



SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Raging anger within me. An evaluation of a person centred counselling service for male victims and perpetrators of domestic violence at HMP Doncaster 2005-2006

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Published version

WILKINSON, K. and O'KEEFFE, C. (2006). Raging anger within me. An evaluation of a person centred counselling service for male victims and perpetrators of domestic violence at HMP Doncaster 2005-2006. Project Report. Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University.

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DRSACC



Bringing service to life

“Raging anger within me”

**An evaluation of a person centred counselling
service for male victims and perpetrators of
domestic violence at HMP Doncaster 2005- 2006**

November 2006

**Dr Katherine Wilkinson and
Caroline O'Keeffe**



**Sheffield
Hallam University**

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male victims and perpetrators of domestic violence at
HMP Doncaster 2005-2006

**Dr Katherine Wilkinson
and
Caroline O'Keeffe**

**Hallam Centre for Community Justice,
Sheffield Hallam University**

May 2007

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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of the following organisations and individuals that made this evaluation possible:

- ❖ Staff at the following prisons for their continued support: HMP Wolds, HMP Everthorpe, HMP Moorlands (closed) and especially HMP Doncaster, where we would like to thank the Referral staff who took time to speak to us
- ❖ We would particularly like to thank the following individuals who always made us feel very welcome at HMP Doncaster: Geraldine Smith, Steve Hewer, Vicky Read, Andrew Lees, Kerry Hemingway, Mandy O'Berg and Layla Thompson
- ❖ Staff at Barnsley and Rotherham Probation Offices
- ❖ Staff from DRSACC and DDVWP, particularly Caren Horsfield, Cheryl Taylor, Elaine Turner, Penny Flintoff and Dennis Atkin for all their continued assistance
- ❖ Members of the DoVeS Management/Steering Committee for their continued commitment to the Evaluation process
- ❖ We would also like to thank Ian Buczynski at Sheffield Hallam University for his technical support
- ❖ Most of all however we would like to say a big thank you to the men who spoke to us so honestly and openly during the Evaluation process. Special thanks to the service user author of the "Raging anger within me" quote which became the title for this report. The author was kind enough to present the written song lyrics to a member of the evaluation team. The song communicates the Service User's feelings of relief about the safe and supportive environment the DoVeS counselling service had provided for him to express all his previously hidden rage.

The core research team, who have been responsible for designing, conducting and co-ordinating this evaluation are as follows:

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Executive Summary

The Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre (DRSACC), a participating member of Doncaster Domestic Violence Working Party (DDVWP), was successful in securing funding from Lloyds TSB and the Tudor Trust to offer counselling support to inmates of HMP Doncaster. The specific objectives of the Doncaster Prison Counselling service (DoVeS), as detailed in funding documentation, have been evaluated along with process issues and counselling outcomes. The findings and recommendations are summarised as follows:

Key Findings:

Service Usage

- 84 men from HMP Doncaster submitted an application to access the DoVeS counselling service in its first year
- 69% of these men attended at least the first introductory session
- 3 men have completed the total 16 session counselling block
- The most common number of sessions attended was between 1 and 3, as 46% (n=39) of men were released or transferred before they could complete the anticipated block of 16 sessions
- 27% (n=23) of men declined the service having ascertained what attendance at counselling involved during the first introductory session. These decisions were taken in conjunction with the counsellor

Referral Process and Routes

- The initial main referral routes to DoVeS were from the CARAT team (30 men) and Resettlement staff (15 men)
- As the service has gathered momentum, referrals are increasingly being sourced from a wider range of departments within the Prison system
- Prison advertising has proved successful
- Referral processes were found to be effective, however need to remain client rather than staff led

Impact on Service Users engaging with the Service

Of the men accessing the service, 20 participated in an in-depth evaluation. These men reported:

- Improvements in their relationships, both inside and outside the prison environment
- Increased hopes for the future as a result of involvement with the service
- A more positive attitude towards their ability to change and improve their lives
- Feeling more equipped to explore and adapt their own behavioural patterns

- Feeling happier and more relaxed about themselves, which has had an effect on their self confidence

Key Recommendations:

Service Delivery:

- DoVeS counsellors have been successful in providing a person-centred but flexible approach to their clients, adapting to the individual needs of their clients
- The project has successfully established a counselling service in a Prison environment. DRSACC need to continue to ensure that DoVeS counsellors receive appropriate supervision, training and that their personal development needs are met
- One of the biggest challenges faced when setting up a counselling service in a Remand prison is maintaining client engagement. Resettlement staff and Counsellors have liaised closely during the first year of the project and continuing to do so will help to reduce the number of counselling sessions missed
- The working partnerships formed around the DoVeS service have had a positive effect on service delivery. Exploring mechanisms for ensuring men can attend counselling for longer will further enhance service delivery. Release dates could be considered at initial assessment by the counsellor
- Consider the provision of a 'dedicated Buddy' who can be made available to access men 'called up' for sessions on the days the counsellor is in the prison. This may assist in locating prisoners and therefore reduce the hours spent by the counsellor attending to this issue

DoVeS Steering Committee:

- The DoVeS management committee have succeeded in establishing an effective and inclusive partnership to oversee service delivery. In order to maintain this, the committee should continue to meet on a regular basis
- Building on this success, the DoVeS management committee may want to consider issues around systems and monitoring of providing information for clients' partners and ensuring post release support is provided. Further, a discussion concerning the possibilities/feasibility of collecting data to measure 're-offending' rates for men accessing the counselling service, may also enhance the project's provision
- The committee have monitored the DoVeS staffing situation carefully as they are aware that this may have an effect on the number of men wanting to access the service who are placed on a waiting list
- A discussion around the sustainability of this successful, but time limited project, may feed into the strategic direction this project adopts for the future. Will the partnership be seeking funding to continue/ expand the service?

Liaison Role Development:

- The Liaison Officer role, which has been developed in order to raise awareness of the service, has proved invaluable and should be continued and expanded
- The Liaison Officer role could be developed to promote appropriate domestic violence referral systems with potential Referral Staff (i.e. is sexual abuse domestic violence?)
- Liaison sessions with staff groups have proven to be highly effective and should be repeated regularly to ensure new staff are made aware of the service and focus on the need for confidentiality for Service Users within counselling sessions
- Service promotion has proved successful. The Liaison Officer could further consider promoting the DoVeS service in the prison induction process and possibly organise liaison meetings with wider prison staff, like Operations Managers on each house block
- The success of the Liaison Officer's role could be expanded to consider raising awareness of domestic violence issues with the general prison population

Preparation for the Second Year Evaluation:

- The evaluation data collection methods adopted have proved effective, however a de-brief session should be conducted between the evaluation team and Counsellors to refine the data collection methods for second year service delivery and evaluation purposes
- Building on the success of the first year of the DoVeS service delivery, the DoVeS steering committee may consider reviewing the feasibility of collecting evaluation data for original objectives of the project (post release support and effects on offending behaviour). This can be conducted in partnership with the evaluation team
- The DoVeS partners may want to consider the inclusion of a 'control group' in the second year evaluation to contrast 'changes' in those men accessing counselling service and those not accessing the service

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background to DoVeS - HMP Doncaster Counselling Service

The Doncaster Domestic Violence Forum, formed in 1992, comprises practitioners from both the voluntary and statutory sectors. Since 1995 it has been known as the Doncaster Domestic Violence Working Party (DDVWP), a multi agency group who adopt a holistic approach to the issue of domestic violence¹ and whose unified purpose is:

- To establish and maintain a system of networking between agencies
- To raise awareness and comment on domestic violence issues
- To be proactive in encouraging policy development around the issue of domestic violence
- To offer support to agencies or individuals working with victims of domestic violence.

Due to the particular interests of some key members, the DDVWP developed a concern with the issue of domestic violence among the prison population. Specifically, a Senior Probation Officer who ran an anti-bullying programme at HMP Moorlands conducted a survey at the prison which revealed that some 80% of the male prison population had experience of domestic violence as either victims or perpetrators and approached DDVWP with this concern.

The idea was formed to develop a counselling service in a local male prison to help address this considerable problem. DDVWP approached their long established partners from Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre (DRSACC) in order to help facilitate this work. DRSACC became a registered charity in 1986 and has grown into a full time professional service for anyone who has experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives. DRSACC works within the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy ethical framework. DRSACC also aims to educate, conduct research and raise awareness of the issues of sexual abuse in society to improve the treatment of survivors of abuse, and to reduce or eliminate its incidence. DRSACC currently employs 5 counsellors qualified to a minimum of Diploma in Counselling. Last year 413 people benefited directly from the service.

In 2004, the partnership between DDVWP and DRSACC was successful in securing funding from the Tudor Trust and, in 2005, Lloyds TSB and planned a three year programme with DRSACC as the lead applicant. The programme incorporates three elements:

- 1) Research
- 2) Counselling service delivery
- 3) Counselling service evaluation and sustainability

¹ The definition of domestic violence adopted by the DDVWP is 'the emotional, physical, sexual or mental abuse of a person by their partner, family members or someone with whom there is or has been a relationship'

The initial research element of the 3 year project was carried out by Community Consultations of Sheffield, who were commissioned by DDVWP to investigate the extent of provision for perpetrators and victims of Domestic Violence in the UK. This work was funded by Doncaster Community Safety Partnership. The resulting research report² highlights that current provision for male victims of domestic violence is almost non-existent, unlike perpetrator programmes for men. The report goes on to highlight that the DDVWP were therefore at liberty to address this situation in innovative ways as there is no successful model to emulate.

In order to undertake the second element of the programme, counselling service delivery, the partnership of DDVWP and DRSACC initially approached HMP Moorlands in 2003. However, due to the movement of staff who initially supported the introduction of the counselling service, it became increasingly difficult to negotiate project set up at HMP Moorlands. The partnership turned to HMP Doncaster to facilitate this counselling service which became known as DoVeS. This title was suggested by prisoners at HMP Doncaster to acknowledge the 'Domestic Violence Service' focus, but associated the acronym with doves to symbolise peace and non-aggression.

HMP Doncaster is a local remand prison opened in June 1994 and operated in the private sector by Premier Prison Services Ltd. The prison has an operational capacity of 1135, and is comprised of three house blocks, each house block has 4 wings and each wing can hold a maximum of 90 prisoners. The Health Care Centre has 29 beds for in-patients on one floor with a further 36 beds on the lower floor for enhanced workers.

The key objectives of the counselling service to be offered by DRSACC at HMP Doncaster, as detailed in tender documents, were as follows:

- To employ two counsellors to provide counselling for 90 male prisoners who are victims/perpetrators of domestic violence over the two year funding period
- To provide support for partners of this cohort of men
- To raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence among prison staff (e.g. sentence planning, resettlement and induction teams)
- To provide advice on support agencies post release
- To improve quality of life of service users, ultimately leading to a reduction in re-offending.

It was envisaged that the above objectives would be achieved through adherence to the underlying key principles of DDVWP, for example:

- Empowerment of victims
- Maximising accessibility of services available to them
- Adopting holistic approaches to support.

² 'Provision for male perpetrators and Victims of Domestic Violence in the United Kingdom' - www.dvforum.co.uk/about.html)

The DoVeS Prison Project Management Committee was formed to oversee counselling delivery with representatives from DDVWP, DRSACC and HMP Doncaster. A member of the commissioned evaluation team from Sheffield Hallam University was also represented on the Committee. Doncaster Victim Support and the Director of Services from the local Primary Care Trust also had an input in the early stages of the service.

The report presented here is the evaluation of the pilot counselling service and represents the third element of the overall project entitled 'evaluation and sustainability'.

1.2 Setting Up, Structure and Design of Service

Interested parties met in order to discuss the practicality of providing the counselling service at HMP Doncaster (see Appendix 1). Project start up (Service Delivery) began in November 2005 when Counsellors were recruited and Prison Induction undertaken. It was decided that quarterly management committee meetings would take place from March 2006 (see Appendix 2).

Two experienced counsellors employed by DRSACC were initially seconded to deliver the DoVeS counselling service. One of the two counsellors withdrew from the project after five months, having found the prison environment a challenge to work in. It was decided at DRSACC that the remaining counsellor would double up her hours to compensate and since March 2006 has attended the prison for two days a week. It was also agreed that service users would be offered an initial maximum of 16 counselling sessions which would take place once a week for one hour. However, it was acknowledged that any client could be offered more sessions if he felt he required them.

Both counsellors have worked for over five years with clients accessing the DRSACC who have experienced all types of abuse. However, DRSACC are an organisation that focuses specifically on survivors of sexual abuse rather than domestic abuse issues more generally. DRSACC counsellors operate from a person-centred approach to counselling as in their experience this model has proved most appropriate for working with their specific client group. The recruited DoVeS counsellors have attended a number of specific training courses concerned with working with adult survivors of abusive relationships. Both counsellors also attended a week long induction at HMP Doncaster that familiarised them with the prison environment and the existing rules and regulations. However, counsellors found it difficult to access practice literature concerning the experiences of counsellors working within the prison environment.

1.3 A Person Centred Approach

There is extensive academic and practitioner literature on the Person Centred Approach (PCA) to counselling (Bozarth, 1988; Mearns, 1994; Tolan, 2003; Rogers, 2004). For explanatory purposes, within the context of this report, the therapeutic approach of person centred counselling is based on the presence of 3 main conditions between counsellor and service user which are necessary and sufficient for therapeutic change. These are:

Condition 1: Unconditional positive regard

The counsellor accepts the client unconditionally and non-judgementally. The client is free to explore thoughts and feelings positive or negative without being rejected or condemned.

Condition 2: Empathic understanding

The counsellor accurately understands the client's thoughts, feelings and meanings from the client's perspective.

Condition 3: Congruence

Congruence is achieved where the counsellor is authentic and genuine. There is no air of authority or hidden knowledge.

From the person-centred approach, if these three core conditions are met, this will enable the client to develop and grow in their own way. The PSA to counselling can be contrasted with Cognitive Behavioural approaches to counselling, which have generally proved more popular in institutional contexts, as Cognitive Behavioural Therapies (CBT) focus on monitoring and managing thinking patterns. This counselling focuses on reducing negative thinking and changing the content of thoughts. Behavioural Counselling focuses on what actions the client takes, what rewards are in place that encourages the client to act a certain way and what unpleasant consequences prevent the client from behaving in other ways. In this way, CBT approaches to counselling include goal setting and planning which are determined primarily by the therapist rather than the client and is focused on managing, rather than understanding a person's behaviour.

The PSA approach aims to facilitate the strengthening and expansion of the client's identity which results in the client thinking and acting independently. In this way, a person centred counselling environment is created which is characterised by trust, confidentiality and safety, where clients encounter *themselves*. A person centred counselling approach treats the client as the expert in their own lives and supports clients to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. These underpinning elements of the Person Centred Approach (PCA) formed the basis from which the Evaluation strategy's design and delivery were developed.

1.4 Aim of the Evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is to provide a rigorous and 'user friendly' assessment of the extent to which the counselling service at HMP Doncaster has met its aims and objectives using a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches³.

³ Qualitative data is rich in detail and description, usually in a textual or narrative format and is difficult to express in numerical terms. Quantitative data can be expressed in numerical terms, counted, or compared on a scale.

