



HM Inspectorate of Probation

AUDIT OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

North-West Region of the
National Probation Service for
England and Wales

*Level 2 Follow-up Report on:
Cumbria Probation Area –
Think First*

November 2002

Acknowledgements:

We are grateful for the cooperation of staff from the Cumbria Probation Area in completing this follow-up audit.

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Glossary

ACE	Assessment, Case Recording and Evaluation System
ACO	Assistant chief officer
CO	Chief officer
CRAMS	Case Record Administration and Management System
HMIP	HM Inspectorate of Probation
IQR	Implementation Quality Rating
LSI-R	Level of Service Inventory-Revised
N/A	Criteria not assessed
NPD	National Probation Directorate
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OGRS	Offender Group Reconviction Scale
PSR	Pre-sentence report

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Scoring Approach:

The criteria for the delivery of accredited programmes have been divided into four sections. These sections, and the overall weighting assigned for each section, are as follows:

Committed leadership and supportive management	20%
Programme management responsibilities	30%
Quality of programme delivery	30%
Case management responsibilities	20%

Each criterion is scored as **Fully Met** (2 marks), **Largely Met** (1 Mark) or **Not Met** (0 marks).

The scoring summary sheet at the end of this follow-up report shows the marks awarded for each criterion – for those criteria designated as Mandatory (see Performance Standards Manual) the mark given is doubled. This denotes the critical impact these criteria have on the effective delivery of programmes.

The marks awarded for each section are shown and then expressed as a % by dividing the total number of marks scored by the maximum available, and multiplying by 100. Section B has been divided into seven sub-sections for ease of scoring.

To determine an area's IQR, the scores for each section are multiplied by the appropriate factor to take account of the relevant weightings given above. The % totals for each section are then added together to give the IQR.

For this follow-up audit, those criteria that were fully met on the original audit have not been re-assessed. The marks awarded then have therefore been carried over.

Overview:

- The original audit of Think First in Cumbria took place in September 2001.
- The follow-up audit comprised the following elements: video monitoring of ten recorded Think First sessions; a case file read; interviews with the ACO, programme and treatment managers, tutors, case managers and PSR writers.
- Only those criteria not fully met at the original audit have been reassessed and new marks awarded.

Findings:

An action plan had been swiftly drawn up following the original audit and most recommendations had been addressed, with considerable progress made in some respects. The leadership of the area remained committed to Think First and active in promoting an allocation culture, wide staff ownership and accurate targeting.

With the help of an external consultant, a process improvement project had been carried out, exploring reasons for non-completion of programmes. There arose from this a detailed action plan to improve attrition rates at all stages.

The area had not been able to schedule programmes with sufficient frequency and some offenders had faced delays in programme commencement. Offenders having to travel long distances from outlying rural areas remained a considerable challenge to Cumbria. The case manager role had been strengthened, although work remained to be done on exploring how case managers might proactively support offenders and reinforce their learning.

There had been little progress in relation to supervision planning for programme cases. This reflected the broader position in Cumbria whereby an implementation plan for OASys was now in place and the roll-out was imminent. Understandably, little interim work had been done in relation to supervision planning, pending this implementation.

A significant programme of training had been rolled out by the area, although there were some problems in maintaining a sufficiently large tutor pool. The resultant increase in staff confidence and ownership of Think First was evident. Treatment management had been firmly established and staff were regularly supervised. However, failure to score programme delivery accurately had led to no increase in the quality of delivery at the point of follow-up. Scores for the videos externally assessed for the follow-up audit were very similar to those for the sample looked at 12 months ago and, in many cases, the areas for improvement remained identical. Finding an accurate benchmarking system for the scoring of performance must be a priority if the standard of delivery is to be driven up.

Next Steps

Cumbria Probation Area achieved a revised IQR of **65%**.

The next full audit will be incorporated into HMIP's normal inspection/audit cycle. The area should pay particular attention to mandatory items, which have not been fully met.

This audit follow-up report and the IQR will be received by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel in March 2003.

