question negative attitudes or behavior without devaluing the mentee as a person. The mentor must always remember their role in the program to assist the mentee in reduction of his/her offending and assist with their reintegration into the community. If the mentor does not maintain specific boundaries or rules in the relationship and chooses to ignore poor behavior or attitudes, the offender may over time become a happier and more self-confident criminal.

Mentoring Suitability

Whilst mentoring has significant benefits, studies have proven that not all offenders are suitable to engage in a mentoring program. Those offenders deemed unsuitable are sex offenders, offenders who are disinterested in engaging in the program, offenders who are unmotivated towards change; those who have significant substance abuse issues and mental health issues (who are a risk to themselves and others) and offenders who are homeless. Nonetheless, some offenders who are currently deemed unsuitable, may be able to engage in the program later on after the issues pertaining to their unsuitability are addressed.

It should be said that proper and successful mentoring occurs when the mentor has intentionally been the motivator and catalyst towards change and not the driver of it. It is always the case that the mentee take responsibility for their own change and that the mentor helps the mentee be self-reliant and self sustaining. As the proverb goes. *“You give a person a fish and feed them for a day; you teach them how to fish and feed them for a lifetime.”*

MENTEES

Mentees: Mandated or voluntary

All potential mentees are referred to the program while they are in a Correctional Centre. They are generally referred by a Probation and Parole Officer, a Correctional Officer, Welfare Officer, Chaplain, another offender or self-referred.

Studies have proven that it is preferable that offenders voluntarily engage in the program and not be mandated by court, as it was proven difficult to effectively engage with mentees who otherwise do not want to be involved.

Mentees Characteristics

Most of the offenders who will be referred to the mentoring program will have come from a background characterized by:

- History of offending behaviour
- Dysfunctional familial relationships and antisocial role modeling
- Substance abuse/misuse
- Low social/economic background
- Lack of employment history/welfare dependency
- Poor self esteem, lack of self confidence
- Various mental health issues
- Limited literacy/numeracy

Given the number of problematic factors that face offenders prior to participating in the mentoring program, it is crucial that the prospective mentee is screened effectively to ensure that they don't have any other problematic issues that will further hamper their progress.

Due to safety concerns, both for the mentor and wider community, sex offenders, violent offenders, offenders with drug dependency issues are not eligible to participate in the program. Additionally, offenders who have significant mental health issues and those who don't have stable accommodation are also unable to participate. However, once these offender's issues are met, their eligibility can be reviewed.

Length of Contact

Research of mentoring programs within Australia and overseas record that most successful mentoring relationships require a minimum of six months to twelve months duration. Whilst it is noted that the length of the relationship is important, continuity and availability are not less important factors.

Given this, mentors will be required to commit at least 6 months and no less than twelve months to the mentoring relationship and will be asked to dedicate one hour per week to their mentee preferably face to face visits, or weekly phone contact (where face to face is not possible). Mentors will be asked to sign a Statement of Commitment expressing their willingness to commit to the relationship for the specific time period.

Ending the Mentoring Relationship

At any time during the mentor/mentee relationship, the match may break down as a result of internal problems (eg. Relational differences, mentee's antisocial behaviour) or external problems (mentor suffering some health or personal problems). If this occurs, the committee will attempt to support the relationship and bring a resolution for it continue; if it is necessary that the match be terminated, then both the Mentor and Mentee will be asked to sign an Exit

Feedback Form identifying the reasons why they are exiting the Match and to identify how the program can be improved and what can be amended to achieve better outcomes.

Depending on the reasons behind the termination, the mentee may be provided an opportunity to be re-matched with another mentor if he/she desires.

Despite the mentor/mentee formally exiting the match, both will be allowed to continue their relationship on an informal level.

Parolee Pathway

Pathway Introduction:

- 1.1 Parolee participants identified by probation & parole officer or parole unit.
- 1.2 Information meeting with parolee
- 1.3 Identify parolee's suitability of participation
- 1.4 Parolee signs agreement

Matching:

- 2.1 parolee matched with mentor

Pre Release Transition:

- 3.1 Parolee's initial contact with mentor in Correctional Centre
- 3.2 Parolee engages in 12 meetings with mentor in Correctional Centre
- 3.3 Parolee released to community

