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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CASE FORMULATION TRAINING PACKAGE FOR PROBATION STAFF

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Introduction: A recent UK Government initiative has sought to address the management of personality disordered (PD) offenders, aiming to improve public protection by reducing reoffending whilst simultaneously improving the psychological health of offenders with PD. Case formulation (CF) is given primacy here as it enhances offender management through a psychologically informed approach and informs pathway planning through Criminal Justice System or NHS services. Probation services are given an important role in formulating cases as part of the new strategy.
Objectives: Develop a consensus amongst professionals as to what makes a good Case Formulation (CF).
Investigate whether probation services can be taught CF skills, and to enhance these skills.
Aims: Develop a case formulation training package for probation staff and evaluate the training.
Method: The training package was informed by the results of a Delphi survey amongst professionals, and focus groups with probation staff, offenders and carers of individuals with PD.
Results: There was consensus that CF allows for collaboration between client and therapist, helps with complexity through organisation of case notes and has utility in treatment planning. Themes highlighted for effective CF included background, trauma, offending, risk and current lifestyle. The theoretical model gaining most support was a CBT model. The assessment of formulations was identified as challenging.
The CF training package is currently being evaluated and findings will be presented at the conference, alongside outcomes of all phases of the research.
Conclusions: CF has the potential to enhance treatment planning. Its suitability for probation staff will be discussed.

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