



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Supporting Offenders into Employment

Formative evaluation

June 2019

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to Ella Cullen and Nicole Herdina for contributing to the completion of this report. A special thanks to all the participants, staff and providers who provided their time to assist with this evaluation.

Disclaimer

The views and interpretations in this report are those of the Research and Evaluation team and are not the official position of the Ministry of Social Development. The opinions, findings, recommendations, and conclusions expressed in this evaluation are those of the author(s), and not of Corrections, Salvation Army or Workwise.

Published October 2019

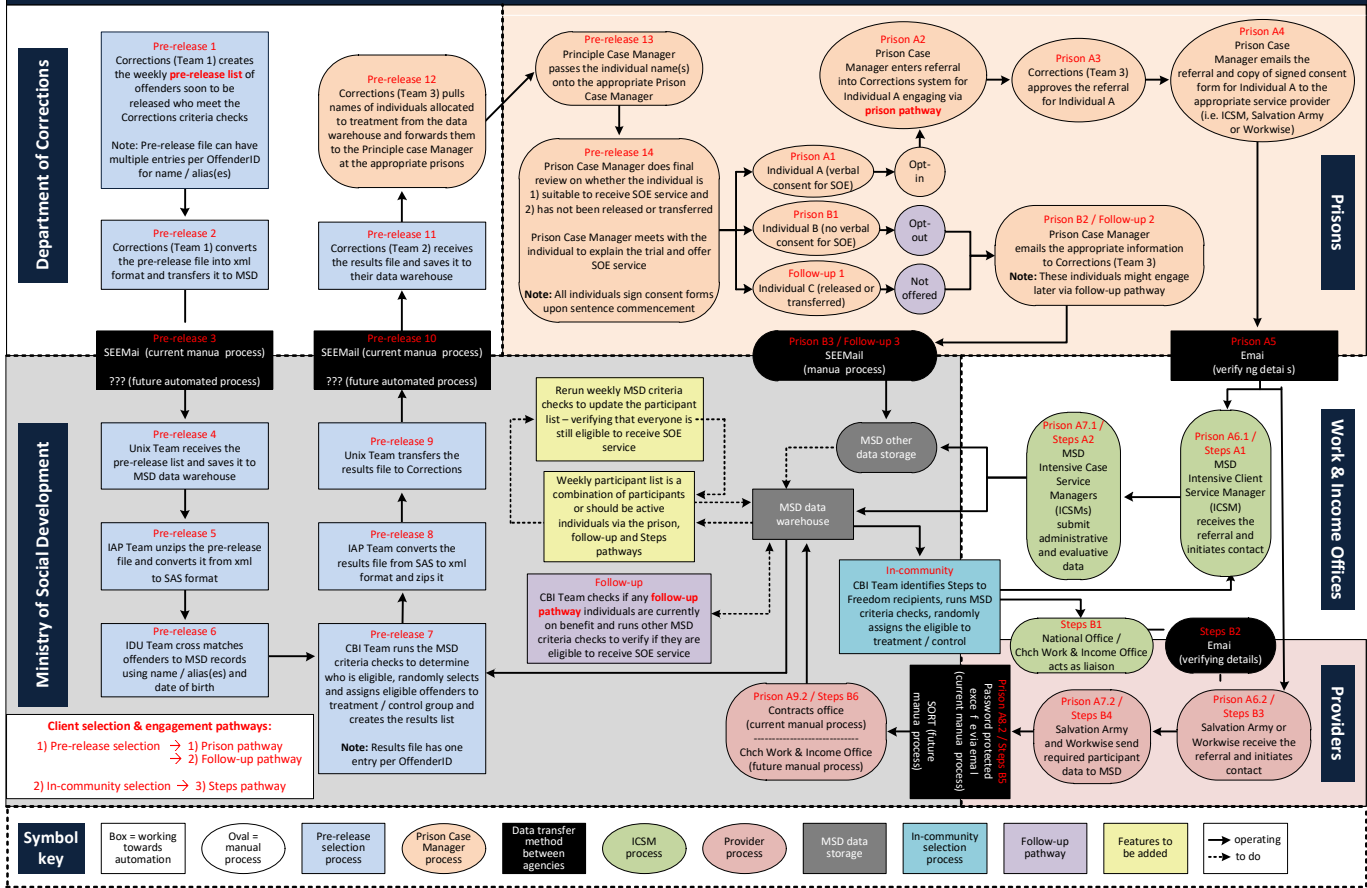
ISBN 978-1-98-854194-5

Contents

Contents	3
Abbreviations and terminology	7
Executive summary	9
Features of the SOE trial that worked well	9
Challenges identified.....	11
Changes already brought into effect by the formative evaluation.....	12
Introduction	14
Background	16
The formative evaluation methodology	18
Main findings	22
The SOE trial: a new way of working	22
The SOE trial consisted of three separate delivery approaches	22
The three delivery approaches were different, but all were responsive, flexible and innovative	23
SOE trial: selection processes and engagement pathways	26
Key finding: Flexible and innovative delivery of SOE worked well for participants	29
Adapting delivery to better meet the needs of participants in the service worked well..	29
A flexible approach to managing participants increased engagement	30
ICSMs and providers referred participants to appropriate support services	31
Key finding: Establishing rapport in prison is key to participation in the service post-release	33
There were differences in how providers and ICSMs worked with participants and employers	33
Early engagement while participants are in prison built rapport and trust	34
Providers and ICSMs preferred more time to engage in prison	35
Participants valued the support provided by the service even though they faced multiple challenges.....	38
Key finding: Transitioning from prison into the community presented many challenges	39
Accommodation was the main challenge for participants on release.....	40
Other challenges for participants following release	42
Key finding: Implementation of SOE was operationally challenging	44
The referral process was complex, manual and time consuming	44
There were multiple reasons for the low number of prison referrals	44

Issues which influenced later referral by Corrections case managers:	45
Corrections staff play a key role in SOE.....	46
Probation officers worked with recently released prisoners in the community	47
Key finding: Cross-agency collaboration requires communication, person-centric planning, and coordination of data systems	50
Good communications, planning and coordination across all players could enhance service delivery.....	51
A person-centric plan is ideal	52
MSD systems and processes could better support ICSMs and other agencies interacting with Work and Income	54
A number of challenges for ICSMs were raised:.....	54
Conclusion.....	57
References	58
Appendix 1: SOE trial pre-release selection process with 'prison' and 'follow-up' engagement pathways	60
Appendix 2: SOE trial in-community selection process with 'Steps' engagement pathway	61
Appendix 3: SOE trial design and data flow.....	62

Supporting Offenders into Employment – Trial Design and Data Flow



Appendix 4: Tracking the number of people through the pre-release selection process and prison engagement pathway to the number participating in SOE service 63

List of figures

Figure 1: It is a challenge to develop a relationship with a participant after release from prison	30
Figure 2: Making it easier for participants at the time of release from prison	33
Figure 3: Communication is key when Corrections and MSD work together.....	52

List of tables

Table 1: Representative list of services available to recently released prisoners	15
Table 2: Comparison of the three SOE service delivery approaches	25
Table 3: Distribution on the number of weeks prior to their proposed release date that people were identified on the soon-to-be released from prison list.....	36
Table 4: Release conditions for treatment and control groups selected through the pre-release process and released from prison by 2 June 2017	40
Table 5: Tracking the number of people through the pre-release selection process and prison engagement pathway to the number participating in SOE service	45
Table 6: Reasons why people on the prison release list did not meet Corrections eligibility criteria.....	63
Table 7: Locations where people on the prison release list were being released to outside of SOE service areas, leading to their exclusion from the SOE trial	64
Table 8: Reasons why people did not meet the MSD eligibility criteria	65
Table 9: Reasons why treatment individuals were not offered SOE service in prison	66

Abbreviations and terminology

The tables below contain a list of abbreviations and a list of terms used in the report.

Abbreviations	Meaning
BEUT	Behavioural Evaluation Update Tool
BPS	Better Public Service targets – a set of 10 targets which set the Government expectations for the public service
CARS	Corrections Analysis and Reporting System
CEEO	Community Education Employment Officers – Corrections
CMS	Client Management System (MSD)
CMT	Campaign Management Tool
Corrections	Department of Corrections
CV	Curriculum Vitae
GP	General Practitioner, medical doctor
IAP	Information Analysis Platform – MSD’s data warehouse
ID	Identification – documentation required for a benefit: passport, driver licence, student identification or bank transaction record
ICSM	Intensive Client Support Manager
IOMS	Integrated Offender Management System – a Corrections database
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
ORC	Offender Recruitment Consultants – Corrections
PRC	Prisoner Reintegration Coordinators – MSD
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
SOE	Supporting Offenders into Employment
SWN	Client number (MSD)

Terminology	Meaning
Client	General term for MSD beneficiaries.
Individual	General term for people who have been assigned to the SOE treatment group, who can accept or decline the SOE service. Occasionally, we also use the term individuals to refer to everyone assigned as either treatment or control within the SOE trial, but this distinction should be clear given the context.
Offender	General term for those either in prison or released to the community.
Participant	General term for individuals in the SOE treatment group who receive SOE service, either currently or previously.
SOE	A general term used when looking at the bigger picture that includes both the SOE service and SOE trial. It is also used when it's difficult to clearly identify operational processes as being either SOE service or SOE trial.
SOE delivery approach	This refers to the three different approaches to SOE service delivery, for example intensive case management (internal), multi-disciplinary (Workwise, external provider) and intensive reintegration (Salvation Army, external provider).
SOE service	A new cross-agency service that is being trialled, which individuals can receive through one of the delivery approaches (eg, in-house MSD service, external service providers).
SOE trial	Refers to the RCT design and evaluation to understand how well the SOE service is performing.
Stair-case/ stair-casing	Working with participants involves understanding their skills, strengths and needs, and what steps they can, and are willing to, take to move towards sustainable work. Working through the steps needed to build individual work readiness is known as 'stair-casing'.

Executive summary

This report details findings from the formative evaluation of Supporting Offenders into Employment (SOE) a cross-agency collaboration between the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the Department of Corrections (Corrections). SOE service supports people transitioning from prison to the community, and into employment. The aim is to achieve sustainable employment for recently released prisoners to prevent re-offending and reduce the likelihood of them returning to a benefit. The service consisted of three different delivery approaches, each providing three phases of support that starts with early engagement with people while in prison, continuing support after release, and up to one year after entering employment. The delivery approaches consisted of:

- An intensive reintegration approach – externally contracted service through Salvation Army’s ‘Making Life Work’ programme
- A multi-disciplinary team approach – externally contracted service through Workwise’s ‘Working Together Canterbury’ programme
- An in-house intensive case management service – delivered in five MSD service centres across the North Island.

SOE developed and aimed to test a new way of working to support recently released prisoners through the SOE trial. The trial used a randomised control trial (RCT) design with the aim of providing a high level of confidence that any difference in outcomes (eg time off a benefit) between the treatment and control groups (the impact) is due to the SOE service. It is planned to run three years. The in-house MSD service began on 3 October 2016 and the externally contracted services started on 28 November 2016. Evaluative analysis of outcomes and impact is out of scope for this report and will be undertaken as part of the impact evaluation.

This formative evaluation used a mixed-methods design to identify how the SOE service and parts of the SOE trial have been implemented, what has worked well and not so well, and how the service is supporting people who have been released from prison towards employment. Findings presented in this report are based on in-depth interviews (with service participants and staff at Corrections, MSD and external providers) and data analysis that took place in May/June 2017. Evaluative analysis of outcomes and impact is out of scope for this report and will be undertaken as part of the impact evaluation.

Features of the SOE trial that worked well

Delivery approaches differed but all were responsive, flexible and innovative

Each delivery approach (ie, in-house, external) operated differently and despite challenges, all showed innovation in their delivery.

The Salvation Army’s ‘Making Life Work’ programme in Canterbury had an intensive reintegration approach. The Salvation Army has well established relationships with Corrections prison staff and is comfortable approaching them to discuss individuals.

The Workwise ‘Working Together Canterbury’ programme had a multidisciplinary team and used the skills of a psychologist, a peer supporter, employment specialists and health and wellbeing workers. They applied evidence-based practice with a focus on mental health and supporting people to achieve steady, meaningful employment in mainstream competitive jobs.

At the time of this evaluation an MSD in-house intensive case management service was being delivered in five North Island areas (Whangarei, Hawkes Bay, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Wellington). There is an Intensive Client Support Manager (ICSM) located at each of these SOE service areas. MSD used an intensive case management model and employment support service with a focus on work readiness and managing barriers to employment.

The three different delivery approaches have responded to the needs of individuals, learning to align reintegration with building employment readiness. It was recognised that encouraging and enabling people to participate in pro-social activities in their communities contributed to their progress towards employment. Another key factor was being able to take care of unexpected financial expenses, removing this burden while individuals navigate life outside the structure of prison.

Early engagement with individuals in prison built trust

The early rapport established in prison between individuals' ICSMs or providers appeared to support a more successful relationship upon release and helped to better prepare people for life outside prison. This in-prison phase of the trial provided time to develop a plan to manage their immediate release needs (eg, accommodation). Providers and ICSMs reported that compliance and engagement after release was enhanced when they had had time to develop a relationship during the in-prison phase.

Person-centric delivery was valued among participants

People face many, often complex, challenges when transitioning from prison to the community. The main challenge is finding accommodation, while other challenges include health issues, fitting employment around release conditions, money and debt, transport and social isolation.

Participants placed a high value on support provided by the SOE service and a preference to work with one key person who understands their circumstances and needs. This facilitates a more tailored and person-centric approach to delivery. Participants also reported receiving assistance to navigate the barriers to reintegration, including assistance with access to Work and Income, meeting Corrections obligations, securing somewhere to live, and help to access the support services they need.

Cross-agency collaboration between MSD and Corrections was a new way of working

Corrections and MSD combined their expertise and knowledge to support those in prison transition back into the community. The new cross-agency way of working consisted of:

- Establishing a cross-agency governance group to provide oversight and guidance to the SOE trial.
- Seconding a Corrections Principal Advisor to MSD to work with case management teams as a representative of Corrections. SOE operational processes require Corrections case managers to initiate referrals. The seconded Corrections person provided advice to MSD on how prisons operated, and also coordinated the transfer of data between the two agencies.
- Recruitment and training of MSD ICSMs was joined up between the two agencies.

Cross-agency collaboration reinforced the importance of strong messaging to all those engaged across agencies, the importance of consistent project management and showed

that hurried implementation meant that not all systems and operational processes were in place at the start of the trial when SOE service went live.

Challenges identified

Corrections staff played a key role in the SOE trial and there is potential to support them further

Corrections case managers supported the concept of the SOE service, however the trial was challenging to implement on the ground. Lack of familiarity with Work and Income processes also presented some challenges and among probation officers there was mixed awareness about the service and how the trial worked. A probation officer's main priority is to ensure compliance with release conditions, which are sometimes in conflict with employment opportunities, so balancing these aspects created some perceived difficulties. Increased liaison between Corrections case managers, probation officers, providers, and Work and Income could better support people to navigate their journey towards employment.

There is potential for increased cross-agency collaboration to provide probation officers with training in Work and Income processes and training for Work and Income staff about Corrections obligations for recently released prisoners.

