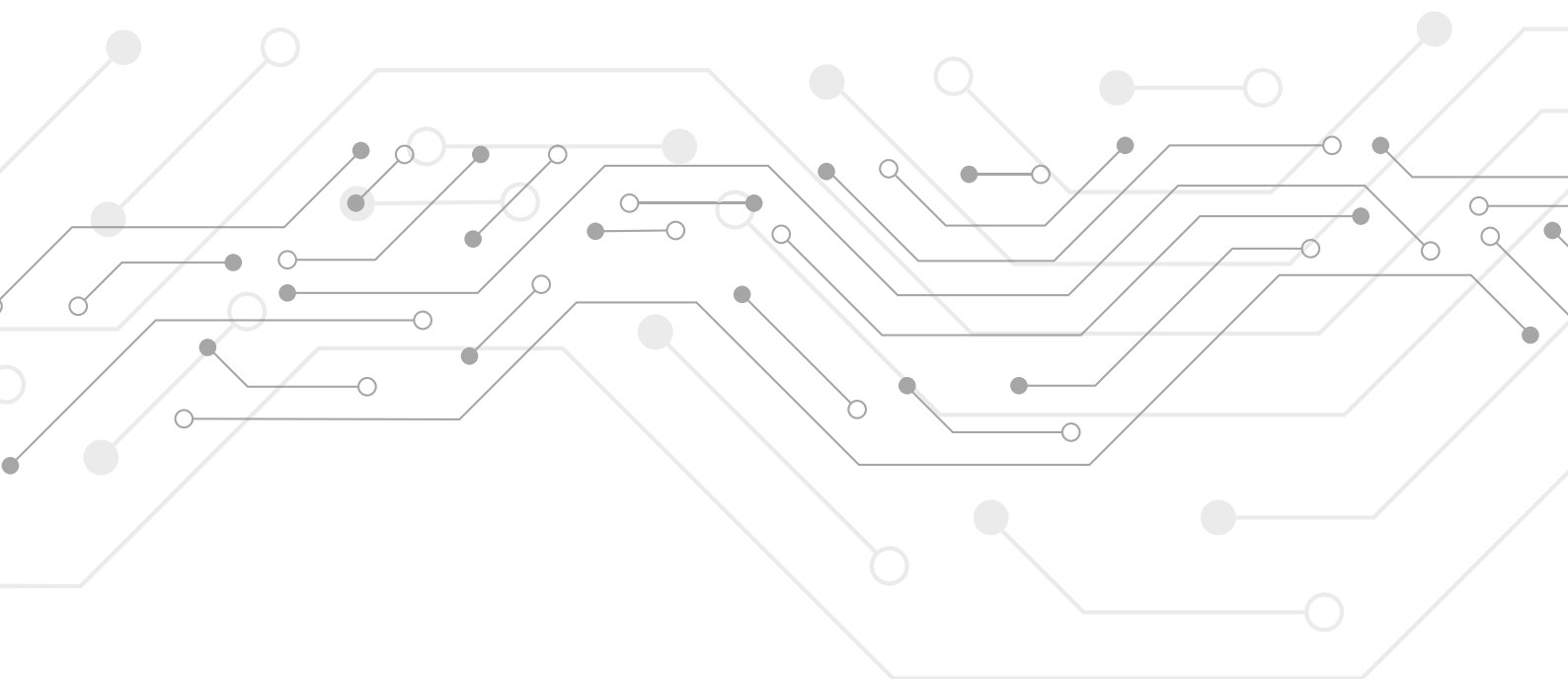


Tackling Domestic Abuse Evaluation

Community Rehabilitation
Company Evaluation Series



November 2021

ingeus



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Introduction

Ingeus commissioned an independent, external consultant, Russell Webster, to undertake a series of evaluations on a range of interventions which Ingeus delivered as the lead organisation in the Reducing Reoffending Partnership (RRP), alongside Change, Grow, Live, and the St Giles Trust; which operated the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland (DLNR) and Staffordshire & West Midlands (SWM) Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC) between 2015 and 2021. This evaluation focuses on the range of interventions Ingeus developed to tackle domestic abuse, primarily to work with perpetrators, but also to support victims.

Chapter 1 summarises the context in which probation domestic abuse work takes place, identifying both the challenges for Community Rehabilitation Companies and the development of the evidence base which led to new approaches. Chapter 2 describes the range of domestic abuse work undertaken by Ingeus. Chapter 3 presents the impact of that work, and Chapter 4 summarises the report and presents conclusions.

