

**Prisoner-Delivery of a Problem-Support Scheme: An Analysis of the
Experiences of the Intervention and its Sustainability.**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Clinical Psychology (D. Clin. Psychol.)

The University of Leeds

School of Medicine

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August 2020

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors, Prof Mitch Waterman and Dr Amanda Perry, for their guidance, advice, knowledge and support. Thank you to the prison, for allowing me to conduct this research, and to Keeley Moore, and the Interventions Department for helping the process run far more smoothly than it ever could have without them. A special thank you also goes to everyone who participated in this research. Thank you for sharing your experiences with me.

I would also like to thank my family for always encouraging me to chase my dreams of being a Psychologist. I am very lucky to have had your faith in me. I also feel incredibly fortunate to have been able to complete my clinical training with such a fabulous group of trainees. I have made friends for life and cannot imagine having undertaken this research project without the support, fun, love and understanding I have shared with you all. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful husband, who has always believed in me and pushed me to achieve things I did not believe were possible. I am eternally grateful to have had you by my side throughout the journey.

Abstract

Introduction: Self-harm is highly prevalent in prisons. One possible intervention for this is problem-solving therapy (PST). This thesis looks at a problem-support scheme based on PST which is currently being delivered in a prison in Northern England. A peer-delivery model is being utilised and the scheme is delivered by prisoners known as problem-support mentors (PSMs). This research aimed to understand the experiences of the PSMs and the staff working within the establishment, and to understand how such a scheme can be sustained.

Method: PSMs and staff stakeholders were recruited to participate in individual interviews at three time points between February and December 2019. Three time points were used to understand how the participants' experiences unfolded longitudinally. These interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule designed to access their experiences of the scheme. These interviews were then transcribed and analysed using Thematic Analysis.

Results: Twenty-eight interviews were conducted, and from these interviews five subordinate themes were identified. The first theme 'appetite for peer-led' describes the staff participants' enthusiasm for peer-led schemes. The second theme, 'need the 'right' PSMs', captured the participants' beliefs that not all prisoners are suitable for the role. The PSM participants reflected on their own 'motivation and commitment' as well as that of their peers. Finally, the 'impact on PSMs' and 'impact on others' were discussed. Two overarching themes, of 'responsibility' and 'us and them', were identified as contributing to many of the described experiences.

Discussion: The participants' experiences of the scheme being based on PST, being peer-led and taking place within a prison are discussed in relation to previous research. There was considerable consistency between the findings of the current research and other research looking at delivering PST-based interventions, with model infidelity being common. The experiences of the scheme being delivered in prison are considered through a

psychoanalytical framework of organisational defences. The research is critiqued and practical implications are discussed, including the need for an adequate level of resource for peer-led schemes to be successful.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In a prison in Northern England, a prisoner-led problem-support intervention is currently being delivered, initially targeted at reducing self-harm. This study aims to understand the experiences of the prisoners delivering the intervention and of the staff working within the establishment. To understand how such an initiative came to be developed I will first introduce the reader to self-harm within the prison system and consider the different explanations for this phenomenon. I will then go on to look at different approaches to tackle self-harm, with a focus on the potential that problem-solving therapy (PST) has shown. I will describe a previous attempt to introduce problem-solving skills through a staff-delivery model, and finally look at the research into peer-led programmes.

1.1 Self-harm

Self-harm is a considerable public health and social concern, with research finding that there were an average of 110,000 hospital presentations for self-harm per year in the United Kingdom (Clements et al., 2016). Self-harm is defined as intentionally causing harm to one's body (NHS, 2015) and is a known risk factor for suicide, with over half of people who die by suicide having previously self-harmed (Foster, Gillespie, & McClelland, 1997). Debate exists in the literature as to whether a distinction should be drawn between self-harm with, and without, the intention to die (Ougrin, Tranah, Stahl, Moran, & Asarnow, 2015), however ascertaining someone's motivation for engaging in self-harm with any certitude is problematic. For this reason, most research conducted within the United Kingdom focusses on the behaviour of self-harming, irrespective of underlying motivation. These research studies underpin National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance and shape the services that individuals who self-harm access in the United Kingdom. Therefore, for the purpose of this literature review, studies will be included regardless of the presumed motivations or intent of the participants who engaged in self-harm.

Approximately 5-6% of men and 20-24% of women within the prison system are estimated to self-harm annually, a far higher percentage than in the non-incarcerated population (Hawton, Linsell, Adeniji, Sariaslan, & Fazel, 2014). Self-harm in prisons places a huge demand on resources and can create psychological exhaustion in staff facing what can be quite severe and distressing self-harm (DeHart, Smith, & Kaminski, 2009). There has been considerable debate about the reasons for the heightened frequency of self-harm in the prison population. Some have pointed to the association between mental illness and criminality and argued that high levels of mental health problems are ‘imported’ in to prisons (Fazel, Grann, Kling, & Hawton, 2011; Smith, 2015). On the contrary, others consider the experience of incarceration and the deprivation of basic human rights, to be the primary factor in increasing self-harm (De Viggiani, 2006; Thomas, Kazmierczak, & Stone, 2006).

It is likely that self-harm in prisons is symptomatic of individuals’ mental health but also the challenges of the prison system, and the interaction between these factors (Marzano et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2006). Marzano and colleagues (2011) used both quantitative and qualitative methods and found that individuals’ experiences of trauma, mental health difficulties and perceived lack of social support influenced how they experienced their incarceration, and in turn their incarceration impacted upon their feelings of hopelessness and depression. The prisoners they interviewed who had self-harmed were more likely to have had negative experiences in prison, most frequently having their possessions stolen, and to perceive their relationships with staff and other prisoners as difficult. Whilst their findings are from individual accounts, and therefore lacking in generalisability, this creates a picture of incarceration exposing vulnerable individuals to additional stressors, thus exacerbating poor mental health and well-being and increasing the risk of self-harm.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the nature of the prison system means that many individuals have their usual coping mechanisms removed, be these healthy coping strategies,

such as spending time with loved ones, or less healthy strategies, such as alcohol and substance abuse. Emotional vulnerability and the removal of habitual coping strategies combined with the increase in environmental stressors therefore leads many prisoners to feel they have no options of coping methods other than self-harm. Prisoners who typically use more avoidant coping strategies may be more likely to turn to self-harm to manage this distress (Haines & Williams, 1997; Kirchner, Forns, & Mohíno, 2008).

1.2 Possible Interventions

In the prison system security will always outweigh other concerns (Thomas et al., 2006), which makes intervening on a systemic level challenging. Attempts have been made to improve the screening for and management of self-harm. Innovations in the UK have included the introduction of the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) system in 2005, which aims to identify and safeguard prisoners at risk of suicide or self-harm by creating a care plan and linking the prisoner with support within the prison. However, despite this initiative existing in prisons for many years, self-harm continues to rise, with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) acknowledging that it remains a "serious concern" (HMPPS, 2018a).

Comprehensive research focussing on interventions targeted at the individual who is self-harming within the prison system remain similarly scarce (Perry, Waterman, & House, 2015) with no clear recommendation for an effective treatment emerging from the literature (Pope, 2018). One trial found a reduction in self-injurious behaviour following a CBT intervention tailored to self-harming behaviours (Pratt et al., 2015). This intervention was delivered by Clinical Psychologists initially at an intensity of two hours of one-to-one therapy per week, reducing to one hour once engagement had stabilised. This makes it extremely resource-heavy compared to many other interventions delivered in prisons, that are delivered in a group format. The intervention, like many delivered to this population, had difficulties

with recruitment and retention, with 131/267 potential participants declining to participate. Similarly in a trial of Psychodynamic Interpersonal Therapy in a prison setting, nearly 50% of participants in the treatment arm dropped out before the completion of therapy despite efforts by the research team to reduce attrition (Walker, Shaw, Turpin, Reid, & Abel, 2017). The picture is further complicated by the number of simultaneous changes occurring within the prison system at any given time making appraising the impact of any innovation challenging (Fazel, Hayes, Bartellas, Clerici, & Trestman, 2016).

1.3 Problem-Solving Interventions

Problem-solving therapy (PST) is a potential intervention for self-harm (Perry et al., 2015). PST is usually delivered as a brief intervention and has been described as a pragmatic treatment for self-harm (Townsend et al., 2001). The short-term nature of the intervention lends itself well to the prison environment and could help overcome barriers of recruitment and retention.

1.3.1 What Is PST?

D’Zurilla and Goldfried (1971) initially outlined the steps an individual goes through to successfully solve a problem and considered how through a cognitive-behavioural lens these steps could be applied to behavioural change. PST was developed from these initial ideas and aims to equip people with the skills to manage their problems. This is done by reducing avoidance, helping with problem definition and promoting thinking of a range of solutions to a problem (Hawton et al., 2016). It is hoped that equipping an individual with these skills will help them to be less reliant on impulsive strategies to managing their problems, such as self-harm.

1.3.2 Why Might It Work?

As described in section 1.1, the aetiology of self-harm is multifaceted and understanding the risk factors and their interactions on a population wide level is challenging.

On an individual level, a formulation-based approach will arguably be the most fruitful in attempting to understand the specific constellation of risk factors leading to the incident of self-harming behaviour (Logan, Nathan, & Brown, 2011). One factor that has been demonstrated to increase the risk of self-harm and suicide is a lack of problem-solving skills (Hawton et al., 2016). Pollock and Williams (2004) conducted research to understand how the difficulty in problem-solving manifests in people who self-harm. Problem-solving ability was measured using the Means-Ends Problem-Solving Test (MEPS; Platt & Spivack, 1975), which requires participants to generate the middle portion of a story linking the beginning to the end. Problem-solving ability is then scored based upon the number of solutions generated and the effectiveness of these solutions. Pollock and Williams (2004) found that people in the self-harm arm were able to generate fewer solutions and the solutions that they did generate were less effective. They also looked at how passive or active these solutions were and found that the individuals who had self-harmed generated fewer active solutions than a non-clinical control group.

