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The Restorative Practices Knowledge Exchange

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THE MAINSTREAM BEYON
FIRST ANNUAL RJC CONFERENCE 18 NOV 2019



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Incore
International Conflict
Research Institute



Purpose

Opportunity to learn from other practitioners and services

Chance to discuss key issues

Space to make contacts and consider challenges

Event Schedule

Day 1: 02 April, 2019

Meet: Organisations identify key issues

Day 2: 03 April, 2019

Workshop: Police-led and Community-led models of Restorative Services

Challenges & opportunities 1: Council of Europe recommendations & towards an Adult RJ Strategy (Dr Ian Marder, Maynooth University ; Louise Cooper, DoJ NI)

Challenges & opportunities 2: Education, Youth Justice and Young People; Prisons & Housing; Communities & Multi Agency Working; Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse.

Day 3: 04 April, 2019

Tour: of Belfast and Restorative Projects

Public Event: Summary of the Knowledge exchange and Panel Discussion on key issues across the three days

Participants

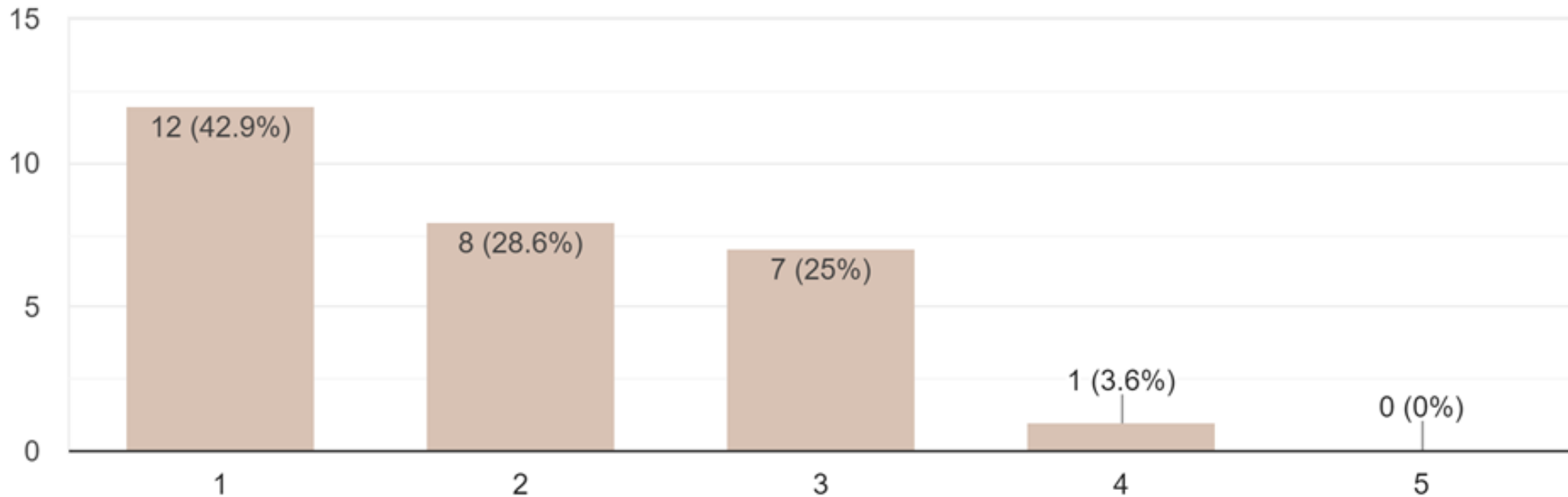
Community Restorative Justice Ireland
Northern Ireland Alternatives
Restorative Gloucestershire
Restorative Practices Forum NI

Victim Support NI
Quaker Service NI
Family Group Conference NI
Home Group

OPCC for Gloucestershire
Police Service of Northern Ireland
Gloucestershire Police
NI Prison Service
Probation Board NI
Probation Service Ireland
DOJ NI

Ulster University
University of Gloucestershire
Maynooth University
Forouh Bay Coll., Freetown, SL

Pre-event survey: Do you feel that your organisation/project is taken seriously as a valid response to crime or conflict?



Very few or no agencies or organisations we work with view our service as a valid response to crime or conflict



Every agency or organisation we work with views our service as a valid response to crime or conflict

Key themes from the discussion

Education, youth justice and young people:

How can we realise the potential of restorative practices for young people?

Earlier intervention is required to deal with social problems

Effective restorative practice in schools can have a **ripple effect into the community**, with a reduction in problems such as ASB

A need for **better coordination of agencies**

Prisons & housing:

What strategies can be deployed in prisons, probation and housing that work?

changing approaches requires us to build Restorative Practice into everyday working practices and into training

Restorative Practices can help **challenge negative role models** in communities

Need to **raise the profile of Restorative Approaches**, and to encourage more referrals for RJ services

Key themes from the discussion

Domestic Violence (DV) and Sexual Violence (SV):

How can we (should we?) use Restorative Approaches with DV and SV?

How to manage Coercive control? **Work with experts** in the area to make sure practice is safe.

If we say RJ cant happen in DV and SV **are we taking power away from the victims** to make their choice?

Its not about 'taking a risk' but about **reducing the risk so** that RJ can work in these areas.

Remember **it is first of all vital to not cause further harm**

Communities & Multi Agency Working:

How can we get agencies working together?

Improving engagement & communication between statutory agencies and local authorities

Overcoming **competitiveness and the silo mentality between organisations** (limited funding & Resources)

Ensuring statutory agencies do not feel **threatened** by the rise of community groups working in their criminal justice space.

The challenges of Top-down and Bottom-up Restorative approaches

- Overcoming inter-organisational barriers to the forming of new working practices.
- Challenging the legitimacy deficit – particularly when working with young people and ethnic minorities
- Generating true community capacity and ‘buy in’ to the restorative approach

Top-Down

Bottom-up

- The constant pressure of working in the context of insecure short term funding
- Overcoming the risk of being perceived to have moved too far away from the community
- While striving to close the gap to the statutory agencies – can they become real partners in the forming of a restorative society?

1. First steps in making it happen?

- Ongoing funding commitment essential for developing the opportunities.
- Identifying a site. Physical or mobile?

2. Strengths to build on

- Already a wealth of experience and framework regarding accreditation and tiering system.

3. Barriers to overcome

- Can lead to a hierarchical system. Transferability of any awards, and what does the qualification look like.
- Accreditation and exclusivity – needs buy in from practitioners so it is not regarded skeptically.

4. Accountability

- Consideration on how complaints handled and by whom

5. What would success look like?

- Enough provision to cover need with equal access.
- Enough accredited practitioners and consistency of standards.
- What is the overall goal? Improving communication / service delivery of departments - or should it be about incorporating restorative practices into the very fabric of society.

Example: the case for a Center for Restorative Excellence in NI

Dr Ian Marder, Maynooth University

Louise Cooper, Department of Justice



Our thanks to those that gave their time to participate in this Knowledge Exchange



You can find the post event report at:
<http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/6989/>