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Executive Summary

Context

Ingeus faced two key challenges in developing its domestic abuse work.

1. The difficulties facing Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) trying to deliver domestic abuse interventions to a very large number of individuals without the policy, national leadership, or dedicated resources to do so.
2. The growing recognition that there was a deficit in the range of evidence-based interventions for all tiers of perpetrators.

There were also widespread concerns that these problems were leading to a lack of protection for victims and potential victims.

The approach

Ingeus realised that it needed to act both swiftly and prudently to meet the twin goals of developing new interventions for lower risk perpetrators that were evidence-based and effective. It therefore took the unprecedented step of a Community Rehabilitation Company, approaching HMPPS with the idea of jointly creating a new intervention. Ingeus also invested considerable resources in the co-production of complementary digital media which was the key building block for Spectrum. It was the organisation's existing commitment to valuing lived experience, which meant that it could organise and support the input of material from so many individuals with lived experience.

The organisation also developed a partnership with statutory partners in Staffordshire to develop a ground-breaking new community-facing service, known as New Era, which:

- Raised awareness of the issue of domestic abuse with the general public, as well as within different professions.
- Greatly increased the capacity to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse, especially on an early intervention basis.

- Similarly, greatly increased the capacity of services to support survivors of domestic abuse.
- Created better links between perpetrator and survivor services.
- Changed the discourse around domestic abuse to recognise its prevalence in society and encourage more perpetrators to recognise their behaviour and seek help to change it.

Outcomes

Spectrum has already been delivered to many hundreds of domestic abuse perpetrators both within Ingeus' CRCs and the New Era service. We await the findings of the Ministry of Justice implementation review. However, Spectrum has already been approved by HMPPS' national Effective Interventions Panel and there are plans to integrate Spectrum's content with that of other legacy CRC domestic abuse and better relationships interventions to create a new evidence-based programme.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, it is clear that the New Era service has developed an effective working model which has established the engagement of, and most importantly, significant numbers of referrals from the key frontline agencies tackling domestic abuse including the police, social services and schools.

Going forward

Ingeus has acquired a considerable body of learning from its domestic abuse work. In addition to having many highly qualified and experienced staff (facilitating domestic abuse groups and balancing the needs of perpetrators and victims requires a substantial and long-term investment in staff training and support), the organisation has developed further its ability to have a collaborative relationship with a statutory partner (as opposed to a contractor-provider one). Ingeus has advanced knowledge in the domestic abuse sector by its willingness to innovate and modernise by developing accessible and sharable digital media. Ingeus is now taking this wide range of knowledge, and its know-how on how to innovate, forwards while respecting the existing evidence base, to further develop practice in the criminal justice field.

Chapter 1: Domestic abuse interventions

Overview

This chapter sets the context for domestic abuse interventions delivered by Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) by looking at two key areas. First, we examine the challenges faced by CRCs in delivering domestic abuse work within the framework of the Government's (now disbanded) Transforming Rehabilitation programme. Secondly, we look at key changes in the understanding of domestic abuse and perpetrator programmes which have emerged from the evidence base over recent years.

CRCs and domestic abuse

The most reliable and comprehensive insight into the issue of interventions with domestic abuse perpetrators by the probation service during the Transforming Rehabilitation period comes from a thematic inspection undertaken by HM Inspectorate of Probation in 2018¹. The inspectorate report explained how domestic abuse provision was expected to work, setting out the distinct roles of the National Probation Service (NPS) and 21 CRCs:

"The NPS advises courts on sentencing all offenders, and manages those who present a high or very high risk of serious harm or who are managed through Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). CRCs manage cases assessed (at sentence) as posing a low or medium risk of harm to others, irrespective of the complexity of these. Most of the perpetrators of domestic abuse who have been convicted of offences such as public order or criminal damage, and many who are serving sentences for assault, will have been assessed as posing a low or medium risk of harm. As such, they will be managed by CRCs and constitute a substantial part of their business. Public order and criminal damage offences within the home, for instance, can mask the wider context of domestic abuse.

¹ HM Inspectorate of Probation (2018) Domestic abuse: the work undertaken by Community Rehabilitation Companies

The CRCs' remit includes providing interventions and services for all NPS and CRC service users to reduce reoffending. CRCs also deliver programmes that the courts impose as sentence requirements. One of these is Building Better Relationships (BBR), the only nationally accredited domestic abuse programme for use in the community. CRCs should also put in place a range of Rehabilitation Activity Requirements (RAR) that the court may impose for a minimum number of days. The exact nature of the work to be delivered is determined by the CRC. A number have developed short RAR interventions to address domestic abuse."