Rees and Langdon (2016), also aiming to understand the relationship between self-harm and problem-solving ability, found that their participants' problem-solving abilities accounted for 15% of the variance in their self-harm scores. Similarly to Pollock and Williams (2004), they also found that the deficit in problem-solving occurred across the stages required to make a decision, namely, identification of the problem, generating solutions, evaluating the solutions. Furthermore, low scores in all these areas correlated with higher self-harm scores. Whilst this research was based on a population of people with mild learning disabilities, it has been argued that it is likely that the aetiology of self-harm in people with mild learning disabilities is unlikely to be markedly different to the aetiology of self-harm in people with mental health difficulties (e.g. Ernst, Morton, & Gusella, 2010; Lovell, 2008).

This lack of ability to generate multiple, effective solutions to problems may lead individuals to respond impulsively or alternatively to rely on more passive strategies, such as waiting for time to pass, or for someone else to solve the problem. These impulsive and avoidant responses rarely act as an effective solution to the problem, thus reinforcing the individual's beliefs that they are unable to solve problems when they present (D'Zurilla, Chang, Nottingham, & Faccini, 1998). Feeling incapable of solving problems that arise understandably leads people to feel more distressed when faced with new problems (D'Zurilla et al., 1998).

This body of research creates a picture where some individuals are faced with problems that appear unsolvable. They struggle to generate effective solutions to these problems, which can lead to feelings of distress. Self-harm has been argued to be considered by some as a solution to problems, such as intolerable internal states and environmental challenges (Linehan, Camper, Chiles, Strosahl, & Shearin, 1987). This means that some individuals may construe self-harm as one of a very limited range of solutions to their problem, or indeed the only solution. PST would aim to teach such individuals a systematic way of generating alternative solutions.

1.3.3 Is there evidence that PST is effective?

There is some evidence to suggest that PST could be an effective intervention to use with those who are self-harming. Hawton et al. (1999) conducted a Cochrane review investigating the efficacy of different psychosocial and pharmacological interventions for self-harm. They found that problem-solving interventions were more effective at reducing further incidents of self-harm than treatment as usual, however this was not to a statistically significant degree. As noted by the authors, it is possible that statistical significance was not reached as the studies had limited statistical power due to the small sample sizes. In a more recent Cochrane review (Hawton et al., 2016), PST was combined for evaluation with general

CBT interventions, due to the similarity between the two therapeutic models. Across the 17 trials comparing CBT/PST to treatment as usual there was a significant reduction in the number of participants repeating self-harm at follow-up (Hawton et al., 2016). Furthermore, there is some evidence for problem-solving skills being the mechanism of change as when the trials that considered problem solving as a secondary outcome measure were combined, a significant effect of the treatment intervention on problem-solving was found.

Townsend et al. (2001) also conducted a meta-analysis of the impact of PST to develop on Hawton et al.'s (1999) findings. They aimed to understand the impact of PST on other variables that could be associated with both poor problem-solving ability and self-harm, namely hopelessness and depression. Their findings showed that PST significantly reduced hopelessness and depression scores. The relationship between problem-solving ability, hopelessness and self-harm is complex. A mediatory role of hopelessness has been argued for by some (e.g. Dixon, Heppner, & Rudd, 1994), whereby an inability to solve problems leaves individuals feeling hopeless and can trigger ruminative negative self-referent thoughts such as “I am useless, I am a failure” leading to suicidal behaviours (Watkins & Baracaia, 2002). However, other research has suggested that hopelessness, low mood and ruminative negative thoughts impair problem-solving skills (Williams, Barnhofer, Crane, & Beck, 2005). The benefits of PST reducing hopelessness and depression could therefore be two-fold in both reducing their negative impact on problem-solving ability and in reducing the likelihood of an individual feeling so hopeless that they turn to self-harm.

NICE (2013) recommend that therapy for individuals who are self-harming includes ‘problem-solving elements’. The exact form of the problem-solving elements remains unclear, perhaps partially because the form PST takes varies between studies. For instance, some research trials include additional elements to the intervention, such as cognitive techniques for managing unwanted thoughts and emotions (e.g. Evans et al., 1999). There is

also some variation in the focus, namely whether the focus is primarily on learning the techniques in relation to a specific problem or improving problem-solving skills in general.

1.4 PST in Prisons

Within the prison system, offenders considered to be medium or high risk may be offered a Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) as part of their sentence-plan. This group programme is based on a cognitive-behavioural approach and includes elements of PST, with the aim of reducing recidivism. Recidivism data takes a number of years to become available, however, an early study has shown a positive impact of TSP on other measures, including a reduction in 'short-cut problem solving' (Gobbert & Sellen, 2013).

Research in to the impact of PST as a standalone intervention for self-harm and other behaviours whilst incarcerated is in its infancy, but intuitively it shows promise. Schotte and Clum (1982) found that individuals with deficits in interpersonal problem-solving skills experiencing high stress life events reported very high levels of suicidal ideation. Undoubtedly, for many becoming incarcerated would be considered a highly stressful life event and can lead to a whole host of problems that prisoners must navigate. Using self-report measures capturing behaviours that could be indicative of being bullied, Ireland and Ireland (2008) found that 81% of prisoners reported experiencing behaviours akin to bullying and 67% reported having perpetrated such a behaviour. This research suggests that many prisoners must navigate complex social problems and difficult interpersonal relationships. Homophobia and racism are also common-place in prisons (e.g. Bhui, 2009; Gear, 2007; Hensley, 2000). Prisoners can also face problems in their social circumstances outside of prison, for instance a third of prisoners are reported to lose their housing whilst incarcerated, a fifth incur financial problems and more than two fifths lose contact with their family (South et al., 2014).

Further support for PST as a useful intervention with the incarcerated population comes from research which found that the reduced ability to solve problems appears to be more pronounced in those who self-harm repeatedly rather than people self-harming for the first time (Hatcher, Sharon, Parag, & Collins, 2011). As self-harm is most often a repeated act by those in the prison system (Hawton et al., 2014), improving problem solving abilities may be particularly pertinent with this population. Pragmatically PST also has potential to be used as an intervention in the prison system. As Townsend et al. (2001) note, PST is cheaper than many other interventions as it is a brief intervention, can be taught relatively easily and is accessible to deliver.

Due to the potential that PST shows, and the relative simplicity of the model, previous research attempted to introduce a brief problem-solving intervention to four prisons in the North of England (Perry et al., 2019). A seven-step version of PST was delivered to staff, with the intention that they would cascade these problem-solving techniques to vulnerable prisoners, specifically those prisoners who had had an incident of self-harm in the previous two weeks. The seven-step model was initially devised by Hatcher, Sharon, Parag, and Collins (2011) and consists of the following steps; (1) getting the right attitude, (2) reflection and recognising triggers, (3) defining a clear problem, (4) brain storming solutions, (5) decision making, (6) making a plan and (7) reviewing progress. These steps are typical of other PST interventions (e.g. Mynors-Wallis, Gath, Day, & Baker, 2000), and show little deviation from the five-steps originally described by D’Zurilla and Goldfried (1971), which were as follows; (1) general orientation, (2) problem-definition, (3) generation of alternatives, (4) decision making and (5) verification.

This intervention was considered to have several benefits over more complex CBT interventions, such as the one trialled by Pratt et al. (2015). Firstly, Pratt et al. acknowledge that their participants struggled to master the skills taught during the intervention, this could

have been partly due to the range of modules involved in this intervention. Focussing on one technique may make mastery more achievable for the participants. Furthermore, Pratt et al. (2015) suggest that a self-help style workbook could increase understanding of the concepts, this problem-solving intervention included a booklet, developed through consultation with prison staff and prisoners, setting out the 7-steps. Finally, the problem-solving intervention was designed so that the intervention could be delivered in a thirty minute session, with the possibility of follow-up if required, which would mitigate issues relating to retention and allow the intervention to be delivered to prisoners regardless of sentence length.

Whilst the intervention itself was acceptable to prisoners and the training and delivery was inexpensive, it was not deemed to be feasible to use a staff-delivery model. The intervention was delivered to 48 prisoners at risk of self-harm but was only delivered by staff on two of these occasions, with the remaining deliveries being conducted by the researchers. Staff offered several reasons for this lack of application of the problem-support training in practice, including the lack of time and resource and turnover of prisoners, which seemed to lead staff to default back to their habitual methods of managing prisoner self-harm and distress. Due to these challenges, the researchers were led to consider different implementation methods and are now trialling the same intervention using a prisoner-led model. A prisoner-led implementation method could potentially address the challenges described by the staff participants in terms of time and resource.

1.5 Peer-Led Interventions

I will now turn to exploring the research into peer-led schemes. Peer-led schemes are defined as education, support or counselling which is provided by someone with shared characteristics, experiences or social status (South et al., 2014). Increasingly there is a recognition of the value of peer support in health and community settings (Deville, Sorbello, Eccleston, & Ward, 2005), with mentoring and befriending schemes existing in a wide range

of settings. Peer-support schemes are well embedded in the prison system (Bagnall et al., 2015), and in recent years both HMPPS (2018b) and the HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016) have produced documents outlining how best to implement such schemes and reviewing those currently in place. Typically, peer-to-peer interventions in the prison system are based on a listener or befriender model, but a wide range of models exist (HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2016), including mentoring schemes, housing advice, support with adjusting to prison-life for new prisoners, translation services, substance misuse, violence reduction and employment advice (Devilly et al., 2005). The prisoner-led problem-support scheme aimed to combine the benefits of a peer-led scheme with the possible benefits of PST. Whilst there are some challenges identified in the literature, using a prisoner-led delivery model conceivably has benefits for the recipients, those delivering the intervention, and the prison service.