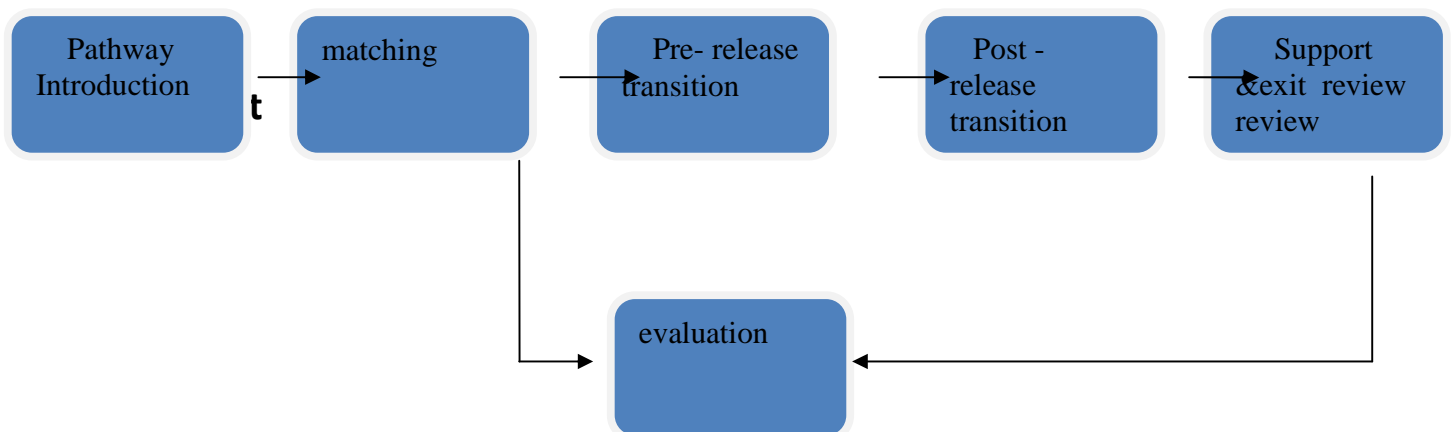
Post Release Transition:

- 4.1 Parolee's initial meeting with Probation and Parole Officer and mentor
- 4.2 Parolee and mentor establish relationship during assessment stage (8 weeks)
- 4.3 Case management meeting with parolee and mentor

Support and Exit Review:

- 5.1 Monitoring and supporting parolee and mentor's relationship
- 5.2 Parolee exit meeting

* *Intermittent evaluations occur throughout the parolee pathway*



TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR MENTORS

Mentors- Orientation and Training

A key component of the mentoring program is the Orientation and Training of suitable applicants.

The Orientation will provide an overview of the mentoring program including:

- Probation and Parole Supervision and Integration
- Prison Visitation and Safety
- Mentoring Philosophy
- Commitment Requirements
- CSNSW obligations and Guidelines

For those mentors who complete the Orientation, a further training component of 20 hours will be mandatory. These sessions will be taught by qualified staff who will teach the following topics:

- Parole Obligations and the Law
- Communication Skills
- Boundaries and Manipulation
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Drug and Alcohol
- Mental health Issues
- Networking with Community Service providers
- Problem Solving

In addition to this, optional training sessions will be provided for mentors intermittently throughout the year as refresher courses and for Question & Answer and Feedback opportunities.

Mentor Support

Complimenting the mandatory training, all mentors will be provided with a Support Handbook to peruse if they have any questions in relation to their commitments or concerns that they may have with their mentees. Additionally, the Mentoring Committee will make themselves available daily for any questions that may be raised and will be prepared to provide additional support as required.

Mentor Supervision and Monitoring

A necessary component of the program is that the mentors are provided with regular supervision and monitoring. This is another crucial component of the program as it helps undergird the mentor both practically and emotionally and ensures that the objectives of the program are being satisfied.

After each meeting between the mentor and mentee, the mentor will be required to make phone contact with a committee member to i) provide a copy of the day's *Meeting Schedule* ii) to advise of the outcomes of the meeting and iii) to provide an opportunity for any feedback or advice.

Additionally, phone contact or face-to-face meetings will be held each month between the mentors and a committee member to discuss their mentees and provide an opportunity for feedback. If desired however, meetings can be held ad hoc to provide immediate support if a crisis arises.