In its summary of the state of domestic abuse work delivered by CRCs, the inspectorate focused on four main areas: policy, strategy and leadership; reducing reoffending; protecting victims and children; and working in partnership. We summarise their principal findings below.

Policy, strategy and leadership

Inspectors were critical that there was no overall strategy from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) or Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to drive the quality of CRCs' domestic abuse practice, saying that contractual targets had led to CRCs prioritising process deadlines above good quality and safe practice. The inspectors were concerned that a lack of strategic approach nationally meant that CRCs were not providing the right range, volume, and quality of domestic abuse interventions to meet identified need. The inspectorate found that too few referrals were being made to the Building Better Relationships (BBR) programme and that there were extensive delays for many who were referred. Many of the interventions delivered with Rehabilitation Activity Requirements (RARs) were deemed not to be compatible with the evidence base.

Reducing reoffending

Overall, inspectors were critical of much practice; highlighting that too little evidence-based work to reduce domestic abuse behaviours and improve relationships was being completed, that some staff lacked the skills to undertake the work they were delivering and that there were "indefensible" delays in starting both the BBR programme and domestic abuse interventions delivered within RARs.

Protecting victims and children

The inspectorate was concerned that many probation workers did not fully understand the effect of domestic abuse on families or the relevance of an integrated approach to managing risk of harm, with the consequence that they focused their work solely on the individual offender.

Working in partnership

The inspectorate found that CRCs were working well with partners around domestic abuse work at a strategic level but that the quality of partnerships at practice level was often not sufficient, with poor communication between CRCs and their partners and too little joint assessment and planning.

Recommendations

The thematic report contained several recommendations for CRCs, including that they should ensure that:

- responsible officers have the right training and support to identify and manage the risk of harm posed by perpetrators of domestic abuse;
- service users complete appropriate, evidence-based interventions in a timely way, and these interventions are delivered effectively and safely; and
- victims, including children, are protected, and supported sufficiently for the duration of a case, and there is an appropriate response to all new information about risk of harm.

Developments in the evidence base

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of what works with domestic abuse perpetrators² commissioned by the Welsh Government in 2018 reported the lack of robust evidence to support the effectiveness of programmes aiming to address Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), regardless of the approach used. In this review, the authors highlighted a number of issues which emerge from the evidence:

- Concerns that a gendered approach has led to a narrow focus in treatment programmes, often failing to address key issues such as poor impulse control and poor emotional regulation.
- Duluth models (see below for a description) were the most common form of perpetrator intervention yet had limited evidence for their effectiveness.
- Issues of reciprocal violence are rarely addressed.
- Little account was taken of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), personality disorder traits and substance misuse histories of many perpetrators.
- There was a need to focus on coercive control as well as physical violence.

The authors' overall conclusion was that we do not currently have a robust evidence base on what works with perpetrators of domestic abuse.

² C. Miles & K. De Claire (2018) Rapid Evidence Assessment: What works with domestic abuse perpetrators? Welsh Government, GSR report number 63/2018

In 2013, BBR replaced the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) and Community Domestic Violence Programme (CDVP) that were implemented in 2003. BBR marked the shift in the academic debate around domestic abuse described above with some researchers,³ including a number working within HMPPS, suggesting that a “narrow focus” on men’s power potentially limited the potential of interventions based on the original Duluth model⁴ which “believes that battering is a pattern of actions used to intentionally control or dominate an intimate partner and actively works to change societal conditions that support men’s use of tactics of power and control over women”. The core principles underlying the BBR were based on the General Aggression Model⁵ – which examines the interplay of thoughts, emotions and behaviour – and promised an approach reported by Renehan⁶, as being “a more holistic and individualised approach”, building on new desistance research and strengths-based approaches, its commitment to ‘What works’ and the criminal justice ‘primary aim’ of reducing reoffending”.

In the thematic inspection discussed in the previous section, inspectors reported the mainly positive views of probation staff about the content of the BBR programme. However, inspectors also found that some practitioners felt the programme was limited by its focus on men and intimate partner violence and that it was inappropriate for many younger perpetrators.

Jason Morris and colleagues⁷ (2019) also argued that there was a need for additional evidence-based provision for men who have committed acts of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) against their male partner or ex-partner. In the same paper, they give a case study of the co-production of digital media as a means of making the programme more accessible to its participants.