1.5.1 Those Receiving the Intervention

Proponents of peer-led interventions argue they allow a connection that is deep and authentic due to the shared experiences between the two individuals (Mead, Hilton, Director, & Curtis, 2001). This enables those receiving the support to feel understood and possibly take advice from peer mentors that could have been dismissed if it came from another source, who they perceived to not have first-hand experience of the problem (D. R. Fletcher & Batty, 2012). This is a particularly pertinent issue within the prison system where some marginalised prisoners habitually resist input from professionals (South et al., 2014). It is envisaged that some of these prisoners may be more open to learning from their peers. Alongside the shared experiences, it has also been suggested that peers are more likely to have a shared language and communicate with each other in a way that is understandable (D. R. Fletcher & Batty, 2012). Another argument for the benefits for those receiving the intervention is that prisoners may be able to identify with their peers and see them as pro-

social role models or living proof that rehabilitation is possible (D. R. Fletcher & Batty, 2012).

Research has been conducted into the efficacy of prisoner-led interventions. Magura, Kang and Shapiro (1994) evaluated a peer-led sexual health group, focussed around the reduction of HIV transmission in the prison population. This intervention resulted in an increase in condom-use by the attendees as well as an improvement in self-reported attitudes towards condoms in comparison to a control condition that did not attend the group. More recently South et al. (2014) conducted a systematic review of peer-led interventions in prison settings. Fifty-seven studies were included in the review and the authors concluded that overall peer-led interventions were effective at reducing risky behaviour and had positive effects on the recipients.

Whilst it appears that peer interventions can be effective, a question still exists as to whether they are as effective as professionally led interventions. Overwhelmingly qualitative research finds prisoners report a preference for peer-led interventions (South et al., 2014). Reasons given for this include higher levels of perceived empathy, less judgement, a greater sense of feeling at ease and greater approachability from peers than staff. Based on these factors, which could reasonably equate to a stronger therapeutic relationship, it could be expected that peers are more effective than professionals are. However, research in to racial matching between clients and therapists suggests receiving one's preference of therapist does not equate to better therapeutic outcomes (Cabral & Smith, 2011). The theoretical basis for racial matching, is very similar to that for peer-led interventions, namely that greater interpersonal similarity strengthens the therapeutic alliance (Cabral & Smith, 2011). Cabral and Smith theorise that the anticipated improvement in therapeutic outcomes may not occur due to intragroup differences, such as different life experiences and world views. This could certainly also be true for peer-led interventions in prison, as the assumption that prisoners are

a homogeneous group with similar experiences appears an over-simplification of a diverse group.

Quantitative research comparing staff and peer-deliverer outcomes in prisons is scarce. South et al. (2014) identified just four studies comparing delivery methods, of which three were considered relevant. Whilst acknowledging the paucity of evidence, they conclude that based on the results of these studies peers are as effective as professionals, but no more so (South et al., 2014). However, this conclusion may be of limited applicability to the current research. Of the three included studies, two focussed on HIV transmission (Grinstead, Faigles, & Zack, 1997; Martin, O'Connell, Inciardi, Surratt, & Maiden, 2008). Grinstead et al. (1997) found no difference between those receiving a peer and a professional intervention in intention to use a condom, whilst Martin et al. (2008) found higher levels of condom usage following a peer-led intervention, but this difference did not reach statistical significance. The intention of these interventions is different to the current problem-support project, as they focus on dissemination of education rather than skills building. Further investigation also reveals that features of the design of both interventions could be obscuring any differences in efficacy between peers and professionals. Firstly, it has been theorised that peer-led interventions have the potential to improve recruitment and retention due to the preference prisoners have for them (South et al., 2014). In Grinstead et al.'s (1997) research the intervention was compulsory upon arrival at the prison, thus mitigating any reduction in professional efficacy due to non-engagement. In Martin et al.'s (2008) study the participants were randomly allocated after recruitment, again mitigating any possible negative effects on recruitment in the professional-delivery arm. On the other hand, one could reasonably argue that peer-led interventions could be less efficacious due to the loss of professional expertise. Whilst this narrative is largely absent in research on peer-led schemes in prisons, it has been found that prison-based treatment programmes are more effective when delivered by

registered practising psychologists than other ‘paraprofessionals’ such as prison officers and non-qualified psychologists (Gannon, Olver, Mallion, & James, 2019). In Grinstead et al.’s study this risk is alleviated as a professional is present in their peer-led condition, presumably to ensure the quality of the information provided by the peer, and to provide expertise if required. Professional expertise was also on hand in Martin et al.’s (2008) study, where the peer-led element of the intervention was delivered through watching a video with a professional present to answer any questions. These studies therefore tell us very little about what potentially is gained in terms of engagement and lost in terms of professional expertise.

The third study included in South et al.’s (2014) review looks at prisoner versus professional observers in a suicide watch programme (Junker, Beeler, & Bates, 2005). Junker and colleagues found a significant effect whereby suicidal inmates required less time being observed when a peer-observer was used rather than a professional. They do however note a lack of clarity about why this is. A possible secondary gain of being on suicide watch is increased staff time and attention, when this is removed in the peer condition it is possible that prisoners are quicker to want to return to the main prison, rather than due to a genuine improvement in suicidality.

In conclusion, research appears to indicate that peers can be effective when delivering interventions. Whilst consistently a preference for peer-led interventions is expressed, at present our understanding of their efficacy in comparison to professional interventions is extremely limited. It appears likely that the efficacy of peers will be dependent to an extent on the type of intervention or support being given, possibly interventions with less technical elements may require a greater level of professional training and expertise. In the context of the problem-support scheme, it is perhaps the frequently reported qualitative finding, that peers are more accessible and available, that is the most important (South et al., 2014). In the earlier version of the problem-support scheme it was found that staff delivery was infeasible

partially due to limited time and resource (Perry et al., 2019), therefore any impact that peer-delivers are able to achieve will likely surpass the limited impact of the staff delivery.

1.5.2 Those Delivering the Intervention

There is a larger evidence base demonstrating benefits for those delivering peer-led interventions than for those receiving them (Bagnall et al., 2015). Much of the literature has emphasised personal growth and positive psychological outcomes for peer deliverers, for instance increased self-esteem (Backett-Milburn & Wilson, 2000), self-confidence (Backett-Milburn & Wilson, 2000), a more positive self-identity (HMPPS, 2018b) and the installation of hope (Bouchard, Montreuil, & Gros, 2010). In Bagnall et al.'s (2015) systematic review similar findings are reported by the studies looking at listener schemes in prisons. These benefits are conceptualised as originating from the peer-mentors feeling that they were able to do something productive with their time and 'give something back', thereby giving them a greater sense of self-esteem and worth.

Backett-Milburn and Wilson (2000) looked at the impact of becoming a peer educator on young people in Fife, Scotland. One of the main benefits that their participants reported was an increased ability to voice their own thoughts and opinions. Similarly, a qualitative study conducted by Moran, Russinova, Gidugu, Yim and Sprague (2011) found their participants reported finding strengths and abilities they did not realise they possessed, and that they enjoyed feeling appreciated and that others valued the contributions they were able to make. Within the prison population it has also been demonstrated that a sense of being trusted by prison staff helped peer-providers to gain self-respect (Edgar, Jacobson, & Biggar, 2011).

Keller (1993) looked at the experiences of 'veteran' prisoners involved in mentoring young offenders and found similar benefits to those described above. However, Keller also uncovered a process whereby the peer-deliverers gained a greater awareness of their own

routes into prison and began to internalise new values. One participant described this as a process whereby he began to accept responsibility for his own actions. This was considered by the author to be a form of self-rehabilitation. It is possible that this level of self-reflection was a product of the intervention itself as mentoring younger prisoners to help them avoid a 'life of crime' may invite more reflection than other programmes such as peer-education or specific skills-based schemes. This highlights the fact that the benefits peer-providers experience are likely to be related to the specific form of intervention being delivered.

Moran et al.'s (2011) study also highlighted the occupational benefits of being a peer-provider; many of their participants reported building skills and competencies that helped prepare them for future employment. These occupational benefits were also described by Backett-Milburn and Wilson (2000) who found that peer-providers experienced improved performance in their role; learning to adapt sessions and work more reflexively, learning from past sessions and adapting to the varied needs of their audience. Salzer, Katz, Kidwell, Federici and Ward-Colasante (2009) looked at whether skills learned as a peer-support worker were translated in to future employment and found that 67% of their participants, who were unemployed prior to training as a peer-worker, were employed one year later. It must be noted that their research focussed on a specific peer-support programme where their participants took part in a 75-hour training course to become certified peer support specialists. However, many of the elements of the training described by the researchers are likely to exist in other peer support programmes, such as how to navigate the workplace, communication skills and engagement strategies. Other benefits that were reported in Moran et al.'s (2011) study were positive emotions, such as joy, happiness, excitement and satisfaction. Whilst these emotional experiences were often quite transient, they were valuable and significant to their participants.

Incarceration removes people from their social support networks. Whilst contact is at times maintained through visits and phone calls, for prisoners their daily social needs must be met by others within the prison (Schaefer, Bouchard, Young, & Kreager, 2017). Who these social connections are formed with is likely to impact upon a prisoner's adjustment to prison and their experiences of incarceration. It has long been documented that incarceration can lead to the development or reinforcement of a set of morals or rules for living by, sometimes known as the inmate code (Crewe, 2013). Some of the maladaptive behaviours advocated for within the inmate code, such as aggression or avoiding forming relationships with those in authority, could bring respect and power within a prison (Collica, 2010), but bring few benefits for rehabilitation in to the community.