SECTION A: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

The CO should ensure that the area:

- *fosters a culture of active allocation of resettlement cases to accredited programmes;*
- *tackles the issue of differential allocation to Think First across geographical and functional areas;*
- *adopts a clear strategy to inform sentencers about programme work in an ongoing way.*

- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Senior managers had worked hard to bring about changes to the programme referral system and significant progress had been made in promoting an allocation culture.
- ▶▶ **Not met:** There were differential allocation rates across the area but these were being monitored and reported on, down to individual officer level. Insufficient work had been done to promote programmes for resettlement cases.
- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Whilst additional work with sentencers had been carried out, the area still lacked a cohesive plan for informing them in an ongoing way about programmes.

A1.1 Committed leadership

2

Description: *The senior management of the area should be openly and explicitly committed to the proper running of the programme through policy and public statements.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

A1.2 Management structures

1

Description: *Effective line management structures exist for the proper operation of the programme integrating this within case management structures. Adequate time should be set aside for the effective management of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Senior managers and the service delivery management group had spent time planning for improved management structures and increased programme capacity.
- Senior management responsibility for programmes had transferred to the operational ACO with the aim of promoting a more integrated operational delivery structure.
- The treatment management function had been established but not fully developed.
- A new set of comprehensive, competency-based job descriptions had been produced for programme related roles.

A1.3 Staff ownership of the accredited programme

1

Description: *There is full ownership of the programme by managers, programme tutors and other relevant staff, e.g. court personnel and case managers.*

Progress since the original audit:

- PSR writers had received briefings on Think First and felt more central to the programme work of the area.

- There were geographical variations in programme allocations, but local targets were being set and concordance data and allocation rates monitored.
- Whilst insufficient priority overall had been given to resettlement cases, work had begun on production of a guidance note in relation to the allocation of licencees to Think First.
- In his regular newsletters the CO addressed programmes' issues as central to good service delivery within the area.

A1.4 Effective communication with sentencers

1

Description: *There is high quality, proactive communication with local sentencers and clerks to the justices about the programme, including written information.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Little evidence of a systematic approach to information and publicity for magistrates was found.
- 25% of Think First orders made by sentencers had not been proposed.
- A Think First leaflet for sentencers had now been produced.
- At liaison meetings with a number of benches between March and May 2002 effective practice had been an agenda item.
- Use had been made of magistrates' newsletters and retirement room notice boards as a means of informing them about programmes.
- Little work had been done in relation to the judiciary.

SECTION B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

The CO should ensure that the area:

- *revises its targeting procedures so that it is more consistently accurate;*
- *reviews its policy on the timeliness of commencements with a view to minimising delays in programme starts;*
- *improves the accessibility to offending behaviour group work programmes for women and minority ethnic offenders;*
- *establishes active treatment management which encompasses the full range of duties appropriate to the role, most particularly the monitoring of 10% of videos and the supervision of tutors;*
- *sets up, as a matter of urgency, a system of regular structured supervision for programme tutors and that constructive use is made of videotaped programme sessions to develop practice;*
- *organises training in programme theory to treatment managers, programme tutors, PSR writers and case managers;*
- *provides training in session familiarisation to PSR writers and case managers;*
- *develops a strategy for maximising attendance at, and completion of, group work programmes;*
- *addresses the issue of disruption to programmes run on the Carlisle site;*
- *continues to develop its plans to evolve an active feedback loop in which all grades of staff are involved in making use of monitoring and evaluation data to improve practice.*

- ▶▶ **Largely met.** The area had worked hard to improve the accuracy of targeting to Think First and the principles of effective targeting were clearly understood by all parties. There remained work to do in maximising allocations to the programme.
- ▶▶ **Not met.** Although ways had been sought to improve timeliness of group commencement, including consideration of weekend working, some offenders were still experiencing worrying delays.
- ▶▶ **Fully met.** Accessibility to Think First had been addressed and improved and more women, in particular, were now accessing the programme.
- ▶▶ **Largely met.** Treatment managers were now routinely monitoring 10% of videoed sessions, although their scoring was not yet accurate.
- ▶▶ **Largely met:** Tutors were being supervised regularly by treatment managers.
- ▶▶ **Fully met.** Training on programme theory had been delivered and tutor staff development meetings had been creatively used to offer ongoing updates on research and evidence.
- ▶▶ **Fully met.** Case managers and PSR writers had been given training to improve their familiarity with the programme.
- ▶▶ **Not met.** Cumbria had developed anti-attrition work and sought to increase programme completions, though with limited success to date.
- ▶▶ **Largely met.** Problems with disruption to groups run at the Carlisle site had been considerably reduced.

