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The last few months have seen some inspirational women hit the headlines: Jessica Ennis, Ellie Simmonds and Katherine Grainger triumphed at the London 2012 Olympics; Malala Yousafzai focused worldwide attention on children’s rights to education; and Burmese pro-democracy campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi welcomed President Obama at the home where she spent much of the last 20 years under house arrest. Inspired by this, our second edition of the *Pathway Press* is themed around the personality disorder strategy for women offenders.

What is the women offender personality disorder strategy?

It’s DH’s and NOMS’s strategic approach to managing women offenders who are likely to have personality disorder, have committed a more serious offence and are at high risk of re-offending. Its aims are to reduce re-offending, improve psychological health and well-being, and develop the workforce.

All women identified through the strategy will receive a gender-sensitive, holistic pathway plan, involving a range of health, criminal justice, social care and third sector partners. The plan starts and finishes in the community and may include:

- **Treatment** at the Primrose programme at HMP Low Newton, or the Therapeutic Community at HMP Send, or one of (up to) four new personality disorder treatment services
- Time to consolidate and test out treatment gains in a dedicated **progression** environment – there are already PIPEs (psychologically informed planned environments) at Low Newton and Send and there will be a new whole-prison enabling environment (EE) at Drake Hall. All of the six women’s approved premises will also become PIPEs or EEs
- Independent **mentoring** and advocacy.

For further information please see <http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/criminal-justice/womens-services/> or contact the women offender personality disorder project lead, Laura d’Cruz: Laura.dCruz@noms.gsi.gov.uk.

... Latest programme news ...

In recent months, we have:

- Launched a co-commissioning process for community-based personality disorder services for male and female offenders across England
- Conducted listening events at five sites as part of our user engagement and participation strategy
- Developed four regional business plans, setting out co-commissioning intentions for each region.

Our next steps are:

- Finalising the programme’s research & evaluation strategy
- Opening a new enhanced progression unit at HMP Belmarsh in March 2013 for men from London in the last 18 months of their sentence.



And here’s a **date for your diaries**: we are hosting the first national personality disorder programme conference in Nottingham on **11-12 February 2013**. Michael Spurr, NOMS Chief Executive, is a confirmed speaker. Further details to follow soon!

New personality disorder treatment service at HMP Foston Hall



The first of (up to) four new personality disorder treatment services for women will be located at HMP Foston Hall in Derbyshire. A flexible, inclusive treatment programme will be offered from a new purpose-built non-residential centre in the prison's grounds. HMP Foston Hall was chosen because of its population profile, the high level of local expertise and the possibility of building a meaningful pathway with nearby Drake Hall prison. The treatment service will be delivered by Foston Hall and a health provider, which will be selected early next year. It is hoped that the new service will be operational by Autumn 2013.

Deputy Governor, Amanda Hughes, comments... "We are delighted to be working with the NHS and NOMS on the first of the new personality disorder treatment services for women. This is welcomed and much needed service provision for female offenders and we are thrilled that Foston Hall has been chosen as the location. This project also provides excellent opportunity for joint working with Drake Hall to provide progression for women with severe personality disorders and linking into the wider pathway for female offenders in the mid region."

Primrose programme

The Primrose programme has been running at HMP Low Newton in Durham since 2006, when it was set up as part of the Dangerous & Severe Personality Disorder programme. It offers a range of psychologically informed interventions tailored to meet the individual needs of its twelve participants. It aims to reduce the risk they pose to themselves and others, and to provide women with pro-social life skills which enhance their physical, emotional, spiritual and mental wellbeing. Delivered jointly by the prison and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust, the Primrose programme is currently being

evaluated by London Metropolitan University. One participant commented to researchers:

'I'm me for the first time. I can actually feel free even in prison... It's good to be able to say that, it really is, because I would never have been able to say that before.'

Prisons with queries about referrals for Primrose should email primrose@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk

"Exploring new paths" through CARE

One of the aims of the women offender personality disorder strategy is to support the further roll-out of the CARE (Choices, Actions, Relationships, Emotions) programme, which currently runs at HMP Foston Hall. CARE isn't just for women with personality disorder, but because of the way its target group is defined (women in prison with a history of violence and who have experienced a range of complex problems), CARE may well be a valuable step in the pathways of many women identified through the personality disorder strategy.

CARE facilitator, Helen Thomas, tells us more... "CARE was introduced at HMP Foston Hall in July 2011. Three groups run per year, with eight women on each course. CARE aims to enable women to develop insight into their risk and needs, enhance belief that change is possible and provide the motivation to work towards and maintain that change. CARE uses a range of treatment methods including narrative therapy, which allows each woman to express her preferred ways of living and develop skills to allow her to be successful at living her preferred life. Mentoring and advocacy is provided by an independent organisation called *Women in Prison* and is available for two years after the programme has finished.

"We will be formally evaluating the programme within the coming months, but informal feedback has been very positive. This is how one participant described her experience:"

"I have learnt to face my past, the really bad things that happened and that I caused... Understand the reasons "why" and explore new paths. Build myself back up and become a nicer person. Everyone is capable of becoming a better person."

Prisons with potential referrals for CARE should email Helen.Thomas@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk.

Over to you: Pathway Press brings you the latest offender personality disorder programme updates, alongside stories from our pilot sites, news from our existing treatment units and wider personality disorder developments. Previous editions are available here: <http://www.personalitydisorder.org.uk/criminal-justice/publications/>. Our next edition (February 2013) will focus on community-based services. If you have a story to share, please email pd@noms.gsi.gov.uk.