In order for the program's outcomes and processes to be effectively measured, the program will be subject to frequent monitoring. This will be in the form of:

- Consistent meetings with all mentoring committee.
- Review Meeting each month with mentors via phone or face-to-face contact.
- Written records from both mentors and mentees
- OIMS data pertaining to Parolee's being mentored
- Managing grievance(s) process
- Data collected by University Western Sydney to conduct regular evaluations throughout various intervals of the program.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Evaluation: why it is important?

All programs, need to be evaluated to determine their efficiency, analyze their effectiveness and to identify what changes can be implemented to improve future outcomes. Mentoring programs are not exempt and need to be evaluated to measure their success and to fine-tune the program and its processes. Evaluation has been identified as a key component of crime prevention programs. National Crime Prevention report detailed that monitoring and evaluation of community crime prevention programs can “provide valuable information about the way it was conducted and its context, outcomes and efficiency, helping managers and others to plan program changes.”

Lack of Evaluation

There has been a lack of evaluation of mentoring programs both overseas and within Australia. The main reasons for this being:

- The need for long-term study and a tendency to have a lack of consistency in measuring outcomes.
- Lack of comprehensiveness in existing evaluations.
- The voluntary nature of the programs which adds to inconsistencies.
- Dependency on participant observations
- The inability to effectively measure mentoring program that had an array of objectives, small sample sizes and short time frames.
- Many mentoring programs found it difficult to secure funding, and that due to financial hardship, evaluation was performed as it was not deemed a priority.

The Need For Evaluation

As discussed, many mentoring programs have not been able to be evaluated properly which has reduced the effectiveness of their programs, and has prevented more current programs from embracing some strengths and positive processes and avoid pitfalls. Knowing these concerns, governments should take the initiative to not only promote mentoring programs but to also fund the evaluations as part of their commitment. Research suggests that funding of mentoring programs be written is as an integral part of the program and not seen as an appendix.

Partnership Between MENTOR and the evaluating University

MENTOR in conjunction with a willing university will evaluate the mentoring program through a series of qualitative and quantitative evaluations throughout the course of the program.

To date, previous research has focused only on the end result of mentoring programs and their effectiveness. This has limited the data available to researchers regarding what works. Therefore, the initiative to evaluate throughout the program is an innovative concept in mentor program design and evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation will be based on evidenced Best Practice coupled with rigorous evaluation to test scientifically:

1. Effectiveness of the program as a crime prevention strategy
2. Effectiveness in reducing risk factors for participants
3. What information is required for decisions to be made about replication

4. What are the most appropriate data collection methods
5. What works?
6. Effectiveness of Reward Program on success of relationships

APPENDIX A - RESEARCH

Mentoring, Social Capital & Desistance: A study of women released from prison Brown & Ross (2010)

—A positive mentoring experience may give women new experiences and practice in relationship building, in line with the principle that ‘in order to create change in their lives, incarcerated women need to experience relationships that do not repeat their histories of loss, neglect and abuse’. —Brown & Ross argue the enormous potential of the pool of residual social capital that lies largely untapped within our community.

—They discuss pathways by which that capital could be activated for purposes that were both practical in nature— providing job or house references, lending reputation in court proceedings — and that intervened in the complex process of psychological change that must accompany letting go an old life and personal identity and finding new ways of being in the world.

The Personal Touch in Ex-Offender Re-integration. Burnett (2007)

—Burnett focuses on ex-offender integration. He emphasizes the importance of “a person centred approach based on a working alliance” as a core service. —He suggests that more weight should be given to both relationship factors and personal agency models of offender re-integration

Youth Sport vs Youth Crime. Carmichael (2008)

—Carmichael argues that organised sport does prevent crime by giving people a positive identity, feelings of empowerment and assisting with leadership, teamwork and self-governance skills. Non-traditional partnerships are the most effective such as between police, social science agencies, and local business

—Studies have proven that the process works however there is limited empirical evidence of a direct causal relationship. Carmichael suggests that more data needs to be gathered to support this.

Mentoring for Progression – Prison Mentoring Project Assessing Strengths, Outcomes & Roll Out Potential. Huggins (2010)

—This program in the UK is based on established peer mentoring practices . All mentors have previously been mentees and are fully trained. Focus is on assisting the mentee to achieve their goals and aspirations. This program highlights the importance of mentoring in conjunction with action planning, on-going support and realistic, obtainable targets rather than more generic advice, support and guidance. —Huggins suggests that a larger pilot program would be beneficial to reduce the problem of selection bias in samples

A Rapid Evidence Assessment of the Impact of Mentoring on Re-offending – A Summary. Jolliffe & Farrington (2007)

Of the 18 studies assessed, seven showed that mentoring had a statistically significant positive impact on re-offending. Results suggested that mentoring significantly reduced subsequent offending by 4 to 11per cent, but this result was primarily driven by studies of lower methodological quality. The best studies, designed to provide the most accurate assessment of the impact of mentoring, did not suggest that mentoring caused a statistically significant reduction in re-offending.