The following chapter describes how Ingeus responded to these two key factors: the criticism of CRC practice by the probation inspectors, in particular the lack of capacity, the use of non-evidence-based interventions and a lack of proactive concern for victims; and the evolution of the domestic abuse evidence base to ensure that interventions were effective with a broader range of perpetrators.

³ E.g. Weatherstone, P. 2010. New Directions in NOMS Domestic Abuse Programmes. In: JUSTICE, M. O. (ed.). <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/32897308/new-directions-in-noms-domestic-abuse-programmes>.

⁴ <https://www.theduluthmodel.org/what-is-the-duluth-model/>

⁵ The General Aggression Model (GAM) is a comprehensive, integrative, framework for understanding aggression. It considers the role of social, cognitive, personality, developmental, and biological factors on aggression.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29279227/>

⁶ Nicole Renehan (2020) Building Better Relationships? Interrogating the ‘Black Box’ of a Statutory Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme

https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/files/188959394/FULL_TEXT.PDF

⁷ Morris J, Gibbs CA, Jonah OT, Bloomfield S, Weatherstone PH, Ireland JL. Developing content to promote desistance in men who have committed intimate partner violence in same-sex relationships. *European Journal of Probation*. 2019;11(2):96-113. doi:10.1177/2066220319871454

Chapter 2: The work delivered

Overview

Ingeus was committed to delivering a high-quality domestic abuse service which enabled as many perpetrators as possible to move away from their abusive behaviour and to do its utmost to protect existing and potential victims from all forms of domestic abuse.

To achieve this aim, Ingeus invested heavily in expanding both its overall capacity in delivering perpetrator interventions and in extending the range of those interventions to make them more accessible and appropriate for the ever-increasing numbers of offenders found to be involved in domestic abuse. Additionally, Ingeus invested in a new partnership, New Era (Ending Relationship Abuse) which set out to be an integrated domestic abuse service with a common gateway for both perpetrators and abusers.

In this chapter, we describe two significant developments. The first was Ingeus' decision to approach Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to jointly develop a new intervention which would focus on the emerging large numbers of low and medium risk domestic abuse perpetrators. This intervention was named Spectrum to reflect that it was an appropriate intervention for both heterosexual and homosexual perpetrators.

The second development was the New Era service which set out to develop a holistic domestic abuse service with a common gateway for both perpetrators and victims and a remit to raise the issue of domestic abuse across the local community. Ingeus invested in this project both to increase the capacity of services for perpetrators and to improve the links between services for perpetrator and those for victims.

Spectrum

Building Better Relationships (BBR) was (and remains) the only accredited domestic abuse perpetrator programme available to probation staff, and only those service users who had been ordered to attend as a requirement of their community order were considered eligible. Nationally, because of capacity issues, BBR was mainly reserved for those assessed as high risk on the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA). As we have seen from the probation inspectorate's report, this situation resulted in many service users,

particularly those assessed as low or medium risk, not receiving a domestic abuse intervention.

Ingeus had previously developed an intervention for lower risk perpetrators known as Safer Choices but wished to modify and update this programme in line with the most recent research. Therefore, the organisation decided to commission HMPPS to develop a new programme for this target group in collaboration with staff and service users from Staffordshire & West Midlands (SWM) Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) (one of the two Ingeus CRCs). The criteria for the new programme was that it needed to be:

- evidence-based;
- deliverable in groups or one-to-one; and
- appropriate for same sex relationships.

The programme was named Spectrum and it was agreed by both parties that as part of its construction, materials would be developed for two variants of the programme: one for male perpetrators with female victims, and one for men with male victims.

The programme

Spectrum was targeted at participants who were assessed as Low Risk on the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA). Medium risk cases were only assigned to Spectrum if they were not suitable for BBR (based on the BBR screening checklist). In these cases, participation in Spectrum was only one part of a broader case management plan.