- ▶▶ **Largely met.** The area had improved the feedback process to staff in relation to programme information, but more work needed to be done in informing practitioners about developments and progress in other Think First areas in the region.

B1.1 Resources and facilities

1

Description: *Adequate accommodation consistent with the Estates Standards Manual is available for all sessions of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- In Barrow two rooms had been incorporated into a group work room of adequate size.
- Facilities at the Kendal office were inadequate and the site was no longer used for Think First.
- There were some problems with the sound quality and camera angle when free-standing cameras were used.
- The size of the group room in Carlisle had been improved by the removal of some fixed furniture and 'break out' facilities were also now available.
- In Carlisle partition doors had been moved to minimise noise and disruption both from other users of the site and from residents of the nearby hostel.

B1.2 Provision of information leaflets about the programme

2

Description: *There should be a set of leaflets for offenders, sentencers and staff clearly describing the programme and its requirements.*

Progress since the original audit:

- The area now had a full set of information leaflets aimed at participants, sentencers, case managers and tutors.
- A general *Services for Courts Pocket Guide* had also been produced by Cumbria, which included a section on accredited programmes.

B2.1 Managing attendance

2

Description: *Offender attendance and absence are managed to achieve the required National Performance Management target for offender completions. Attendance is managed to achieve coherent delivery with full impact for all undertaking the programme. The maximum number of absences by any one offender is consistent with the requirements of the programme manual for the specific accredited programme.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B2.2 Avoidance of cancellation or disruption to sessions

1

Description: *Sessions are not cancelled or disrupted owing to offender crises, high workload or other pressures, and arrangements exist to deal with crises outside of the programme session. Sessions are delivered at the frequency defined in the programme manual.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Case managers continued to deal with offender crises when alerted by tutors, therefore avoiding disruption to sessions.
- A recent programme had been postponed because pre-programme sessions had not been delivered on time to all group members.

- The disruption caused at the Carlisle site by probation staff and nearby hostel residents had been reduced by some partition doors being moved.

B2.3 Catch-up sessions/Attendance

1

Description: *Provision is made for catch-up sessions, or a 'bus stop' approach, to allow offenders who miss a session to continue with the programme. All offenders missing sessions, who are not excluded from the programme, should attend catch-up sessions, or in the case of a 'bus stop' approach be moved onto another programme within ten working days, to ensure full delivery of the programme. Treatment managers must specify arrangements for monitoring the integrity of catch-up sessions.*

Progress since the original audit:

- In case records catch-ups were clearly recorded in 23 of 24 applicable cases (96%).
- Catch-up sessions were being video recorded and treatment managers were monitoring one in seven of these sessions, as required. However, these had not yet been used as a focus for supervision with tutors and threats to programme integrity were therefore not being explored.

B2.4 Timeliness

0

Description: *All offenders commence the programme, or specified pre-programme phase, within the first month of the order or within three months if other structured pre-programme work is undertaken. Occasionally, the timing may be different to permit other preliminary work to be completed, e.g. a programme of drug detoxification.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Weekend working had been explored for employed offenders but had not been implemented. A programme of evening groups was established.
- Although staff were clearer than they had been about the importance of a prompt programme start, some offenders were still facing considerable delays.
- Although a clear schedule had been devised, this planned for a new programme start every eight weeks rather than every four weeks.
- The area was not monitoring delays to programme starts.
- Of the file read sample, only four of 31 offenders (13%) began the programme within one calendar month, with another two cases (6%) having a planned delay because they were not programme ready.

B3.1 Staff selection

2

Description: *A staff selection procedure meeting the requirements of the programme manual is in place and only staff meeting the defined criteria are selected to deliver the programme.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B3.2 Staff roles and competencies

2

Description: *Differences in role between grades or posts are clearly reflected in job descriptions. A defined set of competencies exist for each staff role involved in the programme, using those specified in the programme manuals and the national management manual.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Role differences were clearly set out in job descriptions and these incorporated key tasks and competencies.
- Specific guidance had been produced about the requirements of the treatment manager role and staff understood and valued this role.
- Treatment managers demonstrated a confidence and understanding about their role, which had not been in place at the time of the original audit.