Programs successful in reducing re-offending were where the mentor and mentee spent more time together at each meeting and met at least once a week. Mentoring was only successful in reducing re-offending when it was one of a number of interventions given. Where behaviour modification, supplementary education and employment programmes were also involved, significant reductions in re-offending occurred.

Longer mentoring programmes were not more effective, possibly because of the difficulty in recruiting high-quality mentors. Mentoring was found to be most effective when it was applied to those apprehended by the police.

Only studies in which mentoring was still being given during the follow-up period led to a statistically significant reduction in re-offending. This suggests that the benefits of mentoring did not persist after the mentoring ended.

Mentoring seems to be a promising intervention but only two studies of lower methodological quality have evaluated the impact of mentoring on re-offending in the UK. It is, therefore, recommended that large-scale randomised controlled trials should be mounted to evaluate the effects of mentoring programmes on subsequent offending.

Mentoring Programs & Youth Development: A Synthesis. Jekielek, Moore & Hair (2002)

—Jekielek et al argue that effective mentoring places great demands on mentors and on program structure. —Mentors must commit to the long term and make regular contact. Mentors must commit to ongoing training

—This paper suggests that planned variance experimental studies are required to make confident and practical suggestions to practitioners in relation to age groups, group mentoring, practical activities to use etc.

Community Adult Mentoring and Support – The Value of Volunteers to Community Corrections and Community Safety. Johannesen (2006)

—Volunteers have proven to be valuable partners in the work of the parole office. They bring true “community” to Community Corrections. Benefits include added eyes and ears, collateral contact provided by the mentor, practical assistance with accommodation etc

Johannesen states that —“when an offender knows that someone cares enough to introduce him to the community and support him without payment he develops a stake in and a sense of belonging to that community”

Towards Effective Practice in Offender Supervision. McNeill (2009)

—McNeill argues that no one model of reducing re-offending is effective as offenders are heterogeneous, their needs are complex and their pathways to desistance are individualised

—McNeill states that effective practice can only really emerge from practitioners reflective engagement and continual dialogue with clients.

Evaluation of a mentoring program for young juvenile crime offenders – challenges for evaluation design. Milne & Flaherty (2011)

—Milne and Flaherty identify four key areas of evaluation for a mentoring program to reduce re-offending in young people

- 1. How to assess the effectiveness of the program as a crime prevention strategy
- 2. How to assess the effectiveness in reducing risk factors for participants
- 3. What information is required for decisions to be made about replication
- 4. What are the most appropriate data collection methods

Improving Youth Mentoring Interventions through research based Practice Rhodes (2008)

—Outlines several reviews of ‘successful’ mentoring programs as well as identified issues with programs. Rhodes suggests greater adherence to evidence based practice and rigorous evaluation to test the efficacy of existing programs and guide development of new initiatives

—Rhodes argues that to implement this type of strategy one must address the complexities involved. Researchers have a central role to play in comparing methods of implementation, analyzing success and failure in different applications for mentoring

What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence Justice Analytical Services. Sapouna 2011

—Sapouna outlines how individuals desist from re-offending and highlights the desistance journey from the offender’s perspective.

—Sapouna suggests that the onset and maintenance of desistance depends, to a large extent and for a significant proportion of offenders, upon them developing pro-social thinking

styles, higher levels of self-efficacy and pro-social bonds. Interventions that target these areas are, therefore, more likely to be successful in reducing reoffending.

—**Request for Proposals Prisoner Re-entry Mentoring Service for the Upper Peninsula**
April 23, 2012

—**Conducting a needs analysis**

—**Checklist for mentoring – NSW Dept of Education**

—**Building Offenders Community Assets through mentoring**

—**Executive Coaching Questionnaire – Values Coaching**

—**Airborne Program Evaluation**

—**The Human Face of Offender Management**

—**Handbook for volunteers, interns & professional partners**

—**Early Intervention – Youth mentoring Programs WA Government**

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