Collica (2010) looked at the benefits of forming a pro-social network when engaging in a peer role within a prison. The research found that 67% of the participants described the sense of community as the greatest benefit they attained from their involvement with the peer programme. These relationships were emotionally close, with 94% of the participants stating that they considered their fellow peer-workers to be extended family. The value that the prisoners put on these friendships contributed to a reduction in misdemeanours, which was partially attributed to the participants not wanting to let their peers down by damaging the programme's reputation. In addition to a reduction in anti-social behaviour, the peer-providers increased their pro-social rehabilitative behaviours, such as engagement in education and employment. This was credited by the participants to the positive reinforcement and encouragement they received from their peers. The participants all described the benefits of being viewed positively by their peers and by the staff running the programme. This opportunity to develop a new pro-social self-concept without feeling judged for their past behaviours was valued and may account for the reduction in recidivism seen in the participants once released from prison. Developing and maintaining a new identity is

incredibly challenging for prisoners, and similar research in to prisoners making religious changes has found that the most important factor in maintaining this change was interactions with peers who were supportive of the change (Kerley & Copes, 2009).

Collica's (2010) research was conducted on female prisoners, with the paper arguing that females may put more value on building social networks in prison as family separation is felt more acutely by women. However, it is undeniable that male prisoners also experience that separation, and in fact conversely, Lindquist (2000) found that familial separation was more challenging for male prisoners. Lindquist argues that this finding was perhaps due to men struggling more with becoming dependent on their family for financial and practical support, such as liaising with legal professionals and providing clothing. She argues that this change in role may be more distressing for men as it marks a greater move from typical gender roles. However, if we are to argue for the impact of the loss of gender specific roles this would also surely be true of women losing their opportunity to be care givers. Overall, it appears that separation from social networks outside of prison is likely to have a significant impact on both men and women, and the gender differences may be less profound than individual differences. This is supported by Wulf-Ludden (2013) who found through interviews with prisoners that there were no gender differences in why the participants sought friendships in prison. Furthermore, Moran's (2011) study, which included male and female participants, echoed Collica's (2010) findings where these connections with other peer-support workers were described by some as a 'substitute family' and an 'emotional home' (Moran et al., 2011; p.7).

Interestingly, contradicting most other research, Lindquist (2000) found that social support from other inmates did not improve prisoners' experience of incarceration but was in fact linked to higher mental distress. It is acknowledged that this is perplexing and Lindquist struggles to provide a clear explanation for this finding. Personally, I wonder if the

environment could partially account for these findings. The research was conducted in a jail where sentences are short and prisoner turnover is high, perhaps meaning that these friendships are short lived and mark another loss when inmates are released or moved to a different establishment.

One of the most important themes that emerges from this pool of research is how varied and individualised the benefits of being a peer-worker can be. Backett-Milburn and Wilson (2000) observed differences both in the skills and attitudes that the participants developed, and the rate at which these developments emerged. It is likely that the differences in benefits can be somewhat attributed to individual differences but there may also be aspects of the role or the environment in which the role is performed that could impact upon what benefits the peer-support providers' experience. Moran et al. (2011) attempted to unpick some of the external mechanisms that could account for the differences in what participants gain from the roles. They found that participants appreciated aspects of their peer-support roles that allowed them to help others, to tell their story, to educate and share knowledge and to become a role-model. The participants describe the importance of a supportive, person-centred environment that has a strong focus on recovery, where regular training is provided with other peer supporters and materials and information is readily available. They also describe the importance of structure and being orientated to the role. Under these conditions it may be that peer-support providers are able to gain more benefits from the role.

Whilst Collica (2010) does report a substantial reduction in reoffending in peer-deliverers post release, overall South et al.'s (2014) systematic review draws no clear conclusions about the impact of being a peer-deliverer on recidivism rates. Their review also indicates that whilst there are many ways that being a peer-deliverer can be beneficial, there are also indications in some of the qualitative research that the role can be challenging and place peer-deliverers under emotional strain, with some incidences of secondary trauma being

reported (e.g. Dhaliwal & Harrower, 2009; Krespi Boothby, 2011). A large literature base exists demonstrating the impact of emotional burnout on professionals working in the helping professions (e.g. Acker, 1999; Maslach & Jackson, 1981), including staff in correctional facilities (e.g. Dignam, Barrera, & West, 1986). It would be naive to assume that peer-deliverers would not also experience these emotional challenges. It is also possible that as a vulnerable group, often presenting with their own emotional challenges and a diminished social network, these experiences of emotional burnout could be heightened in a prisoner population (Perrin, 2017). As acknowledged by Perrin (2017), being a peer-deliverer also presents challenges in terms of establishing boundaries. Peer-deliverers are often housed with those they are delivering interventions to and must also manage the possibility of being seen to be on the 'staff-side' which goes against typical values of the inmate code.

1.5.3 The Prison Establishment

HMPPS (2018b) state one of the benefits of introducing peer-led initiatives is the positive impact on the wider prison regime. With self-harm in prisons continuing to rise (Ministry of Justice, 2020), there may be ways in which the current system is unable to meet prisoners' needs, be that due to engagement issues, limited resource, or the complexity of the difficulties with which prisoners present. Prisoners could be an untapped resource to help bridge this gap (Deville et al., 2005). Furthermore, prisons are set specific targets in terms of prisoner health and well-being and it is possible that when peer-led schemes are effective they could help prisons meet these targets (South et al., 2014).

Additionally, allowing prisoners to undertake peer delivery roles has been argued to reduce the strain on prison staff, giving them time to focus on other aspects of their role, which could incur additional benefits for the wider prison (South et al., 2014). However, it is also acknowledged within the studies reviewed by South et al. that running successful peer schemes requires practical staff support, which is at times hard to obtain due to lack of

resource. This suggests that a degree of caution is required when promoting peer-led schemes as a way of reducing staff strain in under resourced systems, as it is unlikely that such schemes will achieve the desired goals if they are neglected in terms of staff time and resource.

Whilst intuitively it makes sense that effective peer-led schemes may have economic benefits by reducing the amount of violence and self-harm in prisons and the costs associated with these behaviours, as well as reducing the need for paid staff to address these issues, this has not been well demonstrated in the literature. In South et al.'s (2014) review only one study met the criteria to be included in the cost-effectiveness analysis. This study was conducted by Zhang, Roberts and McCollister (2009) and looked at the cost-effectiveness of a Therapeutic Community (TC). They found that participants in the TC were less likely to raise grievances, to receive infractions and to have caused major incidents, such as riots, which all led to managerial cost savings. However, the cost of running the TC far outweighed the money saved. A TC is a particularly unique and intensive form of peer-led scheme making it impossible to generalise the findings of this study to other less intensive schemes in a typical UK prison (South et al., 2014). Whilst an essential element of a TC is the peer influence, there are many other elements that could have accounted for the reduction in disruptive behaviour. These included group and individual therapy, role-playing, accountability offered by staff and peers and the overall ethos of the environment being very different to a typical prison. Also of note, any prisoners who had been involved in gangs were not permitted in to the TC, which could further account for the reduction in misdemeanours. Due to the lack of research in to cost-effectiveness South et al. (2014) devised their own pilot economic model to assess the cost-effectiveness of peer-led interventions. Due to the bias towards research into peer-led HIV interventions, this was the focus of their model. They concluded that peer-led HIV programmes were more cost-effective than professionally-led

programmes or no intervention being offered. As acknowledged by the authors, this model very specifically focuses on HIV programmes and again could not be generalised to other peer-led schemes.

It is possible that there may be economic benefits of peer-led programmes that extend outside of the prison environment through reducing recidivism, improving health behaviours and increasing the likelihood of securing employment. As previously discussed, there is some evidence suggesting that peer-deliverers are less likely to re-offend (Collica, 2010), and that those receiving peer-education around HIV are less likely to engage in risky behaviours (e.g. Magura, Kang, & Shapiro, 1994), both of which could reduce public service spending.

South et al. note some disparity in the research relating to the organisational impact of peer-led programmes, with some research suggesting an improved prison environment as a result of peer-led programmes whilst other research points to more ambivalent responses from the organisation (e.g. Hall & Gabor, 2004). Additionally, themes around security and safety emerged in some of the studies South et al. (2014) reviewed, with staff raising concerns about confidentiality between prisoners and how this would be managed if risk issues arose, as well as peer-deliverers abusing their position of trust to distribute contraband within the prison.

Implementing such a scheme in a sustainable manner is a substantial task, requiring commitment from the institution, so that suitable candidates can be identified for the programme, and that training and support can be provided (Devilly et al., 2005). South et al. (2014) identify the need for organisational support to ensure the successful embedding of peer-led schemes as one of the most consistent themes emerging across the studies they reviewed. Several studies also point towards difficulties with retaining peer-providers (South et al., 2014). For these reasons, it is important to look at how such a scheme develops longitudinally.

1.6 The Current Research

The current research is focussed upon the prisoner-led implementation of a problem-support scheme in one category C prison in the North of England. Category C prisons are training and resettlement prisons aimed at developing prisoners skills prior to being released back in to the community. I shall now provide some background information about the problem-support scheme. The prisoner-led scheme has been running since early 2018, with the first group of prisoners being trained in February 2018. In the period from initial training to December 2018 thirty-six men were trained and gained the title of ‘Problem-support Mentor’ (PSM). Training took place at regular intervals as PSMs were regularly lost due to the turnover of prisoners in a category C prison. This churn of prisoners also meant that there were times when there were lower numbers of PSMs available in the prison. Several recruitment strategies were trialled, including prisoners self-identifying, staff putting prisoners forward for the role, and the PSMs identifying their peers as suitable for the role. The PSMs were based across all the wings in the prison and advertised themselves as PSMs through posters on their cell doors and by wearing clothing branded with the scheme’s logo. As part of the governance of the scheme, the PSMs recorded their contact with other prisoners. This data shows that they saw a total of 837 clients in the first eleven months of the scheme. Most of these sessions were focussed on introducing the scheme, with only 20% of the sessions being classified as delivering the PST intervention. This was reflected in the length of the sessions, with the average session lasting three to four minutes.