Increased communication, planning and coordination across agencies would enhance delivery

Increased communication between agencies would support the delivery of a more person-centric approach. This could be done through:

- Better communication around the purpose and processes of the SOE trial, and more information about Work and Income processes to Corrections staff to improve buy-in and referrals.
- Having a person-centric release plan that has been agreed and communicated by all agencies involved and collaboration and communication between all the support people, whānau and agencies around a reintegration plan for a participant with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities.
- Developing an overall SOE communications plan to engage and empower staff across all involved agencies to deliver consistent messages about the service.
- Employing an experienced project manager to maintain crucial relationships across all the agencies involved.
- Enabling more timely referrals which may help to maintain the integrity of the intended *ten week in prison* component of the service.
- Clarifying and collaborating on the responsibilities for both MSD and Corrections about accommodation and employment to remove duplicated efforts.

MSD systems and processes could better support ICSMs and other agencies interacting with Work and Income

The externally contracted service providers work differently to the in-house service that uses ICSMs. ICSMs cannot work off-site to support participants because of MSD health and safety restrictions. The ICSMs noted that they could not accompany participants to job interviews, provide in-work support at the participant's workplace or visit employers. The limited availability of office cars also restricted visiting times to prisons. The provision of supervision for ICSMs and further training in motivational interviewing were

identified as things that could better support them in their work. Contracted service providers reported needing greater support with Work and Income systems and processes to enable them to better support participants in the service.

Implementing the SOE trial was challenging in the operational setting

The SOE trial used an *intention-to-treat* stratified randomised control trial (RCT) design. Operationally, this meant people were selected based upon the area they were released to. Once criteria checks were completed and eligible people were randomly selected to the trial, they were then randomly assigned to the treatment group (those who are invited or required to participate in the service) or the control group (those who received a business-as-usual service).

One challenge was that people can be regularly moved around the country to different correctional facilities. With only six areas eligible for the trial, many individuals became ineligible when released to areas outside the trial. Referral numbers were low initially because people were released before they could be approached by a Corrections case manager. In response to this, the in-community selection process (and 'Steps' engagement pathway) was activated to help increase participant numbers. The aim of using an RCT design for the trial is to help fully understand and assess the impact of the trial. The findings from the RCT will be described more fully in a separate impact evaluation report.

Changes already brought into effect by the formative evaluation

The findings of this formative evaluation have already informed several changes to SOE service and the SOE trial.

Relationships

- In the North Island relationships have been developed between Corrections case managers and probation officers and they have been able to positively support the journeys of participants in the SOE service.
- Key MSD and Corrections personnel have been installed in Canterbury to support recruitment of participants and improve provider understanding of Work and Income processes and obligations.

Processing and data enhancements

- The data transfer system, while not fully-automated, is now more systematised with limited human input resulting in greater speed.
- ICSMs and providers are encouraged to continue working with participants via video conferencing if participants relocate outside of an SOE service area.

Support for ICSMs

- ICSMs have been encouraged to access and use the SOE trial funds available to support participants on their caseload.
- Use of the evaluation tools has been reviewed and the Behavioural Evaluation Update Tool (BEUT) has been put online to make it easier to complete.

- Structured engagement notes are being set up to consistently record ICSM engagement and intervention with participants.
- ICSMs now have laptops so they can enter or access their work information at a probation office or in the car before or after appointments in a prison.
- ICSMs are accessing professional supervision and more effort has been made to promote the usage of this by ICSMs in recent times.
- ICSMs who do not have previous Work and Income experience will also receive additional support to better understand the benefit system and the full range of financial assistance available to participants on their caseload.
- It is intended that all ICSMs receive additional training focussing on engagement and coaching skills required in the role.

Introduction

This is a formative evaluation of Supporting Offenders into Employment (SOE), a cross-agency initiative between MSD and Corrections. SOE service supports people transitioning from prison to the community, and into employment. The purpose of the SOE trial is to test the effectiveness of this new service in supporting recently released prisoners into sustainable employment. The theory of change (logic for intervention) is that finding stable and secure employment will help break the cycle of re-offending and reduce the likelihood of returning to benefit and remaining on it long term. Increasing the amount, quality and range of services provided to recently released prisoners will lead to improved social outcomes for them, their whānau, communities and wider society. The trial is intended to run for three years.

In New Zealand approximately 9,500 people leave prison and 30,000 begin community sentences every year¹. MSD is currently supporting approximately 16,300 recently released prisoners in all 11 MSD regions, working with Corrections to provide pastoral support and financial assistance to them before and upon release from prison.

One of the current government programmes targeted at this group is the Prisoner Reintegration Programme (PRP), a voluntary service set up in 2005 by MSD and Corrections to provide specialised support for recently released prisoners. MSD has 11 dedicated Prisoner Reintegration Coordinators (PRCs) operating in all regions, except Nelson where there is no prison. PRCs work with prisoners before and upon release, to process the Steps to Freedom application and 'handshake' them to the local MSD service centre in the region they are returning to. See *Table 1: Representative list of services available to* below for details of some of the other services for this group, out of the 60 services available in total.

The Supporting Offenders into Employment (SOE) service goes beyond PRP by offering a more intensive and holistic approach that focuses on long-term support by either an MSD Intensive Client Support Manager (ICSM) or an external provider (Salvation Army or Workwise). The aim is to offer a seamless service for participants, with early engagement while in prison, continuing support after release and up to a year after obtaining employment. Additional areas of support can include help accessing healthcare services, education and training to better prepare recently released prisoners for the workforce and assistance with finding an employer who is a good fit. By helping participants be better prepared for work and continuing support for up to a year while employed, the aim is to help participants sustain employment which reduces the likelihood of them returning to benefit or re-offending.

We expect to see a range of innovative approaches and learnings emerge as a result of collaborating with external stakeholders, which will increase the knowledge base for MSD and Corrections about what works best for prisoners released into the community.

¹ *Overview of support that the Ministry of Social Development provides released prisoners* (MSD Report to the Minister, 2018).

Table 1: Representative list of services available to recently released prisoners

Service	Description
Employment Support Service (ESS)	Contracted services that support recently released prisoners to find and maintain employment through active case management, job placement and in-work support for up to six months after work is obtained.
Guided Release	Provides long-serving prisoners with increased opportunities to address their basic reintegration needs prior to release, prepare intensive release plans and better equip them for their final release.
Housing First	The Housing First model recognises that it is easier for people to address issues such as mental health and substance use, once they are housed. The priority is to quickly move people into appropriate housing and then immediately provide wrap-around services to support their success.
Individual Placement and Support (IPS)	Individual Placement and Support is an evidence-based approach to supported employment for people with mental illness. IPS supports people in their efforts to achieve steady, meaningful employment in mainstream competitive jobs. It is based on eight principles: eligibility based on personal choice, focus on competitive employment, and integration of mental health and employment services, attention to personal preferences, work incentives planning, rapid job search, systematic job development and individualised job supports.
Intentional Peer Support	Intentional Peer Support as an approach is intended to move beyond helping a person to developing a partnership where both parties grow. It does not start with the assumption of a problem but works to develop new ways of thinking and doing. It looks beyond the notion of individual responsibility for change and encourages movement towards what a person wants instead of focusing on what they need to stop or avoid doing.
Out of Gate	Launched in 2013, Out of Gate assists short-serving (less than two years) prisoners to adjust to life beyond prison. There are five providers: Presbyterian Support, Goodwood Park Healthcare Group, CareNZ, Healthcare New Zealand Ltd and the National Urban Māori Authority.
People at Risk Solutions (PARS)	Formerly known as the Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation, PARS have years of experience assisting prisoners and their families/whānau and delivering services inside and outside prisons.
Release to Work	Minimum security prisoners who are assessed as suitable engage in paid employment in the community, to help them gain employment on release.
Salvation Army (non-SOE contracted services)	Reintegration support for prisoners who have served two or more years. They offer two services: Navigation support for one month and Supported Accommodation for up to 90 days. Services are located at New Plymouth, Gisborne, Napier, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Invercargill
Steps to Freedom	<p>A grant of up to \$350 from MSD for people who have been in prison for 31 days or more and have now been released, or released on home detention.</p> <p>The grant is for any initial set-up costs such as: housing, bond or rent in advance, beds and bedding and essential appliances.</p>

Service	Description
Tiaki Tangata Reintegration Service	A whānau-centric service that supports long-serving Māori prisoners to successfully transition back and reintegrate into their local community upon release from prison.
Whare Oranga Ake Reintegration	A kaupapa Māori environment which supports prisoners in re-connecting with their culture and identity and in addressing identified reintegration needs (particularly employment, accommodation and whānau relationships).

Background

Recidivism and return to benefit is high among released prisoners

Fifty-two percent of people released from New Zealand prisons in 2002/03 were convicted of a new offence and returned to prison at least once during a five-year follow-up period. Twenty-six percent had re-offended, been reconvicted and returned to prison within the first twelve months. For younger people the reconviction and imprisonment rates are higher, with 71 percent of those aged under 20 re-imprisoned within five years. For Māori, the re-imprisonment rate (58 percent) is higher than the rate for both NZ Europeans (47 percent) and Pacific peoples (40 percent) (Department of Corrections, 2009).

Roughly 60 percent of released prisoners will receive a main benefit within the first month of their release. Eighty percent end up receiving benefit support for twelve months or longer.

Employment is associated with reduced offending

Being employed has been shown to be associated with reduced re-offending (Skardhamar and Telle, 2012). However, there is also evidence that having any job is not enough to encourage desistance but that the stability and quality of the job are also important factors (Sampson and Laub 2006; Healy, 2010). Where work is unstable or does not lead to the formation of strong social bonds, desistance from crime is less likely (Bellair and Kowalski, 2011).

What works for recently released prisoners?

The most successful programmes for supporting recently released prisoners back into employment are those which coordinate work before and after release from prison (Shapland et al, 2011). Effective 'through care' involves contact with people while they are still in prison, continuity of contact in the community and opportunities for people to have input into the services that they receive (Trotter, 2011). 'Through care' is intended to reduce re-offending by addressing the needs of prisoners as they re-enter the community. Consistency of contact builds trust between service users and providers.

Recently released prisoners' value practical support more than any other type of intervention (Maruna, 2010) although they are not necessarily accustomed to actively seeking help from outside agencies to solve their problems (Shapland et al, 2011). Those working with this group may need to adopt a more proactive approach to helping solve their practical needs while at the same time trying to enhance their problem-solving skills and empower them to search out help when needed. Following from that, there is strong evidence that provision of practical support in prison is unlikely to have a

lasting effect on the risk of re-offending unless it continues after release (Harper and Chitty, 2005).

Programmes focused on pre-employment strategies and teaching soft skills, such as the Centre for Employment Opportunities (CEO) programme in the United States, have had an effect on re-entry to prison. Using random assignment, the CEO programme has demonstrated a reduction in recidivism especially with people who enrolled shortly after release from prison (CEO; Redcross et al, 2012).

Other models such as transitional job programmes which offer temporary subsidised jobs, for example the Joyce Foundation's Transitional Jobs Re-entry Demonstration (TJRD), showed that while there are employment outcomes in the first two years post-release, for most former prisoners (70 percent) this did not lead to formal sustained employment beyond the two-year period (Jacobs, 2012). Findings from the TJRD evaluation suggest that enhancement to the model such as a focus from transitional temporary work to regular employment would create more incentive and better pay conditions for offenders. Other enhancements include extending the transitional job period or adding training to the programme (Jacobs, 2012).

There is mixed evidence, mainly from the United States, about the effectiveness of employment programmes in reducing re-offending. Stand-alone employment programmes are unlikely to be effective unless they are combined with motivational, social, health and educational support services to help address other needs of former prisoners that may act as barriers to finding employment. These barriers can include learning difficulties, mental illness and substance abuse (Visher et al, 2006).

Evidence from the UK has shown that the most successful elements of effective employment programmes are: strong local partnership, training related to local employment needs and opportunities, long-term funding and generous lead-in times (Sarno et al, 2001).

Randomised control trial to measure effectiveness of the SOE service

Randomising people as part of the RCT trial design prior to inviting them to participate means that we are testing the effectiveness of the SOE service within the environment that it would operate if it was business-as-usual. This helps us to understand if this service is of value overall, given:

- labour market conditions and employment rates can vary by area
- there are numerous other reintegration programmes available (Table 1, page 15)
- released prisoners' feelings about how much or how little support they think they need
- the availability of housing, training and employment options
- the expectations of case managers and probation officers
- that not everyone will take up the service and the support available.

This formative evaluation therefore includes a description of how recently released prisoners were selected for the SOE trial as part of the RCT design, how those in the treatment group were invited to service and how this has affected implementation of the SOE service. A separate impact evaluation will look at the outcomes, and the difference in outcomes between the treatment and control groups.

Terminology

About the terminology in this report, 'SOE service' refers to a new service that is being trialled, which individuals can receive through one of the delivery approaches (e.g. in-house MSD service, external service providers). Whereas, the 'SOE trial' refers to the RCT design and evaluation to understand how well SOE service is performing. We use the umbrella term 'SOE' when looking at the bigger picture that includes both the SOE service and SOE trial. It is also used when it's difficult to clearly identify operational processes as being either SOE service or SOE trial.

The term 'offenders' as used in the name of the SOE service refers to people either in prison or released to the community. We use 'individuals' as a general term for those assigned to the treatment group, who can then accept or decline SOE service. Occasionally, we also use the term 'individuals' to refer to everyone assigned as either treatment or control within the SOE trial, but this distinction should be clear given the context. 'Participants' are limited to treatment group individuals who have received SOE service.

Aim of the formative evaluation

This formative evaluation was conducted in May 2017 and describes the findings after the trial had been active for around six months. Relevant qualitative and quantitative evidence and commentary to show how the SOE service was implemented, what worked well and what did not work, and how SOE service works to support people transition from prison towards employment is included. It is important to note that, as documented in the Executive summary, implementation of the SOE service has improved during the first year and processes have been developed to respond to challenges revealed by this evaluation.

The formative evaluation methodology

Formative evaluation of SOE was undertaken in May/June 2017 and used a mixed-methods approach. It included in-depth interviews and focus groups, as well as data analysis, to understand the flow of people through the RCT selection process and the flow of treatment individuals into the service.

Interview selection process

Purposive sampling was used to select participants from each SOE service area for the in-depth interviews based on age, ethnic group and gender. Participants interviewed included:

- people ranging in age from 25 years to 54 years
- Māori, New Zealand Europeans and Australians
- those who had served prison sentences ranging from six weeks to 22 years
- those with convictions for different offences including drink driving, burglary, supply of drugs and murder
- those who had been taking part in SOE from one month to eight months.

Selection of Corrections case managers was through the Corrections Principal Advisor who had been seconded to MSD. He contacted each of the prisons in the SOE service areas and arranged with staff to invite Corrections staff members who had participants receiving SOE service to attend a voluntary focus group.

In-depth interviews and focus groups with 79 key staff members involved in delivery of the service and 13 participants receiving the service took place between 15 May and 30 June 2017:

Frontline:

- In-depth interviews with four Intensive Client Support Managers (ICSMs)
- In-depth interviews with five Workwise team (four frontline and one managerial)
- In-depth interviews with six people from the Salvation Army (four frontline and two managerial).