B3.3 Preparation and debriefing time for tutors

2

Description: *Tutors are allowed 1½ hours for preparation and debriefing for each session in addition to the programme delivery time.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B3.4 Staff continuity

2

Description: *Three leaders should normally be assigned to each accredited programme to allow for leave, sickness and other contingencies. All sessions of the programmes are delivered by at least two of the three assigned staff. Continuity is maintained by at least one of the staff members having run the previous session.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B4.1 Training arrangements for new staff

2

Description: *Training courses exist for all grades and roles involved in delivering the programme and all staff newly assigned to the programme receive training before running their first programme. The training delivered follows that defined in the programme training manual.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B4.2 New staff paired with an experienced colleague when running their first programme

2

Description: *Staff newly trained in a programme should be paired with a more experienced colleague when running their first course.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B4.3 Training arrangements for experienced staff

N/A

Description: *Competency-based booster and developmental training arrangements exist for all staff experienced in delivering the programme. All programme delivery staff are required to attend such training when they have demonstrated their competence to do so. [This will include delivering a stipulated minimum number of courses.]*

Criterion not assessed at original audit.

B4.4 Staff knowledge of the concepts and methods used in the programme

2

Description: *All relevant staff have a knowledge of the programme model, targeting, objectives and methods sufficient for effective delivery of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- A major investment had been made in running refresher training sessions in Think First for a number of staff groups.
- Case managers and PSR writers had a clear understanding of the importance of accurate targeting.
- All staff interviewed spoke confidently about their awareness of the concepts and methods used in Think First and believed their knowledge was sufficient for effective programme delivery.

B4.5 Staff knowledge of the theoretical and evidential basis of the programme

2

Description: *All relevant staff have a knowledge of the programme's theoretical base and evidence, sufficient for effective delivery of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Staff development meetings were used to update tutor knowledge about research and evidence in relation to cognitive-behavioural work.
- Treatment managers were now well versed in the theory underpinning Think First.
- Case managers had been encouraged by the anecdotal evidence of perceived progress made by Think First offenders on their caseload and recognised an increase in their own commitment to the programme.
- It was unfortunate that Cumbria had not been able to build its own evidence base because it had not been able to analyse and interpret psychometric data.

B4.6 Supporting skills necessary to run programmes

2

Description: *From interview, observation, appraisal and training audits all relevant staff have supporting skills including core group work skills, presentation skills, case management, etc, sufficient for the effective delivery of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Training records were being kept in respect of individual staff members.
- Supervision and performance planning documents prompted the consideration of individual staff training needs.
- Complementary training in motivational interviewing, diversity issues and child protection had been delivered to staff.

B5.1 Staff supervision and quality of practice

1

Description: *All staff involved in the programme receive support and supervision at a frequency specified in the national management manual. This will enable tutor skills to be developed and problems resolved within the lifetime of the current programme by supervisors familiar with effectiveness methods and the programme. The manager to have observed staff in the delivery of the programme either directly or through video prior to each supervision session.*

Progress since the original audit:

- A schedule of fortnightly supervision of tutors by treatment managers, published in advance, was firmly established.
- Additionally, the programme manager was supervising tutors every six weeks and was seen as an accessible and flexible source of additional support to staff at other times.
- Written notes were kept of staff supervision sessions.
- Video monitoring was now a clear focus of tutor supervision sessions.
- A schedule of alternate team meetings and staff development meetings, each taking place every eight weeks, was doing much to inform practice for programme staff.
- A system of telephone conferencing between treatment managers and tutors was used to supplement formal supervision and had proved helpful in discussing issues relating to the delivery of particular Think First sessions.
- The value of supervision, in terms of its impact on improving delivery standards, was limited by both tutors and treatment managers over-scoring delivery performance. A reliable benchmark was not therefore yet in place.
- Whilst the programme manager was proactive in working with treatment managers on video monitoring, she was not scoring sessions and therefore was not able to offer an alternative benchmark.

