



Women Offenders Repeated Self Harm Intervention Pilot

(WORSHIP)

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Summary

- Background and rationale for the study
- Randomised control trials
- Psychodynamic-interpersonal skills therapy
- Aims of this study
- Methodology
- Future aims



Background

- Self-harm and attempted suicide is a huge problem for the whole prison service but, in particular, Women's prisons.

| Male | Female |
|---------------|---------------|
| 25% remand | 50% remand |
| 10% sentenced | 23% sentenced |

Meltzer et al, 1999

- There are currently around 4,293 women in custody (HO, 2006).
- The National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England (DoH, 2002) highlighted the problem and identified 6 goals to reduce rates
- Prisoners and those who have committed past acts of self-harm are identified as high-risk groups.
- Media attention due to 6 deaths in custody at Styal prison in a 12 month period (2002-2003).



Randomised Control Trials

- Several trials have been conducted using a range of models. These have included:
 - Cognitive-behavioural models (Linehan et al, 1991; Typer et al, 2003)
 - Problem-solving skills (Salkovskis et al, 1990; McLeavey et al, 1994)
 - Multimodal Models (Allard et al, 1992; Wood et al, 2001)
 - Psychodynamic Models (Bateman & Fonagy, 1999; Guthrie et al, 2001)

- Few of these studies produced statistically significant results.
- However, Guthrie et al (2001) produced a significant reduction in self-harm in a community sample of women and men.
- The sample were recruited after presenting to the A&E department of one Northwest hospital for acts of self-poisoning. N=119 (58 EG, 61 TAU).
- Significant reduction in suicidal ideation. SH acts 9% treatment vs 28% control and depression reduced but not significantly.



Psychodynamic-Interpersonal Therapy

- Interpersonal difficulties has been cited as one of the main reasons for self-harm episodes (Lorensini & Bates, 2002; Fieldsend & Lowenstein, 1981)
- The therapy entails identifying and helping to resolve interpersonal difficulties which cause or exacerbate psychological distress.
- It is brief, consisting of four, 50 minute sessions.
- However, it will need to be tailored to the specific needs of women prisoners and to the prison environment.

Aims of the study:

1. To explore 'users' views of how the prison currently manages self-harm and how they think an intervention will work in the prison system.
2. To adapt an existing community intervention for the specific needs of women self-harmers in prison.
3. To pilot the modified intervention to ascertain impact on rates of self-harm.
4. To assess the feasibility and acceptability of implementing the intervention in the prison system.



Phases:

Phase 1 - Qualitative interviews with 20 prisoners who have self-harmed, 6 healthcare staff and 8 prison officers

Phase 2 - Adaptation of the community self-harm intervention

Phase 3 – Training of 3 members of prison staff in the administration of the intervention

Phase 4 – Evaluation of the intervention, including feasibility and fidelity

Phase 1

- Qualitative interviews will be carried out using 'a priori' sampling methods.
- Semi-structured interviews will be used to identify the needs of women self-harmers in prison in relation to an intervention for self-harm and to identify potential barriers to the intervention.
- This 'user led' approach will inform how the intervention is adapted to fit into the prison environment



Phases 2 and 3

- Phase 2- the existing intervention will be tailored to the specific needs of women prisoners and to the prison environment.
- Phase 3- Staff will be recruited from the prison to be trained in the therapy and receive specific training for implementing it in prison

Phase 4

- The tailored intervention will be piloted using 60 women who self-harm from Styal Prison.

Intervention

Trained staff will deliver four 50 minute sessions one week apart to the 30 women assigned to the intervention. Over an 18 month period, each staff member will deliver the intervention to 10 women.

Control

30 women will receive treatment as usual, but in addition will receive four 50 minute informal sessions with prison staff to discuss practical issues such as money management.



Outcome Measures

Participants in the trial will be assessed before and after the intervention using:

- Acts of self-harm which will be recorded prior, during and post intervention.
- Beck Suicide Intent Scale
- Beck Depression Inventory
- Beck Hopelessness Scale
- Inventory for Interpersonal Problems

Future research

- If positive results are found and it is feasible to deliver it within the prison system, then we will be looking to complete a full-scale multi-site trial in the future.

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