1.5 Objectives of the Evaluation

- To provide information on the progress made towards objectives as outlined in tender documents
- To identify what worked well and what did not work so well (in terms of both what was done (outputs) and how it was done (processes))
- To identify and assess the effectiveness of steps taken to address any problems encountered
- To provide information on the extent to which the counselling service has met the needs of the target group
- To document progress of service users and the impact of counselling on different areas of their lives
- Monitor uptake of the service
- To assist with the planning of future projects

The evaluation contains two main components:-

- i) process evaluation
- ii) outcome and impact evaluation

1.5.1 Process Evaluation

Understanding process was a key feature of the evaluation of the programme. The process evaluation aimed to gain an understanding of the project's strategic framework, decisions, structures and approaches. This element of the evaluation was on-going throughout the duration of the programme and allowed for an understanding of the critical factors and mechanisms, which shaped the delivery, and outcomes of the counselling service, particularly those issues pertinent to providing a counselling service in a prison environment and the challenges inherent within that. In summary, it sought to answer the following questions:

- How effective has the partnership been in delivering the intended service?
- What are the organisational processes which have supported/hindered achievement of the counselling service?
- What has been the level of stakeholder engagement and input into the service?
- To what extent have collaborative and consultative working practices been achieved between stakeholders?
- To what extent has partnership and co-operation with the prison authority been achieved?
- What is the potential for replication of the counselling service across the prison estate?

1.5.2 Outcome and Impact Evaluation

This element of the evaluation sought to examine the 'success' of the initiatives adopted in addition to assessing the suitability and feasibility of chosen approaches for male prisoners. The outcome and impact evaluation sought answers to the following questions:-

- What has been the take-up of the service? Has the counselling service met its target of users engaged? What is the profile of men accessing services?
- What level of 'drop out' has the counselling service encountered? What are the reasons for this? How has this been addressed?
- What have been the main disclosure and referral routes for service users?
- How accessible has the programme been for service users?
- How many sessions have been attended by service users?
- How many sessions have been missed? Reasons for non attendance?
- In what ways (if any) has attending the counselling service benefited the target group (e.g. increased hope for the future, increased empowerment, improvement in relationships, self concept etc)?
- What movement/progress have service users shown regarding the above, during their involvement with the service?
- What are the perceived benefits/disadvantages of embarking upon the programme (from the perspectives of service users, prison staff and counsellors)?
- What impact has engagement with the service had on the behaviour and morale of service users?
- What are the perceived benefits/disadvantages of the specific approaches adopted (from the perspectives of service users, prison staff and counsellors)?

Throughout all phases of the evaluation an action research methodology was adopted which was responsive to the needs of stakeholders. This was our preferred approach as action methods provide a continual linking of research with practice and enables evaluators, researchers and stakeholders to learn from each other through a cycle of planning, action and reflection. In this sense, action methods can be responsive to situations in a way that many other research methods cannot be. On-going dialogue, participation and joint decision-making were also a key feature of our approach to evaluation.

1.6 Stakeholders in the Evaluation

- Service Users
- DRSACC Management Committee
- DRSACC Working/Task Groups
- DDVWP
- Doncaster Prison staff
- Project staff (e.g. counsellors)
- Prison health networks
- Domestic Violence Forums in England and Wales
- Prison Service Resettlement Teams
- Home Office Policing and Crime Reduction Group
- Funders (Lloyds TSB and Tudor Trust)
- Policy makers in a variety of fields

Chapter Two: Methodology

2.1 Methodology

Where possible the evaluation design aimed to adhere to a humanistic and person centred framework so as to be consistent with the person centred approach to counselling delivery and also the principles of empowerment which are central to the ethos of both DDVWP and DRSACC.

As previously mentioned, the evaluation includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. An important part of the evaluation was to assess whether change/progress had occurred among service users therefore it was important that data was collected from service users at two different time points. Thus the evaluator had contact with service users as follows:

- As close as possible to the start of engagement with the counselling service (entry)
- As close as possible to the completion of engagement with the counselling service (exit)

This approach was adopted in order to effectively compare and reflect on any shifts or changes in service users' attitudes to counselling and any effects they felt the counselling had had on their lives⁴. At each time point the following data collection techniques were utilised:

- Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted exploring experiences and perceptions of the service (see Appendix 3)
- Quantitative data was captured by using a specially designed scale, where respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with statements about how they felt about the lives/selves e.g. 'I respect myself' (see Appendix 3)

A semi structured interview guide was designed in conjunction with DRSACC (see Appendix 3) and questions were constructed around certain topic areas, as follows:

- Accessing the counselling service and referral routes
- Appropriateness of the counselling environment
- Expectations and experiences of counselling
- Perceived impact of counselling on affecting personal change
- Perceptions about the effectiveness of counselling received

⁴ In reality it proved somewhat difficult to have both entry and exit contact with service users. This is explored further in a later section

2.2 Scale Design and Delivery

The scale was designed in conjunction with counsellors to ensure it was as 'user-friendly' as possible and also appropriate for the client group. The scale was delivered on a one-to-one basis by the evaluator. All statements were read aloud to service users by the evaluator as no assumptions were made about their literacy level. The statements were organised in 5 separate, but inter-related sections:

- Feelings about 'self'
- Relationships with others
- Abilities to change and/or improve life
- Behavioural change
- Attitudes to re-offending

An example from the scale can be seen below:



In line with Sheffield Hallam University's (SHU) commitment to co-operative inquiry and empowering evaluation methods this approach to data collection was fully interactive:

- All statements were read aloud by the evaluator to ensure literacy problems were accounted for
- Service users were encouraged to take the pen themselves and identify their position on the continuum
- To reduce the effects of social desirability management, service users were informed that the evaluator wanted to hear what was both good and bad about the counselling service so the service could be improved
- Throughout the process service users were encouraged to view themselves as experts on their own lives
- Throughout the process service users were encouraged to elaborate on their responses to the statements and also to reflect upon progress made as a result of participation in counselling.

Although crude in design, asking service users to 'rate' their feelings in this manner at different time points offers the evaluator some indication of change/progress in service users. This quantitative data also complements and verifies the qualitative data obtained (as can be seen in Chapter 5).

2.3 Additional Data Collection

In addition to the data collection methods outlined above, a variety of documentation and information resources were used/analysed for evaluation purposes, as follows:

- DRSACC client contact sheets (see Appendix 4)
- Client Log (DRSACC)
- Weekly log sheets (DRSACC)
- Lloyds TSB Foundation Bid
- Proposal documents
- Minutes of meetings Doncaster Prison Project
- Individual Prison Project Logs (DRSACC)
- DRSACC information sheets
- Advertising for DoVeS counselling service (designed by prisoners on IT course)
- HMP and YOI Doncaster Data protection information

Finally, in depth semi structured interviews were also conducted with staff to ensure a 'rounded' evaluation which would capture service provider as well as service user perspectives:

| Interviewee | Date |
|--|----------------------------------|
| DRSACC Development Officer | March 2006 |
| DRSACC Counsellor 1 | February 2006 and September 2006 |
| DRSACC Counsellor 2 | February 2006 |
| Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator HMP Doncaster | February 2006 and September 2006 |
| Assistant Director of Resettlement HMP Doncaster | February 2006 |
| DDVWP Domestic Violence Manager | December 2005 |
| DRSACC Liaison Officer | September 2006 |
| Member of CARAT team | August 2006 |
| Member of In Reach team | September 2006 |
| Member of Psychology team | September 2006 |
| Chaplaincy representative | September 2006 |
| Member of Wing Staff | September 2006 |
| Member of Sentence Planning | September 2006 |

2.4 Issues of Access and Ethics

Service users were selected randomly to participate in the evaluation. Participation was dependent simply upon which service users were accessing counselling on the day which the evaluator visited the prison and also on a willingness on the part of the service user to be involved. As already mentioned, once a service user was recruited to the evaluation an 'entry' interview (involving both semi structured interview and scale completion) would take place and where possible an 'exit' interview would also be conducted. In total, 45 interviews were conducted with men for evaluation purposes. Of these, 20 were entry interviews and 20 were exit interviews with

the same men. The remaining 5 interviews are entry interviews only as the men were released and could not be traced by the evaluation team. The majority of interviews were conducted at HMP Doncaster. However because it proved difficult to access service users for exit interviews due to the unstable nature of the prison population, the evaluator also conducted several exit interviews at the following venues once the service user had left Doncaster prison:

- Barnsley probation office
- Rotherham probation office
- HMP Wolds
- HMP Everthorpe
- HMP Moorlands (closed)

Service user participation in the evaluation occurred only with the express permission of participants. On induction to the service the counsellor would ask the service user if he was willing to participate. He was able to accept or decline the request with assurance that either decision would in no way impact upon the counselling received. At the start of evaluation interviews service users were made aware of the nature of the evaluation and the ways in which the information would be used. Service users were informed of the evaluation's anticipated consequences and were assured anonymity in the writing up and dissemination. Just one service user, having heard the explanation of the evaluation, declined to continue with the interview.

All interviews were recorded with the permission of the service user. The recordings were transcribed and then erased from the mini-disc. The transcriptions were numbered to ensure anonymity and the scale part of the interview is kept in secure storage at the University.

Interviewees were given the opportunity to reflect on the evaluation process at the end of interviews and asked if they had anything to add and/or if they felt the interviewer had left any important questions unasked.

Interviews undertaken with staff from DDVWP, DRSACC, referral staff and representatives of the prison authority were also recorded, transcribed and stored in the same way. For a more detailed record of evaluation activities, see Appendix 5.

2.5 Analysis of Interview Data

All semi-structured interview data (both service user and staff interviews) was analysed using a thematic framework approach. This involved working through a number of distinct although interconnected phrases (familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing and coding, mapping and interpretation) in order to make sense of the data. This is the preferred method of data analysis as it is a system which is based entirely in the original accounts of those studied. The qualitative analysis was an interactive process between two members of the evaluation team and involved ongoing discussion and debate throughout all stages, particularly in relation to agreeing key themes. This approach is particularly effective as it provides a

'checking mechanism' for the interpretation of data, thus adding to the validity of the results.

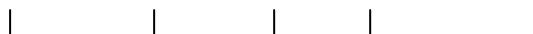
2.6 Analysis of Scale Data

Both SHU and DRSACC staff were resistant to employing evaluation data collection techniques that included numbered or boxed ranges and recognise that such small numbers require cautious interpretation. It was felt that the client group may find attempting to code their experiences with numbers as alienating and confusing. These reservations were shared by representatives of HMP Doncaster. An example of the continuum measure constructed jointly by SHU and DRSACC staff used in the evaluation interview sheet is provided below:

The important people in my life are happy

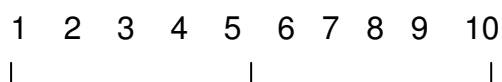
Strongly disagree

Strongly agree



At the entry interview, men were given a series of 23 simple statements (such as the one above) and were asked to mark the scale to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with the statements using a blue pen. The men were asked to think about how they felt about the statement over the last month or so, not just how they felt that day. At the exit interview, on average 8 weeks later, the same men were asked to identify their feelings over the previous month or so about the statements on the scales again, this time with a red pen.

These two sets of ratings (marked with a blue/red pen) were quantified using a simple numeric 10-point scale⁵, as reproduced below, and then analysed.



The ratings from of each individual man's entry and exit interview were entered into Microsoft Excel, according to the numbered statements. Averages were calculated for each man at entry and exit and for each statement at entry and exit. This data was aggregated in order to give an indication of average differences, or lack of them, across the 20 men between the two interview points. The extracted data was used to produce a visual representation of change between the two time points. The findings from these analyses can be found in Chapter Five.

⁵ The numeric data taken from seven of the statements (numbers 4, 6, 11, 16, 17, 20 and 21), which had a negative rating (for example: statement number 4: 'I feel I do **not** have much to be proud of') were reversed to allow for a positive rating that could be corresponded with the rest of the statement findings.

Chapter Three: Service Usage

3.1 Service Usage

The service user data presented in this report is generated from two populations accessing the DoVeS counselling service, as detailed below:

- Group One - total number of men submitting applications to access the service (n=84)
- Group Two – a sub sample of the above group who participated in the in-depth evaluation (n=20)

The **Group One** data presented in this chapter aims to:

- Present an overall profile of the men accessing the service
- Describe the impact of the prison regime on service usage
- Supply details of the number of counselling session attended

The data in this section is usually expressed as a percentage along with the actual number of men usually in brackets (n=). However where the number of men being discussed is very small, just the actual number of men is shown.

3.2 Demographics of Men Submitting Applications to Access DoVeS

Between September 2005 and September 2006, 84 men from HMP Doncaster put in applications to see the DoVeS counselling service. An original objective for the service was to engage 90 men over the two year funding period so based on first year activity we can assume that this expectation will be surpassed. However, as demonstrated later, there are significant barriers to keeping men engaged in the service for the long term (i.e. to complete the intended block of 16 sessions).

The target audience for the service delivery in the original tender documents estimated that their service would reach the following diversity categories of men:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| • White British | 65 |
| • Mixed White and Black Caribbean | 5 |
| • Mixed White and Asian | 5 |
| • Asian or Asian British Indian | 5 |
| • Asian or Asian British Pakistani | 5 |
| • Black Caribbean | 10 |
| • Black African | 3 |
| • Chinese or Chinese British | 2 |

The minority ethnic prison population data from HMP Doncaster is 80% (n=865) white, 9% (n=100) black, 8% (n= 85) Asian, and 3% (37) identified themselves as 'other'. Men who accessed the DoVeS counselling service were mainly young and white (see Fig: 1.1 and 1.2). Therefore although the estimates for the original service take up were not wholly met in terms of

diversity, the men accessing the service are relatively representative of the whole of the prison population.

Fig: 1.1 Age of men accessing DoVeS service

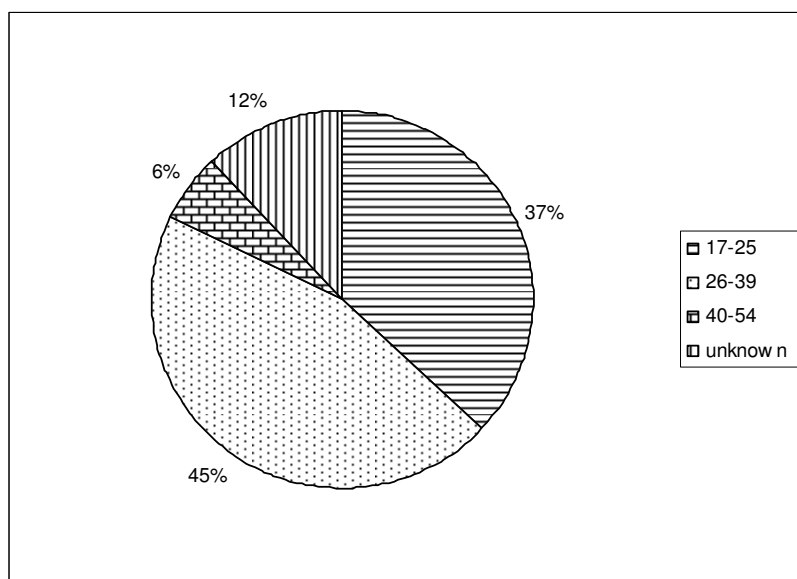
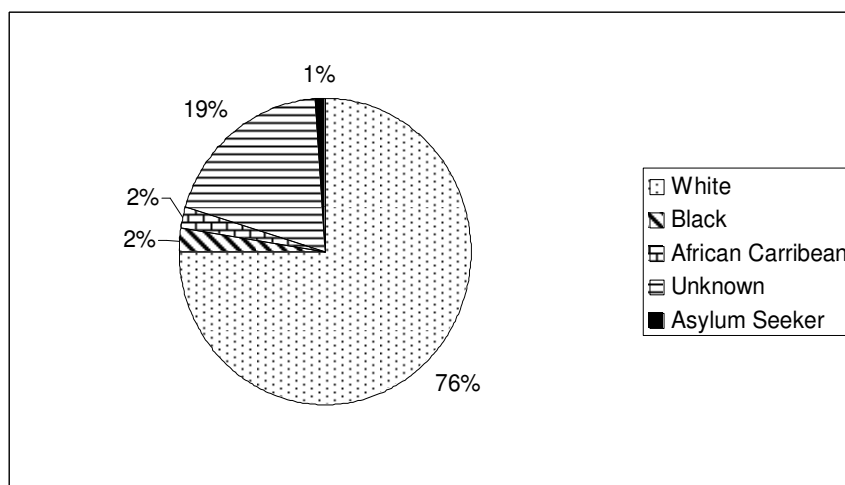


Fig: 1.2 Ethnic origins of men accessing DoVeS



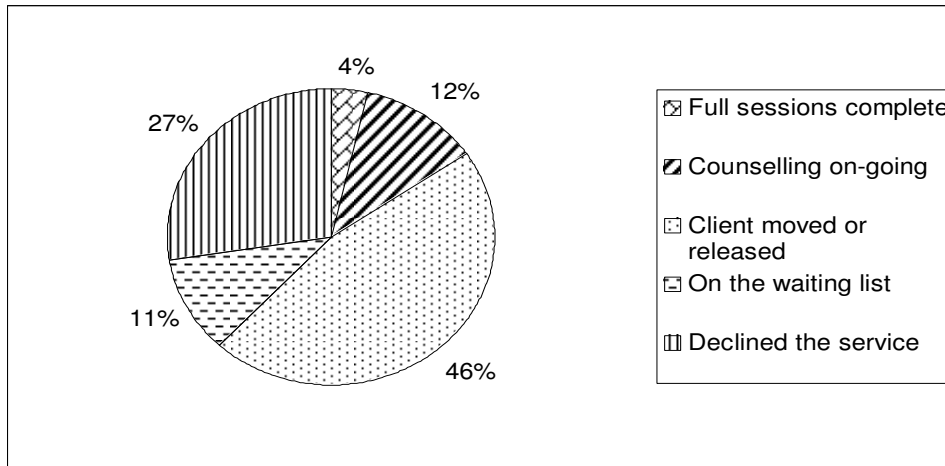
HMP Doncaster generally runs close to its maximum capacity of 1,135 men (1,087 in September 2006). Therefore the proportion of men accessing the service is 8% of the whole prison population (in September 2006). This data may prove valuable when compared with year two figures of the service delivery uptake. There is no data to illustrate the age range of the total population of men at HMP Doncaster.