Corrections:

- Five focus groups with 25 Corrections case managers (at five locations: Northern Regional Correctional Facility, Hawkes Bay Regional Prison, Rimutaka Prison, Manawatu Prison and Rolleston Prison)
- Six focus groups with 27 probation officers (at six locations: Upper Hutt, Porirua, Whangarei, Hastings, Palmerston North and Christchurch).

Management and project team:

- In-depth interviews with three Service Centre managers
- In-depth interviews with two Corrections team (one project team member and one data analyst)
- seven MSD team (two project team members, two from the contracts team and three data analysts).

SOE participants:

- In-depth interviews with ten men
- In-depth interviews with three women.

Recruiting participants for interview was challenging. The intention was to include approximately 30 participants (20 in the internal service and five each from the two external providers).

Interview questions

As the interview questions were generalised, we have used the term SOE, rather than trying to distinguish between SOE trial and SOE service.

- How they became involved in SOE
- Their role in SOE
- Experience of working with current and former prisoners / individuals / participants in SOE
- Experience of working with other agencies involved in SOE
- What they felt was working well with SOE
- Opportunities for improvements to SOE.

Interviews with ICSMs were conducted face-to-face in Work and Income offices. They also answered questions about their training for the role, how they performed their role and the pros and cons of the role.

Interviews with the Salvation Army and Workwise providers were conducted in their offices, using a mixture of interviews and focus groups with staff involved in SOE.

Focus groups with Corrections case managers took place in prisons, whereas focus groups with probation officers were conducted in their offices.

Management, contracting staff, data collection staff and project managers from Corrections and MSD were also interviewed to understand how SOE was implemented, particularly focusing on the cross-agency aspect of SOE.

Qualitative data analysis

Thematic analysis of the interviews was conducted in order to identify patterns of meaning across all the qualitative data collected in order to answer the following formative evaluation questions:

- How was the SOE trial / service implemented?
- What has worked well in the trial / service implementation?
- What has not worked so well and what changes could improve the trial / service?
- What are the early experiences of participants in the service?

The aim was to improve on the project design and performance and to understand why SOE works or does not work and what other factors (internal or external) may influence the outcomes and impacts of SOE.

The analysis also aimed to compare and contrast the three delivery approaches of the service. The analysis looked at what was working to support participants, what the main challenges faced by them and those delivering the service were, strategies that appeared to work, and improvements/changes that could improve the service to participants.

Administrative and SOE data analysis

The quantitative analysis for this evaluation involved linking up separate spread sheets of prisoners who had been identified as coming up for release either on parole or on conditions for the pre-release selection process. Comments (e.g. reasons for exclusion) were categorised as appropriate.

As of 8 May 2017, 3,484 prisoners had been identified as coming up for release. Of these, 112 had been identified twice. Twelve were only assigned to the treatment or control group the first time, ten were only assigned to the treatment or control group the second time, and two were assigned to the control group twice. The others (88) were not eligible for SOE either time they were identified.

Cross-checking the pre-release selection dataset against the official list of treatment and control assignments, showed 369 people were allocated to the treatment group, 362 were allocated to the control group and 13 were either on hold or had no assignment as of 3 May 2017.

Corrections provided data for those who had been assigned to the treatment or control groups as of 3 May 2017 and released by 2 June 2017. This was linked to the pre-release selection data and MSD's administrative data for description of individuals when they were assigned to SOE and statistical testing of any differences between the treatment and control groups at selection using an alpha of five percent.

For those released by 2 June 2017, the numbers were limited to 248 treatment and 249 control individuals. Note that of those 248 treatment individuals, we only had a record of 112 who had had any engagement with an ICSM or provider (80 with ICSM, seven with the Salvation Army and 25 with Workwise).

In the early months ICSMs were instructed to find MSD clients, outside of the pre-release selection process, to top up their caseloads. While these clients have not been specifically included in the analyses, some of them may have already been assigned to

the treatment (who weren't approached) or control group. At the point of analysis there were three people in the control group who the ICSMs had engaged with. In line with the intention-to-treat methodology, these people will be analysed in the groups to which they were assigned.

Testing revealed continuous variables were skewed, so the Wilcoxon t approximation was used to test any differences between the treatment and control groups for these variables. This is also why medians have been reported in the text, rather than mean values. Chi-square tests have been used to assess any differences between the treatment and control groups for the categorical variables. Any significant differences have been revealed in the text; unless this has been explicitly stated then no difference was found.

Main findings

The SOE trial: a new way of working

A collaboration between MSD and Corrections

The SOE service presents a new way of working for both MSD and Corrections, and an opportunity for both agencies to collaborate and to learn about each other's efforts to reduce long-term welfare dependence and serious crime, including the rate of re-offending. As well as the MSD ICSMs and their respective service centre managers, key roles across the two agencies include the SOE governance group, the project team, Corrections case managers and probation officers.

The SOE governance group includes deputy chief executives, directors, general managers and national managers from both MSD and Corrections. The governance group is responsible for providing leadership, direction and decision making over the cross-agency work programme within the parameters of the SOE trial.

The project team includes an MSD general manager, an MSD director, an MSD service designer, a principal advisor from Corrections, and an MSD senior service designer who is also the project lead. Together, they are responsible for implementing the SOE service, relationship management, day-to-day operations, and responding to challenges within the SOE service and trial.

Corrections case managers work with people in custody. They facilitate services and deliver active support to prepare people to live an offence-free life. Their role is to ensure a successful transition to probation service or into the community. The role of Corrections case managers is to approach those randomised to the treatment group of the SOE trial letting them know about the SOE service and, when someone consents to participate, they facilitate the first meeting between that person and the ICSM or external provider.

Probation officers motivate and encourage recently released prisoners to make positive changes in their lives, and this often means working closely with friends, family/whānau, programme facilitators and community work supervisors as well as other agencies such as Work and Income, the Salvation Army and Oranga Tamariki–Ministry for Children. Probation officers will make referrals to programmes that may assist those with an issue or problem specific to their offending type, or that may have contributed to their offending

The SOE trial consisted of three separate delivery approaches

Two externally contracted services were located in Christchurch

These providers had capacity to support up to 100 participants each at any one time. The externally contracted services began on 28 November 2016:

- The Salvation Army – 'Making Life Work' programme
- Workwise – 'Working Together Canterbury' programme

In-house case management service delivered in five MSD service centres across the North Island

There was an Intensive Client Support Manager (ICSM) for each North Island service area (Whangarei, Hawkes Bay, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Wellington). Each ICSM had an approximate caseload of 40 participants, resulting in a maximum of 200 participants in the in-house service at any one time. This delivery approach began on 3 October 2016.

The three delivery approaches were different, but all were responsive, flexible and innovative

The design of the SOE trial incorporated the in-house and the contracted services. However, as two providers had been separately contracted to provide the SOE service in Canterbury and they have different approaches, this has resulted in three different approaches to service delivery for our participants.

Three approaches to service delivery were included in the SOE trial

- The Salvation Army – Making Life Work – a reintegration model
- Workwise – Working Together Canterbury – a multi-disciplinary model
- MSD – Intensive Client Support Managers (ICSM) – an intensive case management trial

The three approaches tailored their service delivery to meet the needs of participants in service.

The Salvation Army's 'Making Life Work' programme used a reintegration model

The Salvation Army has a long history of working with marginalised populations and people both in prison and after release in the community². They have provided programmes and support in the area of drugs and alcohol and offer services to assist people recently released from prison into employment. The Salvation Army has existing contracts with MSD for the provision of:

- A Supported Accommodation service which provides housing for men released from prison for 13 weeks in Salvation Army-owned or run properties. Moving people into their own private accommodation occurs after this time and the support continues for a further 13 weeks.
- A Navigation service – this provides support for one month to those who already have their own accommodation at the time of release.

Initially the Salvation Army's model of delivery for the SOE service separated the functions of prisoner reintegration and employment in the provision of their service to people in trial:

- Seven field workers, some of whom are trained social workers, managed the early integration into the community. The Salvation Army uses its own properties to house

² <http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/need-assistance/accommodation/post-prison-support>

individuals on release so that the field workers can closely monitor and support them. The field workers had low caseloads and worked intensively with people.

- One employment navigator acted as a broker between people in the service and employers.

However, by the time of the interviews for this evaluation, the Salvation Army was in the process of modifying its service delivery. Only one key field worker was assigned to support the integration of people in the community. The Salvation Army was planning to hire an employment coach to upskill and prepare people for work with the aim that once ready, they would be referred to the employment navigator to broker them directly into an employment role.

The Workwise 'Working Together Canterbury' programme used a multidisciplinary model

The Working Together Canterbury wrap-around service was delivered by a multidisciplinary team. Workwise uses a 'Housing First' model to assist people into accommodation and tried to minimise the use of emergency housing or temporary arrangements as far as possible. Their approach uses evidence-based practice and incorporates the principles of Individual Placement and Support (IPS)³.

The multidisciplinary team consisted of an employment consultant, a housing coordinator, two health and wellbeing support workers, a psychologist, a newly-appointed peer support worker and a team leader. As well they offered clients access to a wider team of Wise Group staff including support workers and registered health professionals.

An initial psychosocial assessment with each participant provided the basis for a plan to identify their needs and work holistically with them. Each participant in service has a key worker alongside them, but the whole team meets regularly at multidisciplinary team meetings to provide their skills as needed.

The in-house MSD ICSM programme used an intensive case management model

The approach adopted by MSD used a high intensity case management and employment support service. This individual and tailored approach concentrated on streaming people into employment.

Five Intensive Client Support Managers (ICSMs) focused on finding sustainable employment through work readiness, up-skilling and managing barriers to employment. They provided individualised assistance to address complex needs of participants leaving prison. The ICSMs facilitated access to care and support aimed to stair-case work-obligated participants towards sustainable and appropriate employment including assistance with work skills, education and training, health, money and housing.

³ Individual Placement and Support is an evidence-based approach to supported employment for individuals with mental illness. IPS supports individuals in their efforts to achieve steady, meaningful employment in mainstream competitive jobs. It is based on eight principles: eligibility based on client choice, focus on competitive employment, integration of mental health and employment services, attention to preferences of those in the service, work incentives planning, rapid job search, systematic job development and individualised job supports.

A suite of tools specific to the SOE trial support the case management approach. These include employer and participant incentives, a discretionary fund, multiple support meetings and an education and training grant.

Table 2: Comparison of the three SOE service delivery approaches

Aspect	Salvation Army	Workwise	MSD ICSM service
Delivery approach	Strong reintegration	Multidisciplinary	Intensive case management
Release from prison – pick up participants from prison?	Yes – take participant to bank, accommodation, to buy clothes, doctors’ appointments	Yes – take participant to bank, accommodation, to buy clothes, doctors’ appointments	No – participants required to get quotes for phones, clothes, accommodation
Sources of accommodation	Have approximately 20 properties in Christchurch and hostel for emergency accommodation	Workwise Housing co-ordinator – using Work and Income emergency housing, Wise Group social housing, Comcare Charitable Trust, private rentals and working with some real estate agents	Using emergency accommodation, refer to social housing assessment and housing case managers
Location of meetings with participants	In the community or Probation Services office. From August 2017 larger Salvation Army office space allows participant interaction on site.	In the community, Workwise office or Probation Services office	Work and Income office or Probation Services office
Participant job interviews	Attend and support with participants	Attend and support with participants	Unable to attend or support at interviews
In-work support	Can visit the workplace	Can visit the workplace	Unable to visit the workplace but participants are eligible for the In-Work Support telephone service
Record keeping	Service and Mission Information System (SAMIS)	Workwise internal system RecordBase	Initial Client Assessment (ICA), Behavioural Evaluation Update Tool (BEUT). Shared drive for participant log, CMS
Incentive payments to participants in employment	No	No	Yes
Discretionary fund	No but able to access non-recoverable Work and Income entitlements	Yes, flexible programme fund utilised for a range of interventions	Yes
Use of multiple support meetings	Weekly team meetings	Weekly MDT meetings and team meeting every morning	Not using multiple supports meetings. Weekly telephone conferences with other ICSMs
Supervision	Field workers (social workers) have regular supervision	Yes	Yes (However, ICSM uptake was low due to lack of awareness and information)

SOE trial: selection processes and engagement pathways

The focus of SOE service is to help recently released prisoners gain sustainable employment to break the cycle of re-offending and reduce the likelihood of returning to a benefit. Therefore, to be eligible for SOE trial people must meet these general criteria:

- be in a SOE service area,
- not present any safety concerns for ICSMs or providers working with them, and
- be currently on, or likely to return to, a benefit with work obligations.

There are two processes through which people can be selected to the SOE trial and three pathways that treatment individuals can be engaged. The third engagement pathway was included in the SOE trial design since participation in SOE service is **voluntary** for people while in prison or off-benefit, and **mandatory** for people while on a benefit.⁴

The selection processes and engagement pathways are outlined below (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for flow diagrams), with additional details following paragraphs.

- **Pre-release selection process:** people currently in prison were identified via Corrections' weekly soon-to-be-released list and matched against eligibility criteria
- **'Prison' pathway:** people were approached in prison
- **'Follow-up' pathway:** people were not approached in prison, but later approached while on benefit when participation is mandatory
- **In-community selection process:** former prisoners released to the community were identified via MSD's ad hoc Steps to Freedom list and matched against eligibility criteria
- **'Steps' pathway:** people were approached while on benefit

Pre-release selection process and criteria

A list of prisoners scheduled to be released soon, who meet Corrections' eligibility criteria, is provided weekly by Corrections to MSD.

Corrections' eligibility criteria excluded people that were:

- not being released on conditions or on parole (so we know what probation office the prisoner will be released to)
- not being released to an SOE service area
- considered high risk
- thought to pose a risk to staff
- child sex offenders and
- diagnosed with severe and unstable mental health issues.

MSD then applied their own eligibility criteria to exclude those who:

- could not be data matched to a Work and Income Number (SWN)
- were already selected to the SOE trial
- already had an SOE programme tag on file
- had no history of receiving a main benefit

⁴ In theory they 'will be' obliged to participate in SOE service while receiving a benefit. However in practice this is not happening systematically and is dependent upon ICSM and provider capacity.

- last received a Supported Living Payment, Sole Parent Support (with a child under two years of age upon the offender's expected release date) or New Zealand Super / Veteran's Pension benefit
- had a trespass order from Work and Income offices
- had a child sex offender note on their record
- were under 18 or over 64 years old.

Checks were carried out each week to see how many spots each of the ICSMs and providers had available. The pre-release list was then consulted to assess whether anyone was eligible to fill those spots at each service area. If there were, MSD had a two-step process to randomly select eligible people for each service area, and then randomly assigned them to the treatment or control group.

The full list of results was returned to Corrections, indicating who had been assigned treatment, control, not eligible or not selected for SOE trial. Corrections forwarded the treatment list details to the relevant prisons.

The 'prison' pathway

The Corrections principal case manager at each SOE prison did a final check for any safety reasons that would exclude someone from receiving SOE service.

A Corrections case manager met with eligible people and told them about the SOE service. That person was informed that participation was voluntary while in prison or off benefit, but mandatory if they receive a benefit.

In Christchurch, if capacity allows, people are given the option to work with Workwise or Salvation Army.