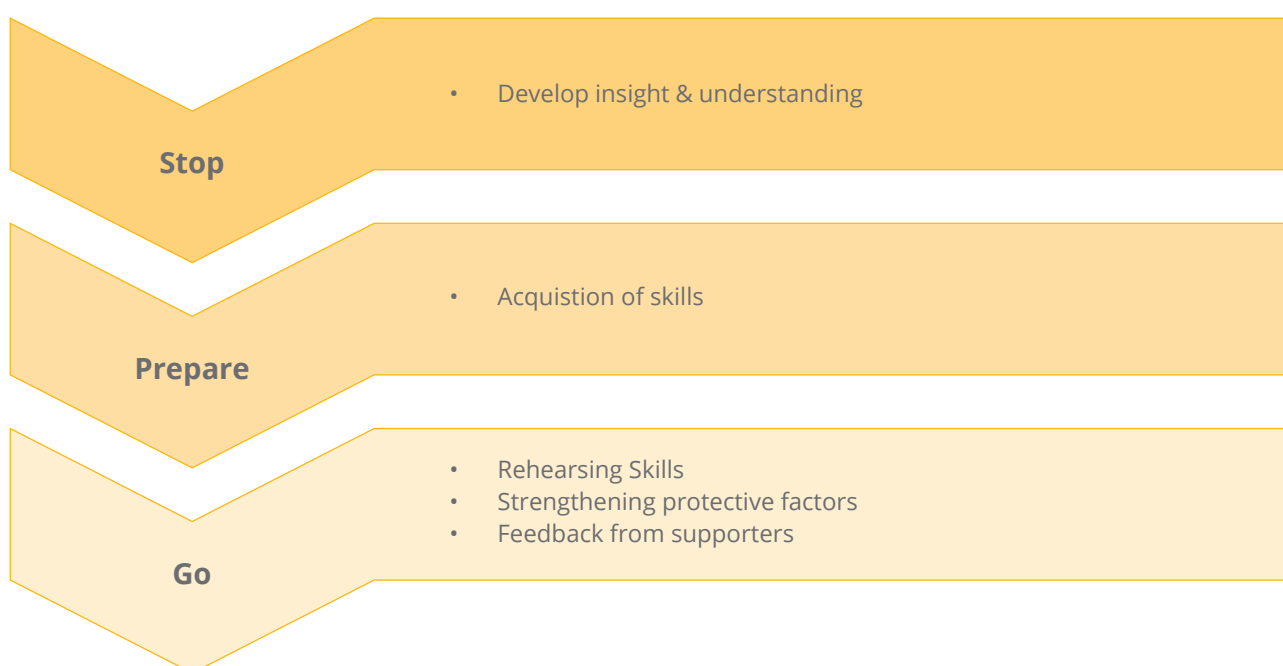
Spectrum was designed as a 10-session course consisting of up to 28 exercises designed to help people improve their relationships by understanding themselves better and learning how to prevent and cope with conflict. To achieve these aims, Spectrum encourages participants to decide how they want their relationships to be, to recognise their strengths, and to develop new skills. This approach was matched to the emerging evidence base on the value of strengths-based work and the importance of “agency⁸” in desistance theory.

Spectrum used material drawn from the BBR programme. The sessions were designed to target specific psychological processes that underpin Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

The main defining characteristic of Spectrum was that all the exercises were built around short (1-5 minutes long) animated digital media clips designed to achieve specific learning outcomes. Service users and volunteers from Ingeus with experience of domestic violence created the stories and voiced the animated clips. Leaflets and communications materials explained the purpose of Spectrum to participants.

⁸ The favoured term for self-determination in desistance theory.

The model of change underpinning Spectrum is based on a three-stage process shown in the graphic below:



Spectrum was designed to promote rehabilitative conversations between participants and staff to support learning that they can then transfer into their everyday life. The clips consist of engaging and brain friendly animations that model the use of a skill/tool/concept in an everyday relationship scenario.

The pandemic as catalyst

CRCs did not deliver any accredited programmes in person during the pandemic, when the probation service moved to an exceptional delivery model which reduced physical contact as much as possible in line with social distancing requirements. However, the digital nature of Spectrum meant that it was able to still be delivered on both a group and individual nature via online videoconferencing. This was an important and unexpected positive result of developing modern, digital content. The take-up of this service was so high that Ingeus made the decision to transfer the two Victim Link Workers from the BBR programme to Spectrum to ensure that victims were getting the support they needed.

A lead practitioner interviewed for this evaluation commented on the value of the digital clips which served as discussion starters. Because these clips were easily available online via YouTube, they were frequently shared with service users, making it possible to enliven telephone or online video sessions with

more engaging content. The practitioner discussed how she would share a clip at the end of a session in preparation for the next session and knew of several service users who would watch the clip more than once as well as immediately prior to the next session, because it made the issues they were working on real and relevant to their lives and because they could easily view the material via their phones.

She also stated that several service users found that one-to-one sessions were more effective than groupwork interventions. This was attributed to some people on probation feeling more able to be honest and share their experiences when not constrained by feelings of shame in front of other participants. Another important issue was that some people were concerned about sharing private details with other people in the group who lived locally and might not keep this information confidential.