3.3 Profile of Men's Engagement with DoVeS

As detailed in Fig: 1.3, just 4% of men (n=3) completed the full block of sessions agreed, 12% (n=4) are still attending the counselling service and 11% (n=9) were on the waiting list at the time of writing. 27% (n=23) declined the counselling service after attending at least one session (the reasons given

for this are detailed later). A significant number of men putting in applications to access the counselling service (46%, n=39) had their attempts impeded by 'regime issues' within the prison system, thus were unable to attend a full 'block' of sessions, this is discussed further below.

Fig: 1.3 Engagement with DoVeS service

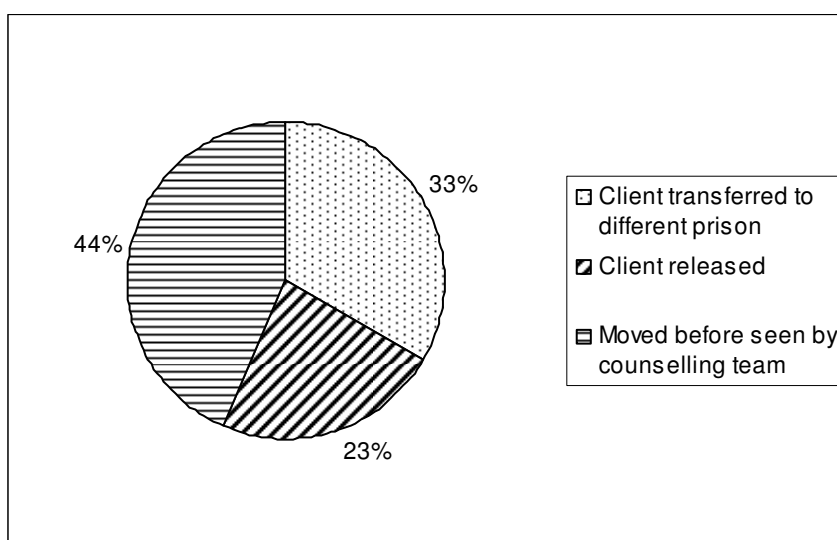


3.4 Service Users and Regime Issues

As can be seen in Fig 1.4 below, of the 46% (n=39) of men who were unable to complete a full block of sessions due to 'regime issues', 23% (n=9) were released from custody and 33% (n=13) were moved to different locations across the prison estate during their engagement in counselling.

A further 44% (n=17) of these men were moved away from HMP Doncaster before the counselling team saw them for the first introductory session.

Fig: 1.4 Regime issues



As HMP Doncaster is a remand prison these types of movements are not unusual, however this does raise questions regarding the effective

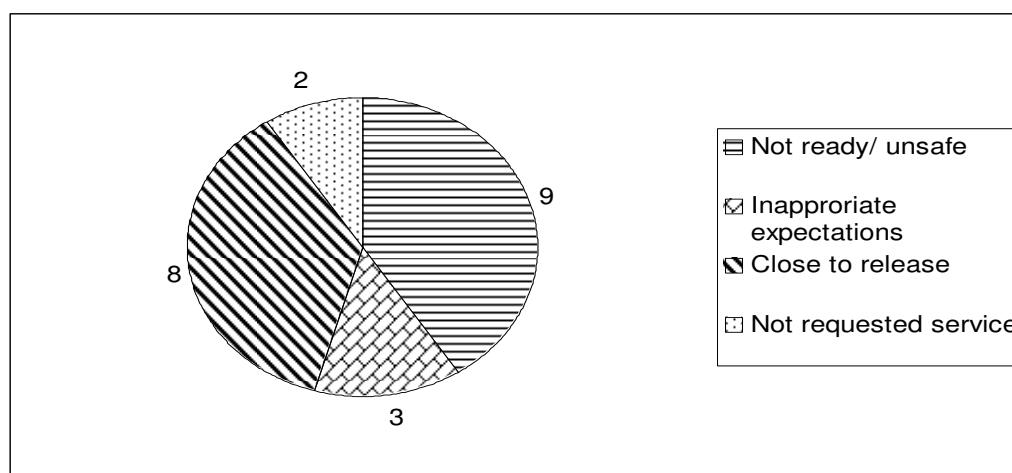
engagement of clients in the counselling service if their stay is not of a duration where a counselling relationship can be established or maintained.

3.5 Men Declining the Counselling Service

27% (n=23) of men submitting applications to access the service declined counselling after at least one session (see Fig: 1.3 on previous page). Of these 23 men, 11 men attended only the introductory session. Having gained more details of what the counselling involved (in conjunction with the counsellor) these men decided that the service was 'not for them'. The Counsellors felt that these sessions were still worth while as these men were provided with what was often their first exposure to finding out what counselling was. The remaining 13 men took longer to come to this decision (attending between 2 and 4 sessions). In this way, attendance at over 4 sessions may be taken as indicative of a commitment to the counselling service.

Of the men declining the service (n=23), 9 stated they felt that they were not ready to open up to the counsellor, some felt prison was also not an environment they felt safe enough to do so (see Fig: 1.5). Of these 9 men, 1 man was excluded from the counselling as staff members felt there was a safety issue and deemed him unready to access the service until this was addressed.

Fig: 1.5 Men Declining Counselling Service



A further 8 men felt they did not want to begin counselling sessions so near to their release dates, these men were offered contact details of other counselling services in their area. 3 men declined the service as their expectations of what the service could do for them were not met. For example, 1 had expected attendance to strengthen his application of access to his children, another, to 'look good' on their case report (see Fig: 1.5).

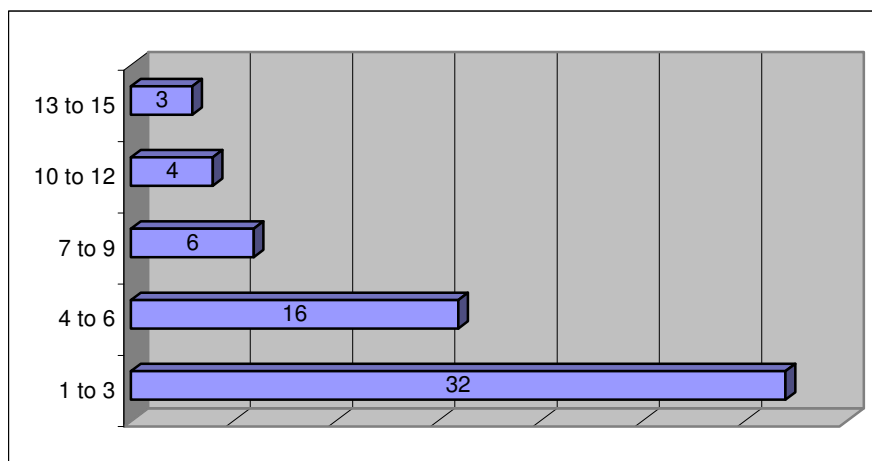
A further 3 men stated they were expecting the counselling to be Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and admitted to preferring the 'goal setting' elements of that counselling model as opposed to a person centred approach. 2 men claimed they had not asked to access the service (see Fig: 1.5). One

gentleman claimed someone must have filled the form in for him and was confused as to why they'd thought he needed counselling, the other that he had mentioned that he'd been a victim of domestic violence, but that he had not requested the service. This situation raises questions regarding the autonomy of potential service users and their referral routes into the counselling service (see Chapter Four).

3.6 Sessions Attended

Of the 84 men submitting applications to access DoVeS, 58 (69%) men attended at least one counselling session (exclusions from 84 total: 17 men transferred before counselling team could access them and the 9 men on the waiting list, as both groups have therefore received no sessions). As shown in Fig: 1.6 the most common number of sessions attended by men was 1-3, (32), the least common number of sessions was 13-15 (3).

Fig: 1.6 Sessions attended



This chapter has outlined the service usage details of the 84 men accessing the DoVeS counselling service at HMP Doncaster between September 2005 and September 2006.

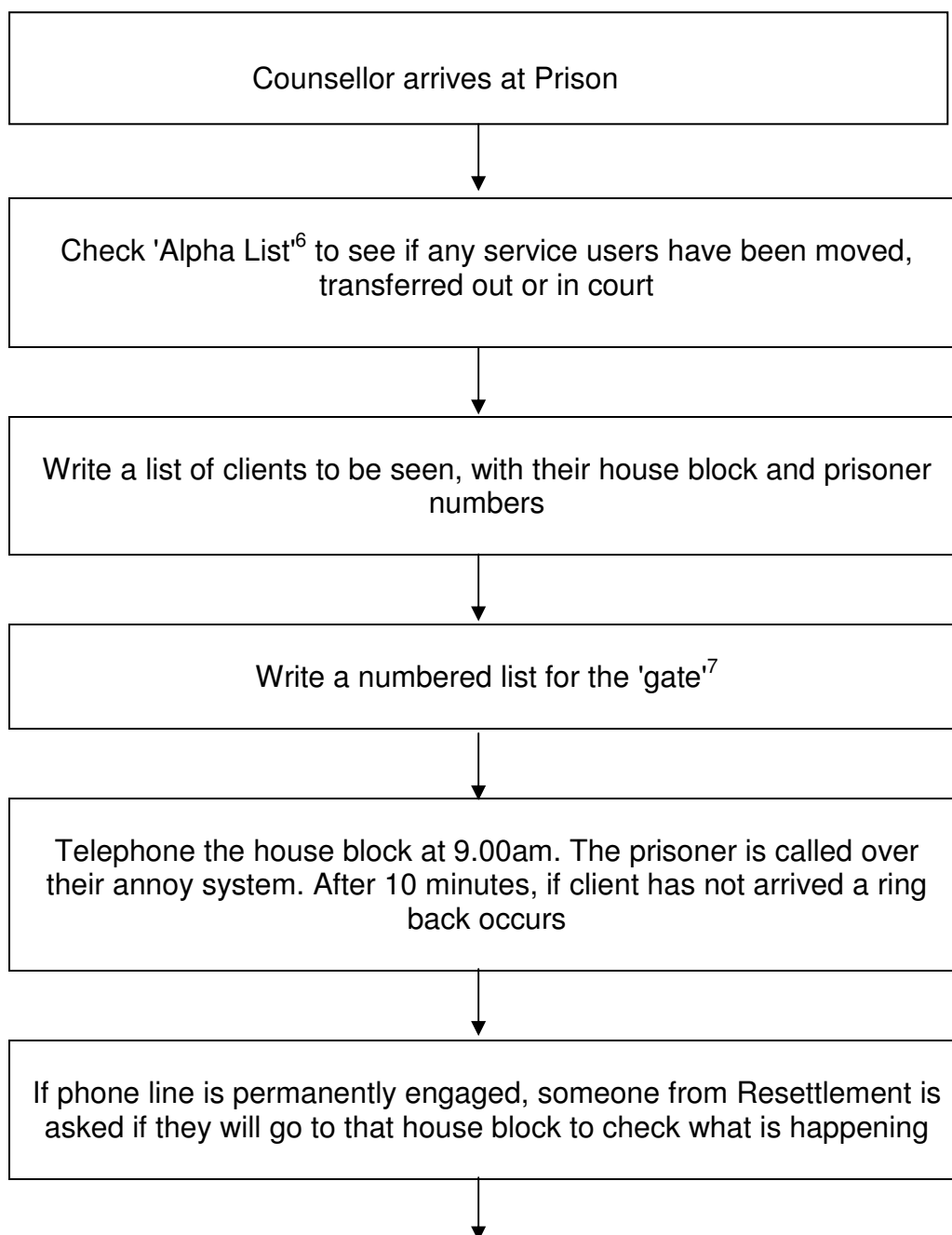
Chapter Four: Processes and Challenges

4.1 Counselling in a Prison Environment: Processes and Challenges

Having outlined service usage in the previous section, this section offers an insight into operational issues of the service including an examination of the processes and challenges pertinent to delivering a counselling service within a prison environment.

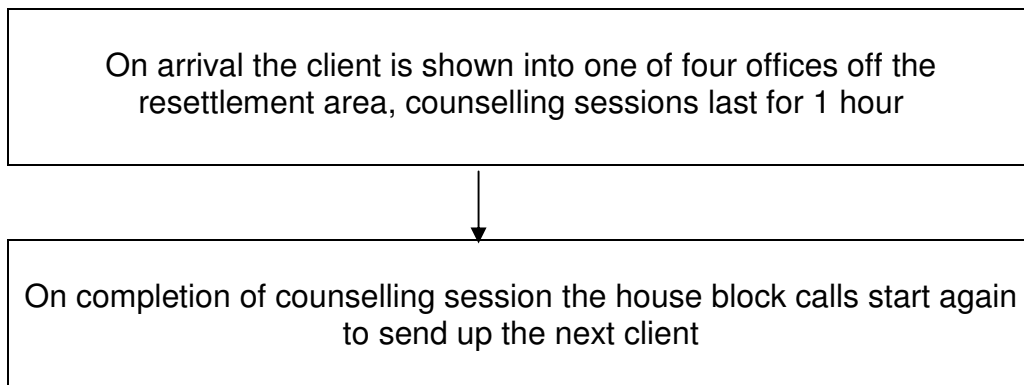
4.1.1 Day to Day Service Delivery

The diagram below provides the reader with a 'snap-shot' of the day-to-day delivery of the service from the counsellors perspective.