When someone agreed to participate in SOE service, the Corrections case manager recorded a referral in their system. A meeting was set up between the person and the appropriate service approach, either an ICSM or provider, ideally while that person was still in prison.

The 'follow-up' pathway

The 'follow-up' pathway was for those people who were released or transferred to another prison before they could be approached (due to delays in the selection process or the combination of a short sentence and time served on remand). This pathway involved a Work and Income employee contacting and meeting with those currently on benefit to inform them of the SOE service and their obligation to participate.

If someone in the Christchurch treatment group was not approached in prison and was not currently engaged with Work and Income then an employee of Corrections contacted the person to inform them of the SOE service and offer them the opportunity to participate voluntarily as part of the 'follow-up' pathway.

In-community selection process and criteria

The in-community selection process involved identifying current Work and Income beneficiaries living in one of SOE service areas who were not already assigned to the SOE trial, had received a Steps to Freedom payment (on release from prison) within the past three, six or nine months, were not receiving a Supported Living Payment, Sole Parent Support (with a child currently under two years of age) or New Zealand Super / Veteran's Pension benefit, did not have a trespass order from Work and Income offices

or a child sex offender note on their record and were not under 18 or over 64 years old. The priority order of selection is three months, then six months, then nine months.

A check was carried out to see how many spots each of the ICSMs and providers had available. The in-community list was then consulted to assess whether anyone was eligible to fill those spots at each service area. If there were, MSD then did a two-step process to randomly select eligible people for each service area, and then randomly assign them to the treatment or control group.

The in-community selection process was used on an ad hoc basis to help boost participant numbers.

The 'Steps' pathway

Names of the in-community treatment individuals were provided to the ICSMs or providers who then arranged a meeting with them and explained the SOE service to them.

These people had to participate in the programme as part of their benefit obligations, but their participation became voluntary once they were off benefit.

Key finding: Flexible and innovative delivery of SOE worked well for participants

Adapting delivery to better meet the needs of participants in the service worked well

The Salvation Army made a responsive change to SOE delivery

The Salvation Army reassessed its approach to delivering SOE after their initial referral numbers were low. They identified and acknowledged some misconceptions they had about the kind of participants that they would receive and modified their approach in response. They recognised that the reintegration and employment functions in their delivery of SOE needed to be more aligned. In late March 2017 the Salvation Army appointed an employment coach to act as a conduit between one key field worker and the employment navigator, aiming to get participants work-ready. The Salvation Army re-launched their service as “Making Life Work” with a greater emphasis placed on the employment side of the service.

Workwise implemented peer support to enhance their delivery

Workwise recognised a gap in their multidisciplinary team and noted that many participants were young men who would benefit from participating in pro-social activities in their communities. Workwise responded by employing a new staff member to provide peer support to extend their community involvement and connections with Māori. It was intended that the role would take an Intentional Peer Support approach⁵ and embed literacy support within the role.

MSD ICSMs were innovative in their use of their discretionary fund

The ICSMs used a discretionary fund to stair-case participants toward their goals in training and employment. This fund was used in a number of innovative and effective ways to:

- enable participation in pro-social activities (e.g. table tennis club membership, gym membership and the purchase of rugby boots)
- pay for driving lessons or licences to improve employment opportunities
- assist those without licences with transport by purchasing bicycles, helmets and bicycle locks
- remove stress from participants by purchasing essential items (e.g. purchasing essential household items otherwise not available through Work and Income)
- increase confidence and work prospects by funding dental treatment and tattoo removal
- secure accommodation in advance by paying bond and rent a number of weeks in advance of release from prison
- support employment by purchasing work equipment or special licences

⁵ Intentional Peer Support as an approach is intended to move beyond helping a person to developing a partnership where both parties grow. It does not start with the assumption of a problem but works to develop new ways of thinking and doing. It looks beyond the notion of individual responsibility for change and encourages movement towards what a person wants instead of focusing on what they need to stop or avoid doing.

- provide participants with identification (e.g. paying for birth certificates).

A flexible approach to managing participants increased engagement

The Salvation Army worked hard to form relationships

Engagement with participants following their release from prison was a challenge for Salvation Army field workers. One field worker spoke about going to the prison to pick up someone who they had not had the opportunity to meet previously. At the prison gate the participant's associates were there to pick him up. The field officer could only introduce himself before the participant departed with his associates (see Figure 1). Although it was challenging to build up a relationship with someone after their release from prison, the field worker persisted in following up, with them and was able to gradually build up a relationship by specifically addressing immediate needs for furniture and food.

Workwise persisted in their support of participants in the trial

Workwise were able to respond flexibly to participants who did not meet their obligations and responsibilities in the service. One person, for whom Workwise had found full-time work, missed his second day at work because he overslept. One of the Workwise employment consultants phoned the employer and persuaded them to give the person another chance. The employment consultant picked the person up and took them to work at 6.30am the next day and then continued to phone them every morning to ensure they got up to go to work until the habit was established.

Figure 1: It is a challenge to develop a relationship with a participant after release from prison

It was catch-up the whole time. And so it was really just trying to chase him, book an appointment and just hope for the best, really.

Well, with [...], see, what happened is I went to pick him up and basically his mates were already there and so that had already been arranged but, of course, I didn't know that. We introduced ourselves there, at the gate. And then he and his mates didn't give me any opportunity to actually talk about a particular process. He was gone...

So from there it was trying to chase him and find out exactly where his address was and I accessed that from his probation officer. I went round there and had several engagements with him. I formed a relationship with him, primarily through the need that was there in the home. So I managed to get a care pack from a family store because he was staying in a home there and there was about six or seven others in a two-bedroom home. I managed to get a care pack, with tables and chairs. Managed to get him some food packs as well. And, you know, we managed to actually talk and so I met some of his needs, which was really cool. We set up some appointments, which he just failed to attend. He wouldn't respond to any texting too, as well, so it was chase, chase, chase.

ICSMs were responsive to challenging situations

People's thinking styles are known to be influential in determining whether offending continues or ceases. Those who do not re-offend do not necessarily face fewer social problems than re-offenders. However, there is evidence to suggest they are more psychologically resilient, as they show higher levels of self-efficacy and better coping skills (Healy, 2010). The ICSMs established rapport with participants, working with them to modify behaviours and to put strategies in place to deal with challenging situations. For example, an ICSM encouraged someone to send texts to them expressing frustration with a situation rather than defaulting to previous behaviours or violence. As the ICSM said, "it was a really big thing for him because he can lose his temper really fast and that he actually stopped and thought.... That's making a difference to someone, to stop them doing something dumb which could end up with them back there [prison]".

ICSMs and providers referred participants to appropriate support services

Workwise and the Salvation Army can refer participants to support services as well as providing their own in-house support. The MSD ICSMs each work differently with their participants in their Work and Income location (see Table 2 on page 36). Some ICSMs reported that they did not refer participants to any programmes but relied on Probation Services to address their needs as part of their release conditions.

The Salvation Army used a number of support services

Examples include:

- Addiction services – The Salvation Army's 'Bridge' delivers residential, day and aftercare services for participants dealing with addiction issues; Waka Tapu Social Services provide alcohol and drugs services.⁶
- Gambling counselling and education at the Salvation Army's 'Oasis' service.
- Budgeting advice is strongly emphasised and delivered through Kingdom Resources.
- Family support – Family Violence Services, Positive Parenting course, driver licencing.
- Health support – two local GPs and mental health support through Pathways community-based mental health services.
- Driving Mentoring Programme – supports driving needs and help with lessons.

Workwise used local support services and their own in-house resources to assist participants toward their goals

Examples include:

- Education courses (e.g. free computing courses at the Ara Institute of Canterbury).
- Initial psychosocial assessment allows them to identify previously undiagnosed mental health issues.

⁶ Drug treatment programmes generally have a positive impact on re-offending. A meta-analysis of drug treatment programmes in Europe found that treatment reduced recidivism in drug-using offenders (Lösel et al, 2011).

- Counselling services: The Men’s Centre and the Women’s Centre provide up to 20 free counselling sessions. A social worker and lawyer are also on site.
- Health support by arranging GP appointments.
- Driving lessons using their in-house driving instructor.
- Peer support and literacy support – Workwise are looking to embed this service using an in-house employee.

ICSMs referred participants to a range of training and employment services

The five ICSMs come from a number of different backgrounds and worked differently, depending on their location and experience, to support participants towards employment. Some ICSMs were more focused on moving toward employment than educational or training opportunities. The ICSMs were unaware of the availability of the Education and Training Grant and unsure how to finance training. Some used the discretionary fund and others used alternative Work and Income benefits to pay for training. ICSMs are able to refer participants to a number of training and employment opportunities including:

- Motivational training – using the Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) programme.
- Foundation courses in numeracy and literacy.
- Taitamariki 500 – a youth work preparedness programme in Northland that trains and assists youth aged 19–24 into employment.
- Training in traffic control, roading, construction, scaffolding and working in confined spaces.
- Competenz – a multi-sector industry training organisation.

Contracted service providers had extensive links in the community

Contracted service providers had a broad community contact base (e.g. links to health services) and the ability to address drug and alcohol issues or mental health concerns.

Aspects of the cross-agency collaboration that worked well

Both agencies have used their expertise and knowledge to support participants into the SOE service. MSD and Corrections, along with the contracted service providers, brought a number of different approaches to the trial. Although the number of organisations working with this population may not have decreased, it is hoped that by working more closely together a better service can be developed. As one of the project team stated, “So instead of having eight cars up the driveway, you’ve still got eight participants but they’re all in the one van”.

A number of features of the joint agency initiative have worked well:

- A cross-agency governance group was established at the start of the trial to oversee and guide the process.
- A Corrections principal advisor for case management teams, a role that involved developing practice policy and implementation for case managers in the prisons, worked with the project team and was then seconded to MSD in April 2017.
- The recruitment and training of ICSMs was joined up between the two agencies.

Corrections case managers and probation officers have worked alongside MSD staff and providers to support participants.

Key finding: Establishing rapport in prison is key to participation in the service post-release

There were differences in how providers and ICSMs worked with participants and employers

Contracted service providers met participants at the prison gate

At the time of release from prison Workwise and the Salvation Army met participants at the prison gate to pick them up and address their immediate needs (e.g. take them to probation report-ins, take them to a GP, obtain a benefit, housing, employment, ID, set up bank accounts, and purchase a phone, see Figure 2 below).

In contrast, ICSMs are required to work from a Work and Income office, and therefore participants had to get quotes for any immediate need (e.g. phones, clothing and housing). The ICSMs were unable to pick participants up from prison, go to job interviews or visit a place of employment to provide in-work support.

Linking participants to family, whānau and pro-social networks was important for reintegration

Interventions that can help participants to develop pro-social networks have shown significantly higher chances of success in reducing re-offending (Shapland et al, 2011). Providers and ICSMs often engaged with families, friends and the wider community of the participant to ensure that positive relationships could be developed and maintained. Some ICSMs engaged with whānau/families prior to release to help them to prepare.

Figure 2: Making it easier for participants at the time of release from prison

"We get there, pick them up and say 'We're going back to the office now'. Get them something to eat, McDonalds or Burger King or something. The first thing once we leave jail, is cash the cheque [Steps to Freedom], bring them back to the office and just go through what we are going to do. But we've already spoken about that when they're inside as well but you have to repeat that because they're stressed. They've got a lot on their plate so we try and make it as easy and streamlined as we can. So, we take a lot off them, not having to make choices on those first days, just try to make it as easy as possible... So we will already have a doctor's appointment set up, WINZ appointment get that up and running. If they need clothing we go and get that, probation.....we sort them out ready to go." [A provider]

Employment support was approached in a number of ways

While supportive of education and training ICSMs and providers recognise that participants released from prison want to earn money. Providers and ICSMs face challenges in sourcing employment for participants. As one ICSM felt, "I've got a lot of guys who would jump at the chance for just a chance at work, even though they look like bad asses and if they could just get a job, they'd turn up and work hard and be polite".

ICSMs spoke about challenges they faced in assisting participants into employment and believed that given a choice between an employee with a criminal record and one without a record, the employer would always choose the person without a record. They used a number of different avenues to find employment. Some ICSMs worked with Work and Income job brokers who provided a recruitment trial across a wide range of industries matching the talents of jobseekers to work opportunities.

Others worked with the Corrections Offender Recruitment Consultants who have experience in brokering jobs for recently released prisoners and have established relationships with employers. ICSMs also used networks with employers where these had been developed in their previous roles. Another ICSM reported that employers in their area were frustrated or overwhelmed with the number of work brokers looking for jobs and the duplication of effort by a number of agencies.

Providers reported working directly with participants to assist them into employment and maintaining relationships with employers (e.g. the Salvation Army had a contract with a packaging and containers company that they could direct participants to).

ICSMs can use employer wage subsidies to encourage employers to take on recently released prisoners. This allows time for people to learn, become efficient at the job and prove themselves to employers. A possible disadvantage noted by some of those interviewed was that employers may take advantage of the incentive system to earn money from cheap labour and then dismiss them when the subsidy runs out. Twelve months sustainable employment was seen as the goal of SOE and there was a perceived risk of returning to prison at the end of a temporary or seasonal contract.

Early engagement while participants are in prison built rapport and trust

Early engagement prior to release builds trust and the foundation for a good working relationship after release. Participation in the service is intended to start ten weeks before release to allow the service provider and person receiving the service to build a relationship. Providers and ICSMs recognised the value of being able to work with participants while they were in prison to get their early buy-in to the service. Participants in prison also appreciated early contact and support prior to release. However, this engagement period was often less than ten weeks (see Table 3 In instances where people were not recruited prior to release, it was harder for providers and ICSMs to establish a relationship and ensure compliance with the service post-release.

The in-prison phase of the service is key

The in-prison phase of the service facilitates engagement between the participant and provider or ICSM in a secure prison environment. Post-release when their living situation was more likely to be pressured than the prison setting, participants were more likely to continue this engagement when the early relationship building had taken place. Ten weeks allows time for the provider to form a plan to manage participant's immediate needs prior to release (e.g. accommodation). Engagement with participants before release meant the ICSM or provider knew of the living circumstances, and, in some cases, allowed the provider and ICSM time to engage with the person's family to also help them prepare.

The Salvation Army use the in-prison stage to focus on engagement

The Salvation Army field workers aim to support participants to reintegrate into the community and live a pro-social life. The field workers spoke about having an “unconditional positive regard” for the participants that they work with. They reported that their other contracts to support people being released from prison usually involved them working for much longer before release⁷. Their long-standing history of work in the prisons means that they have well-established relationships with Corrections prison staff and are comfortable approaching them to discuss participants. Before release the field workers set up an appointment for participants with Work and Income for a week after their release date and an employment navigator visits the prison to explain their role too.

Workwise try to visit participants in prison as often as possible before their release

The Workwise team invite the Corrections case manager to their initial meeting with participants in prison. They conduct a comprehensive psychosocial assessment and, following a multidisciplinary meeting of their team, develop a plan with participants before release. They have been able to identify previously undiagnosed mental health issues for some participants.