The clients presented to the PSMs with a wide range of problems. The most common problems raised were drug-related, followed by concerns relating to release, for example how to find housing or employment. Many of the problems the clients came with were practical, such as how to retrieve lost property, get access to envelopes, or get a job within the prison. However, some of the clients presented with more emotionally driven problems such as fear

of being bullied, experiencing anger or simply wanting someone to talk to. The PSMs reported a total of 81 problems that clients had brought to them, of which only four were self-harm related. This suggests that whilst the scheme was initially developed in response to the high levels of self-harm in the prison system, in fact the scheme was being used much more broadly. Those developing the intervention predicted this, and the training and support the PSMs received was not solely focussed on problems relating to self-harming.

The PSMs also recorded the outcomes of their sessions, which were equally varied. In nearly 50% of sessions the outcome was that the PSM helped the client complete an ‘App’. An App is an application form which prisoners complete and submit to the prison if they have any requests, such as to see healthcare or to add someone to their visitor list. Other frequent actions included helping the client to develop an action plan, making a referral to a professional on the client’s behalf, and passing information on to a Prison Officer. On several of the occasions the PSMs reported that they had just spent time talking with the client or helped him to calm down.

The current research is part of a wider research project intended to understand how such a scheme can be implemented in a prison setting. As outlined above, the majority of research on peer-led schemes in prisons focusses on either education-based interventions, typically around HIV prevention, and supportive interventions, such as the Listeners scheme. The differences in experiences of peer-led interventions outlined in this chapter could be partially attributed to the different forms these interventions take. This research therefore makes a unique contribution as it focusses on a skills building intervention. Additionally, previous research in this field does not account for how participants’ experiences of peer-led schemes evolve over time. This research included a longitudinal design to aim to capture any potential changes in experience as the scheme evolved. Previous studies are diverse in research methodology with some researchers opting for qualitative methods whilst others

have used quantitative. As this research is targeting a different form of intervention to previous literature it was felt that a qualitative, exploratory, approach was most suitable for addressing the following aims:

- To understand the experiences of the problem-support mentors (PSMs) who are delivering the problem-solving intervention to other prisoners.
- To understand the acceptability and experience of a prisoner-led problem-solving intervention to staff stakeholders.
- To understand whether such an intervention is sustainable and to find avenues for development and improvement by examining its development over time.

Chapter Two: Method

This chapter provides an overview of the method used to achieve my aims of understanding the experiences of the PSMs and staff stakeholders and gaining an appreciation of the sustainability of a peer-led problem-support scheme. It includes a rationale for thematic analysis (TA) as the choice of analytic method, details of the procedure, and ethical issues that were considered. This chapter also aims to provide some insight into my own reflexivity as the researcher.

2.1 Introduction to Methodology

A qualitative method was selected for this research. Quantitative methods could also have been used in the form of questionnaires. This may have assisted in the recruitment of a larger sample, as participants could have seen completing a questionnaire as less time consuming and may also have preferred the greater anonymity offered by completing a questionnaire. However, this research aimed to gain a more detailed account of the participants' experiences which could only be achieved through face-to-face interviews, where participants could be given time to express themselves and prompts could be used to deepen accounts. Furthermore, developing a questionnaire would require me to make assumptions about the factors likely to be important within the problem-support scheme which did not feel appropriate for an initial exploratory piece of research.

2.1.1 Methodology of Analysis

Thematic Analysis (TA) was selected as the method of analysis. TA is a systematic method of analysing a dataset that allows the researcher to understand the shared experiences and meaning making across a group of participants (Braun & Clarke, 2012). When conducting a thematic analysis it is important for a researcher to consider their ontological stance, as this will influence the process by which the research is conducted (Tebes, 2005). Ontological positions are typically considered to be a spectrum, with positivism, the belief

that an objective external reality exists (Scotland, 2012), and constructionism, the view that reality is constructed entirely within the human mind (Fletcher, 2017), as the two polarities. Critical realism is considered to be a mid-point on this spectrum, taking elements from both positivism and constructionism (Fletcher, 2017). Critical realists hold the view that an external reality does exist, however the way in which it is accessed and understood is influenced by social and individual factors, meaning that some ‘knowledge’ is closer to the truth’ than other knowledge (Fletcher, 2017). A critical-realist ontological stance was applied to this analysis, as this position most closely reflects my beliefs about the existence of an objective truth. This stance seemed appropriate for the current analysis as the roles which the participants hold within the prison are likely to shape the lens through which they view their experiences. For the most part, an inductive approach to TA was used to ensure that the themes closely mapped on to the data. A heavily deductive approach would be less suitable in this instance as the research is exploratory, and not aiming to interpret the data through any specific constructive perspective. I do however acknowledge that throughout the process of undertaking this research I will have been influenced by theoretical research that I read, so efforts were made to mitigate this risk as discussed in section 2.9. This is largely fitting for the purpose of this research, which aims to capture some of the realities and complexities of the environment in which the scheme is being developed and to aid an understanding of how it can be sustained. However, as advocated for by a critical realist position, it is acknowledged that individual perceptions of these realities, including my own as the researcher, will differ. Despite a lean towards bottom-up analysis, some of the themes described are latent and based on broader assumptions than those that were articulated by the participants. This is because the themes that were consistently spoken about across the data set were considered within the context of existing theory, with an understanding that both existing theory and the participants’ own accounts of their reality and fallible.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Grounded Theory (GT) were both considered as alternative analyses. IPA differs from TA in that it retains a focus on the individual's own meaning-making rather than looking at objective influences on their experiences. IPA's stance against the objective would not enable me to appreciate fully some of the practical elements of the issue of sustainability. I believe that exploration of these issues would be more appropriate through TA. The epistemological stance of IPA does not fully align with the purposes of this research, which was grounded in pragmatism.

GT seeks to generate a theory to account for the experiences of the participants, which was not the primary aim of this research. Rather it was to gain an idea of the commonalities between their experiences. One essential component of GT is theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 1996), whereby the researcher recruits participants to clarify and test ideas as the research progresses. There were elements of theoretical sampling in this research, as the interview schedule was developed between time points, and specific staff groups were targeted to understand different perspectives after time point one. However, the small population of problem support mentors (PSMs) from which I was recruiting, alongside the longitudinal nature of this research, did not allow for the purely theoretical sampling approach required for GT.

2.2 Research Setting

The participants all worked or were detained at a category C prison in the North of England. The prison is part of the male estate and holds more than 800 prisoners. Practically it was unfeasible to conduct the interviews outside of the prison setting, as the PSMs are prisoners themselves and therefore unable to leave the estate. Conducting interviews within the prison was also expected to aid the recruitment of staff by removing the need to travel and participate outside of working hours. However, there may have been certain disadvantages of conducting the interviews within this setting. Prior to commencing the data collection, I

applied for security clearance through HMPPS in December 2018, unfortunately this was not granted within the timeframe needed to begin the interviews which were planned to take place between February and December 2019. This meant I was reliant on staff escorts to bring the prisoners to and from the interviews. Whilst this was challenging practically, it may have served to further distance me from the establishment, hopefully allowing the PSM participants to speak more honestly about their experiences. On the other hand, conducting the interviews at their place of work could have impacted on the ability of the staff to speak freely about their experiences.

A final challenge of conducting the interviews within a prison related to finding a space where we would not be disturbed. Certain routines within the prison made this challenging; for instance, movement of prisoners around the establishment occurs at certain times in the day, known as line route. During one interview we had to conclude prematurely, as the participant was required to return to his wing via line route.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this research was granted by HMPPS Ethics Committee on 20th December 2018 (Ref: 2018-335). A copy of the authorisation letter is included as Appendix A. Consideration was given to the potential ethical issues below.

2.3.1 *Participant Distress*

It is possible that describing their experiences of the problem-support scheme could cause distress to participants. This appeared to be more likely for the PSMs rather than staff as they could have had experiences in the role of dealing with challenging situations. To mitigate this risk it was explained to the participants during the consent process that they could pause or terminate the interview at any point, and that they were not obliged to answer all of the questions if they did not wish to. It has been argued that it is empowering for disadvantaged groups to have their stories heard (Berger, 2015). As this is the intention of the

current research, it is hoped that this benefit will outweigh any potential distress. If a participant did become distressed and required additional support this could be accessed through the usual channels within the prison, however this did not occur.

2.3.2 *Informed Consent*

The PSMs were provided with a copy of the information sheet (Appendix B) one week before interview. This was to allow them time to read it fully and consider whether they were willing to take part in the research. I then went through the information sheet with the PSMs when I met them for interview and gave them the opportunity to ask any questions before they gave their consent to take part. The consent form I used is attached as Appendix C.

The staff members who were recruited prior to the interview day were emailed a copy of the staff information sheet (Appendix D) to give them time to read it and to decide whether they wished to take part. The information sheet was then reviewed with myself prior to the interview and they were given the opportunity to ask any questions before they consented to take part. Some of the staff members who were interviewed were recruited opportunistically and therefore it was not possible to provide them with the information sheet prior to meeting with me. These staff were provided with an information sheet before the interview began and given the opportunity to ask any questions that arose, before obtaining informed consent (Appendix E). It was made clear to all participants that following the interview they would have two weeks where they could choose to have their data removed from the study.

2.3.3 *Confidentiality*

Confidentiality was ensured in several ways. Firstly, efforts were made to ensure the security of the data. With the participants' permission, the interviews were recorded on an encrypted dictaphone belonging to the Interventions Department. These recordings were deleted from the dictaphone as soon as they were transferred to the University of Leeds

password-protected secure server. The transcripts and analyses were also stored on this server. Original versions of the participant consent forms were stored securely in a locked cabinet in the D. Clin. Psychol. course office. Secondly, confidentiality was maintained by providing both the participants and any other people mentioned in the interviews with pseudonyms.