⁶ The 'Alpha List' is a list of all men at HMP Doncaster which is reviewed daily

⁷ The 'gate' is a security check point between house block corridor and resettlement suite

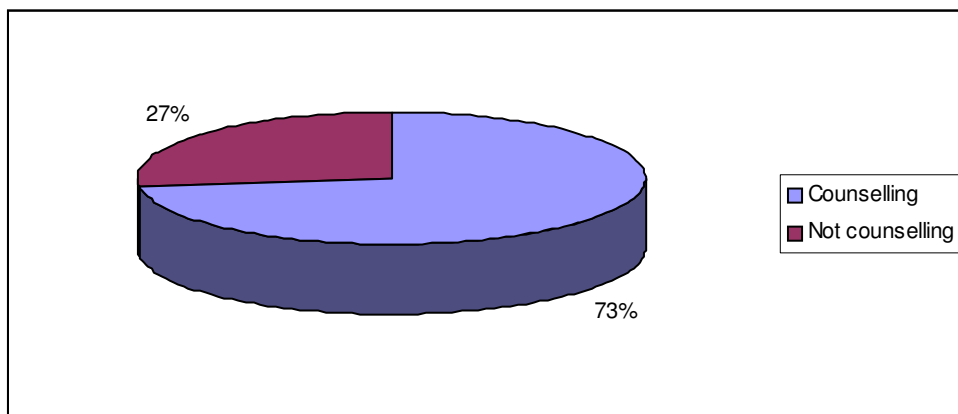


There may be added difficulties when ‘calling up’ a prisoner to attend counselling, such as if the client is on a suicide watch. In these circumstances, attendance at counselling is dependent upon the availability of a Prison Officer to escort service users to the resettlement suite. Additionally, the daily prison regime involves prisoners being ‘locked down’ (in their house blocks) between 11.30am until 12.15pm and at these times the counsellor can only access clients in an emergency.

4.2 Unattended Sessions

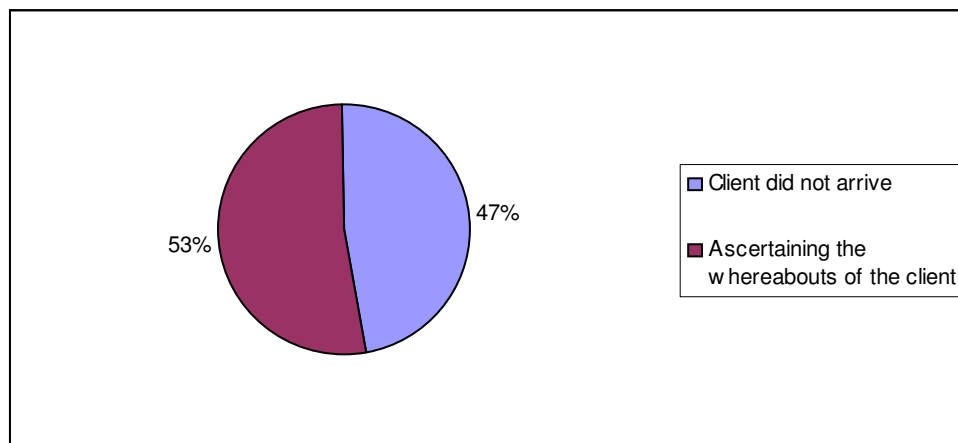
An examination of the weekly log sheet completed by counsellors has revealed that between 16th November 2005 and 27th September 2006, the DoVeS counsellors have spent a total of 321 hours available for counselling at HMP Doncaster. Of the total hours spent at the prison over this time period, the team have been counselling for 73% (233 hours) of that time, with 27% of their time (88 hours) not being utilised for counselling.

Fig: 1.7 Activities of the counsellor



Out of the 88 hours, 41 hours (47% of ‘non counselling hours’) was a result of clients not arriving for their appointment, thus the counsellors were left with many wasted waiting hours (see Fig: 1.8). The remaining 47 hours (53% of non-counselling time) was spent attempting to ascertain the whereabouts of the client. In these instances, clients were found to have been attending education, the gym, in segregation, in upper health care or on visits.

Fig: 1.8 Counsellors non-counselling time



This situation raises questions concerning the priority given to attending the counselling service amongst other activities in the prison environment, for both the prison regime and the clients. Indeed, initially counsellors found this situation quite difficult:

'It does feel sometimes that there is a little bit of resistance or what it is maybe it's just not being informed enough, but it feels like sometimes we are not very high on the priority list. So I might have made arrangements to see a prisoner in the afternoon and they've said - "you're doing nothing - I'll send for him now". So it feels like they sometimes don't quite get it' (Counsellor)

Counsellors however stated more recently that they increasingly viewed this situation as indicative of working within the prison regime:

'I think we were getting a little bit dispirited when (counsellor's name) client was transferred out. Then the other client who was 'brought up' at the wrong time (am instead of pm), actually decided he didn't feel safe enough to start while he was in prison, I mean he may change his mind later, but at the time he didn't so...we sat there for 2 weeks with 2 counsellors having freed up a whole day each - it was frustrating' (DRSACC Development Co-ordinator)

'You have to have an acceptance of the system and from other things I've read about other counsellors I feel quite happy with what's set up here' (Counsellor)

Indeed, as mentioned above, the counsellor felt that experiencing these things was good for her building a rapport with potential clients as:

'its not good just going in and saying I'm going in for an afternoon to see two clients...you need to go in, hang around and become part of that prison and just getting to know all the little things that go on with the prison, the prisoners experience, because that's what, it's almost like having an alliance with the prisoner in their world' (Counsellor)

Unattended counselling sessions have proved to be a significant barrier to the counsellor being able to use their time at the prison constructively. A further issue arises when service users near their release date, as counselling seems to become less of a priority and sometimes sessions can be missed. This issue could be used as a learning point to be considered by counsellors when organising sessions with clients who are near their release date. However it has been acknowledged by the DoVeS team that when working in the prison environment one has to be flexible and work within the confines of such a particular environment. The DoVeS committee meetings have attempted to address these issues, however an appropriate and realistic system that will work in this environment has yet to be found.

4.3 Promotion of the Service

Before the service start-up men attending an IT course in Education were asked to design poster advertising for the counselling service. It was these men that came up with the DoVeS title. These posters were placed around the prison (see Appendix 6). The service was also advertised on the prisons internal Intel TV and radio network. In order to increase awareness of the service among prison staff, thus promoting referrals, a significant amount of 'groundwork' has been undertaken. Before service start up Resettlement staff made informal approaches to all the departments at the prison to tell them about the service. DRSACC staff attended various staff group meetings to raise awareness of the service. In addition, as the service has progressed it has become increasingly apparent that liaison work between DoVeS and wider prison networks is crucial to the future success of the service. With this in mind a Liaison Worker role was created.

4.4 Liaison Role

From the meeting mentioned above, it was decided that the advertising and raising awareness of the service needed to be reviewed:

'I think a lot more training and awareness raising for the staff as a whole would help, the ones higher up that have been involved in the process have a clear idea about what we are trying to do and seem very supportive, but that doesn't appear to have filtered down as yet'
(Counsellor).

DRSACC staff met with the Assistant Director of Resettlement at this time to discuss recruitment and advertising. At this time it was decided that it would be useful to develop a Liaison Officer role in order to raise awareness of the counselling service within the prison. At the time of writing the Liaison Officer had delivered sessions to different departments within the prison (see Appendix 7).

The DRSACC Liaison Officer begins her session with prison staff with a brief overview of the project, DDVWP and DRSACC and provides a page of more details, like the website addresses of the organisations she has mentioned. Attention is then turned to *'just saying a little bit about the impact of neglect and abuse in childhood'* (Liaison Officer). In this way the Liaison Officer

functions to illustrate the connection between victims of abuse and their behaviour which, it is hoped, will increase staff members' sensitivity to disclosure.

'My hope would be that the sessions will help people to deal with more sensitivity to these issues, they would have much more awareness of how to handle this in a more appropriate way and then I suppose my hope would be that like the proverbial pebble dropped in the water, other staff would see and hear this, and my hope would be that this project would really set some waves going through the whole prison system' (Liaison Officer).

The Liaison Officer also underlines to Prison Staff the importance of men having agency within the referral process:

'I try and make it as clear as I can that some people will need your support and your help in doing this (accessing service) and they might even ask you to find out more or to put their name on the list. But I also underline that they make sure the person is asking them for that' (Liaison Officer).

Some of the referral staff interviewed stated that they found the liaison meetings very useful:

'It was great - it all really helped us get to know another service that is available here and how to set the referral process into action' (Referral Staff).

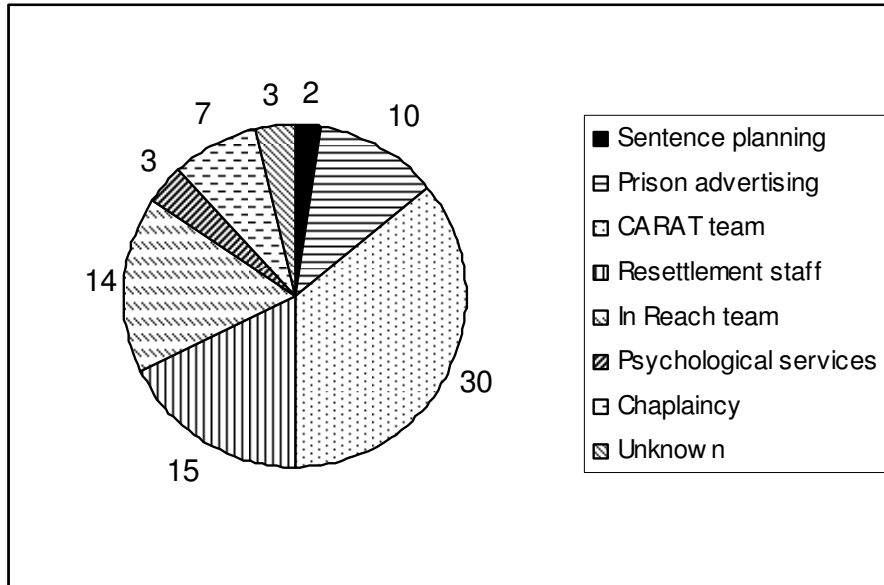
It was suggested however that these meetings needed to occur regularly as staff turnover was high in some prison departments. Referral staff also came up with some ideas that the Liaison Officer may take on board in terms of recruitment to the service:

'We have an induction session with every single man that comes through our doors. It wouldn't be difficult to get a slide in our power point presentation - you know just giving details of how to access the service' (Referral Staff).

4.5 Referral Routes

This evaluation has examined the referral routes to the DoVeS counselling service taken by the total 84 men accessing it (see Fig: 1.9).

Fig. 1.9 Referral routes of total accessing DoVeS



4.6 The Referral Process

It was decided at initial start up meetings between DRSACC and representatives of HMP Doncaster, that once signposted to the service, prospective service users would be encouraged to access the service themselves by filling in a general application (as opposed to someone doing this for them). This approach appeared to be in line with the focus on personal responsibility which is integral to the person-centred approach to counselling. It was agreed that a general application to resettlement should be submitted. However to ensure the DoVeS service was accessed rather than Resettlement generally, the application was made for the attention of a named member of the resettlement team. This process was entirely confidential.

Of the referral routes identified by the evaluation it is clear that all were well placed and appropriate to signpost prisoners to the DoVeS service:

| Service | Activities |
|---|---|
| CARAT (Counselling, Advice, Referral, Assessment and Through-care team) | Work with people with drug or alcohol problems |
| Community Resettlement Team | Assist in resettling prisoners once they are released (securing housing, employment, contact with Job Club etc) |
| In Reach Team | Form part of the prison's mental health team |
| Sentence Planning Team | Raise awareness of meaningful activities available within the prison |
| Chaplaincy | Generic duties and pastoral care |
| Psychological services | Range of services, including suicide and self harm prevention team (Assessment Care in Custody Team) |

As the service was set up specifically for those men who had experienced domestic violence, a disclosure of such experience would usually occur prior to referral. Disclosures of domestic violence were reported to occur in a variety of ways. Some staff members reported picking up on these kinds of issues during case reviews, assessments and through day-to-day contact with prison population. All the staff interviewed acknowledged that the service is for both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Indeed, many staff members acknowledged that although they categorised most of the men they saw as perpetrators of domestic violence, on reflection they saw domestic violence as a cycle:

'We see mostly perpetrators of domestic violence, but then having said that most of them were subject to some kind of abuse as a child anyway, so I suppose it's everybody really' (Referral Staff).

'Primarily perpetrators, but invariably if you talk to them it's been done to them anyway so it's a continuation of the cycle really' (Referral Staff).

A general concern was expressed that some working within the prison system may refer men to the counselling service considering it to be a quick fix for those men who disclosed:

'You don't automatically throw them to the counsellor and think that's going to cure it all because it's not for everybody, counselling isn't for the faint hearted prisoner because it's too difficult' (Referral Staff).

'The frustrating thing I find is that so quickly with any service that we offer if we don't get the immediate results well its not working and that's not actually the case (...) in effect what we are doing is trying to re educate' (Referral Staff).

However, some referral staff reflected that the counselling service could be employed as an effective crisis intervention with men, although two members of staff expressed reservations about the counselling service's ability to respond to a crisis, bearing in mind the DoVeS waiting list:

'Just thinking about the security situation - what are they going to do - if they are not getting any help and so on - therefore we are more likely to take them ourselves, even though we haven't got the skills, rather than leave them on a waiting list... it is hammered home - if somebody discloses you don't just leave it... otherwise it's quite life threatening especially in this cooped up type of place' (Referral Staff).

Staff reported that their approach to referral was adapted to the needs of the prisoner expressing an interest in the service. One staff member reflected that they did fill in an application form on behalf of the prisoner, but only when requested by him, as *'some of them can't read and write, so I don't argue if they ask'* (Referral Staff). The majority of referral staff stated that they simply sign-posted the DoVeS service and handed out an application form. One member of staff admitted they preferred to refer verbally:

'I refer, normally I usually just get on the phone, with his permission of course' (Referral Staff).

Some referral staff however saw the referral process as a more gradual process:

'If you say to someone "I think you need to go here" that doesn't work, what you have to do is you have to have a series of conversations. They've got to want to be there, and having identified that they are helping themselves. You just say "I think that's the most appropriate one and I was hoping you'd pick them" and then they get a big step forward - it's the encouragement that they need' (Referral Staff).

The relative benefits of encouraging agency in the men accessing the service, against being more directive about the referrals process is clearly as significant an issue as the use of directive vs. non-directive models of counselling.

4.7 Information Sharing

HMP Doncaster has a fluid policy on information sharing between separate prison departments. DRSACC however operate within the framework of confidentiality laid down by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). BACP endorsed confidentiality is not absolute (disclosure of harm to others is excluded) however HMP Doncaster requested the additional exclusion of disclosure of criminal acts clients have not been prosecuted for. While DRSACC staff have complied with this request, the counsellors have found that some prison staff have also expected DoVeS to comply with the prison's general policy of information sharing.

'Some want to be given feedback, so I'm trying very hard to avoid that, to steer clear of that. There is natural office banter, the type of stuff that perhaps we could expect, but some just can't understand why we can't share information with them' (Counsellor).

'I think they are a bit more used to sharing information. That is not the way we work - it's very much the clients choice as to whether he tells you he's coming or not' (Counsellor).

Prison referral staff felt that information sharing between services could be beneficial (and in some cases essential) in a number of ways. First in terms of safety and accountability:

'From the mental health point of view there are issues about whether a man needs watching overnight say, if they are being opened up by counselling' (Referral Staff).

'If they've been to see somebody and they've started to open up, they can often find it quite traumatic and then they've gone away and thought about it even more than sometimes, if they are still dealing with things - we need a heads up.' (Referral Staff).

Secondly, in terms of providing a more effective service to their client group:

'I understand the reasons why [information is not shared], but if it's somebody that stays on our caseload we really do need to know if somebody has been seen and how many times' (Referral Staff).

'Just, if they've cooperated with the DoVeS project or not, whether they've cooperated because that is useful information for now. We don't need to know the nuts and bolts I can understand why that information is kept confidential but if they're transferred to another prison, if they have not been cooperating then one of my recommendations maybe that I can put down that fact and save other people a lot of time' (Referral Staff).