This same practitioner had piloted the same sex edition of Spectrum and received feedback that the bespoke co-produced digital material was appropriate and effective, exploring both the similarities and differences of domestic abuse within a same sex relationship.

Spectrum became a key component of Ingeus' range of interventions for perpetrators of domestic abuse, quickly spreading to being delivered by the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire & Rutland CRC as well as the Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC. Its effectiveness is discussed in the next chapter.

New Era

Staffordshire County Council, the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, and the City of Stoke-on-Trent wished to increase the quality and accessibility of services for both perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse. They commissioned a new service known as New Era ("Ending Relationship Abuse") which created a common portal for both perpetrator and victim services. Ingeus delivered the perpetrator services and Victim Support the services for victims.

The remit for the perpetrator services, which Ingeus took a lead role in developing, was much broader than the simple delivery of groupwork interventions. The remit extended to include community prevention work (including domestic abuse awareness campaigns and outreach work) and a range of one-to-one and groupwork interventions at three different tiers of need. Referrals were made from a wide range of sources including the police (as an Out of Court Disposal), social services and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass).

The service enabled people to be referred at a much earlier stage of their involvement in abusive relationships before violent and coercive behaviours were entrenched and the level of risk had escalated. Feedback from partners was that New Era provided a resource which had long been missing. Police officers were pleased to be able to refer people when they had been called out to domestic "incidents" to

facilitate early intervention. Social Services became one of the main referral sources and social workers again reported that the New Era resource was invaluable in trying to change perpetrator behaviour at an early stage to ensure that partners and children could be safeguarded. Similarly, large numbers of people supervised by the probation service who had not been convicted of crimes of intimate partner violence, but whose domestic abuse behaviour emerged during statutory supervision were referred to the service.

The New Era service also provided help in issues of parental (and grandparental) abuse and explicitly offered services tailored to the needs of all: male and female, heterosexual and homosexual, perpetrators, and victims.

Victims' work

Ingeus was careful to ensure that the needs of victims were never de-prioritised in work with perpetrators. Partner Link Workers and the Victim Support Unit were closely involved in the delivery of both BBR and Spectrum, working alongside the partners/ex partners of participants to signpost them to services and report vital risk information. This risk information was provided to supervising probation officers and programme facilitators but never shared with perpetrators. Ingeus invested fully in ensuring that partner link workers had access to the best possible and latest training including exploring the potential for them to undertake the same training as Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs).

The next chapter examines the impact of the domestic abuse work undertaken by Ingeus.

Chapter 3: Impact

Introduction

This chapter examines the impact of Ingeus' domestic abuse work with a focus on monitoring and evaluation of the Spectrum programme and New Era service.

Spectrum

Spectrum is currently the subject of an Ministry of Justice (MoJ) implementation review with the findings due to be published in early 2022⁹.

The original pilots gathered feedback from participants which found that those who completed the course thought that they were less likely to be violent towards their partner or use abusive language, they also thought they were less likely to be involved in self-harming behaviour. The completion rate for the pilot programme was substantially higher than the programme it was designed to replace.

New Era

The official end of year report for the second year of operation of the New Era perpetrator services is the most up-to-date source of monitoring information for the project, covering the year of 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. The report charts the continued growth and success of the project, albeit the second half of this period was substantially adversely impacted by the pandemic and associated lockdowns. The project was not able to deliver groupwork programmes owing to social distancing requirements, nor could it continue to work in schools (which was its primary point of contact with children and young people) simply because they were closed to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, the year saw a slight increase in referrals from the launch year from 330 to a total of 337. Although referral levels dipped during the third quarter of the year owing to the pandemic, they were rising again in the final quarter. During this year 31 individuals completed Spectrum and seven people the BBR programme, with work with a large majority of referrals taking place on an individual basis because of the

⁹ This report will be updated by the review's findings when available.

pandemic restrictions. There were approximately 35 individuals engaged in both these programmes at the time of completing the annual report suggesting that outputs would be substantially larger in year three of the project.

The project undertook a feedback survey with a sample (37) of service users which found that an overwhelming majority (96%) described their experience of New Era as “very positive” (87%) or “fairly positive” (9%) with the same proportion (96%) reporting that they were “very satisfied” with the support they received.

The end of year report also contains some examples of qualitative feedback from service users which clearly demonstrate the impact of the work:

“I thought I was just being physically violent, which I never have been, however, I now realise it covers a range of behaviours, shouting, arguing, controlling behaviour. Verbal, physical, emotional abuse”.