2.4 Recruitment

2.4.1 Recruitment of PSMs

This research project was introduced to all PSMs during a supplementary training block they attended in December 2018. It was explained to the PSMs that I wanted to know what their experiences of being a PSM were. In January 2019 the scheme coordinators, who designed the training and provide weekly supervision to the PSMs, provided them with a sign-up sheet and the opportunity to volunteer to participate. Ideally, I should have recruited the PSMs myself, however, due to difficulties with me accessing the prison without security clearance, it was agreed that the above was the best course of action. I compensated for my reduced apparent neutrality by emphasising to the PSMs prior to interview that they were able to speak honestly about their experiences of the intervention and that I was independent of the prison and the scheme. The PSMs were given a two-week window to express interest in taking part in the research. A process was developed in the eventuality of more than five PSMs volunteering. Five names would be drawn at random and invited to interview, with the remaining PSMs being invited to a focus group separate to this research. This group would be facilitated by my supervisor, to offer them the opportunity to express their opinions. However, only five PSMs expressed an interest in participating so it was not necessary to follow this procedure. I attended the prison in February 2019 and conducted interviews with all five of the PSMs who volunteered.

At time point two I intended to schedule interviews with the same five PSMs. The process of contacting them was again to be facilitated by the internal coordinators of the scheme. However, due to the churn of prisoners, only one of the original interviewees was available. I therefore returned to the larger pool of PSMs and re-issued the invitation to interview. The same process of a two-week window to express interest was followed. Four PSMs expressed an interest in participating. Interviews took place in June 2019. At time point three there was a reduced pool of just five active PSMs. The same process was followed and three PSMs agreed to interview in November 2019.

It is acknowledged that interviewing a select number of PSMs would not allow me to draw conclusions which could be generalised across the entire population of PSMs. However, they provided me with enough data to make recommendations for the development of the problem-support scheme, and to understand individual experiences. Whilst interviewing more PSMs would have provided a larger data set, this was not within the scope of this D.Clin.Psychol. thesis.

2.4.2 Recruitment of Staff

An email was sent to all staff working in the prison in January 2019, explaining the intention of the research and my interest in gaining a staff perspective on how the problem-support scheme was working. This email was sent to staff by an internal member of the Interventions Department. This email included my secure NHS email address, to which staff could send an email to express their interest in participating. Similarly to the PSMs, a two-week window was provided for staff to express interest. I planned for five staff members to be selected at random for interview. Unfortunately, there were no responses. I therefore used more active recruitment methods, whereby the research was raised at various staff meetings throughout the prison. Following these strategies, five members of staff volunteered to participate and interviews were conducted in March 2019.

All the staff members that I spoke to at time point one held ‘civilian’ positions in the prison. Through the interviews it became clear that there was an important distinction between civilian, otherwise known as ‘non-uniformed’ staff, and ‘uniformed’ or ‘discipline’ staff. Uniformed staff are prison officers, who for the most part work on the prison wings, whereas civilian staff work in other functions in the prison such as intervention programmes, education and healthcare. Therefore, it was agreed with my supervisors that I needed to recruit uniformed staff at the second time point to understand their perspective. I had already explained the longitudinal nature of the research to the participants at time point one and did not wish to deny them the opportunity to participate again if they so wished. Of the initial five participants, three agreed to participate again. Therefore, in addition to scheduling interviews with the three staff members from time point one we also approached uniformed staff. Due to the challenges recruiting uniformed staff at time point one, a new approach was agreed whereby I attended the prison to conduct the interviews during a ‘lockdown’. This occurs on the second Wednesday of every month and allows staff the opportunity to participate in development and training opportunities. Emails were sent to staff members who were free on the duty rota on that day, and three uniformed staff members agreed to participate.

At time point three I contacted the six staff members who had participated at time point two and asked whether they would be interested in participating again. One staff member was no longer working at the prison and I did not receive a response from another. The other four participants agreed to take part in a final interview. In addition to these four participants, one additional participant was approached and recruited on the day of the interviews, which was in December 2019.

2.5 Materials

Participants were presented with an Information Sheet and a Consent Form prior to their interviews. Ethical approval was granted by the HMPPS ethics board for the use of these documents (Date: 20.12.2018; Ref: 2018-355).

Two semi-structured interview schedules, one for staff and one for PSM interviews, were designed. These also received ethical approval from the HMPPS ethics board (Date: 20.12.2018; Ref: 2018-355). Semi-structured interview schedules were selected to provide some structure and consistency between the interviews whilst also providing the flexibility to ask follow-up questions and explore other ideas raised by the participants. The interview schedules were developed using the MoJ and HMPPS toolkit for evaluating peer support schemes in prisons (HMPPS, 2018b), consultation with the University of Leeds Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Expert Reference Group (Everybody's Voice), and previous interview schedules used by the research team. Amendments were made to the interview schedules between each time point to allow for further exploration of some of the ideas discussed at previous time points.

The interview schedules focused on the participants' individual experiences of the problem-solving intervention. The PSMs were asked questions such as 'What motivated you to become a PSM?', 'Is the role what you expected?.. in what ways is it different?', 'How have you dealt with difficult things that have come up?', and 'Is there anything you would change about either becoming or being a PSM?'. The questions aimed to capture all aspects of the experience of being a PSM. The staff were asked similar questions, with the intention of gaining their perspective on the intervention. Questions included 'Are you aware of the problem-support initiative?', 'Do you feel that the right people are being identified as PSMs?', 'Have you noticed any changes in the PSMs?' and 'How do you think that such an initiative could be sustained in a prison such as this one?'. A full list of the questions is

included as Appendix F. Participants were encouraged to provide as much detail as possible, so prompts and additional follow-up questions were asked as appropriate.

2.6 Procedure

2.6.1 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the PSMs and with staff stakeholders at three time points over a period of nine months. Three time points were used to aid my understanding of how participants' experiences evolved over time. It was important to capture the views of staff members as well as PSMs as the success of the scheme is to an extent dependent on staff support, through their interest in identifying potential PSMs, making referrals and promoting the scheme.

This research aimed to gather rich, detailed accounts of individuals' experiences of the problem-support scheme. It is probable that these experiences would vary, therefore individual interviews were selected over focus groups to eliminate any group-influence that could over-shadow in a focus group (Smithson, 2000). Additionally, obtaining rich information requires a qualitative researcher to form a collaborative relationship with their participants (Vishnevsky & Beanlands, 2004). In order to elicit personal, detailed and potentially sensitive information from the participants, it was advantageous to develop a rapport with them individually.

Twenty-eight interviews were conducted in total, lasting between sixteen and forty minutes, with a mean length of twenty-seven minutes. Following each interview, I briefly recorded my experiences and reflections. The interviews were recorded using a dictaphone belonging to the Interventions Department. Approval was granted for the use of this dictaphone from the Head of Security and Intelligence at the prison.

The recorded interviews were sent to the University of Leeds approved transcription service, 1st Class Secretarial (<https://www.1stclass.uk.com/>). The interviews were transcribed

in an ‘intelligent verbatim’ style, which omitted pauses, repetitions and false starts. This is counter to Braun and Clarke’s (2012) recommendations, however the additional expense of verbatim transcription was prohibitive. Attempts were made to reduce the risk of losing the participants’ meaning due to the removal of pauses and guggles (e.g. mm-hm, ah-ha) by listening to the recordings repeatedly. Once the transcripts were returned, they were checked to ensure that all identifiable information was removed and pseudonyms were assigned to the participants and any other person who was referenced in the interview.

2.6.2 Analysis

Six thematic analyses were conducted; one for staff and one for the PSMs at each time point. This was done as the PSMs and staff are distinct groups whose experiences of the intervention would differ from each other. Also it was anticipated that the themes covered would differ across the three time points. Braun and Clarke (2006) outlined a six-phase approach to TA to standardise its application. These steps are as follows:

Step 1: Familiarise yourself with the data

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Step 3: Searching for themes

Step 4: Reviewing potential themes

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Step 6: Producing the report

Between time points one and two I carried out step one of the six steps. The recordings were then listened to to check for any inaccuracies, and then listened to a second time whilst I recorded my initial thoughts and reflections. This was done to allow the interview schedule to be developed once I had reflected on the initial round of interviews.

Following time point two, the same process was followed, however it was decided that it would be beneficial to move further with the analysis before time point three, and I

completed up to step four of the analysis. This was prompted by the observation that some issues were potentially being skirted around by some of the participants, for instance additional probing was used to access the participants' experiences of model fidelity at the later time points. I felt that re-working the interview schedule based on initial themes from the first two rounds of interviews would allow for a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences.

It is not typical to conduct analysis between interviews when following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of thematic analysis. In this instance, however, each time point and participant group was considered to be a separate analysis and so it was decided that the benefits of deepening the interview schedule out-weighed the costs of tainting future interviews with my knowledge of the analyses.

Once all the interviews had taken place the remaining analyses were conducted. Once the six analyses were completed it was clear that there were considerable similarities in the themes being identified across the three time points and between participant groups. For this reason, and in the interests of brevity, I have collapsed the analyses over time and participant group, and in the Results chapter one thematic map is presented. Extracts from the original transcripts and previous version of the thematic maps are included as Appendix G to illustrate the analytic process.

2.7 Researcher Reflexivity

Elliott, Fisher and Rennie (1999) describe the importance of owning one's own position when conducting qualitative research. One's own positionality is likely to influence the process of conducting research and therefore the outcomes that are reported.

The personal stories told by the participants, and the researcher's interpretation of them are influenced by having shared 'group membership' or not (Berger, 2015). I do not have lived experience of being imprisoned, nor working within a prison, so I was likely

considered to be an outsider when conducting this research. This impacted at times on the flow of the research interviews as I had to clarify some of the terminology used by the participants, thus highlighting my status as an outsider. It is possible this could have made forming a rapport more challenging or made it more difficult for the participants to convey their entire meaning to me. Furthermore, there may have been elements of the participants' experiences that they felt that I would not understand and therefore they did not bring to the interviews.