Conversely, however prison referral staff also acknowledged that the DoVeS counselling service, by remaining independent of the prison system (and not sharing information) benefited the prisoners:

'The prisoners don't see it as part of the prison service, so they are more willing to interact and more willing to disclose' (Referral Staff).

'When agencies are working with the same gentlemen it can be very frustrating [not sharing information], but in terms of the trust you need to get men to disclosure during counselling - the confidentiality does make sense' (Referral Staff).

Issues of information sharing were presented as significant to the referral staff interviewed. In light of this, DRSACC liaison staff may consider covering this issue in more detail during future liaison sessions.

4.8 The Counselling Environment

All counselling was undertaken in available offices just off the Resettlement suite at HMP Doncaster. These offices are often busy, with staff from Job Centre, the Bridge Project and Resettlement staff interviewing other prisoners. The offices used for counselling are therefore in the safety sense positively placed, however counselling staff were concerned that clients would feel overlooked. The men accessing the service were asked how they felt about the surroundings in which the counselling took place:

'It's alright, nobody can see or hear' (Service User).

The majority of men reported that despite the often chaotic surroundings, they felt they could disclose sensitive information. One man reported that *"It was safe - that hour was my time"*. Crucial to this sense of safety was the perception of DoVeS as being 'external' to the prison system (most often associated with counsellors not wearing a uniform and wearing a 'volunteer' badge). This added to the men's feelings of security and confidentiality.

'I wouldn't talk to a screw about it or anybody who wore a uniform' (Service User).

Service users were asked about the ideal timing of counselling sessions for them. The counsellor is restricted to a certain day of the week and can offer either a morning or afternoon appointment. Respondents reported that this approach to the timing of the sessions felt fine for them. However it became evident that this attitude may have had more to do with the acceptance of the prison regime, rather than anything the men may expect from services outside the prison:

'You get used to it in here - not really knowing where you are going or why' (Service User).

Sessions are offered to clients on a once a week basis for one hour. While most of the men reported this frequency and duration to be adequate, some men indicated that they would like to have more intensive engagement with the service:

'I wish it could be longer or maybe more often like 3/4 times a week' (Service User).

From the counsellor's perspective, the counselling environment also proved a challenge initially. This was particularly the case when counselling sessions occasionally take place in different rooms each week:

'It can be difficult because of the lack of control over the therapeutic environment. For clients, providing a safe, familiar environment can provide continuity for them and can take some of the buzz and the panic out of the place' (Counsellor).

'You are reliant on other people for everything, that's really kind of hard to deal with' (Counsellor).

The counsellor who left the project felt quite daunted by an environment she was not used to working in:

'My ways of coping with stress at work are going for a walk, shutting myself in a room and reading a book or texting my husband. Those kinds of things I do to support myself are completely unavailable here. I can't stand the environment and I can imagine how some of the prisoners feel: oppressed, trapped and all of those kinds of things' (Counsellor).

However, the remaining counsellor reports that as the project has developed she has become more relaxed about working in this busy environment and that prison staff have made her feel very welcome:

'I don't feel isolated as the people here are lovely and I feel very much part of them, but the only time perhaps that it is isolating is that if there is a real counselling issue - to check out with other counsellors and the people here have a very different agenda, so I hold it until I get back to work, I've learned now how to manage, so it is not so daunting. The buzz and the panic has gone' (Counsellor).

This is an important point in the light of the remaining counsellor being the sole counsellor at the prison.

4.9 Counselling in a Remand Prison

A remand prison is an environment that is characterised by the short stay of many of its inmates. This proves challenging to both the counsellors and the potential for the development of the client-counsellor relationship:

'It's very much an environment that changes and fluctuates. The biggest shock for me was that in my counselling work before I've never been impacted on by politics or political decisions and all of a sudden I am - because it changes from one week to the next, the prisoners don't know where they are and it's also left me thinking - are the clients going to disappear?' (Counsellor).

Some referral staff expressed concerns about using a less directive counselling approach with this type of prison population. The main reservation however was the often short time that prisoners stay at HMP Doncaster.

'Don't want to open up a can of worms because they are never here long enough for long term and a lot of them do need long term counselling' (Referral Staff).

'To start a session, build up a relationship and they're transferred out, (...) the fact that you can be kind of left with a bit of an open wound' (Referral Staff).

The counsellors however felt that these concerns were acknowledged and session content adapted with this in mind:

'In three sessions say, I wouldn't have got as far as opening them up, I wouldn't have gone in any length of exploring any deep issues with them, so the sessions would have been very light - just generally an inquiry as to how they are as people' (Counsellor).

Further, some of the prison referral staff interviewed have knowledge of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as a counselling model. This is unsurprisingly as this is the most commonly used approach in the prison system. However, DRSACC staff are committed to the Person Centred Approach for working with victims of domestic violence as:

'On the face of it, CBT maybe useful, but when working with this client group - it is not my favoured way of working. I have learnt from experience with this client group that when working with people who have experienced abuse, CBT approaches, by focussing on 'behaviours', well it can increase the guilt. In my experience you have to look behind the behaviour' (Liaison Officer).

Prison referral staff also acknowledged that prisoners themselves would not attend this service if they did not feel there would be some benefit, even in the short term:

'You quickly get to know if people aren't interested in something in here, just because they are prisoners doesn't mean they will put up with things that they feel are not useful' (Referral Staff).

'If a prisoner believes it isn't going to be the thing for them they'd know that at one session' (Referral Staff).

The evaluation found the prison referral staff to be supportive of the DoVeS counselling service. Many of the concerns raised in this section may be covered in more detail during the liaison visits to the prison, where any anxieties of prison staff could be allayed.

4.10 Post Release Follow-up

A further key objective in the original tender documents was *'To provide advice on support agencies post release'*. Initially stakeholders were positive about being able to provide this support:

'I don't see why not because we are affiliated to groups nationally, so we can offer service provision post release date'
(DDVWP, Domestic Violence Manager)

In reality however, this objective has proved difficult to enact. As described in previous sections the dynamic and changing population of HMP Doncaster makes it difficult to practically respond to the aim of providing post release support and advice. The high proportion of service users that are moved transferred or released before session completion has proved a barrier to providing details of counselling services outside of the prison. This is for two reasons:

- 1) Prisoners often do not know themselves when they are about to be released or transferred, so cannot inform the counsellor so that she can access the information they require.
- 2) Where prisoners are released or transferred and are aware before they move, they often do not know where they are going to be released to, therefore making it impossible for the counsellor to provide details of other counselling services in one area.

However, where clients have been aware of their release date and living location, the counsellor has discussed their needs and offered appropriate information and contact details. One service user has requested to continue with the Counsellor at DRSACC post release. The DoVeS counsellor also provides other members of staff with information about agencies for themselves, family members or prisoners who have requested details. The Counsellor has a directory of resources and agencies at the prison.

Further, the DoVeS counsellor is increasingly being accessed by wider departments within the prison system to ensure inmates receive the appropriate services post release. The Counsellor has met with the drug team at HMP Doncaster in order to set up counselling for a client and has recently been in touch with Probation in order to support a prisoner and his partner to access the appropriate service post release.

The nature of the Service User population has proved a barrier to the successful achievement of the objective of providing post-release support. This issue needs to be reviewed at the DoVeS committee meetings in conjunction with the DDVWP representative.

4.11 Professional Identity

Over recent years, within the prison service, a more holistic approach to inmates has been adopted in Resettlement departments all over the prison estate. However, despite these shifts in focus, making changes to the prison regime can be difficult to effect and 'outsiders' can be treated with suspicion.

Just like the prison service, the counselling profession has as many stereotypes attached. Counselling-based therapies are often viewed as being at the soft end of the treatment continuum. In many senses it could be imagined that these two very different cultures may be difficult to integrate, however this project shows that this can be done to the benefit of all involved:

'It almost feels at times that you are trusted and you're independent. Maybe it has come over time as they are less suspicious of you, thinking you are going to let a prisoner use a phone or what ever'
(Counsellor).

'We've had the usual teething sort of stuff, you know where the counsellors have had to get used to working with us in this way, but our door is open, so as long as they approach us with anything we can deal with it' (Resettlement).

However, counsellors sometimes see the prison regime as (often unintentionally) providing a system where victims of abuse struggle to cope or as illustrated in the quote below, provide a haven where men do not have to think or make decisions. This situation can be counter productive in counselling terms:

'They just don't grasp the effects of traumatic childhoods has on the prisoners in here and how their behaviour in here might be related to something in their past. Sometimes this environment can replace some of the dynamics of what it was like for them at home. Alternatively, some men find the prison environment wonderful because it is so containing for them, so they are going to keep coming back, because they don't have to think here' (Counsellor).

Whether the prison regime can acknowledge this will have a huge impact on any counselling service provided:

'I think that for a prison taking it [the counselling service] on, there will have to be a clear understanding of what counselling is about (...) and maybe the prison needs to challenge their thinking in some ways and think well, lets look at it this way' (Counsellor).

Ultimately however, process of change in professionally bound attitudes cannot happen overnight and DRSACC acknowledge that this pilot project, being the first of its kind, needs to settle in to the prison regime and all have high hopes for the service:

'I would like for someone to really do something with it and really challenge themselves as a prison system' (Liaison Officer).

These issues highlight that the successful establishment of any new project is dependant upon effective communication and action between all partners.

4.12 Partnership Working

This project is a result of a partnership between both a statutory and voluntary agency. The partnership between DDVWP and DRSACC is long established. Their partnership with HMP Doncaster however, is a new venture and DDVWP and DRSACC representatives were initially a little nervous:

'It was a new area for us we haven't been working with them previously and because it's run by a private company as opposed to a national company we were a little bit, not reluctant, but a bit wary of going into that situation. But I think our fears have been unfounded to be honest. To date, I think they have been very positive and they seem to be very well engaged' (DDVWP Domestic Violence Manager).

At HMP Doncaster however, there has been a long history of working with voluntary agencies:

'We already have lots of agencies working out of the resettlement offices anyway, so this is another service which we can provide within the existing, already established support provision' (Resettlement).

'It's worked well here because we were set up and things were ready and in place to facilitate this kind of service already' (Resettlement).

Despite the original reservations about forming a partnership with a statutory agency, DRSACC and DDVWP have been delighted with the engagement from HMP Doncaster:

'It was like a breath of fresh air that you're actually talking with somebody that had a clue and was welcoming of this project' (Liaison Officer).

'We've been absolutely and hugely impressed by a lot of aspects of working with Doncaster prison. You go a meeting and they come out with action points and go back and they are done. It's a good thing'
(DRSACC Development Co-ordinator).

'I was amazed how fast it all moved at Doncaster and got people who were really keen on setting up the service. It was almost overwhelming actually' (Liaison Officer).

In this way, the 'can do' attitude at both HMP Doncaster and DRSACC has had a positive effect on the provision of the DoVeS counselling service:

'We asked if we could come in and talk to everybody and he said "yes, we have, you can meet them now if you want" and he suggested the chaplaincy as well and he ran upstairs and asked the officer who is in charge of buddies "Have you got any buddies up there?" "Yep", "Can we come up and see them?" "Yep". So you didn't have to get permission in triplicate, which was great!'
(DRSACC Development Co-ordinator).

'When they say they are going to do something, they do it'
(DRSACC Development Co-ordinator).

The evaluation team found that the partnership between DRSACC and HMP Doncaster has developed into one of effective communication and action. This has been a key factor in overcoming some of the problems outlined in this section of the report.

Chapter Five: Experience and Impact

5.1 Experiences and Impact of Counselling Service

The findings presented in this section of the report are generated from Group Two – service users who participated in the Evaluation (n=20). It also includes some staff interview data which corroborates service user data. As detailed in Chapter Two, data collection with service users involved two techniques at two separate time points (entry and exit):

- Qualitative interviews to provide more detailed information about the experiences of the counselling service
- The completion of a scale where service users were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with certain statements.

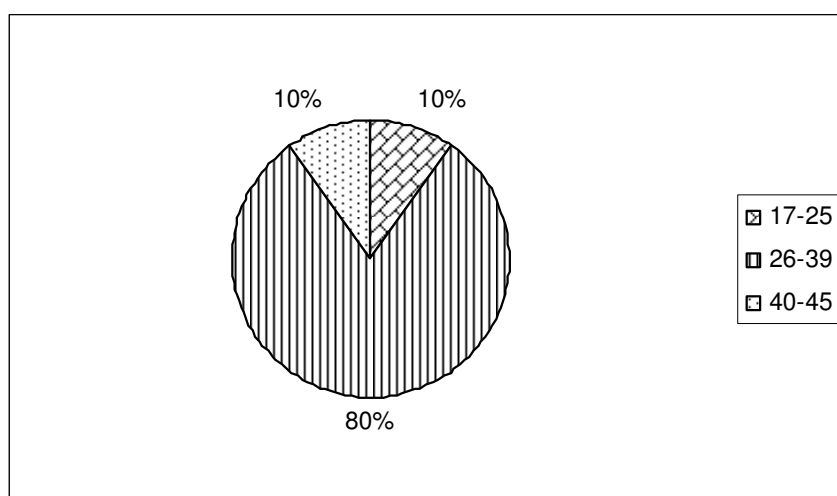
This Group Two dataset aims to:

- Present an overall profile of the 20 men interviewed for the evaluation
- Present the results of the scale designed and administered to indicate any changes in the participants between before and after accessing the counselling service.
- Deliver meaningful insights into the experience of accessing a counselling service in prison through a thematic analysis of the service-user and staff interview data

5.2 Demographics of Group Two

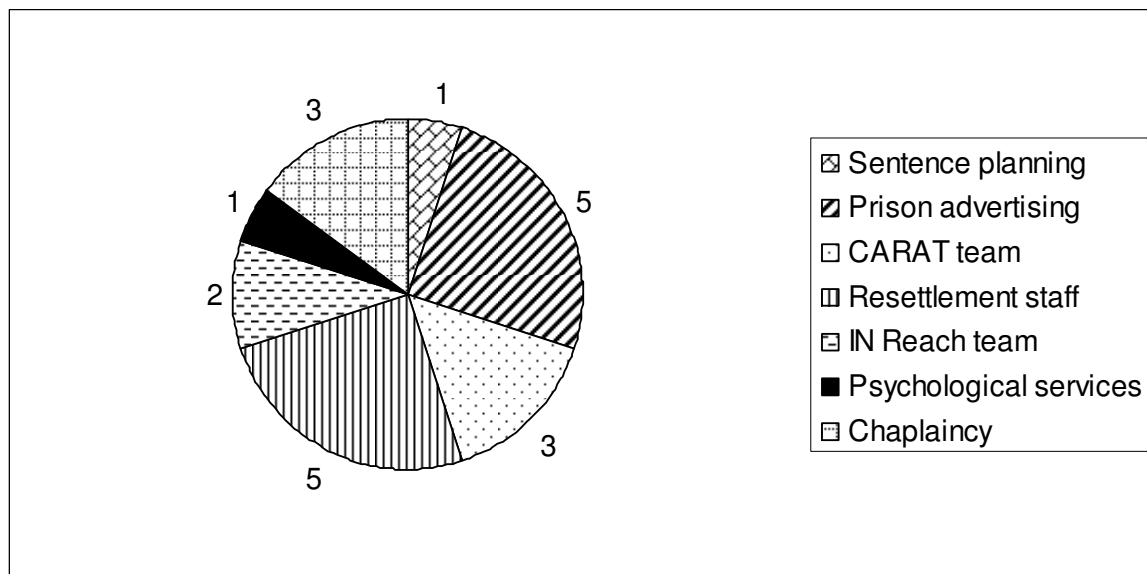
As indicated below, the 20 men included in Group Two were predominantly aged between 26 and 39. Of the men interviewed, 19 identified themselves as white and 1 man as black.