“I understand my triggers and how to control emotions. I take time out when needed to not escalate confrontation and wind down”.

“I think it has helped in my relationship with N and with my brother and my mum and dad. I am better at thinking and getting myself across”.

“I understand much more that there is a risk of harm in the day-to-day life of your children both at the time and in the future as they grow up”.

“When I look back on it, I learned a lot and took a lot from it. It’s not a huge inconvenience to take 1.5 hours one evening a week for something that can make a lot of difference and teach you a lot of things. I enjoyed being in the group and getting to know the other men”.

“I think it has made me and C stronger. I am able to stand back and really think about what I am doing and know it is wrong. I am more respectful to C and it is a much better environment for the children to be in”.

“I learnt how to look at things from an unbiased point of view, remove the filters during conflict and arguments. Calm down and consider the facts. Work towards my goal of being a co-parent. Talking about my emotions and feelings and acting assertive instead of aggressive”.

“All aspects of the course are useful. It is not just one thing or certain things; you have to start from the bottom and work up anyway. You need one skill to build on to the other. It lets you do it in steps”.

The project had also modified its community engagement work in the light of Covid restrictions with the development of remote awareness raising and training sessions to a wide range of local professionals including GPs, social prescribers, social workers and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) co-ordinators.

The final chapter of this report summarises the domestic abuse work developed by Ingeus and its impact.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

Overview

In this report we have seen how Ingeus took proactive decisions to increase the capacity and range of domestic abuse interventions in the light of two main challenges:

1. The difficulties facing CRCs trying to deliver domestic abuse interventions to a very large number of individuals without the policy, national leadership or dedicated resources to do so.
2. The growing recognition that there was a deficit in the range of evidence-based interventions for all tiers of perpetrators.

There were also widespread concerns that these problems were leading to a lack of protection for victims and potential victims.

Developing new evidence-based practice

Ingeus realised that it needed to act both swiftly and prudently to meet the twin goals of developing new interventions for lower risk perpetrators that were evidence-based and effective. It therefore took the unprecedented step of a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) approaching Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) with the idea of jointly creating a new intervention. Ingeus also invested considerable resources in the co-production of the complementary digital media which was the key building block for Spectrum. It was the organisation's existing commitment to valuing lived experience which meant that it could organise and support the input of material from so many individuals with lived experience.

Spectrum has already been delivered to many hundreds of domestic abuse perpetrators both within Ingeus' CRCs and the New Era service. We await the findings of the Ministry of Justice implementation review. However, Spectrum has already been approved by HMPPS' national Effective Interventions Panel (EIP) which played a key role in the lead up to reunification, by enabling Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR) interventions to be appraised against seven core principles set out by the Correctional Services Accreditation Advice Panel. The Seven Principles used within the EIP to assess Structured Interventions and toolkit are as follows:

1. Alignment with an evidence base.
2. Credible rationale for how, why and for whom the intervention will work.
3. A structure that allows replication.
4. A selection process that targets the intervention appropriately.
5. To equip people with useful skills and ensure that no one will be disadvantaged or harmed.
6. Quality assurance to ensure the intervention is delivered as designed.
7. A commitment to research and evaluation.

This means that Spectrum is already being delivered by hundreds of practitioners across England and Wales and has been confirmed as an important and effective addition to the limited repertoire of domestic abuse perpetrator interventions. HMPPS plans to integrate Spectrum's content with that of other legacy CRC domestic abuse and better relationships interventions to create a new evidence-based programme.

Interestingly, and importantly, staff interviewed for this evaluation stated that the availability of a lower tier intervention for domestic abuse meant that that the intervention was offered to and taken up by many more perpetrators, in particular, those who had not been convicted of a domestic abuse offence but where abusive behaviour became apparent in the course of probation supervision. Staff also felt there was additional value in being able to intervene earlier before the violence and coercion in an intimate relationship became entrenched, making it more amenable to positive change.