Early engagement encouraged service compliance following release

The providers or ICSMs are more likely to know where a participant intends to live when they are able to engage in prison, making it easier to follow up with contact and support. ICSMs reported great value in building an early relationship while participants are in prison and that where rapport is established, compliance with the SOE service after release is more likely. Making the effort to meet with participants in prison was more likely to lead to them coming to meetings arranged at Work and Income offices. One ICSM commented, “You just want them to turn up here [at Work and Income] whereas you haven’t made the effort to go out there and connect. I feel like they appreciate it a lot more”.

Some of the provider staff members interviewed found it a challenge to try and engage with participants who were openly admitting that they were returning to crime, going to live with a gang after release or admitted that they had no intention of finding employment.

Providers and ICSMs preferred more time to engage in prison

Different delivery approaches presented challenges

SOE had three service delivery approaches to engagement in the service:

- ‘Prison’ pathway – those approached prior to release from prison

⁷ <http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/need-assistance/accommodation/post-prison-support>

- 'Follow-up' pathway – those who were not approached prior to release from prison, but approached while on benefit
- 'Steps' pathway – those who are already in the community and receiving a main benefit, and recently received a Steps to Freedom⁸ payment.

Providers and ICSMs reported that the expected ten week lead in to release rarely happened and that they had limited time in prison to work with participants. Examples were given by all providers where referrals were received after the person had been released and they described how often it was difficult to locate them in the community at that point. They described the challenge of “playing chase”.

In the period until May 2017, Corrections identified people on their soon-to-be-released from prison list an average of 7.4 weeks prior to release (Table 3). Sixty-nine people were released prior to a Corrections case manager being able to approach them about SOE service, which can happen because of the time taken to do the manual selection process in the early days, as well as those serving time on remand. In these instances, the individuals were identified as coming up for release less than two weeks before their release date.

Those assigned to the treatment group were identified about 5.4 weeks prior to their planned release date, whereas those assigned to the control group were identified about 6.3 weeks prior. When the treatment and control people are combined, they were identified about 5.7 weeks prior to their planned release date. Participants who have a record of being contacted by a provider or ICSM were identified slightly earlier at about 6.7 weeks. While the aim was to engage at ten weeks prior to release, it appears that this may only have happened for about a quarter of the treatment group. This means that the optimal period of engagement with the service prior to release had already passed for most.

Table 3: Distribution on the number of weeks prior to their proposed release date that people were identified on the soon-to-be released from prison list

Sample	Minimum	Percentiles					Maximum	Mean
		5th	25th	Median	75th	95th		
All those identified on the soon-to-be released from prison list (n = 3484)	-23.7	0.1	2.7	7.4	11.3	12	23.3	6.9
Individuals released before approach by a Corrections case manager (n = 69)	0.1	0.1	0.9	1.9	8.3	11.3	13.3	4.3
Individuals assigned to treatment group and released by 2 June 2017	-2.1	0.7	2.3	5.4	10.4	11.9	17.4	6.2

⁸ Steps to Freedom grants are available from Work and Income for offenders who have been released from prison after serving 31 days or more. If they have a spouse or partner their eligibility depends on their spouse or partner's income and assets. The maximum available amount per grant is \$350, dependent on any money the person has in their prison account upon release.

Sample	Minimum	Percentiles					Maximum	Mean
		5th	25th	Median	75th	95th		
(n = 248)								
Individuals assigned to control group and released by 2 June 2017 (n = 249)	-20.7	0.7	2.4	6.3	10.6	11.9	18.1	6.3
All individuals assigned (treatment and control) and released by 2 June 2017 (n = 497)	-20.7	0.7	2.4	5.7	10.4	11.9	18.1	6.2
Participants with a record of contact with ICSM or provider (n = 112)	0.9	1.3	4	6.7	10.4	11.7	12	6.9

Notes:

- The data has a skewed distribution, so the median is a better measure than the mean. Displaying the data in the table this way allows the reader to see how skewed the data distribution is for each group.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the number of weeks between the treatment and control groups.

Service compliance was a challenge when there was no pre-existing relationship

Participation in the SOE service was mandatory for those released from prison who went onto receive a benefit. The providers and ICSMs found working with participants who had been released prior to starting in the service more resource intensive. Before being recruited, those selected through the in-community process were believed to have been less intensively case managed by Work and Income staff with higher workloads. The ICSMs spoke about the challenges of setting new expectations for people who had been released up to nine months previously and who had not volunteered to enter the service. As one ICSM stated, "They've been released, they've been out in the community and they're up to doing their own things and it's really hard to pull them back in". The Salvation Army were used to working with participants who wanted to engage with them and found managing compliance in some instances a challenge. Field workers spoke about participants that did not want to work, had no work history and openly spoke about continuing to take drugs.

Providers found it difficult to get information from Probation Services about where people were living in cases where they had been released from prison before providers could establish a relationship with them. They reported difficulties arranging meetings and non-attendance at arranged meetings. Some people who had been out of prison for a considerable time were no longer required to comply with release conditions and therefore had no relationship with Probation Services.

Participants valued the support provided by the service even though they faced multiple challenges

Participants preferred to work with one key person

Participants faced several complex issues in transitioning from prison to the community. The main challenge facing participants released from prison and the providers supporting them is finding suitable accommodation. A number of other issues also present difficulties in adjusting to life after prison including health issues, isolation, financial difficulties, and lack of transport and employment challenges. Participants rarely experience only one challenge at a time and multiple challenges can act as a barrier to employment.

Participants expressed a preference to work with one person who understood their circumstances and needs. Participants who had served previous prison sentences reported how they had previously been passed from one agency to another and that dealing with multiple organisations had increased their stress and confusion. They previously had experienced delays in receiving their benefit after release, but since commencing the SOE service they felt the benefit application process had gone smoothly. As one participant stated, "You feel you are not just another client".

Corrections staff also appreciated how one key worker could provide a more person-centric service and that too many providers and programmes could be confusing and overwhelming for participants preparing for release. One probation officer stated, "There's a lot of people sometimes working with offenders and it's kind of like working out who's doing what and for the offender themselves it's like, 'I'll just stand here and all this is happening to me'".

With the right support participants felt prepared for release

For some participants the prospect of release presents many challenges and for some staying in prison seems like an easier option. As one participant commented, "I sort of wanted to stay in prison because it was easy.... I didn't want to come out.... I was willing to do something to stay in". Having support to plan for their release means that participants are less likely to re-engage with old associates on release or feel that they need to resort to crime when they don't have money or accommodation available.

Some participants spoke about how having support provides a sense of hope. One participant commented, "Communication and support, it was like all there, like right from the get go and that's what kept me motivated." Others spoke about how they felt that their ICSM or provider appeared genuine and sincere in their support. Some form strong relationships of trust with their ICSMs, who support them in their relationships with whānau/family and with finding strategies to manage challenges as they arise.

Key finding: Transitioning from prison into the community presented many challenges

Prison is an ordered and structured environment where people can become highly institutionalised. As one probation officer explained, "They're unlocked at 9.00am; they're brought their breakfast in their cell; they're locked up at 11.00am for lunch; they're unlocked at 1.00pm; their dinner is served at 4.15pm and they are not unlocked again. If they need to go to the doctor, they're taken to the doctor; if they need to go to hospital...they're taken everywhere". Corrections staff perceived that on release the ability to manage in an unstructured and confusing environment was challenging for former prisoners and that many did not have the ability to work through common problems. The issues faced by people prior to imprisonment are often still there and they do not have the social supports in place to help them.

Released prisoners have several different relationships to manage including those with their probation officer, Work and Income, old associates, family and their employer. In addition, they will have several issues to deal with on release including finding accommodation; obtaining employment; health needs (e.g. mental health challenges); meeting their conditions of release; debt and a lack of money; lack of identification or a bank account; transport difficulties; and isolation often from the stigma of having a Corrections history. Some have very limited work experience or pro-social skills. When multiple challenges occur at one time, for many it is easier to fall back on old associates and patterns of behaviour and the risk of recidivism is increased.

For this section, we are referring to the 248 people in the treatment group and the 249 people in the control group who were released from prison by 2 June 2017. As expected, most individuals were released on condition (72.2 percent of the treatment group and 66.3 percent of the control group) or parole (21.8 percent of the treatment group and 25.3 percent of the control group). However, there were still some people selected to the trial who were released without conditions, had their sentence cancelled, their recall declined or remand days exceeded their sentence (six percent of the treatment group and 8.4 percent of the control group).

The most common release condition for people was counselling, with two-fifths having to attend (43.5 percent of the treatment group and 44.6 percent of the control group, Table 4). About a third (33.5 percent of the treatment group and 31.7 percent of the control group) had to attend a rehabilitation programme. Non-association was a condition for 8.9 percent of the treatment group and 12.9 percent of the control group. Very few had conditions forbidding them from returning to a place of employment or residential address.

Table 4: Release conditions for treatment and control groups selected through the pre-release process and released from prison by 2 June 2017

Release condition	Treatment		Control		Total	
	Number	Percentage of non missing entries	Number	Percentage of non missing entries	Number	Percentage of non missing entries
Counselling	108	50.2	111	46.8	219	48.5
Rehabilitation programme	83	38.6	79	33.3	162	35.8
Non-association	22	10.2	32	13.5	54	11.9
Non-return to place of residence or place of employment	2	0.9	15	6.3	17	3.8
Missing	33		12		45	
Total	248		249		497	

Notes:

- Percentages might not add up to 100 due to rounding.
- One criterion for people to be eligible for SOE is to be released with conditions or on parole. Those recently released from prison need to satisfy all conditions as part of their release or risk returning to prison. Conditions are assigned based on individual situations and are designed to reduce the risk of re-offending, help with rehabilitation and/or reintegration and provide for reasonable concerns from victims.
- The residence condition is the only condition that has a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control groups.

Accommodation was the main challenge for participants on release

A lack of stable accommodation has been associated with negative post-release outcomes for former prisoners (Morrison and Bowman, 2017) and having stable accommodation is known to support desistance from offending as it increases the chances of finding employment (Lart et al, 2008). Early accommodation stability is ideal and it is hard for recently released prisoners to engage with job searching without a stable address.

Legislation currently does not permit assessments for emergency or social housing to be conducted prior to release from prison⁹. If a person has served more than 31 days an initial stand-down is imposed, and they are required to access the Steps to Freedom payment to assist them during the stand-down period. This makes it hard to secure accommodation for prisoners upon release.

Released prisoners find accommodation through a number of sources: returning to live with family or old associates, temporary housing provided by Out of Gate¹⁰ or other housing support providers, boarding houses or hostels, emergency housing, social housing or private rentals. However, all the service approaches reported difficulties

⁹ <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1964/0136/latest/DLM364308.html>

¹⁰ Out of Gate is a navigation service focussed on addressing accommodation, employment, education and training, living skills, health/wellbeing needs and supporting positive links with whānau, family and the community (Department of Corrections 2016).

sourcing housing and that some participants are leaving prison without an address to go to.

Providers gave examples of overcrowded flats shared with old associates involved in drugs and crime. Where participants return to live with partners or family, the situation can be precarious and issues or tensions can arise very suddenly. Providers noted that where associates and gang members visit or stay with a participant they were more at risk of eviction.

Finding accommodation was challenging in some areas of the country and finding good quality accommodation another challenge for some ICSMs. One ICSM had moved a participant out of the accommodation provided through Out of Gate, into emergency housing for a few weeks before sourcing what they believed was more suitable accommodation.

The Salvation Army houses participants in Salvation Army accommodation in the short term, while Workwise use Wise Group accommodation where suitable and available. However, the intention is to have participants living in sustainable housing. A shortage of one-bedroom flats in the service areas meant that suitable accommodation was in high demand and short supply. Even where accommodation was available, it could be unaffordable for some (e.g. in Christchurch the weekly rent of a one-bedroom flat was \$250). For a participant on a benefit of \$300 a week with other debts or reparation payments this rental cost is unaffordable.

Some participants have release conditions that place a restriction on where they are allowed to live and this can reduce options. The Salvation Army field workers in Christchurch reported delays in getting information from Probation Services about where participants were allowed to live. The field workers had to find accommodation first and then check with Probation Services to see if the location was acceptable under the release conditions, rather than Probation Services providing this information up front.

Providers reported that many participants were very grateful to be picked up on release day, particularly as some were not accustomed to asking for help from agencies to solve accommodation problems. Hence providers supported a proactive approach to solving housing problems. As one provider noted, "Once they've got accommodation they do seem to be able to find work a lot easier".

Emergency accommodation was often the only option

ICSMs and providers that were interviewed reported that many participants released from prison did not have a place to live at the time of release and were going into emergency accommodation. Providers reported spending considerable time trying to source emergency accommodation which meant sacrificing time trying to source longer-term sustainable housing. They reported that the process of re-applying for emergency accommodation weekly was very stressful for participants.

A perceived difficulty for ICSMs was a directive from MSD in May 2017 that all MSD staff should refer recently released prisoners to Corrections for support to find accommodation. This reduced the perceived ability of the ICSMs to work supportively with participants to meet their immediate housing needs.

Other challenges for participants following release

Participants spoke about the many issues that they face on release.

Health issues

Participants acknowledged health issues and many spoke about having completed drug and alcohol programmes in prison and as part of their release conditions. Staying away from drugs was one of the main challenges once released. The cost of visiting a GP also presented a barrier to some in managing their health. As one participant said, "That's just a bill to me so I prefer not to go if I don't have to".

Fitting employment around conditions of release

Most of the participants interviewed believed employment was important and being unemployed had previously led to crime and time in jail. Being busy working was acknowledged as the best way to avoid reverting to drugs and alcohol or associates on release. However, balancing a job with release conditions also presented a challenge for some participants. One participant commented, "How can you go to appointments with counselling? they're not open on weekends, so you can't do any counselling on weekends when you're not at work...it makes it hard for you".

Developing a routine with conflicting priorities

Some participants spoke about the difficulty of trying to establish a routine following release. Managing different priorities was difficult with employment just one issue alongside others like accommodation, access to children, complying with release conditions "all the processes you've got to go through, all the courses you've got to do after probation...like you're constantly doing heaps".

Money difficulties, debt and reparation payments increased stress

Some participants spoke about how hard it was to manage on a benefit, having very little left over after paying basic expenses. Delays in receiving benefits and lack of money were seen as a reason for falling into old patterns of behaviour and criminal activity.

Lack of transport was a barrier to employment

A number of participants had either lost their licence as a result of their conviction or had no means of transport. Finding employment close to where they lived could be a challenge.

Technology and low literacy

For one participant who had spent two decades in prison, learning to use a cell phone was a major challenge. For others applying for jobs and using online job application processes were challenging.

All of the participants interviewed for this evaluation left school with minimal or no qualifications. Most left school at ages 16–17 and had not enjoyed or felt engaged with

the education system. Participants were aware that a lack of qualifications and often an intermittent or poor work history was a challenge in finding a job.

Isolation

Many participants had release conditions that restricted who they could associate with and areas that they could live. Staying away from alcohol meant not going into bars or social situations or associating with old friends that were still involved in a criminal lifestyle. From being in prison with people all around every day where “You can’t be by yourself and then all of a sudden you come out and you are by yourself”.

Many lacked social or family support on release and expressed shame about their criminal behaviour which made it hard to see previous contacts. One participant said, “I think the most scared I was coming face to face with people I used to work with”. Some spoke about rejection by others because of their offending and facing rejection from potential employers.

