

Measuring Attitudinal Change: An Action Research Project

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Summary: Choice and Challenge is a 12-session offending programme based on a motivational cognitive behavioural therapeutic (CBT) approach, designed and implemented by the Probation Service Programme Development Unit (PDU) in 2013. The programme has been delivered in community and custody settings for four years. Pre- and post-programme attitudinal testing has been put in place from the outset in order to have some evidence of effectiveness and to assist in programme revision. Programme impact has been measured using the Crime Pics II questionnaire. Information was also collected on some participants in the six- to 12-month period following completion of the programme. Initial findings suggest that participant attitudes were positively impacted. However, the change has proved difficult to sustain and there are significant variations in terms of which attitudinal indices are best sustained. Victim awareness is the least eroded of the four measured indices. This paper provides a brief introduction to the programme, describes the design process and considers the implications of the findings for service delivery in the Probation Service.

Keywords: Probation supervision, recidivism, reoffending, antisocial attitudes, antisocial behaviour, crime, CBT, group work.