My lack of shared experience could also have impacted on how I responded to cues offered by the participants and may have led to my missing subtleties which members of the group would not have done. It has been suggested that shared experiences or group membership between the researcher and the group which is being studied could offer a head start in understanding the nuances of a particular population and having insight that an 'outsider' researcher may not have (Berger, 2015).

On the other hand, I believe I hold some shared experiences with the participants, in terms of working in stretched services with forensic populations and in terms of my own experiences of delivering interventions to others. I did not convey this shared experience to the participants, perhaps due to my own views on appropriate boundaries but also because of my desire to maintain the focus on the participants' stories rather than my own. However, it is possible that my own experiences and beliefs could have impacted upon how I interpreted the data.

It felt at times as though the PSMs were reluctant to speak about aspects of their experiences that could make them appear vulnerable. This could be due to the dynamic of myself being a young female academic coming into a male establishment. Equally, it could have been a protective strategy for the men, as following our interviews, they would be returning to the prison wings where they may feel it is important to appear tough and in

control (Clarke, 2013). A similar dynamic arose between myself and the staff, where I felt that they intended at times to manage my impression of them. As I am a Trainee Clinical Psychologist and was wearing an NHS ID badge, staff could have felt a need to focus their interviews on the rehabilitation element of prison rather than the punishment.

Whilst conducting my analysis it was also essential for me to reflect on my own stance and how this could have coloured my interpretation of the data. I hold strong views on difficulties typically being held within a system rather than an individual, which could have led me to over-value or ignore certain aspects of the participants' accounts that did or did not reflect this viewpoint.

Strategies were utilised to maintain reflexivity and to increase my awareness of my own biases, including conversations with my supervisors and keeping a reflective journal capturing some of my experiences throughout the research process. Some photographs illustrating this are included as Appendix H.

I considered reviewing the themes with the PSMs and staff members as an additional validation check. However, due to the process I followed for the analysis this could not have taken place until after the final round of interviews had been analysed. This would be problematic because due to the turnover of staff and prisoners I would have been unable to return to the participants but instead would have had to go to the current group of PSMs and staff who could hold different perspectives on whether the participants' accounts reflected their own experiences of the scheme.

Chapter Three: Results

In the following chapter I will begin by describing the participants at each time point. A thematic map will be provided to depict the themes that were identified, highlighting the differences between the participant groups and how I perceive the themes as relating to one another. I will then describe each theme in depth and provide verbatim quotes to elaborate on the participants' ideas and allow the reader to hear the participants' experiences firsthand. Finally, I will describe two superordinate themes that were seen to underpin many of the ideas raised by both participant groups.

3.1 Participants

3.1.1 PSM Participants

Time point one. Five PSMs were recruited at time point one. Two of these participants had been PSMs since the beginning of the scheme in March 2018; the other three were newer to the role, having undergone their training in December 2018. Each participant was escorted to the Interventions Department, where we met for a one-to-one interview. Pseudonyms have been provided. Four of the participants were white and one was black, they varied in age, with the oldest participant being in his fifties and the youngest in his twenties.

'Frankie'

Frankie presented confidently and spoke passionately about the scheme. Frankie was one of the original PSMs so had been in post for nearly twelve months. He seemed keen to impress on me his status and responsibility in the prison. Frankie was dressed in sportswear and apologised repeatedly for his appearance, saying he had only just got up. Shortly after the interview his position as a PSM was at risk due to the trafficking of substances and an incident of violence. Frankie had gained parole by time point two.

'Jason'

Jason was new to the role when we met and had been working as a PSM for two months. Jason appeared confident and described his experiences slowly and clearly. He was expecting to leave the prison shortly after our interview as he was awaiting transfer to a category D open prison. He received this transfer several weeks later so was not available at time point two.

‘Ollie’

Ollie had been in the role since the beginning of the scheme. Ollie was dressed in work clothes, showing that he, like many of the PSMs, had another job in the prison. Ollie was energetic and eager to tell me about his experiences and show his understanding of psychological principles. During his interview he presented as quite grandiose and described experiences and beliefs that did not appear to be based in reality. As this was my first time meeting Ollie it was difficult to tell whether this was his personality, whether he was nervous, or whether he was under the influence of substances. When Ollie left the interview the staff member collecting him said she believed he may have smoked Spice prior to our interview. Despite this possibility Ollie was able to give a reasonably clear account of his experiences and data from his interview has been included in the analysis. Ollie was released shortly after our interview.

‘Olu’

Olu was dressed smartly for the interview. He articulated himself clearly, presented as quite calm and appeared to be comfortable with reflecting on his experiences. Olu was still at the prison at time point two but had taken a step back from his role as a PSM due to personal issues. He did however agree to a second interview.

‘Craig’

Craig was very busy on the day of the interview and missed his time slot twice due to work commitments at the workshop and assisting staff with collecting the meals for the wing.

Craig arrived for his interview dressed in sportswear and gave a clear account of his experiences as a PSM. Craig was unavailable for interview at time point two.

Time point two. The second round of interviews were carried out in June 2019. The interviews took place on a day when the PSMs were attending a training event to ease the pressure on the need for escorts for myself and the PSMs. Each of the participants is described in more detail below. The participants again varied in age and ethnicity, with the youngest participant being in his twenties and the oldest in his fifties. Two of the participants were white, one was black and the final participant was mixed-race.

‘Olu’

Olu was the only PSM that it was possible to interview at time point one and two. Olu presented in a very similar manner at the second time point.

‘Theo’

Theo presented as self-assured and described an enthusiasm for giving his opinions. Theo informed me that he was new to this prison and had only been an inmate for a few months at the time of the interview. Theo was a new PSM and had only completed his training the week before our interview. He was dressed in a jumper and t-shirt both bearing the PSM logo.

‘Leroy’

Leroy is serving a life-sentence and had been in prison for more than ten years years at the time of our interview. Leroy presented as very calm and softly spoken. Similarly to Theo, Leroy was new to the role and was wearing the PSM branded jumper. He appeared pleased with his position as a PSM and told me that he had applied for the role previously and been rejected. There were plans for Leroy to be moved to a category D prison shortly after our interview as part of a process deportation process, however this plan was changed, and he remained at the same prison.

‘Eric’

Eric had been a PSM since December 2018. He was dressed in the old PSM uniform. He presented confidently and apologised for not volunteering to interview at time point one, saying he was focussed on getting parole at the time. Eric described himself as a third-generation immigrant. He informed me that he was expecting to be released within the next couple of months and had left the prison by time point three.

Time point three. I aimed to interview both Leroy and Theo who were the only remaining PSMs from time point two. However, Theo declined to participate again, stating he had already given his opinions. It was only possible to recruit two further PSMs at time point three as there was a reduced pool of just five PSMs, and they did not all wish to participate.

‘Leroy’

Leroy was the only PSM whom it was possible to interview at time points two and three. He appeared relaxed about participating in the interview but was more disheartened in his presentation than previously.

‘Jake’

Jake had become a PSM in December 2018 but was released shortly after and therefore left the role. When he was recalled to prison in mid-2019 he re-joined the scheme. Jake was not wearing the PSM t-shirt or jumper at the time of the interview. He appeared to be thoughtful and reflective in his answers.

‘Chris’

Chris presented less confidently than his peers. He trained as a PSM in August 2018 but was released a few months later. When he was recalled to prison he also re-joined the scheme. Chris was wearing the PSM jumper and spoke very positively about the scheme. He explained to me that he was on a wing with a fellow PSM.

3.1.2 Staff Participants

Time point one. Five staff members were recruited at time point one. None of these participants worked on the prison wings, although some had held wing-based positions in the past. Four of the participants were white-British and one of the participants was Asian. The participants were all aged between thirty and fifty. Pseudonyms have been provided and each of the participants is described in more detail below:

‘Chloe’

Chloe works in the Programmes team. Chloe’s Manager was one of the scheme coordinators. This is the first prison Chloe has worked in. Chloe is a ‘civvy’, meaning a non-uniformed member of staff. She presented as very friendly and was happy to participate but said she was worried about getting the right answer.

‘Thomas’

Thomas is a Custodial Manager. Thomas told me he had worked in prisons for nearly thirty years, across a variety of establishments, including category A prisons. Thomas was a uniformed member of staff but was not working on the prison wings at the time of our interview but rather held three different roles in the prison. He spoke prior to our interview about the passion he used to feel for prison work.

‘Joanna’

Joanna works in the Programmes Team with Chloe. Her position is a Programmes Facilitator. Despite being a ‘civvy’ at the time of interview, Joanna spoke about her previous role on the wings and considered herself to take the ‘wing-perspective’.

‘Priya’

Priya works in the Safer Custody team. Priya’s role involves coordinating the ACCT documents, which are care plans for vulnerable prisoners. Priya’s role is also a ‘civvy’ role. Priya left her position at the prison a few months after our interview.

‘Emily’

Emily works as a Triangulator in the Safer Custody Team. Her role is largely around data management and she collates data on incidents that occur within the prison. Emily was also a ‘civvy’ but used to be a uniformed member of staff. Emily was very enthusiastic about her new position and was eager to explain it to me. It was not possible to contact Emily at time point two.

Time point two. Chloe, Joanna and Thomas were all available for interview at the second time point. Chloe and Joanna held the same positions in the prison, however Thomas had moved back to working as a Custodial Manager on a wing. They all presented in a very similar manner to at time point one. Three additional staff were interviewed. All of the participants were white. Their ages varied, with the youngest participant being in their thirties and the oldest in their fifties.

‘Megan’

Megan is as a Custodial Officer. Due to constraints with staffing, Megan was unable to leave the wing and therefore the interview was carried out in the staff office on the wing. Megan is a uniformed member of staff.