Fig: 2.1 Age range of Group Two



A significant number of the 20 men sampled were referred through Resettlement staff (5 men) and the same number through seeing self referral, having seen or heard the prison advertising for the service.

Fig: 2.2 Referral routes for Group Two

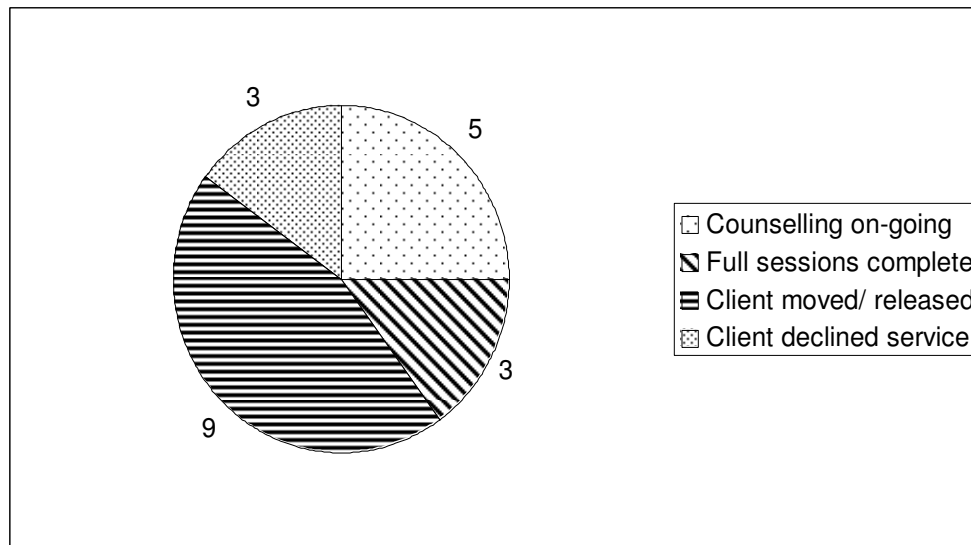


5.3 Profile of Group Two’s Engagement with DoVeS

As shown in Fig 2.3, of the 20 men in Group Two, 3 have completed their session blocks in full, 5 are still attending the counselling service, 9 were released or transferred before counselling session block completion, and the remaining 3 men declined the service. However, an entry interview was still conducted with these three in order to gain an insight into their reasons for non engagement. Of the 3 men who declined the counselling service, one discussed his reservations about the counselling process, as he knew he was being released quite soon. Another man said at interview that the counselling clashed with some paid work he’d been offered at the prison, while the final man stated that he’d found the counselling process inappropriate as he was hoping the process would be more prescribed. These 3 men attended between 1 and 3 sessions, see fig 2.4)

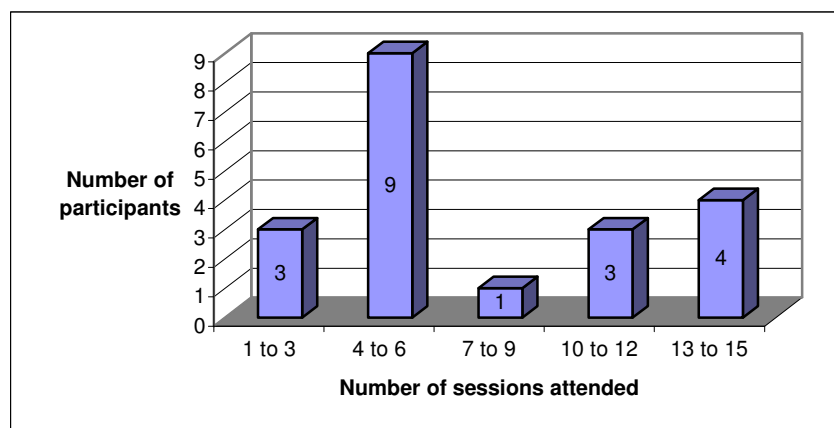
Of the 9 men in the moved/released category, 4 men were transferred (so exit interviews for these men took place in other prison establishments) and 5 men were released (4 of these exit interviews were conducted before release and one post release at a local probation office).

Fig: 2.3 Profile of Group 2



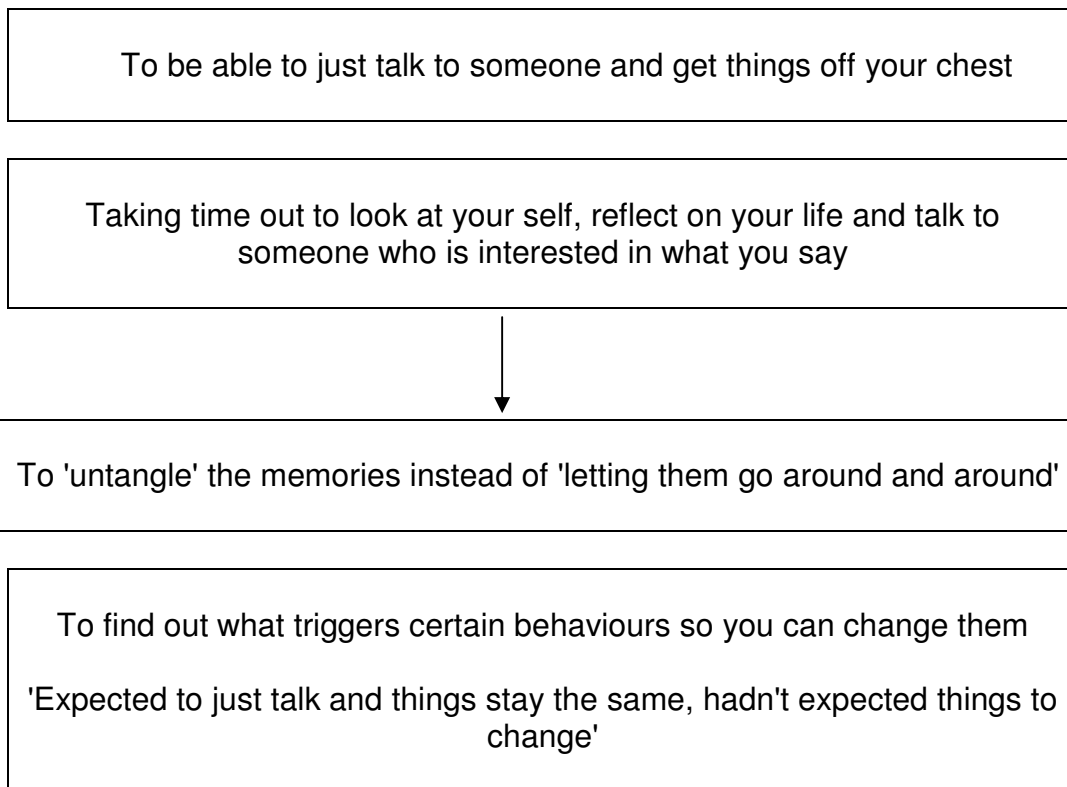
The 20 men who participated in the evaluation predominantly attended between 4 and 6 counselling sessions as illustrated below:

Fig: 2.4 Sessions attended by Group Two



5.4 Perceived Functions of Counselling

The meanings and utility of counselling held by service users are important as they may influence the experience of counselling. The interview data was examined to ascertain the working definitions utilised by clients in order to compare definitions of counselling between first and second interviews. The evaluator identified differences in the definitions of the counselling process between first and second interviews, which are presented in the diagram below. The first two definitions were typical of perceptions of counselling at first interviews, while the last two boxed definitions illustrate men's later acknowledgement that counselling can facilitate change.



5.5 Service User Views

The next section presents service user views from the interview and scale data. The scale data is presented in graphical form so as to give a visual representation of changes in responses which have occurred between entry and exit. In terms of the interview data presented in this section, a distinct concern with retaining service user accounts has been maintained, thus verbatim quotes are used wherever appropriate throughout this section in order to illuminate the key themes being discussed. When all data was analysed it was found that interview data and scale data collected was frequently complementary thus it is presented in an integrated manner.

As previously mentioned the scale statements covered five broad topics and the data in the following section is arranged in accordance with these:

- Feelings about 'self'
- Relationships with others
- Ability to change/improve one's life
- Attitudes to behavioural change
- Attitudes to re-offending

5.5.1 Section 1: Feelings about Self

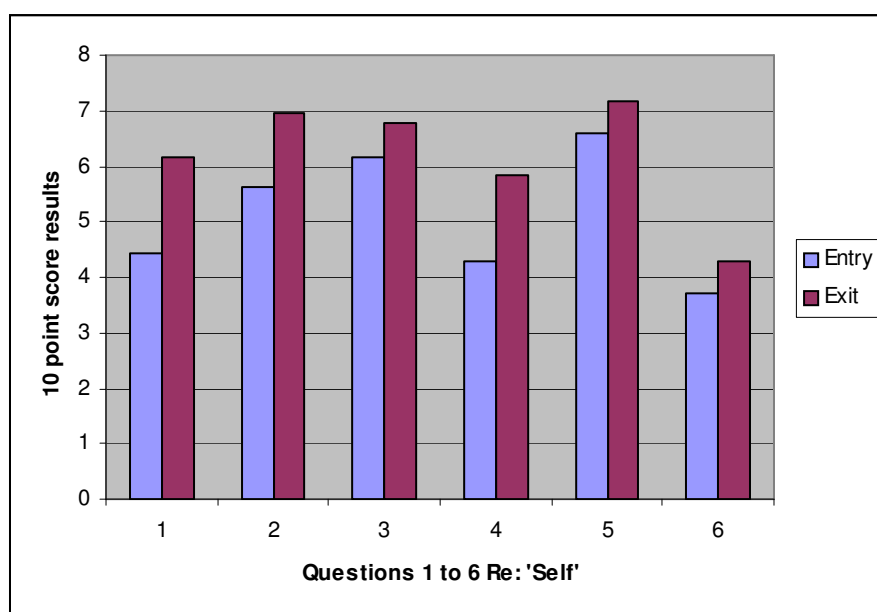
Service users reported that one of the most positive affects of accessing the counselling service had been to increase self-understanding and therefore self-acceptance, as the men reported being:

'More relaxed with myself (...) more ok with who I am (...) able to get on with myself (...) It's helped me accept lots of things that have happened to me, I never thought I could, but you can'
(Service User).

'I'm a better person for counselling, a lot nicer I reckon'
(Service User).

Service users reported feeling more positive about themselves at the exit interview than at entry to the counselling service (see Fig: 2.5).

Fig: 2.5 Feelings about self



This self-learning was reported by the service users as enabling them to identify their strengths and their weaknesses in counselling sessions.

'I'm coming to see that I've got lots to be proud of (...) I'd not thought of it like that before, it's like having time to find out what my good qualities are and holding on to them' (Service User).

The men reflected feelings of increasing self-worth and attitudes which demonstrated a stronger, more internalised sense of self:

'It's also given me the confidence to see that if I really want to do it and develop in life I am strong enough to - it's almost like having it underlined in counselling though - it's like being given permission to see yourself as a good person and a strong one - even though you're in here and labelled as a con..'
(Service User).

'I think I have got more to be proud of now you know- I can talk to my girlfriend so much better now' (Service User)

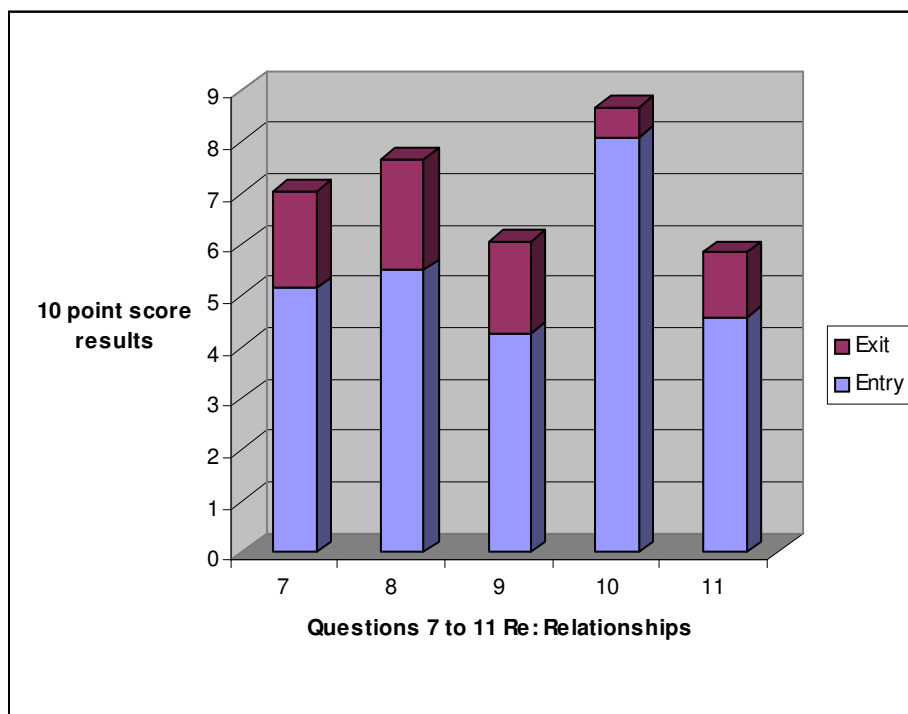
'That's changed too- for the better- not so bothered what other people think of me- I'm my own man now - as long as I'm proud of me - blow what others think' (Service User)

As the data demonstrates, overall service users felt that accessing the counselling service had had a positive affect on their feelings about themselves and this in turn had a positive relationship on their feelings about themselves.

5.5.2 Section 2: Relationships with others

Service users were asked to rate their feelings about their relationships with other people on the scale; again these feelings were collected at entry and exit to the counselling service. Fig: 2.6 demonstrate a positive shift between entry and exit data.

Fig: 2.6 Relationships with others



Many respondents, when reflecting initially on their relationships with others, talked about a compulsion to 'push people away' for fear of being hurt. The respondent below acknowledges these feelings as undesirable:

Deep down you didn't really want that to happen, you know what I mean, you just didn't know how to approach or deal with that situation at the time' (Service User).

Service users reported that they felt the counselling had been positive with regard to their relationships with others, often describing the counselling experience as enabling them to 'practice' talking to their loved ones in a more positive and constructive manner. They reported being able to express themselves more effectively as a direct result of the counselling. Further, a number of men came to a realisation during counselling that they had sometimes been controlling in their relationships with others, as one man explained:

'If I went to my mum now and said give me £30 she'll do it, because I know she'd do it. But I don't want to do it, it's like being disrespectful to people that care really isn't it'
(Service User).

Along with improvements in self-confidence service users reported that as their self concept improved and self respect increased. The men saw these improvements as also affecting their attitudes to and relationships with members of prison staff:

'At one time I'd never had any respect for the prison staff, but now I'm more polite to them, they're only doing their job'
(Service User).

'Even the wing staff said they'd seen a difference in me (...). The staff expect more of me now because I've been feeling happier and I like it - that respect you know and I want to keep it'
(Service User).

The experience of counselling was reported as also affecting peer group relations in prison. An improved 'sense of self' resulted in service users feeling 'worthy' of relationships with others whereas during previous sentences they may have remained detached:

'I've found it easier to come out of myself with people in here. I'm playing cards with a group of people, I'm chatting to them'
(Service User).

In summary, from the data collected from Service Users, there is significant evidence to suggest that the experience of counselling has been beneficial to their personal relationships both inside and outside prison.

5.5.3 Section 3: Ability to Improve One's own Life

This section of questions aimed to evaluate the men's feelings about their ability to develop and enact progress in their own lives. As the graph below demonstrates the men in the sample felt more confident

about their abilities to improve their lives at the exit interview (see Fig: 2.7).