Developing new community services in partnership

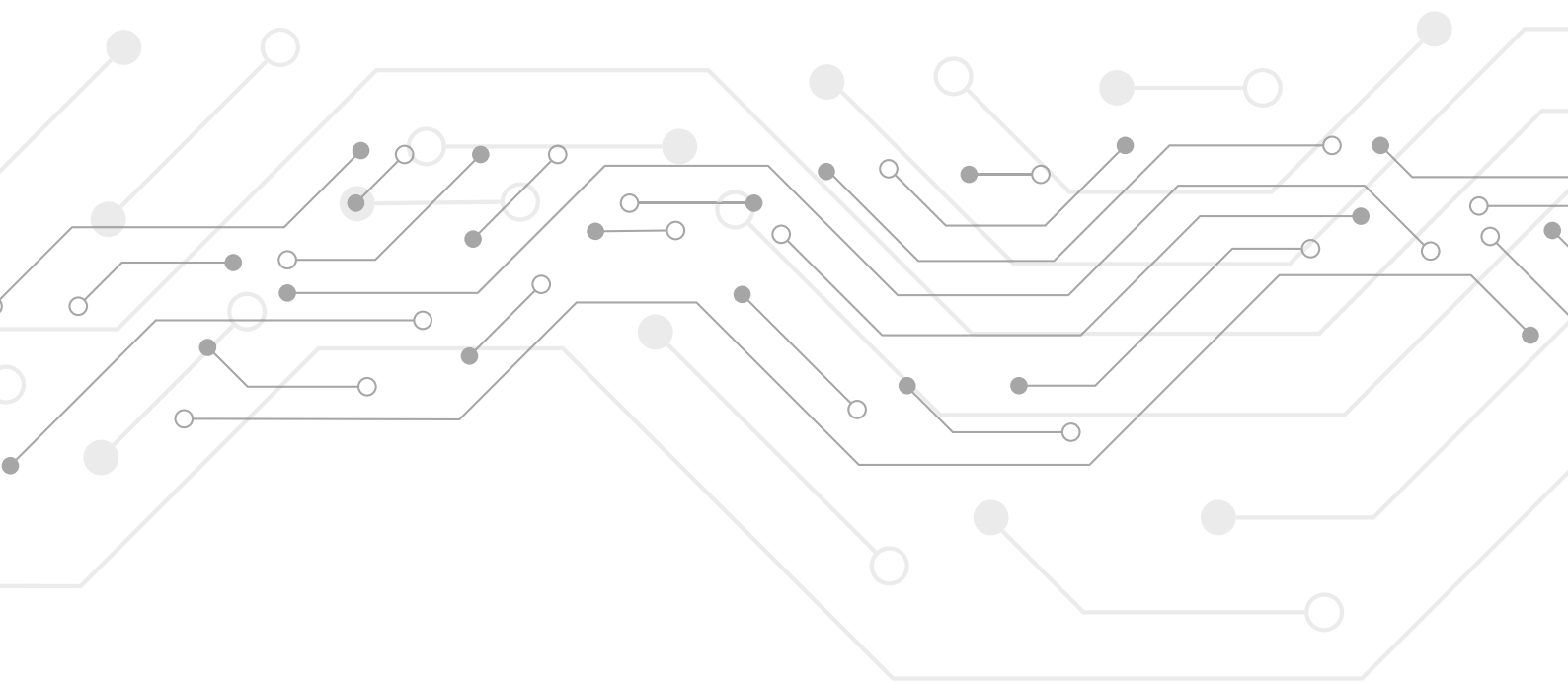
Ingeus, in partnership with statutory partners in Staffordshire, set out to develop a ground-breaking new community-facing service which aimed to:

- Raise awareness of the issue of domestic abuse with the general public as well as within different professions.
- Greatly increase the capacity to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse, especially on an early intervention basis.
- Similarly, greatly increase the capacity of services to support survivors of domestic abuse.
- Create better links between perpetrator and survivor services.
- Change the discourse around domestic abuse to recognise its prevalence in society and encourage more perpetrators to recognise their behaviour and seek help to change it.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, it is clear that the New Era service has developed an effective working model which has established the engagement of, and most importantly, significant numbers of referrals from the key frontline agencies tackling domestic abuse including the police, social services and schools.

Conclusion

Ingeus has acquired a considerable body of learning from its domestic abuse work. In addition to having a large number of highly qualified and experienced staff (facilitating domestic abuse groups and balancing the needs of perpetrators and victims requires a substantial and long-term investment in staff training and support), the organisation has developed further its ability to have a collaborative relationship with a statutory partner (as opposed to a contractor-provider one). Ingeus has advanced knowledge in the domestic abuse sector by its willingness to innovate and modernise by developing accessible and sharable digital media. The organisation's long-standing commitment to valuing lived experience meant that it was able to work as a full partner alongside HMPPS to co-produce content that was engaging and effective. Ingeus plans to take forward its knowledge and know-how on how to innovate while respecting the existing evidence base to further develop practice in the criminal justice field.



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