Help to navigate Work and Income

Participants spoke about difficulties navigating Work and Income, particularly trying to manage financial problems. One participant commented, “I know that with Work and Income, from my previous experience before I went to prison, it’s very difficult to get support...if you need something you have to ring up, make an appointment and you won’t get seen for a month”.

Relationships with whānau and children could be difficult to re-establish

Many participants spoke about their children and difficulties with seeing them and re-establishing relationships. They wanted to be better parents.

Gang membership could place additional pressure on participants

Providers spoke about participants who felt under pressure to remain in a gang, particularly “the young ones that haven’t got their patch yet because they’ve still got a lot of ... they’re answerable, they’re quite fully answerable to the top people when they get out. So, they’ve got a lot of time that they need to give to the gang, and times where they need to be running the headquarters or doing A, B or C whereas the older guys that have been patched they’re more likely to be able to go to work and concentrate on work”.

Some participants leave prison without key supports in place

Participants often struggled to engage with employment unless other issues were addressed first. Participants may leave prison without key supports in place like official identification, bank accounts and accommodation.

Providers perceived Work and Income systems, legislation and processes as impeding the key needs of participants prior to release (e.g. the inability to arrange a social housing assessment prior to release). Some welfare provisions are not available until release from prison and can take some time to process. This can leave some participants without support at the time of release. Navigating Work and Income services is especially difficult for those who may not have access to identification documents, telephones or contact addresses.

Key finding: Implementation of SOE was operationally challenging

The referral process was complex, manual and time consuming

The transfer of data between MSD and Corrections involves multiple steps. Challenges in automating the process means that the mechanism has remained manual and involves multiple people in a number of different teams across the two agencies.

The data transfer process was complex

Without a data transfer system in place, the sharing of data between MSD and Corrections began as manual spread sheets and human data entry, a time-consuming process that was prone to error.

A manual process for the selection, randomisation, referral and recruitment of people in to SOE introduced the possibility of human error and issues with the quality of the data. A number of issues were identified with the spread sheets early on and manual checking added complexity and time to the task. The processes relied on a number of different people in different teams across each organisation with no specific back-up which introduced delays.

This process was improved on in the second six months of the project with most of the steps being systematised to the point where while there are still several people involved, their input is limited to pressing the 'go' button. The main limitations in this process are the different identifiers used between Corrections and MSD as well as the different data formats used.

Collaboration was essential when separate data systems were at play

Due to people being part of both Corrections and MSD data systems, as well as Salvation Army or Workwise systems in Canterbury, information is kept separately across agencies. This means collaboration among all these organisations is essential to identify the treatment individuals, so they can be invited to the service and to support participants once in service. When collaboration breaks down, this presents challenges for frontline staff across all these organisations in assessing the status of a participant and opportunities for learning are missed.

ICSMs reported that they rely on getting referrals from a Corrections case manager for individuals. Corrections might verbally notify the ICSM that they have someone interested in service, but due to privacy, the name might not be communicated until weeks later. It was therefore hard to track delays in referrals.

There were multiple reasons for the low number of prison referrals

Prison referral numbers to the SOE service were low initially. The service was launched prior to Christmas 2016 and it was expected that a large number of referrals would be

made at this time. However, these did not materialise and the projected number of releases to each service area were not realised.

By 8 May 2017 3,484 people had been identified as coming up for release from prison, however only a quarter of these (874) met Corrections' eligibility criteria. More than two-thirds (1,776) of the exclusions were because people were being released to a non-service area. Of the 874 people who met Corrections' eligibility criteria, the majority (744) also met MSD's eligibility criteria. The main reason for excluding people at this point was because they had no SWN or MSD benefit history, with the second highest reason being that they had previously, or were currently, eligible for the Supported Living Payment.

Of the 369 people allocated to the treatment group, there is a record of 164 being offered the service (44 percent). The most common reason people were not offered the SOE service in prison was because they had been released before they could be approached by a Corrections case manager. On average these people had been identified on the soon-to-be released from prison list about 2–4 weeks prior to their planned release date (see Table 3, on page 36). The second most common reason was that individuals had changed their release location to outside a SOE service area. Table 5 summarises how the number of prison referrals were lower than expected. Further details for each stage of the prison referral process are given in Appendix 4.

Table 5: Tracking the number of people through the pre-release selection process and prison engagement pathway to the number participating in SOE service

Operational stage	Number excluded (percent excluded at this stage / percent of 3,484)	Number remaining (percent of 3,484)
Offenders identified for release		3484 (100.0)
Met Corrections' criteria	2610 (74.9 / 74.9)	874 (25.1)
Met MSD's criteria	130 (14.9 / 3.7)	744 (21.4)
Assigned to treatment	375 (50.4 / 10.8)	369 (10.6)
Offered SOE service	205 (55.6 / 5.9)	164 (4.7)
Participated in SOE service	~98 (60.0 / 2.8)	~66 (1.8)

Notes:

- Data collection processes meant separate records were kept for each ICSM and provider, making it difficult to maintain a running total of how many participants have previously or are currently receiving SOE service. We estimate that roughly 40 percent of individuals approached will have participated in the service.
- Example of how percent excluded at this stage is calculated: out of 874 who did meet Corrections' criteria, 130 did not meet MSD's criteria in the following stage (130 / 874 = 14.9 percent).

Issues which influenced later referral by Corrections case managers:

Relocation to other prisons

Corrections case managers reported that prison numbers were high, and prisons regularly made room for transfers from other prisons. Those people serving short sentences may be moved to another prison shortly before release because they are low security and therefore miss out on the SOE service.

Some people declined to take part in the service

Corrections case managers reported the opt-in to SOE in prison was approximately two-thirds of those who were offered the opportunity. Several reasons were reported for people declining to take part. The two most common reasons for declining were where someone had found a job prior to release or they were moving out of the service area after release. Other reasons reported by Corrections case managers for declining were having alternative support in place, working with Out of Gate, planning to return to the gangs or crime and a suspicion of government services.

Of the 164 people who were offered the SOE service by Corrections case managers 28 (17 percent) were documented as declining the invitation. The main reasons documented for declines included:

- Plans to get income from elsewhere
- Does not want assistance or support
- Has other assistance or support
- Don't believe they need assistance or support.

Corrections staff play a key role in SOE

Corrections case managers reported that they supported the concept of the trial, but there was a perception among many Corrections case managers that the service was targeted at the wrong people. The exclusion of child sex offenders and violent offenders gave an impression of targeting and selecting easier prisoners to make the SOE trial successful.

Some examples given by Corrections case managers were of those referred individuals who had jobs arranged before they left prison, where Corrections staff believed they should not be receiving incentive payments over the following year.

Many Corrections case managers believed that services should be targeted at those who needed them most and who had the highest risk levels. Research has found that Corrections' own measure of prisoners' risk of reconviction correlated with re-imprisonment in the follow-up period (Nadesu, 2007) and some Corrections case managers believed that efforts should be directed towards this at-risk population.

Furthermore, some Corrections case managers expressed the view that, with limited numbers able to participate, it would be better to target those who were motivated or at a stage of readiness to change. Research supports the idea of readiness to change as a treatment condition for intervention with offenders (McMurrin, 2002).

The opportunity to participate in SOE service was not consistently presented

ICSMs and providers worked to build relationships with Corrections case managers and to inform them about the service. Some Corrections case managers reported that they were not always confident which, of the many programmes available in prison, to refer individuals to. Some took the ICSM with them to talk to the individual about the service and others asked the ICSMs for advice.

In Christchurch more participants chose to work with Workwise than with the Salvation Army. Corrections case managers gave various reasons for this. The Salvation Army presentation at the launch of the service was not as well perceived by Corrections case managers as the presentation by Workwise. The Salvation Army were already working in

the Christchurch prisons and their delivery of the service was initially perceived to be business as usual. *Workwise* was less well known, but perceived as a new option to offer. Differences in approach across Corrections case managers may have influenced individual's participation in the service.

Further clarity of roles is needed for those involved in the delivery of SOE service

Corrections case managers perceived that their skills were sometimes overlooked in the service delivery. Some reported a belief that they knew prisoners best, and yet they had no input into the selection of individuals for the service. Some also expressed frustration that they could be working with an offender on their release plan, have formed a good relationship with them and be making progress at the time they were selected for the service. The expectation of handing over to another provider often meant that the release plan could be changed and they felt that their effort had been wasted.

The Christchurch Corrections case managers wanted clarity on the providers' acceptance and exclusion criteria for service so that they could manage offender reintegration. An example was given of an individual opting to go with an SOE provider and then being declined by the provider two days prior to release and left looking for accommodation because Out of Gate had stopped working with him. Some case managers have approached the providers and asked if there are any factors that would exclude an individual from SOE before they approach the individual about the service, so they have some certainty.

Probation officers worked with recently released prisoners in the community

Probation officers would like more information about SOE

Probation officers had mixed levels of awareness of the SOE service. Similar to Corrections case managers, some felt that only motivated individuals should be included. Increased communication was requested by probation officers as many had not attended an information session and were uncertain how the trial operated.

Balancing safety and employment obligations presented challenges

The project team expected that participants would be offered more opportunities through SOE particularly around employment and some flexibility in probation report-ins for participants. Evidence supports an early return to employment following release from prison as a means of preventing a return to offending (Coles and Bowes, 2015).

Some probation officers reported that they did not actively encourage employment because completion of programmes (e.g. anger management, alcohol and drug programmes or counselling), takes priority over employment. The longest programme in the community was a 13-week programme, four days a week, for two-and-a-half hours a day.

Probation officers reported that many recently released prisoners were not ready for employment at time of release and that some types of employment could increase the risk of re-offending. They expressed the view that if a former prisoner found a job but

had not dealt with their underlying issues, it was likely that they would not be able to sustain employment.

Probation officers were also aware that employment alone could not always fix the risk of offending and that if those released from prison did not complete programmes and committed further crimes, Probation Services would be held accountable. As one probation officer commented, "it's all very well finding them a job, and what I've found with my two guys, they got the jobs, but our guys don't know how to keep jobs, so that's a big problem...they seem to be rushing them into jobs – in the second week getting jobs, they're just not ready for that".

Work and Income compliance was enforced by the ICSMs in the North Island. The providers in Christchurch were not always clear about enforcing Work and Income compliance of those in service and probation officers were not always aware of these obligations. Probation officers did not have a key contact in Christchurch to support management of Work and Income issues if they arose.

More flexible reporting times reduced missed opportunities

Most reporting to probation offices and attendance on programmes occurs on Monday to Friday during work hours. There is limited reporting allowed on Saturday mornings or in the evenings, and this is mainly for those considered low-risk.

An example was given by one of the providers in Christchurch of a participant who had found employment but their probation officer would not allow them to report to the probation office outside work hours. The employer was not willing to give the participant time off work. The provider managed eventually, but with some difficulty, to resolve the situation by bringing other probation staff on board.

Probation officers acknowledged a need for more services in the evening or weekends so that participants could increasingly engage with employment. They spoke about the need for clear communication between providers/ICSMs and employers to ensure that everyone was aware of the release conditions and employment responsibilities and how to make it work.

Work and Income systems and processes are complex

Probation officers reported finding the Work and Income systems and processes complex and difficult to navigate. The ICSMs were acting as a resource for probation officers in some locations to support other former prisoners not receiving SOE.

Participants receive the Steps to Freedom payment on release but probation officers reported delays before they started to receive a benefit. Probation officers reported delays in participants getting appointments for assessment for a benefit and they questioned the purpose of a week stand down before benefit receipt. However, they felt that those receiving SOE generally appeared to get onto a benefit quicker than those who were not.

Probation officers have confidence in their own job brokers

Some probation officers preferred to use Corrections' ORCs (Offender Recruitment Consultants) to find employment because they believed their own brokers were more aware of the implications of release conditions on the timing of employment and the types of employment that recently released prisoners could look at. The Corrections'

consultants could work with participants, drive them to interviews and were familiar with finding employment for those with previous convictions.

Workwise and some ICSMs developed a relationship with Corrections' ORCs which enabled them to work closely together. Once Corrections job brokers found employment the providers were able to provide in-work support.

Key finding: Cross-agency collaboration requires communication, person-centric planning, and coordination of data systems

Long term leadership and project management is necessary to maintain the momentum of the service and fully capitalise on the expertise of both agencies.

Strong messaging is important for SOE

Implementation of the technical aspects of SOE required messaging to stakeholders involved in its delivery, including external providers, ICSMs, Corrections case managers and probation officers. Consistent messaging to obtain buy-in from all stakeholders was a challenge and information about SOE was provided from a number of different sources. For example, SOE was introduced and presented to case managers and probation officers by different members of the project team.

Different levels of understanding about SOE reduced the consistency of delivery. For example, Corrections case managers initially put forward people that they thought were suitable but who were not on the list of randomised individuals. This is the usual approach to assigning prisoners to reintegration programmes and it wasn't made clear to the case managers that selection for SOE was different, or why it was different. Some Corrections case managers and probation officers were unclear of their role and responsibilities and had different levels of understanding of Work and Income systems and processes.

Changes in project management lead are not ideal

Clearly delegated responsibilities and the communication lines to support them are key to cross-agency collaboration. The project management role of SOE underwent a number of changes, each change requiring a new person to come up to speed on a complex project while managing multiple changes to the service design and delivery since commencement.

It is expected that issues with a new service will arise as the processes and systems are embedded. However, a key person available to problem solve is ideal, particularly with external providers. Contract and relationship management delivered locally in Christchurch may have enabled a proactive response to issues as they arose. When communication issues occurred with referrals, it was noted by providers that there was no way to work out or track across Corrections and MSD where the breakdown occurred. Providers perceived this as a lost opportunity to learn and prevent the same issues arising again. The external providers commented that they would have appreciated a key person driving the operational side of SOE. However, in practice they dealt with the contract team at National Office and had no contact with the project team.

Implementation was rushed

The MSD project team came together in July 2016 with a 'go live' date of 3 October 2016. Limited time spent on the design, and challenges around operational aspects of SOE meant that implementation was rushed. As one project team member stated, "the trial has always felt like it has been six steps behind. We're just continually in catch up mode".

ICSMs were recruited in early September 2016, trained and in place approximately four weeks later. The project team did not know the backgrounds of the staff until a week before training so the training included both Corrections and MSD components. The ICSMs reported that a number of systems and processes were not in place at the start of SOE.

The two externally contracted services began delivering the service at the end of November 2016 due to delays caused by a significant earthquake centred in the Kaikoura area, north of Canterbury. For providers SOE was implemented just before Christmas for an expected large number of referrals that did not materialise. All stakeholders believe that the pre-Christmas start date was not the best time of year to plan and organise for the start of a new service.

Ideally, the design of the intervention (business development) and the design of the RCT (development of the evaluation) should take place simultaneously and in partnership.

Good communications, planning and coordination across all players could enhance service delivery

Better communication and collaboration between everyone working with participants would be valuable

Induction to the probation service happens while participants are still in prison but while some probation officers visit participants in prison other sessions are conducted by telephone.