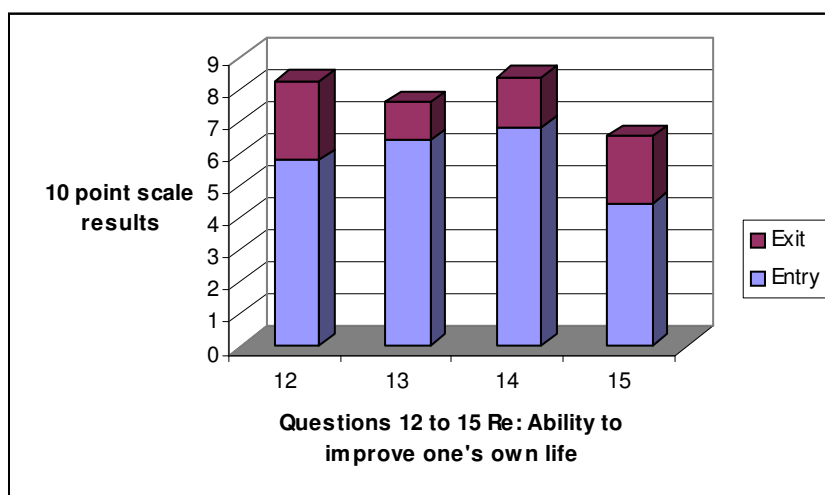
Service Users reported that the increased confidence gained from attending counselling sessions has resulted in feeling confident enough to access to education in order to facilitate improvements in their lives:

'It's given me the confidence to go out there and get some certificates and do courses and stuff' (Service User).

Further, 3 service users volunteered information regarding how they saw their attendance at counselling as affecting their feelings of self-harm:

'...for a while I felt like giving up and going back to my pad and slashing up (...) but I'm proud of myself for not doing that and holding it all in until I got here to talk to someone about it all instead' (Service User).

Fig: 2.7 Ability to Improve One's own Life



One service user however expressed the difficulties of affecting change in the prison environment as he described how it often felt to him that despite feeling very positive during counselling sessions, he often felt that the prison environment actually hindered the change process:

'The prison environment doesn't ever change - even if you come out of a session and think "I've changed", you got to get back into the prison way of doing things' (Service User).

However, when asked if things would have been different for them had they not accessed the counselling service, the men reflected that despite these environmental issues accessing the service was beneficial to them. They reported feeling that accessing the counselling service had affected a positive change in their lives. The feelings identified by the service users above illustrates that they have reflected on their own behaviour.

5.5.4 Section 4: Attitudes Towards Behavioural Change

This section of statements referred to ways in which service users felt about their ability to recognise their own negative behaviours and facilitate change where necessary. Respondents reported positive developments in relation to identifying their own behavioural processes and improving their feelings of control. Service users reported an increased ability to 'work things through' as a result of counselling:

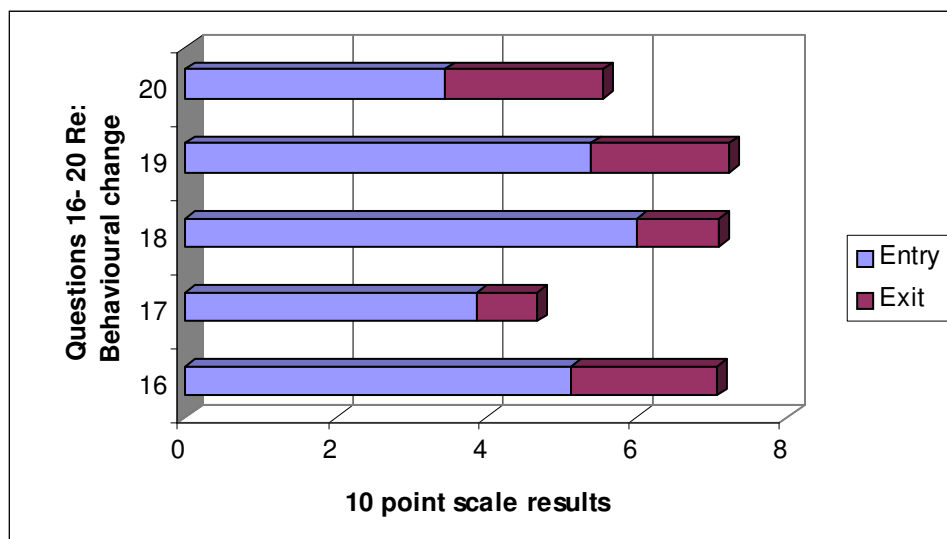
'I can work through it better in my own head (...) counselling has helped me pin that one down (...) at least I know about it now' (Service User).

'I can deal with things, rather than just getting mad and angry' (Service User).

And also to begin to identify alternative coping mechanisms:

'It's like weighing up different ways I can do things and choosing which one will do the best (...) I'm trying to think about the consequences rather than go in all guns blazing like I normally do' (Service User).

Fig: 2.8 Attitudes towards Behavioural Change



Service users reported on the changes they hoped to make, but importantly they self-identified accessing the counselling as aiding their own movement or their journey to a different way of life:

'I'll get there one day, its not over and sorted or anything yet, but I'm moving (...) it's started me down that road, to a better life' (Service User).

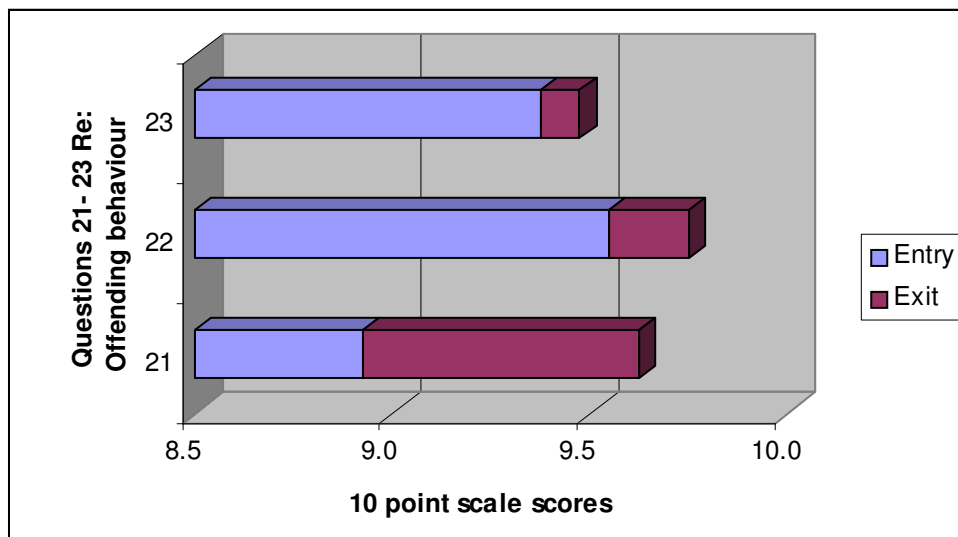
'I'm trying to pace myself, so I'm in a better position to succeed even in little things first, it's about being sensible and realistic I guess' (Service User).

In this way, respondents reported the hope that they could and in many cases that they would continue with the new ways of thinking and acting.

5.5.5 Section 5: Attitudes to re-offending

The final section of scaled statements was designed to elicit service user attitudes to their own offending behaviour. As the graph below illustrates men indicated an increased desire to change their behaviour and increasingly acknowledged their own responsibility for their offending at exit interview. Although the scores were also high at the entry interview for these statements, they still underwent a noticeable rise in the majority of cases.

Fig: 2.9 Attitudes to re-offending



The men interviewed stated a belief that accessing the counselling service had affected their attitudes to their own offending behaviour. The men felt so strongly about this that they claimed that had they not accessed the service they would have returned to their previous behaviours:

'I find drink and drug taking is a comfort to me when I've got nothing else around me with no-one to go and talk to' (Service User).

'I'd have got out in the same frame of mind I came in, no changing, no different thoughts or different ways of handling things' (Service User).

The majority of men in the sample reported feelings of 'being ready' and feeling enthusiastic about changing their lives, many reflecting that repeating their offending behaviour was not an option as:

'What have I got left, if I keep being sent to prison?'
(Service User).

Of the 20 men in the sample, 18 disclosed that this was not their first custodial sentence. However, 17 service users believed that receiving the counselling had resulted in a significant improvement in their experience of prison life and taken them to a better 'head space':

'This time round its been better (...) I've not felt this good for years (...) It's made life easier just having someone to talk to - its horrible when you've got to bottle it up' (Service User).

Men describe accessing the service as easing their burden and enabling them to free themselves of the long held negative feelings which may have contributed to their offending behaviour:

'I've tried to blank it out before, I've never spoken about it before, sometimes it feels like the weight on my shoulders is dragging me down and once I've talked I'm floating back to me cell, it feels a relief. I feel calm and relaxed' (Service User).

Engaging in counselling has provided a space for men to reflect upon their attitudes to their offending behaviours.

Of the 20 men included in Group 2, over half (12 men) only attended up to 6 sessions (see Fig: 2.4, beginning of this chapter). Despite this, significant changes have been reported by the men and this can be taken as an indication of the huge potential benefits of accessing the counselling service over the longer term.

5.6 Feasibility of Reducing re-offending

In the original tender documentation for the DoVeS counselling service, a key objective was *'To improve quality of life of service users, ultimately leading to a reduction in re-offending'* (see introduction). The evaluation team had reservations concerning how such an objective could be measured and asked stakeholders in the DoVeS service to comment on the feasibility of using a person-centred counselling service with offenders to achieve this objective. The counsellors indicated that the often short term nature of counselling offered would reduce the likelihood of achieving this objective.

The person-centred approach sees offending behaviour as a symptom, in the sense that the manifesting offending behaviour is not a direct focus:

'you are trying to get behind that, so if we can try and go far enough back we can try and start the healing processes so hopefully....it's about change and I think there are certain stages they go through, not

behaving like that - well the fact that it's even occurred to them is quite a powerful, shift (...) certain process have to be gone through before they can begin to actualise it though' (Counsellor).

The Counsellor, rather than addressing the offending behaviour directly, attempts to:

'Offer them a different relational experience and if in that experience they experience something within themselves to change their offending behaviour then that's great' (Counsellor).

However, counsellors also felt that:

'It sometimes feels like I'm providing maybe 1% when they need 100%, you know it feels like a drop in the ocean compared to all the other support that they might need' (Counsellor).

Ultimately, the DoVeS counselling service hopes to affect attitudes to offending behaviour within the auspices of personal change. HMP Doncaster representatives also remain positive about the possibilities of this kind of service to reduce offending through the service:

'We are hoping that like most of the other services, this will help support our clients and ultimately to reduce their re-offending and keep them from coming back inside. It may not work for everyone, but the potential impacts could be huge' (Resettlement).

Reducing re-offending through accessing the DoVeS counselling service is an objective that all involved feel is possible, yet in terms of the evaluation, without very different types of data, this objective cannot feasibly be measured as there is no longer term follow up of service users. At this point in time the evaluation team can only provide data which reflect on any changes in men's **attitudes** to offending behaviour pre and post access to the counselling service.

In September 2006's DoVeS committee meeting discussions took place concerning possible alternatives to collecting different types of data on the men accessing the service took place. The discussion focussed on the possibility of collecting data concerning whether or not men accessing the service re-entered the prison system. This issue however needs to be examined in full by the committee before any action is taken.

5.7 Staff Perceptions of the Impact of Counselling

Interestingly data from staff interviews appears to corroborate with service user findings. Staff reported having observed changes in those men who had attended the counselling service:

'He has completely changed, he's a different person, he used to be very uncomfortable, very low self esteem, prone to being tearful a lot' (Referral Staff).

'I haven't had one prisoner say that they haven't found it useful that they haven't learned something from it, that they haven't recognised something in themselves' (Referral Staff).

While others reported observing what they described as more subtle behavioural changes in the men they knew had referred themselves to the service:

'one chap - he took the bit of bad news we had to give him amazingly well really, he was very calm in the way he dealt with a situation, we'd expected him to shout off around the prison - he seemed more secure in himself' (Referral Staff).

Another staff member reported speaking to one man who had declined the service because he didn't feel safe in the prison environment. Despite this he reflected on the experience as being positive and the staff member expressed the view that he would more than likely access a similar service once being released:

'There has been one who said she [counsellor] were lovely but I can't sit and do that, not in here, I just said right we'll write to your GP and get you on a list for when you get out' (Referral Staff).

Another member of staff reported that they felt accessing the service had improved the men's relationships outside the prison:

'I had two women or wives if you like actually ringing me up and saying thank you for getting their blokes on to the DoVeS, because they were so much nicer to them since starting it' (Referral Staff).

The same member of staff had also observed subtle changes at visiting time. Here the staff member observed that the men's partners seemed:

'Less stressed. They felt less under pressure and less fearful when they came in to visit them because before they didn't know what they were facing which made for a pleasant visit, the kids were more relaxed as well' (Referral Staff).

This member of staff also had these observations confirmed directly by some of the men's partners who expressed a wish that they could be involved too:

'some of them [partners] have said it would have been nice to have been able to take part in it [the counselling service] with them' (Referral Staff).

This issue links in with one of the original objectives of this project, which was to ensure partners of men accessing the counselling service were provided with information. Where appropriate the counsellor has provided inmates with details of available services for their partners and families.

Some referral staff reflected that they would like to see the success of the DoVeS counselling service repeated with the provision of a more generic counselling service:

'We get a lot of inappropriate referrals to our service for people who require counselling and it's not something we can offer, and there is no where to sign post them to, unless there are issues of domestic violence' (Referral Staff).

'I wish the counselling wasn't so specific on domestic violence'
(Referral Staff).

Further, some staff members saw this kind of approach as having the potential to affect their clients in a holistic way:

'The benefits are that we can address unresolved issues and that could have an impact on wider things like their mental health'
(Referral Staff).

'When you open the door however slightly at some point it's going to swing wide open' (Referral Staff).

This section has illustrated that the DoVeS counselling service has wide support from staff at HMP Doncaster due to its perceived positive effects on the men who access it.

5.8 Counsellor and Service User Reflections on the Person-centred Approach

The DoVeS counselling service is predicated on a person centred approach, however the evaluation team felt it was important to see how this model worked in the prison setting. Indeed, the counsellors stated they adapted their practice to suit the client group:

'I draw from other theoretical models sometimes, depending on the client, depending on what would be most suitable for that person. I think sometimes what I've also found with men is that they do prefer somebody to be quite pro-active and not just sit there and sometimes be quite inquisitive some times and I suppose for the experiences that they've had - silence - its just not comfortable for them at all'
(Counsellor).

Some of the clients had received CBT counselling previous to accessing DoVeS, however the DoVeS counsellor felt quite strongly that what the men she saw wanted most was to:

'understand themselves - know why they are that way. They [clients] want to be understood and then making their own choices about what they then want to do' (Counsellor).

While other DRSACC staff saw prisoners accessing CBT as being counter productive:

'One of the things I know from being here [counselling victims of abuse] is that some of our clients who have been sent to have CBT have issues about taking responsibility for what you've done in the person centred approach' (Liaison Officer).

This focus on encouraging clients to take responsibility for themselves is a core element of the person centred approach:

'In here I'm not going to tell them they should be doing- it's not instructive. So there are not forms or no sentences trying to diagnose these people. You give them a safe place to start to realise their own potential' (Counsellor).

An element of taking responsibility is also that clients are allowed to make choices:

'these clients are being given an amount of choice and it's about control for them and it's about space for them and something that they may have never ever been offered before in their lives' (Counsellor).

These aims sometimes however do feel at odds with the prison environment:

'It seems very much at odds with the prison, which I kind of expected that because prison isn't a place where you've got free will and choice, but it feels like it is very much at odds with what the whole regime (...) they are very much controlled and watched over and kind of told when to eat, to sleep and so the idea of a person-centred approach where people have the free will to choose when they come, what they want to talk about, choose what they want to share almost seems completely at odds with this environment, but I don't necessarily think that that means it's never going to work because I think it can be useful for them, useful for them to have an experience of something different' (Counsellor).

