

Editorial

Welcome to the eleventh edition of *Irish Probation Journal*. Last year's *Irish Probation Journal* was launched in Hillsborough Castle by Ministers of Justice from North and South of the border. The Ministers and the heads of the Probation Services in attendance for the launch officially acknowledged the important and valued contribution made by *Irish Probation Journal* over a decade in informing, influencing and developing probation practice and research across the island of Ireland and elsewhere.

Having reached that significant milestone, there are plans to continue to develop an *Irish Probation Journal* that will be relevant and valuable to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, academics and students working within criminal justice and social policy. We believe that the articles in *Irish Probation Journal* 2014 will inform practitioners in developing practice and partnerships that will prevent reoffending and make communities safer.

Irish Probation Journal provides a valuable opportunity for academics, researchers and practitioners to present their knowledge, research findings and examples of better practice. It offers a forum for continuous learning and development not only for people within the two services but also for the wider criminal justice readership and international colleagues.

In the annual Martin Tansey Memorial Lecture, hosted by the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development, Paul Senior, Director of the Hallam Centre for Community Justice, highlights the importance of partnership working and collaboration within criminal justice. Paul considers the development of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and pooling resources and expertise to create effective working partnerships to prevent reoffending. He stresses, in particular, the importance of role clarity and identity among the partners as well as a focus on their appropriate tasks. He also emphasises the importance of community involvement, information sharing, governance arrangements and identifying the target population.

Culture, ethnicity and race have become important issues in probation practice. Professor Denis Bracken examines how Probation Officers themselves view practice skills and methods of probation supervision in working with Travellers in Ireland. Continuing on the theme of minorities and their experiences, Paul Gavin considers the position of Irish prisoners in England and Wales, taking a critical look at the circumstances of Irish Travellers. Looking at a source of controversy in prisons in many jurisdictions, Cormac Behan investigates the divergent approaches by Ireland and the United Kingdom in addressing prisoner enfranchisement.

The area of risk assessment and management is explored by Professor Hazel Kemshall in her article charting the development of the Public Protection Arrangements in Northern Ireland. The arrangements are now a core part of probation's role. The development of effective training and information sharing in the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements is considered by Professor Kemshall. Issues in public disclosure as well as community engagement and education are also explored.

The subject of public disclosure and community engagement is continued in 'Not in my Back Yard' by Paul Thompson. Paul describes how, in Northern Ireland, high-risk sexual and violent offenders are assessed and managed in the community and the impact that access to appropriate housing and accommodation has on reoffending risk. Community engagement seeks to educate and reassure the public about approved accommodation, but understandable community concerns remain about where offenders live.

Every year probation services provide many reports to courts to assist sentencers in criminal courts. These reports contain key information for decision-making in the Children Courts. Etain Quigley considers Pre-Sentence Reports in Courts, exploring whether there has been a shift to risk-oriented practice.

Child-on-parent violence has, in recent times, been identified as a significant issue for attention. Eileen Lauster, with her colleagues, describes an innovative project in Limerick working with parents of young offenders who have experienced violence and threat from their children.

Differences between male and female genders are areas of constant curiosity in many fields. Working on LSI-R risk/need assessments, Janice Kelly and John Bogue examine the differing criminogenic needs identified and the implications for effective treatment for female offenders.

The 12-step programme is a widely endorsed model of addiction recovery. Socially constructed conceptions of dominant masculinity

represented in hegemonic masculinity are said to be a contributory factor in men's poor health status, including substance abuse. David Dwyer's study investigates the impact of this in a 12-step recovery programme, and some of the issues arising.

Justin McCarthy explores the complexities and challenges in community service and unpaid community work (Community Return programme) as 'front-door' and 'back-door' sanctions and alternatives to custody.

There are times when we think that problems and challenges in criminal justice are new. In an insightful and measured memorandum written in July 1941 and unknown for many years, the late Evelyn Carroll, a pioneering figure in the nascent Probation Service in the middle years of the twentieth century, provides her own analysis of female offending at the time and how it was addressed in the criminal justice system in Ireland. She examines issues in social attitudes as well as the treatment, aftercare and resettlement of female offenders. How much has changed and how much remains the same?

Restorative Justice and restorative practice are developing areas in community supervision. Dermot Lavin and Claire Carroll provide a practical case study highlighting the benefits of a Restorative Justice approach to victims, offenders and wider society. It is clear that restorative practice can give a voice to victims of crime and help offenders take responsibility for their actions.

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in Northern Ireland were established in 2013 and have helped probation build links at local level to enhance community safety. Eithne McIlroy describes how the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, through its participation as a designated body in partnerships with other statutory agencies and local people, can contribute to better resolution of local problems and keeping towns, streets and communities safer.

Continuous learning and development is explored in 'Practice Teaching in the Probation Service' by Susan Campbell Ryan. It is clear that quality practice teachers' support and guidance are key elements in students' progress and development.

We believe that *Irish Probation Journal* has an important role to play in stimulating new and innovative thinking as well as promoting debate, dialogue and engagement. There are many insightful and valuable articles and reports in this year's edition which will be important in informing and encouraging research, practice and policy development.

We look forward to our next edition and invite and encourage established and new writers on criminal justice issues, community sanctions in particular, to submit papers and research findings for publication in *Irish Probation Journal*.

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