Probation officers were not always informed or notified in advance that someone was participating in the SOE service. Because the probation officers often see participants only after release, they could be unaware of any plan made with the provider or ICSM (see Figure 3 below). There was no formal process of communication or planning prior to release to discuss release conditions alongside potential employment. ICSMs believed that setting clear expectations and consistent messaging to the participants in SOE was crucial at the transition stage and the development of a plan that all were agreed to and understood their role and responsibility.

Figure 3: Communication is key when Corrections and MSD work together

"My guy came out in February. Youth offender, no motivation, he told me in prison -- he's got no fear of going back to prison, he enjoys prison actually, he just doesn't like what he has to do to get into prison. But if he could just go back to prison and not worry about life he would want to. Because we were working with him really well, like he just opened up and told us more about who he is and everything so we got a lot of information out of him.

He moved into a house which was not suitable but we didn't really have much of a choice so we had to monitor that, because it's a lot of drugs, and his are synthetics, and gang. Yeah, so they managed to work with him to keep him off synthetics. They managed to somehow get rid of a debt with the gang as well, don't ask me how they did that but they did it. Yeah, they managed to sort all that out. They got him into full time work with an employer that worked with him with his release conditions. They got him to every report in. Yeah, just incredible communication". [Probation officer]

The Salvation Army field officers already had a relationship with Probation Services and usually went to the first meeting between participants and the probation officer. However the Salvation Army's employment navigator reported delays in finding out which probation officer was assigned to whom in the SOE service and found it difficult to get a response to queries either by phone or email.

A person-centric plan is ideal

There are several programmes available to prisoners, while in prison and when they are released into the community (Table 1, page 15). These programmes are provided by several different organisations and targeted to specific cohorts. Prisoners may interact with several providers over time. Collaboration and coordination between multiple organisations are key to providing a person-centric service.

Corrections provides a large suite of programmes for those in prison

Case managers have a large suite of potential programmes they can direct prisoners to. These are focused on rehabilitation and reintegration and include:

- Motivational programmes designed to improve motivation to understand their offending and increase their interest in engaging with other interventions to reduce their likelihood of re-offending (e.g. parenting and anger management programmes).
- Offence-focused programmes tailored to specific groups and types of offending (e.g. the intervention programme for child sex offenders and the young offenders programme).
- Drug and alcohol programmes include a range of interventions from screening and brief interventions to intensive treatment programmes.
- Education and training programmes offer access to literacy and numeracy support, foundation qualifications and industry and vocational training.
- Cultural programmes such as Tikanga Māori are group-based programmes delivered by Māori service providers to foster the regeneration of Māori identity and values.

- Reintegration programmes assist people to transition into the community on release from prison and include Out of Gate, Release to Work, Guided Release, Employment Support Service and Tiaki Tangata or Whare Oranga Ake reintegration.

MSD and other external providers also deliver reintegration programmes for prisoners (e.g. the Prisoner Reintegration Programme (MSD)¹¹, People at Risk Solutions (PARS) and the Salvation Army (non-SOE service)). Some Corrections case managers expressed confusion about which programmes were best for specific prisoners and whether and what the role of MSD's Prison Reintegration Officers was in the SOE service. SOE participants could work with more than one provider.

There are a number of employment support providers but participants can still miss out

Corrections prepare prisoners for work, assist with finding employment and provide in-work support. Corrections Community Education Employment Officers (CEEEOs), Employment Placement Specialists and the Offender Recruitment Consultants (ORCs) work to place recently released prisoners into employment. They also maintain employer partnership networks.

The Salvation Army provides support in many prisons (outside of the Christchurch SOE service area) and assists former prisoners to find employment. Several Kaupapa Māori employment assistance providers also offer employment assistance. As one Corrections case manager stated, "I struggle to figure out how if there's one job out there, there's three agencies chasing for the opportunity to find someone. It's ridiculous."

Having an agreed plan in place supports participants leaving prison

Those who leave prison without a plan in place tend not to do as well as those who do (Morrison and Bowman, 2017).

It was expected that Corrections case managers would lead on the plan document that follows an offender from entry to prison until release and includes all activities completed while in custody. The processes developed for the SOE service intended that the document would follow them from custody through to probation in the community. It was expected that the ICSM or provider activities would be added to the offender plan to facilitate an easy handover to Probation Services. All three players were intended to meet to coordinate service and handover; this did not always happen in practice, but for one provider each person leaving prison has a person-centric goal plan which is shared between case management and probation.

¹¹ Prior to release (generally four to ten weeks from release date) a Corrections case manager will refer offenders who want to engage to Work and Income. These referrals are sent to Work and Income's Prisoner Reintegration Coordinators. Work and Income has 11 dedicated Prisoner Reintegration Coordinators (PRCs) nation-wide who work with offenders prior to, and on their release from prison. The range of services includes (but is not limited to): identifying employment options; recording information in RecruitMe re work and training completed in prison; arranging for medical certificates to be completed in prison; assisting with job search activities; profiling offenders to employment opportunities; providing regional labour market information; working with the Corrections case manager to link the prisoner back with their previous employer; and providing information about other financial assistance.

One provider reported that at the time a participant is referred to them in prison, they do not receive enough initial information about them. The exchange of information upon release did not always happen. However, the provider was proactive in building a partnership with the Corrections case managers and working collaboratively.

MSD systems and processes could better support ICSMs and other agencies interacting with Work and Income

The MSD ICSM service was provided across five North Island service areas. Although the ICSMs had weekly teleconferences with the project team in Wellington, they worked independently at the Work and Income offices, reporting to their Service Centre Manager as well as the project team in Wellington National Office. Their role required them to manage multiple relationships across a number of organisations. Some innovatively solved problems encountered in their work but working remotely inhibited the development of practices into business-as-usual resulting in some inconsistency in how they delivered the SOE service.

A limitation faced by the ICSMs was the MSD health and safety restrictions in place at the time. Following the events in Ashburton in 2015, MSD has opted for a stronger focus on ensuring the safety of staff. This meant that at the time the SOE begun, safety and security were at the forefront of staff members' minds. If planning of off-site visits to non-government locations raises any red flags safety-wise then sign-off is required by management. Visiting participants who have recently been released from prison raises red flags for managers unaccustomed to for example, the specific training that probation officers might receive for this. Consequently ICSMs saw their participants in Work and Income offices.

A number of challenges for ICSMs were raised:

ICSMs are unable to provide off-site in-work support

Some frustration was expressed by ICSMs that Work and Income job brokers and Corrections Offender Recruitment Consultants could visit work places but ICSMs were not permitted to do this. When participants received their 28 days incentive payment some ICSMs wanted the option of being able to visit the work place, "so it needs to be an option if it's going to be less disruptive to their work-day than mine, I should be going there".

Similarly ICSMs were assisting participants to write CVs but were unable to go to interviews with them.

Limited availability of office cars

The ICSMs reported that they work across several probation offices and some of them work across a number of Work and Income offices too. One ICSM is working across six probation offices. This was a challenge in terms of driving time while also covering prison visits too. The ICSMs used pool cars from their Work and Income office and there was some frustration when there was no car available, particularly where prisons have set times for the ICSMs to visit. For security reasons they are not permitted to take their own cars to the prisons.

Supervision support is necessary

Supervision is an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time and has the purpose of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior members, monitoring the quality of service offered to participants.

Some ICSMs encountered situations which had been challenging and the opportunity to reflect and receive support was not immediately available. ICSMs had been offered supervision through the MSD's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), but none of the ICSMs had taken this up at times of stress or on a regular basis. It was also queried by ICSMs as to whether the EAP counselling service was appropriate to the kinds of situations that ICSMs were dealing with.

Referrals need to provide as much information as possible

ICSMs were aware that they were unlikely to pick up health issues unless they were made aware of them by Corrections staff. They were unable to view medical records and could be unaware of health issues potentially affecting participant's ability to gain and keep employment. One ICSM spoke about a participant, "he's on a lot of medication because he says he hears voices and this and that. So I'm trying to find out what his meds are because he potentially could be on the wrong meds".

Individuals in the in-community 'Steps' group did not have a Corrections screening conducted, only an MSD screening. This meant that ICSMs did not know the level of risk someone might present.

Evaluation tools are not used consistently

The ICSMs were not clear about the purpose and the intended use of their documentation for the evaluation of SOE. This resulted in inconsistent record keeping practices based on a lack of clarity early on. Some of the ICSMs did not find the Behavioural Evaluation Update Tool (BEUT) or Initial Client Assessment (ICA) useful and believed that that they did not capture enough information. They also believed that a laptop or tablet for note-taking while they were out of the office would increase their ability to capture information. ICSMs noted that they have nowhere in MSD's Client Management System (CMS) to record information about their participants. Some were using self-modified ICAs or one from Corrections. One ICSM admitted completing the BEUTs retrospectively.

Further training would be useful

Many participants were working with a number of support persons and agencies as well as the ICSMs. Multiple support meetings were intended to be used by ICSMs to assist agencies to develop a coordinated plan to achieve the participant's goals. At the time of the evaluation ICSMs were not using these meetings.

Motivational interviewing is a conversation style that is useful for participants that present with ambivalence around behaviour change. It uses a range of techniques to assist participants to become motivated to change. ICSMs had seen this used by Corrections staff and believed it would be a useful adjunct to their service.

Providers need more support with Work and Income systems and processes

The Salvation Army and Workwise perceived the Steps to Freedom payment as inadequate to meet the initial needs of participants immediately following release (e.g. the costs of bond and rent for accommodation which are required to be paid in advance). Those released from prison have a week stand down before they can apply for a benefit. Most of those spoken with who work for the providers viewed the benefit application process as challenging. They reported spending considerable time in Work and Income offices with participants waiting for appointments and supporting them to obtain a benefit. Providers often did not understand what benefits a participant may be entitled to or what benefits might be available.

Some of those spoken with who work for the providers were unaware of the benefit obligations for those on SOE service and in receipt of a benefit. Some did not have contact with Work and Income case managers.

Some of those spoken with who work for the providers believed that a key contact in Work and Income to manage and hold oversight of all participants receiving SOE service was a potential solution to inconsistent advice and not knowing who to contact about Work and Income related issues. Even where good relationships were established with a specific case manager in one of the Work and Income offices, if that person was absent, it was hard to avoid delays. Some of the Salvation Army field workers who had a long-term relationship with Work and Income reported that knowing who to approach in a Work and Income office made things easier.

Conclusion

Supporting Offenders into Employment (SOE) is a new way of working across central government agencies (Ministry of Social Development and Department of Corrections) with the aim to support a successful transition from prison to community and into employment. Research shows that sustainable employment is a key factor in remaining out of prison and reintegration into community.

There were many lessons learned from the SOE formative evaluation which assess approximately the first six months of the trial. The key takeaway was that a joint trial and service across agencies takes time to implement and is operationally complex. Specifically, referral to the service across agencies and operating within two data systems presented operational challenges for all involved. Furthermore, the coordination across agency services to provide a streamlined service was challenging for those on the ground.

Despite the operational challenges, the findings from this formative evaluation showed the people delivering the service were committed to the trial and believed in the values of the SOE service. ICSMs and providers worked hard to build relationships and noted that relationship building was the key to success with participants, especially when this happened before they left prison. Furthermore, it was clear from the findings that participants face multiple challenges that need to be addressed with support from their ICSM or provider. This meant that ICSMs or providers were operating in a holistic way with participants in the service and providing a person-centric service.

Looking ahead, the next step in the wider evaluation plan is the case studies report which is taking a kaupapa Māori approach. A kaupapa Māori approach will enable identification of principles or tikanga that are supporting better outcomes for participants in the service. The case studies will provide an in-depth view of the experience of current service participants, as well as the perspective of key support people for each service participant interviewed.

The SOE trial design and RCT evaluation method were included in the formative evaluation as far as how it affected implementation of the SOE service. Items out of scope for the formative evaluation will be included in a separate impact evaluation. For example, this would include issues with the design or implementation of the RCT, checking if characteristic 'balance' was achieved between the treatment and control groups, as well as outcomes and the difference in outcomes between the treatment and control groups (impact).