Service users were asked if they had previously received counselling and many of them reported that they had. Most described Cognitive Behavioural Therapy or a medically prescriptive approach:

'The counselling I had before was more "how you're feeling, what kind of feelings are you having?" and then it was basically, right we'll prescribe you this in order to combat those feelings. But they didn't deal with the main issues, you know the main reasons why I was feeling that way, just not interested' (Service User).

'I used to do a group therapy, that were anger management and then I had one to one for drugs and alcohol. It was like - all the time - what

are me plans and here is what we can do and you'll do this, do that and I just did it' (Service User).

Although men were not asked directly about their knowledge of different approaches to counselling they expressed their thoughts on the approach used in DoVeS mainly through comparison with other counselling they had had. They characterised the DoVeS approach as a process of learning as opposed to instructing:

'It's not like people out there saying "you shouldn't be doing this and that" (...) the learning the counselling gives you is locked in because of the way the counsellor does what she does' (Service User).

This was largely perceived as beneficial, and once they got used to this was of doing things 'sort of like- my whole attitudes changed' (Service User). Men talked about feeling able to take control of the counselling sessions:

'It's sort of like you have all week to sort of think and you know sort out well what's next. It might be the day before or that morning, you could be thinking about I'll deal with this next. I'll deal with that and one thing at a time. I get to decide' (Service User).

Men reflected that taking control of the session had a wider impact in other parts of their lives as:

'(I) feel much more in control you know now - that's from the counselling too - I realised that just because I'm in here doesn't mean I have no control you know - I can still make things difficult for other people and myself if I really wish to and they can't take control of your mind or your feelings you know. I'm in control of me now - responsible for me, I always was, just took counselling to help me realise that' (Service User).

When asked directly if they thought the DoVeS counselling they had received had been effective, 19 out of the 20 men interviewed gave a positive reply. Although some of the men had not completed the full sessions due to reasons already outlined, they all reflected that being exposed to the DoVeS counselling approach had affected changes that they felt were significant in the way they thought about themselves and the choices they made. Indeed, the following quote is from one service user who attended only 6 sessions:

'I never expected it to change anything really and it has, it really has. It's like the counselling has released the hand-brake, that sounds odd, but what I mean is that it has started something in me, started a way of thinking, a different way of thinking than I had before and I like it. I couldn't put the hand-brake on now even if I wanted to. It has started something, I kind of can't go back to the shape I was before, not after being shown such a different, a good different way of thinking about things' (Service User).

Chapter Six: Summary and Recommendations

6.1 Summary

The findings of the evaluation regarding service usage, referral process and routes and the impact on service users engaging with the service are summarised as follows:

Key Findings:

Service Usage

- 84 men from HMP Doncaster submitted an application to access the DoVeS counselling service in its first year
- 69% of these men attended at least the first introductory session
- 3 men have completed the total 16 session counselling block
- The most common number of sessions attended was between 1 and 3, as 46% (n=39) of men were released or transferred before they could complete the anticipated block of 16 sessions
- 27% (n=23) of men declined the service having ascertained what attendance at counselling involved during the first introductory session. These decisions were taken in conjunction with the counsellor

Referral Process and Routes

- The initial main referral routes to DoVeS were from the CARAT team (30 men) and Resettlement staff (15 men)
- As the service has gathered momentum, referrals are increasingly being sourced from a wider range of departments within the Prison system
- Prison advertising has proved successful
- Referral processes were found to be effective, however need to remain client rather than staff led

Impact on Service Users Engaging with the Service

Of the men accessing the service, 20 participated in an in-depth evaluation. These men reported:

- Improvements in their relationships, both inside and outside the prison environment
- Increased hopes for the future as a result of involvement with the service
- A more positive attitude towards their ability to change and improve their lives
- Feeling more equipped to explore and adapt their own behavioural patterns
- Feeling happier and more relaxed about themselves which has had an effect on their self confidence

This evaluation report has shown that the DoVeS counselling service has exceeded its objective of offering the service to 90 male prisoners who have been victims or perpetrators of domestic violence, over the two year funding period. There is a clear demand for this service within the HMP Doncaster prison population, given that 84 men who have put in applications to use the service in its first year. A positive partnership between DRSACC and Prison Management has been developed and maintained effectively. This has proved essential to the development of this service. This report has provided data to illustrate an effective model of counselling service provision established by the HMP Doncaster DoVeS project. However, if this project model is to be replicated elsewhere in the wider Prison estate, certain requirements will have to be met to ensure its success; most of these requirements can be found to be evidenced in the main content of this Evaluation report.

HMP Doncaster is a remand prison with a dynamic population and this has proved to be a significant barrier to service provision. Just 4% of men (n=3) were able to complete the full block 16 counselling sessions. A significant number of men putting in applications to access the counselling service (46%, n=39) were moved or released before the full block of sessions could be completed. Ideally if a man is receiving DoVeS counselling this should be taken into consideration when planning to transfer or move prisoners within the prison estate. However, all involved realise that given the reality of the prison regime this aim is challenging. Inmates at HMP Doncaster also put in requests to be moved or transferred themselves, a request that over rides their attendance at DoVeS. Where it was found that things often prove difficult when attempting to 'call up' clients, it has to be acknowledged that prison systems are not designed for that purpose. Therefore, counsellors working in this environment have to employ a flexible and understanding approach when attempting to ensure counselling appointments are not missed.

The objective of raising awareness of the issue of domestic violence among prison staff has been met through the activities of Resettlement and DRSACC staff. This report has also shown that the development of the Liaison Officer's role has proved crucial to the dissemination of a clear understanding of the underpinning principles behind the DoVeS service within the wider prison population. The Liaison Officer has given presentations to the majority of wider departments in the prison. The evaluation has highlighted that referrals to the DoVeS service need to be prisoner rather than staff led. The Evaluation found strong support for and knowledge of the DoVeS service within wider prison staff departments. This has enhanced referral routes and recruitment to the service.

The original objective of the service improving the quality of life of service users has been evidenced in the report through the words of the Service Users themselves. Service users reported feeling more positive about themselves at the exit interview than at entry to the counselling service and have reported the many advantages of attending the DoVeS counselling sessions. The men interviewed for the evaluation all showed an awareness of the possibilities that accessing counselling could provide them with and were enthusiastic about using the opportunity to access the service to its fullest

potential. The further objective of attending the service as ultimately leading to a reduction in re-offending has been discussed and the feasibility of this expectation being measured are still under review by the DoVeS steering committee.

The objective of providing information for partners and families of this cohort of men has been met when appropriate by the DoVeS Counsellor. The final objective of providing advice on support agencies post release has also been met, however not in the way the project leaders originally envisaged. The DRSACC Counsellor is being used as a resource in the prison by both voluntary agencies and prison staff for information on services available for their clients, some of whom are partners and families of inmates. In this way, this objective is being met, but not in a recorded and documented way. This situation may be reviewed in the context of preparation for the second year evaluation.

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations will be of use to all the stakeholders involved in the DoVeS service. The views expressed in this study and the recommendations for the second year provision of the DoVeS counselling service come directly from the very people who have been involved with it - Service Users, Counsellors and Prison Staff. The evaluation team and the individuals participating in the Evaluation however understand that the successful establishment of this type of project within the Prison Service is an achievement in itself for all involved. The positive outcomes for the men involved in the DoVeS service, which are included in this report are testament to the success of this project. We hope that the following recommendations will assist in identifying priorities for the roll out of the second year provision of this person-centred counselling service:

Key Recommendations:

Service Delivery:

- DoVeS counsellors have been successful in providing a person-centred but flexible approach to their clients, adapting to the individual needs of their clients
- The project has successfully established a counselling service in a prison environment. DRSACC need to continue to ensure that DoVeS counsellors receive appropriate supervision, training and that their personal development needs are met
- One of the biggest challenges faced when setting up a counselling service in a remand prison is maintaining client engagement. Resettlement staff and counsellors have liaised closely during the first year of the project and continuing to do so will help to reduce the number of counselling sessions missed
- The working partnerships formed around the DoVeS service have had a positive effect on service delivery. Exploring mechanisms for ensuring men can attend counselling for longer will further enhance

service delivery. Release dates could be considered at initial assessment by the counsellor

- Consider the provision of a 'dedicated Buddy' who can be made available to access men 'called up' for sessions on the days the counsellor is in the prison. This may assist in locating prisoners and therefore reduce the hours spent by the counsellor attending to this issue

DoVeS Steering Committee:

- The DoVeS management committee have succeeded in establishing an effective and inclusive partnership to oversee service delivery. In order to maintain this, the committee should continue to meet on a regular basis
- Building on this success, the DoVeS management committee may want to consider issues around systems and monitoring of providing information for clients' partners and ensuring post release support is provided. Further, a discussion concerning the possibilities/feasibility of collecting data to measure 're-offending' rates for men accessing the counselling service, may also enhance the project's provision
- The committee have monitored the DoVeS staffing situation carefully as they are aware that this may have an effect on the number of men wanting to access the service who are placed on a waiting list
- A discussion around the sustainability of this successful, but time limited project, may feed into the strategic direction this project adopts for the future. Will the partnership be seeking funding to continue/expand the service?

Liaison Role Development:

- The Liaison Officer role, which has been developed in order to raise awareness of the service, has proved invaluable and should be continued and expanded
- The Liaison Officer role could be developed to promote appropriate domestic violence referral systems with potential Referral Staff (i.e. is sexual abuse domestic violence?)
- Liaison sessions with staff groups have proven to be highly effective and should be repeated regularly to ensure new staff are made aware of the service and focus on the need for confidentiality for Service Users within counselling sessions
- Service promotion has proved successful. The Liaison Officer could further consider promoting the DoVeS service in the prison induction process and possibly organise liaison meetings with wider prison staff, like Operations Managers on each house block
- The success of the Liaison Officer's role could be expanded to consider raising awareness of domestic violence issues with the general prison population

Preparation for the Second Year Evaluation:

- The Evaluation data collection methods adopted have proved effective, however a de-brief session should be conducted between the evaluation team and counsellors to refine the data collection methods for second year service delivery and evaluation purposes
- Building on the success of the first year of the DoVeS service delivery, the DoVeS steering committee may consider reviewing the feasibility of collecting evaluation data for original objectives of project (post release support and effects on offending behaviour). This can be conducted in partnership with the evaluation team
- The DoVeS partners may want to consider the inclusion of 'control group' in the second year evaluation to contrast 'changes' in those men accessing counselling service and those not accessing the service

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Tolan, J (2003) *Skills in person centred counselling and psychotherapy*, London: Sage.

Appendix 1: Design and Setting up Project Meetings

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Activity</i> | <i>Attendees</i> |
|--------------------|---|------------------------------|
| July 2005 | Meeting at HMP Doncaster | DDVWP, DRSACC, HMP Doncaster |
| August 2005 | Meeting at HMP Doncaster | DDVWP, DRSACC, HMP Doncaster |
| December 2005 | Two meetings with HMP Doncaster | DRSACC and HMP Doncaster |
| December 2005 | Sheffield Hallam University approached regarding project evaluation | DRSACC, DDVWP, SHU |

Appendix 2: DoVeS Management Committee Meetings

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Represented parties</i> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| March 2006 | SHU, DRSACC, DDVWP, HMP Doncaster |
| June 2006 | DRSACC, HMP Doncaster, SHU |
| September 2006 | DRSSCC, DDVWP, SHU |

Appendix 3: Data Collection Sheet

ID No:

Doncaster Prison Counselling Service Evaluation Project

Evaluation Scale (to be completed on entry and exit from service)

Name: Entry Int' Date: _____

Exit Int' Date: _____

Entry questions

How did you find out about the counselling service?

How did you access the counselling service?

Did you know you were coming here for counselling today?

What do you expect/hope to get out of it?

How many sessions have you had to date?

Section One

1) I am happy

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree



2) I respect myself

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree



3) I think other people like me

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree



4) I feel I do not have much to be proud of

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree



What is the best thing about attending counselling?

What is the worst thing about attending counselling?

Have you had any counselling before? If so was this counselling different from the DoVeS?

Do any of your peers/ family know you are attending counselling? What has the reaction been like? Have their reactions had any impact on your attitude to the counselling?

Have the counselling sessions affected your confidence in your relationships with other people?

Do you think they have helped you communicate more effectively?

Would you say that receiving counselling has in any way reduced/ increased your anxiety?

Has the counselling revealed things about yourself and the way you do things that you didn't like/ didn't realise?

Affecting change

In what ways if any, has counselling affected your experience of prison life?

Do you see the DoVeS counsellor as part of the prison system or are they different?

Do you do any counselling 'work' (practice what talked about during sessions) outside the counselling relationship?

Do you employ anything you've learned in the sessions in your everyday life?

Attributed to counselling?

At end of interview consider 'movement' (if any) in evaluation scale between entry and exit.

To what extent do you feel these movements can be attributed to counselling and/or other factors?

Do you feel that the counselling you have received has been effective?

In what ways if any, would things have been different for you if you had not taken up the counselling service?

That is the end of my questions- was that ok for you?

Do you feel I've left anything out?

Is there anything you want to add?

Appendix 4: Client Contact Sheet

CLIENT CONTACT SHEET

Contact No: Answer Machine: Yes No

1st Contact Date: _____ Response Attempt Dates: _____

Telephone contact only Face - to - Face counselling

Number Obtained From: Police Social Services Other

Vol. Org. Publicity Health Education Service User

Probation Specify (all) _____

Date on Waiting List: _____ Date of 1st Appointment: _____

Gender of Client: Female Male

Area of Doncaster (or town): _____

Details

Age: 14-16 17-25 26-39 40-54
 55-69 70+ Not Known

Health Issues: Mobility Mental Health Long-Term Illness
 Learning Sensory Other Specify (all) _____

Ethnic Origin: White Asian Black Chinese Not Given
 Other Specify _____ Asylum Seeker / Refugee

Type of Assault: Adult Child Group / Ritual Abuse
 Not Given Other Specify _____

Relationship to abuser (s) _____

Not applicable ('third party' contact)

Appendix 5: Evaluation Activities

| Date | Location | Activity |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Feb 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Service user and staff interviews |
| March 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Service user interviews |
| April 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Service user and staff interviews |
| May 2006 | HMP Doncaster | 2 visits for service user interviews |
| June 2006 | HMP Doncaster | 3 visits for service user interviews |
| June 2006 | Barnsley Probation office | Visit for service user interview |
| July 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Visit for service user interviews |
| August 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Service user and referral staff interviews |
| | | |
| September 2006 | HMP Everthorpe and HMP Wolds | 2 service user interviews |
| September 2006 | HMP Doncaster | 3 visits service users interviews and staff interviews |
| October 2006 | HMP Doncaster | Referral staff interviews x 3 |
| | | |
| June 2006 | DoVeS office | Liaison role interview |
| | | Attendance at DoVeS meetings |

Appendix 6: Poster Design

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D o V e S
Domestic Violence Support

Are you from the Doncaster area?
Do you want a chance
to change your life?

Was your home a frightening place to be?

Were you a victim / instigator of any of the following abuse?

- Physical
- Sexual
- Spoken (verbal)

Has this made you

- Angry?
- Feel bad about yourself?
- Make bad choices?
- Treat yourself or others badly?
- Feel isolated

If you think sharing this might help, we are
offering the chance to talk with a skilled and
experienced counsellor

What next?... **Contact: Community Re-entry Team**

Appendix 7: Liaison Officer Activities

| Date | Activity |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| February 2006 | Buddies meeting |
| April 2006 | Through-care personnel meeting |
| April 2006 | Community Resettlement team |
| May 2006 | Chaplaincy team meeting |
| November 2006 | Lifers group |