B5.2 Staff appraisal

2

Description: *All members of staff involved with the programme have their competence to perform their assigned role assessed annually through the appraisal process. Staff whose performance is assessed as below the acceptable standard but making progress should be given further training and other assistance to improve their performance and a date set for review. Staff who are not making progress in achieving the required standard of performance should not take any further part in running the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- A system of regular supervision now underpinned the appraisal process for programme staff.
- A procedure for the deselection of tutors had been drafted, linked to the area's capability procedure. It had not yet proved necessary to deploy this.
- Programme related objectives were being incorporated in the performance planning documents of case managers.

B6.1 Offender selection and assessment

1

Description: *Routine monitoring results confirm the profile of those entering the programme are consistent with the criminogenic needs addressed by the programme, the level of risk of reoffending and the level of risk of harm/dangerousness.*

Progress since the original audit:

- PSR writers had been given training in relation to Think First.
- Efforts had been made to keep magistrates informed about Think First and the importance of accurate targeting and appropriate sentencing.
- Arrangements had been made for practitioners to discuss offender suitability with treatment managers. This was a helpful screening process but did not guarantee that exclusion criteria were appropriately applied or that all suitable cases were able to access Think First.
- Of the 31 cases in the file read sample, 25 (81%) were either within the appropriate OGRS 2 targeting band for Think First, or were outside it but with a clearly recorded assessment of suitability and work planned to complement the programme.

B6.2 Offender knowledge and understanding of the programme requirements

1

Description: *The requirements of the programme are clearly communicated on at least two occasions to each participant verbally and in writing, and there is evidence from signed consent forms, observation and/or interview that offenders know and understand the requirements.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Records showed that most offenders were being clearly informed about Think First. In 23 of 31 cases (74%) offenders were informed both verbally and in writing.
- Think First information leaflets were issued at the PSR stage and case managers and tutors were later complementing this.

B6.3 Group size

2

Description: *For group programmes the maximum starting group size during the previous year did not exceed 12 and the minimum was not less than four.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B6.4 Accessibility of group work programmes

1

Description: *If female or minority ethnic offenders are placed in mixed groups there are no singleton placements unless agreed to by the offender. Appropriate support arrangements should be evidenced for these programme participants.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Programmes' practice guidance had been issued in relation to anti-discriminatory practice, in order to regulate decisions about offender suitability for Think First, particularly in relation to targeting for the Priestley 1:1 programme.
- A process for interviewing women and minority ethnic offenders had been put in place to ensure that any singleton placements were only made with informed offender consent.

- In ten of 14 applicable cases in the file read sample, (71%), diversity issues were assessed as having been managed well in relation to accessibility to Think First and support during the programme.
- For groups which were of mixed race or gender, consideration was given to appropriate staffing and to individual support for the offenders concerned.

B7.1 Implementation of monitoring and evaluation design

2

Description: *Interview and observation show that monitoring and evaluation arrangements are working as intended and are understood and supported by all staff involved. This should include both input and feedback of data to managers and practitioners at local level.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

B7.2 Practice is informed by monitoring and evaluation evidence

1

Description: *Consistent use is made of evaluation information as it becomes available by those with most direct responsibility, e.g. managers giving regular consideration to attendance and completion information, practitioners to offender feedback and attitude/behaviour change scores. Awareness/knowledge about evaluation results from the same programme operating elsewhere will be relevant.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Senior managers had met with their counterparts from other areas in the north-west region to discuss evaluation results and to work together on promoting best practice.
- Practitioners continued to feel a lack of awareness of comparative information relating to Think First across the region and were keen to receive this.
- Following the collapse of two Think First groups in Maryport, the programme was moved to alternative premises in Workington to combat problems of poor geographical access and long journeys for offenders. The outcomes, in terms of attendance and completion rates, were being monitored at the time of the follow-up audit.
- Senior managers, together with the information manager, had worked to make circulated data on Cumbria's performance more accessible to staff by offering clear analytical commentary alongside graphs, etc.
- As a result of concerns raised in the first HMIP audit file read (September 2001) about clarity of recording, the area had devised a new set of programme recording codes for electronic contact log entries.

