



HEADQUARTERS
One Lochside
1 Lochside Avenue
Edinburgh
EH12 9DJ

Dr Peter Pratt
Our Ref: HQ23127
By email: [REDACTED]

03 October 2023

Dear Dr Pratt,

Thank you for your request dated 31 August 2023 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

For reference, you requested.

RFI 1: “When was Moving Forward, Making Changes discontinued?”

RFI 2: “Was there ever any evidence that it was effective? I do appreciate that the document that I have read, i.e., Moving Forward: Making Changes - An Evaluation of a Group-based Treatment Programme for Sex Offenders, produces a response of probably not!”

RFI 3: “Was it discontinued because there was little or no evidence that it was effective?”

RFI 4: “Similarly, is there any evidence that the Self Change Programme is effective in reducing risk in the community?”

RFI 5: “If there is any such evidence, can this be differentiated into that for violent offenders, as opposed to those convicted of sexual violence?”

RFI 6: “Is there any evidence that the Moderate Intensity Sexual Violence Programme, which can obviously only be undertaken by convicted sexual offenders, is effective in reducing risk in the community?”

RFI 7: “Is there any evidence that the Caledonian Programme has been evaluated as reducing risk?”

We have now completed our search for the information you requested.

RFI 1 Response: The decision to discontinue Moving Forward Making Changes (MFMC) was made in 2020, although as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant existing MFMC strands had to be stopped for a number of months, it was in the latter half of 2021 that the final strands were discontinued.

RFI 2 Response: The evaluation that you refer to in this question has an outcome that can be broadly summarised as follows:

Overall staff felt that MF:MC had a 'better chance' of being effective compared with previous sex offender interventions, as they viewed its design as being more evidence-based. While this evaluation cannot robustly assess whether all elements of MF:MC are best practice, in general the programme design appears to be informed by the current best evidence on 'what works' in terms of appropriate treatment targets and approaches to working with sex offenders.

It is important to note that when SPS develops any offending behaviour programme it does so based on best practice techniques, in accordance with the literature on programme efficacy, and with the intention of submitting it to the Scottish Advisory Panel on Offender Rehabilitation (SAPOR), the body that confers accreditation. Accredited status provides the standard with which it is reasonable to infer that any particular programme has been designed in a manner closely aligned to the 'What Works?' literature. On that point it is worth noting that, MFMC was an accredited programme, as is the original version of SCP currently delivered in some SPS sites.

RFI 3 Response: There were a number of reasons for deciding to discontinue MFMC, one of which was the outcome of the process evaluation you refer to in Q2. However, the significant waiting lists for MFMC were an important consideration, and the move to two interventions designed for perpetrators of sexual violence was to increase the available spaces for that particular cohort, and also to provide offence-focused programmes that were proportionate to risk, i.e., SCP for high and very-high risk individuals, and MF2C for those identified as moderate risk.

RFI 4 Response: Within a custodial environment there are limits to what can be evaluated; specifically, when an intervention is designed using a logic model – as is the case with SCP – what can be measured in custody are short- and medium-term outcomes. Long-term outcomes, e.g., risk reduction in the community, would require following programme completers into the community, a task that lies out with the remit of the prison service. The absence of long-term evaluation does not preclude the potential that the intervention has had a positive effect in terms of risk reduction, although as I am sure you are aware, when an individual enters the community it is difficult to evidence that a period of desistance, or subsequent re-offending can be attributed solely to participation on an offending behaviour programme.

RFI 5 Response: The offence protection strand of SCP, for perpetrators of sexual violence, is still in its pilot phase. It is currently being evaluated with a view to then revising the programme according to the evaluation before it is prepared for submission to SAPOR.

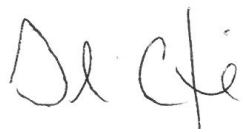
RFI 6 Response: The moderate intensity programme, which has now been entitled Moving Forward 2 Change (MF2C) is still in its pilot phase of delivery, and consequently there is no evaluation data.

RFI 7 Response: The Caledonian Programme is a community-based intervention. It is not delivered within the SPS. I am unaware of what evaluation has been done regarding its effectiveness.

This concludes our response to your request.

If you are unhappy with this response to your request, you may ask us to conduct an internal review, by writing to The Chief Executive, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ. Your request should explain why you wish a review to be conducted and should be made within forty working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within twenty working days of receipt. If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephan McAlpine'. The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Stephan McAlpine

Head of Psychology, HMP Edinburgh