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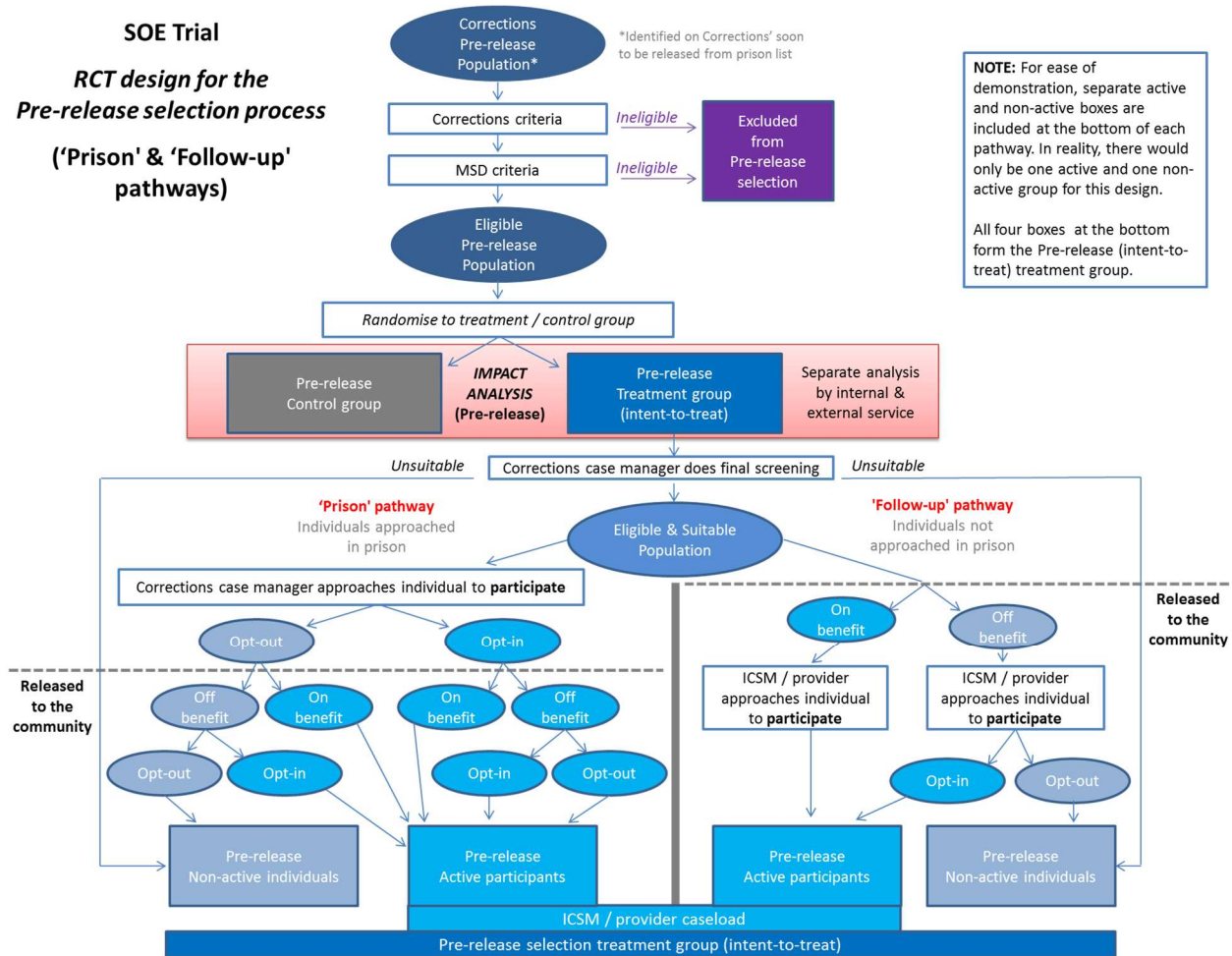
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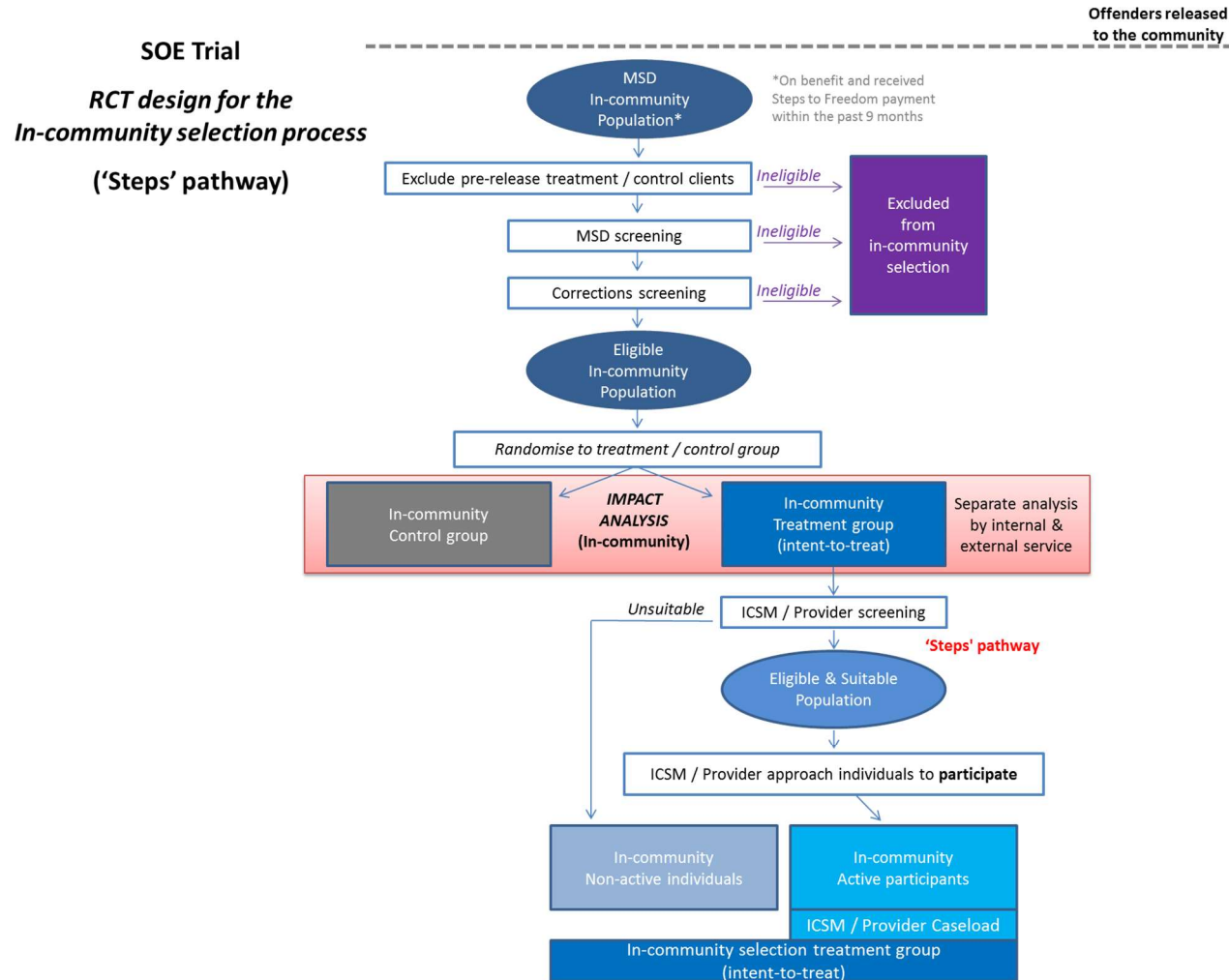
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Appendix 1: SOE trial pre-release selection process with 'prison' and 'follow-up' engagement pathways

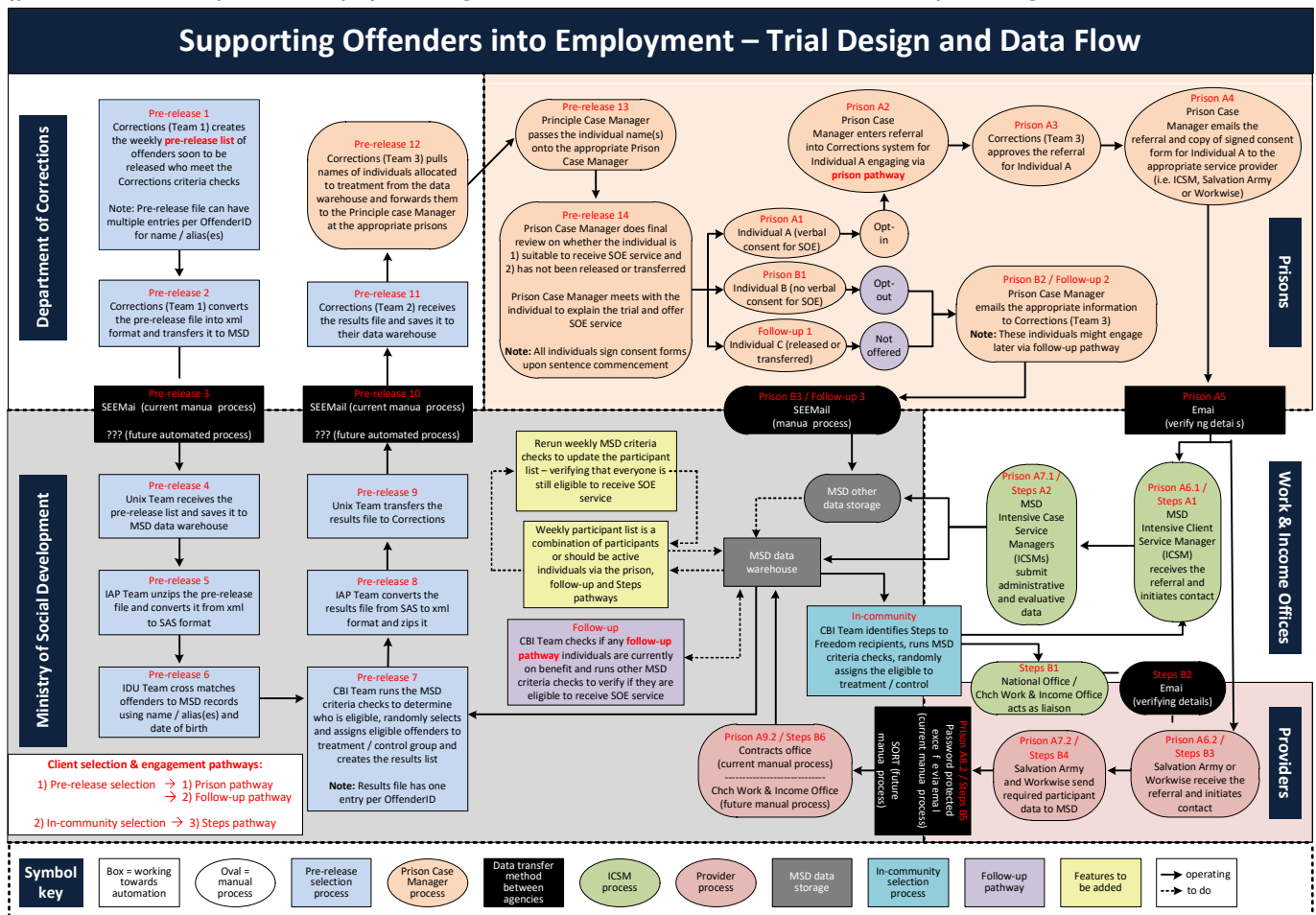


Appendix 2: SOE trial in-community selection process with 'Steps' engagement pathway



Appendix 3: SOE trial design and data flow

This diagram demonstrates an overview of the SOE trial design, including how the two selection processes (pre-release and in-community) and the three engagement pathways (prison, follow-up and Steps), fit together. Data needs to move smoothly through this complex system in order for the SOE service and SOE trial to function well.



This diagram demonstrates an overview of the SOE trial design, including how the two selection processes (pre-release and in-community) and the three engagement pathways (prison, follow-up and Steps), fit together. Data needs to move smoothly through this complex system in order for the SOE service and SOE trial to function well.

Appendix 4: Tracking the number of people through the pre-release selection process and prison engagement pathway to the number participating in SOE service

By 8 May 2017, 3,484 people had been identified as coming up for release from prison, 564 were being released on parole and another 2,920 with conditions. There were 112 people who were identified twice; however, 99 of these did not meet the Corrections eligibility criteria.

Of these 3484, nearly three-quarters did not meet Corrections eligibility criteria (2,610, 74.9 percent). More than two-thirds of the exclusions was because they were being released to a non-service area (1,776, 68.1 percent), whereas 17 percent (444) did not have any conditions (though there was a lot of missing data here).

People already released account for less than five percent (116). Those who had already been released were identified just under two weeks prior to their planned release date (median 1.9 weeks), compared to over seven weeks prior for all those identified (median 7.4, Table 3 above).

Fewer than five percent were excluded due to a staff safety alert (121, 4.6 percent) or identified as a child sex offender (105, 4 percent). The remaining exclusion reasons each individually account for less than one percent.

This left just 874 people (a quarter) who did meet Corrections' eligibility criteria.

Table 6: Reasons why people on the prison release list did not meet Corrections eligibility criteria

Reason	Number of offenders	Percentage of non missing entries
Not in SOE service area	1,776	68.1
No release conditions	444	17.0
Staff safety alert	121	4.6
Already released	116	4.4
Child sex offender	105	4.0
Not in SOE prison	15	0.6
Under 18 years old or over 64 years old	13	0.5
Deportation on release	7	0.3
Other reasons	10	0.4
Missing	3	
Total	2,610	

Notes:

- Percentages might not add up to 100 due to rounding.
- Other reasons include: extended supervision order, preventive detention, active charges and subject to parole.

Of the non-service areas prisoners were planning to be released to, the Auckland areas made up 30.4 percent. An ICSM was based in Auckland at the start of the trial, but this

position did not remain filled. The position was transferred to a new SOE service area in Hamilton in March 2017 (noted as ¹ in Table 7).

One of the key areas the SOE service is not being delivered is the Bay of Plenty, which accounted for 14.7 percent of those excluded. In November 2016, the original SOE service areas were expanded to include nearby locations where prisoners were being released (noted as ² in Table 7). After the formative evaluation was completed, five additional SOE service areas were established in December 2017 (noted as ³ in Table 7).

Table 7: Locations where people on the prison release list were being released to outside of SOE service areas, leading to their exclusion from the SOE trial

Location	Number of prisoners	Percentage of non missing entries
Rotorua	117	6.6
Mount Eden	94	5.3
Dunedin ³	83	4.7
Manurewa	78	4.4
Gisborne	66	3.7
Tauranga	66	3.7
Kaikohe ²	64	3.6
Levin ³	60	3.4
Nelson	58	3.3
Wellington ²	53	3.0
North Shore	51	2.9
Papakura ³	50	2.8
Hamilton ¹	47	2.7
Invercargill ³	45	2.5
Whanganui ³	40	2.3
Manukau	39	2.2
Mangere	38	2.2
New Lynn	37	2.1
Tokoroa	36	2.0
Waitakere ¹	35	2.0
Taupō	34	1.9
Otara	33	1.9
Panmure	30	1.7
Whakatane	27	1.5
Kaitaia	25	1.4
Masterton	25	1.4
Napier ²	25	1.4
New Plymouth	25	1.4
Blenheim	22	1.2
Greymouth	19	1.1
Franklin	17	1.0
Railside	17	1.0

Location	Number of prisoners	Percentage of non missing entries
Timaru	17	1.0
Other locations	287	16.2
Missing	8	
Total	1,776	

Notes:

- Percentages might not add up to 100.0 due to rounding.
- Only locations where more than one percent of prisoners were planning to be released to are specified in this table.
- SOE service areas have specific boundaries that may not be inclusive of the whole town area.

¹ Waitakere was one of the original five SOE service areas. This location was closed due to extremely low numbers and replaced by Hamilton in March 2017.

² Boundaries of the original SOE service areas were expanded to include these nearby locations as well.

³ In December 2017, five additional SOE service areas were established at these locations.

Of the 874 people who met the Corrections eligibility criteria the majority (744) also met the MSD eligibility criteria, while 130 did not. The main reason for exclusion was because these people had no SWN or benefit history, the second highest reason being that they had previously, or were currently, eligible for a Supported Living Payment benefit. Around one in ten had been managed remotely for safety reasons and ten had release dates prior to the SOE service going live (see Table 8).

Table 8: Reasons why people did not meet the MSD eligibility criteria

Reason	Number of people	Percentage of non missing entries
No SWN or benefit history	46	41.4
Previously or currently eligible for Supported Living Payment	33	29.7
Trespassed and/or managed remotely	11	9.9
Released prior to SOE go-live	10	9.0
Other reasons	11	9.9
Missing	19	
Total	130	

Notes:

- Percentages might not add up to 100.0 due to rounding.
- Other reasons include: duplicate entry, previously or currently eligible for Sole Parent Support with a child currently under 2 years of age, under 18 years old and other.

Of the 744 people eligible for SOE (21.4 percent of the 3,484 initially identified):

- 369 were assigned to the treatment group
- 362 were assigned to the control group
- 13 were on hold with no clear documentation as to why or had no assignment.

Of the 369 allocated to the treatment group, there is a record of 164 individuals being offered the service. For the other 205 people in the treatment group, there is a record that 114 would not be approached in prison whereas it was unclear if the remaining 91 were approached or not. Of the 114 with a record of no approach, the most common

reason people were not offered the SOE service in prison was because they had been released before they could be approached by a Corrections case manager. On average these people had been identified about 2–4 weeks prior to their planned release date (Table 3 above). The second most common reason was that individuals had changed their release location. Corrections case managers deemed 6.3 percent unsuitable for the SOE service (see Table 9).

Table 9: Reasons why treatment individuals were not offered SOE service in prison

Reason	Number of individuals	Percentage of non missing entries
Unknown if individual was approached or not	91	45.3
Already released	69	34.3
Change of release location	30	14.9
Deemed unsuitable by Corrections case manager	7	3.5
Other reasons	4	2.0
Missing	4	
Total	205	

Notes:

- Percentages might not add up to 100.0 due to rounding.
- Other reasons include: outstanding charges, conflict of interest and released on parole.

Of those who were offered the SOE service by Corrections case managers, only 28 were documented as declining the invitation. The main reasons documented for declining included:

- Plans to get income from elsewhere
- Does not want assistance or support
- Has other assistance or support
- Don't believe they need assistance or support.