SECTION C: QUALITY OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

<i>No recommendations made.</i>

C1.1 Adherence to programme manual

1

Description: *All sessions of the programme should be delivered in line with the instructions of the programme manual and demonstrate close adherence to the aims and objectives. There should be evident commitment to follow the intention/purpose of the exercises used, including repetition/reinforcement, where these are designed parts of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Tutors remained careful about delivering material in the correct order and did not add inappropriate extras.
- Offender learning was not being checked thoroughly enough.
- There were some pacing problems, with exercises being given too much or too little time.

C1.2 Adherence to treatment style

1

Description: *From direct observation or video evidence, programme tutors make competent and appropriate use of the techniques specified. There will be evidence of effective communication of the material, offender understanding and engagement. Pro-social attitudes are skilfully modelled by workers and are predominant in the group. This includes challenging pro-criminal or anti-social attitudes and behaviour.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Tutors had sustained good practice in relation to summarising and reflecting learning back to offenders.
- Helpful links were made between sessions.
- Some examples of tutors challenging offence supporting views were seen.
- There was insufficient use of open questioning.
- Group members were not consistently encouraged to explain and validate ideas for themselves.

C1.3 Group work skills

1

Description: *Programme tutors demonstrate effective management of the group, including effective co-working to facilitate learning by offenders and modelling pro-social behaviour. Disruption by participants is minimised.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Tutors were clearly spoken and there had been some improvement in their rewording of complex language in order to aid offender comprehension.
 - Generally groups were managed satisfactorily, with all members included in discussions and exercises.
 - Handovers were not always conducted well and co-working was not as positive as it could have been.
 - Insufficient use of appropriate praise was noted.
-

C1.4 Programme delivered addressing race equality and diversity issues

2

Description: *From direct observation or video evidence, issues of racism and sexism are effectively addressed whether arising within programme delivery or offender response. Staff are alert to race equality and diversity issues, they always respond appropriately and show that they have considered and developed strategies for responding, e.g. relevant resources and arguments, clarity about boundaries, approaches that may promote perspective taking.*

Progress since the original audit:

- There was a high level of awareness amongst tutors of diversity issues within programme delivery. They were drawing up group rules with offenders in such a way that they could easily be applied if racism or sexism emerged within the groups.
- Tutors were taking care to research individual offender profiles prior to programme start so as to assess for diversity needs or related issues.
- Most programme staff had attended core diversity training run by the area. Although this had not been tailored to the programme delivery setting, tutors had found it helpful and confidence levels had risen as a result.
- With more women now accessing Think First, tutors were appropriately adapting session material to their needs.

C1.5 Programme integrity checklist

1

Description: *The programme integrity checklist for each session is completed.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Whilst programme integrity checklists were completed reliably, tutors continued to over-score their own delivery performance and did not assess each performance criterion independently.
- Tutors' self-assessments were reviewed in supervision with treatment managers, but there was a lack of accurate benchmarking of performance.

C1.6 End of programme summary reports

1

Description: *The case record shows that at the end of the programme delivery staff prepare a summary for the case manager indicating:*

- *participation in the programme*
- *progress made*
- *an assessment of risk, including the identification of factors relevant to the individual concerned*
- *an assessment of the offender's coping skills*
- *likely scenarios for relapse, including immediate precursors and triggers which might give prior warning*
- *identification of remaining treatment needs.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Case managers spoke positively about the post-programme reports which were sent to them in good time and which formed a basis for the three-way meeting.
- The NPD post-programme report template used by Cumbria did not prompt the required assessment of risk and likely relapse scenarios.

SECTION D: CASE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Recommendation(s) from the original audit which relate to this section.

The CO should ensure that the area:

- **strengthens the case management role by building on the training recently given;**
- **gives additional input to staff on focused supervision planning and the use of SMART objectives.**

- ▶ **Largely met.** Some improvements had been made to strengthen the case manager role, but there remained work to be done.
- ▶ **Not met.** OASys training had not yet been rolled out in Cumbria and the area had therefore not given the required attention to supervision planning. An interim template for supervision planning and review did not prompt the setting of objectives.

D1.1 Initial supervision plan sets relevant objectives for the offender

0

Description: *The supervision plan integrates the programme into the overall plan of work for each offender. Specific objectives are set in a sequence appropriate for the offender and are recorded in the initial supervision plan and regularly reviewed. Assessments should be based on OASys when available, or ACE or LSI-R before then.*

Progress since the original audit:

- There remained a low level of integration of programme work into the overall plan of supervision for each offender. The file read exercise found no cases in which full integration could be seen.
- There were no instances in the file read sample of cases with fully SMART programme related objectives set out in the initial supervision plan.
- Few supervision plans were subject to regular, timely and comprehensive review, with only one of 27 applicable cases being satisfactory in this regard.
- In only two of 31 cases (6%) did the supervision plan draw fully on information contained in other assessments, e.g. OGRS 2 and the evaluation and monitoring tool.

D1.2 Effective liaison arrangements between the case manager and programme staff

1

Description: *The case records show, and interviews with selected staff indicate, the existence of effective arrangements for liaison, handover and communication. This should include the three-way meetings between the case manager, programme staff and the offender at the end of the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- Concerns remained that case managers and tutors were not always communicating in a clear and timely way about offender attendance issues.
- Whilst there were examples of good practice in this regard, in only 13 of 29 applicable cases in the file read sample (45%) was the two-way liaison between case managers and tutors assessed as satisfactory.

- In only five of nine applicable cases (56%) did the case manager attend the post-programme three-way meeting, although where they did attend case managers found these meetings to be helpful.

D1.3 Supporting the offender through all phases of the programme

1

Description: *The case manager is responsible for preparing and motivating the offender prior to their participation on an accredited programme and for reinforcing learning during the programme.*

Progress since the original audit:

- There was an increased level of ownership of the programme by case managers and considerable interest in developing the role, although they still felt there was a lack of guidance, particularly during the group work phase of Think First.
- Considerable progress had been made in establishing the delivery of two distinct pre-programme sessions by case managers. There was however an issue about the timing of delivery, as in only 11 of the 31 cases (35%) were these delivered within one calendar month of sentence, and a recent programme had been postponed because the pre-programme work had not been delivered.
- The recording of pre-programme work had improved and a set of specific CRAMS codes in relation to programme sessions had been developed.
- Although case managers continued to respond well if alerted by tutors to offender crises, in only nine of 25 applicable cases (36%) did they take all reasonable proactive steps to promote the attendance, engagement and compliance of offenders on Think First.
- There were no examples of reinforcement of offender learning by case managers.

D1.4 Understanding and knowledge of programme methods

1

Description: *Interviews with case managers demonstrate they have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the programme and that they either have the requisite skills to undertake reinforcement, follow-up and/or relapse prevention work, or the ability to refer to staff possessing these skills.*

Progress since the original audit:

- A significant number of case managers had received the relevant Think First training.
- There was concern on the part of some practitioners who had experienced a delay between being trained in Think First and actually having an opportunity to deliver it, that their knowledge of the programme would have faded somewhat.
- Case managers were familiar with the programme model and its key aims and objectives.
- Case managers were confident about their ability to deliver pre-programme sessions, but concerned about delivering post-programme work.

D1.5 Monitoring of attendance and enforcement

2

Description: *Responsibility for the monitoring of attendance and the enforcement of orders is clearly defined with appropriate systems in place. There is evidence of effective enforcement in all cases.*

Criterion fully met at original audit.

D1.6 Documentation

1

Description: *The case record shows that all relevant documentation is completed.*

Progress since the original audit:

- In 24 of 31 cases (77%) all relevant documentation had been completed and stored on the case file. In the seven remaining cases the majority of documents were present.
- Statements of understanding were not always available on files.

D1.7 End of programme review

1

Description: *The supervision plan review for each offender shows that at the end of the programme appropriate individual objectives are identified to strengthen and build on the progress made, and to achieve successful community reintegration.*

Progress since the original audit:

- In general supervision plan reviews were of a slightly higher standard than initial supervision plans, with some account of progress made on Think First.
- Supervision plan reviews were rarely influenced sufficiently by post-programme reports. Only one of seven applicable cases (14%) showed adequate linkage of this kind.
- There was no evidence of SMART programme related objectives in supervision plan reviews.

D1.8 Reinforcement and relapse prevention work

N/A

Description: *There are specific arrangements in place to reinforce learning and for relapse prevention work, including booster programmes where required by the programme, delivered by appropriately trained and skilled staff.*

Criterion not assessed at original audit.