‘Nicky’

Nicky was working in the Activities department, having recently transferred from managing the segregation unit. Nicky was dressed in her prison uniform. Nicky presented as quite assertive and was eager to share her ideas and opinions.

‘Vince’

Vince is a Prison Officer and is classed as a uniformed member of staff. Vince works on the inductions wing, where there is a high turn-over of prisoners, as every new prisoner initially stays on that wing. Vince spoke about the unique nature of his wing.

Time point three. At time point three Thomas was no longer working at the prison. It was not possible to arrange an interview with Megan. In addition to Nicky, Vince, Chloe and Joanna one other staff member was recruited. The youngest participant at time point three was in their twenties, with the oldest being in their fifties. All of the participants were white.

‘Nicky’

Nicky had changed position at time point three, she was working as the Custodial Manager for three wings. Nicky explained that she was very busy and did not have long for the interview. Whilst we did get the chance to cover all the questions on the interview schedule, the time for additional probing questions was limited.

‘Vince’

Vince also described himself as very busy at the time of interview. I attempted to arrange cover whilst he participated but this was unable to be facilitated due to staffing shortfalls. For this reason, our interview had to be conducted on the wing. The telephone rang on two occasions before Vince placed it off the hook, a staff member came into the office to get a water bottle and Vince was contacted repeatedly on the radio system. Vince apologised after the interview, saying he felt under immense pressure and described himself as focussed on calculating which cells the new admissions could stay in, rather than the interview.

Despite these factors Vince gave a coherent account of his experiences.

‘Joanna’

Joanna presented very similarly to the previous two occasions.

‘Chloe’

Chloe also presented similarly to how she had at time points one and two. Chloe informed me that she would be leaving the prison service the day after our interview.

‘Jenny’

Jenny is a Forensic Psychologist in Training, who works across all the prisons in the region, a position she has held since 2016. Her role would be considered a ‘civvy’ role. Jenny explained that she has limited direct prisoner contact.

3.2 Thematic Map

Five subordinate themes were identified. In this section these themes will be briefly outlined, and presented in a thematic map, before they are explored in further detail. The staff participants all appeared to be passionate about peer-led initiatives and there was belief that much could be achieved by such a scheme. This appetite for peer-led schemes was partially motivated by the strain they were experiencing in their jobs and the hope that peer-led schemes could go some way towards alleviating this. There was also a confidence that prisoners had something unique to offer each other and could perhaps have an impact that could not be achieved by staff. This was however with the caveat that it was essential to recruit the ‘right’ prisoners for peer-led roles. This was a view shared by the PSM participants who also believed it was essential to recruit the ‘right’ people for the role. Whilst all the participants agreed that the ‘right’ sort of PSMs needed recruiting there was not a shared conceptualisation of what characteristics, experiences or skills should be sought out. However, the PSM participants were all confident that they were suited for the role. Part of what the PSM participants felt made themselves suitable for the role was their motivation to be involved with the scheme, which was typically described as being a desire to help others, and their commitment to act on this motivation. The PSM participants also reflected on their motivations to gain personal benefits from the role. It appeared that the personal benefits had been more readily achieved than their goal to be able to have a positive impact on others. The PSM participants spoke extensively about the personal benefits they had gained, benefits which appeared to be sustaining their commitment to the scheme. However, there were also parts of the role that were challenging, and they saw certain risks to themselves. The staff

participants also described the impact on the PSMs and could see a range of benefits for them as well as some challenges the role created. Due to these challenges the staff believed strongly that the PSMs needed support. Both participant groups also reflected on the impact that the scheme was having on others in the prison. A substantial number of factors were described as hindering the ability of the scheme to have an impact, as well as some factors that were seen as helping. Figure 1 depicts these themes and how they are perceived as relating to one another.

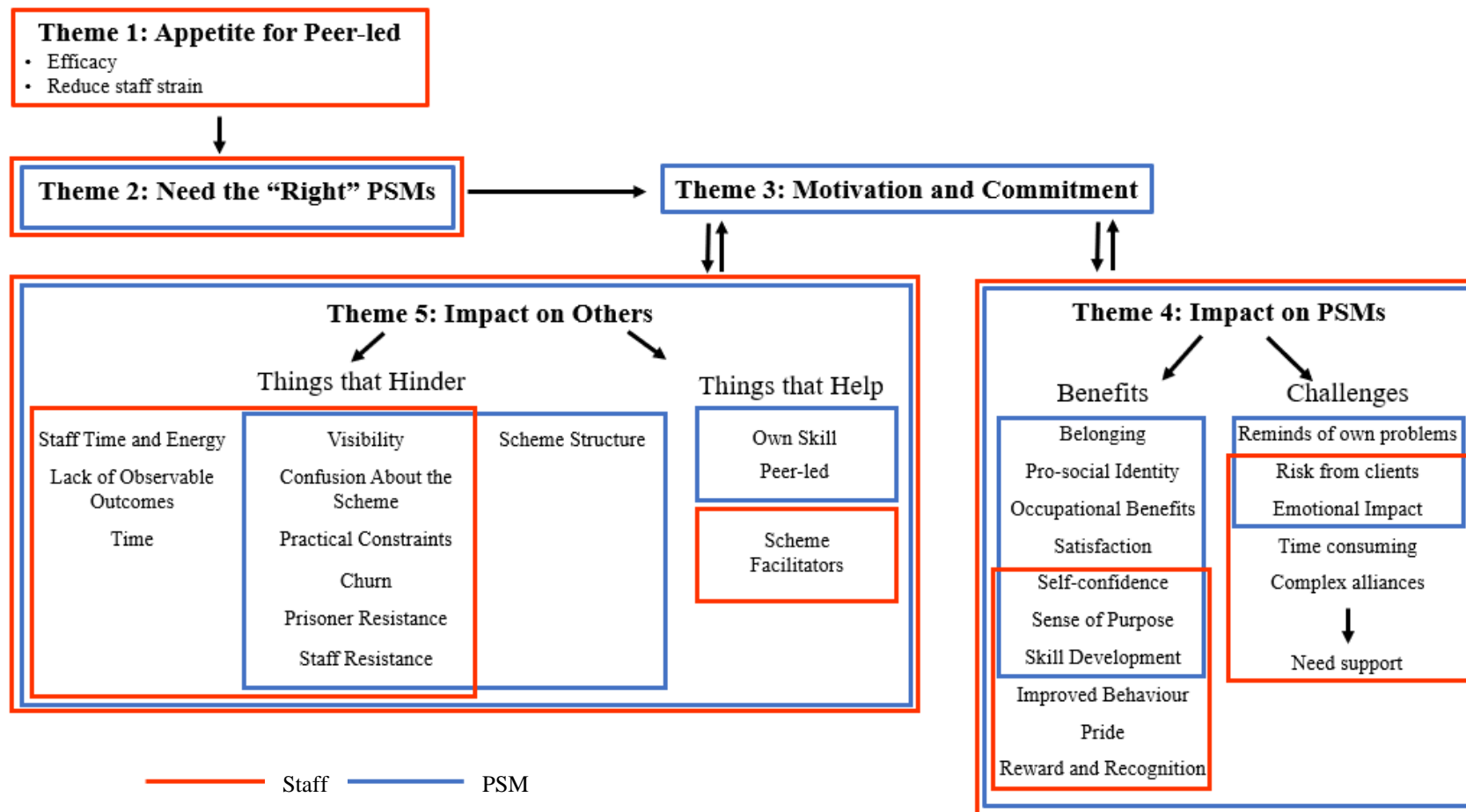


Figure 1: Thematic Map Illustrating Staff and PSM Themes

3.3 Subordinate Themes

3.3.1 Theme 1: Appetite for Peer-Led

An appetite for peer-led initiatives consistently arose from the staff participants;

“It’s very popular with the idea of peer to peer rather than staff to prisoner.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

The staff drew parallels to other peer-led schemes running, and this appeared to reinforce their thinking that a peer-led scheme has potential;

“It kind of fits and follows how peer support works in this jail.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

There were two main reasons that appeared to underpin the enthusiasm for peer-led schemes. Firstly, the participants believed that peer-led schemes could be effective, and secondly peer-led schemes were perceived as having the potential to ease the strain on staff.

Efficacy. The staff participants at all time points believed that there were ways in which the PSMs could be more effective than staff. The participants all seemed to believe that there were shared experiences between prisoners. These shared experiences were seen as an asset, allowing the prisoners to feel more comfortable to open up, helping the PSMs to understand the problems better and possibly making their advice more palatable;

“Peer to peer makes them more comfortable.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

“Unless you’ve been through certain things, I don’t think you can help. It’s like these lads who have been through drugs who then want to be drug counsellors. I can talk to someone about taking drugs but I can’t see it from their point of view because I’ve never taken drugs.”

- Nicky, staff, TP2.

At time points two and three the participants shared the idea that peers may be more effective at getting the message across to other prisoners than staff. This was attributed to prisoners not having the respect for staff that they may for a peer;

“Prisoners don’t like talking to staff or they’ll listen to what we say and then you can bet your bottom dollar they’ll go and ask another prisoner.” - Vince, staff, TP2.

“Some of these people have been from care, dealt with the police and then it’s us. So, they don’t trust uniforms anyway. So, anybody who can say what we’re trying to say, but in a different format from their point of view has got to be a help.” - Nicky, staff, TP3.

Joanna had some ideas about why this could be, she wondered whether it was the way prisoners viewed and spoke to each other as equals, or possibly because staff are paid that reduces the credibility of their advice and support;

“If it came from me, they’d be like, it’s only your job, we keep you in a job.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

“They talk to them as an equal rather than someone that’s lower than them.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

At time point three the participants also believed that the PSMs may be more efficacious due to greater knowledge of the prison system than some staff;

“No-one knows a prison like the lads and we’ve got a lot of young, inexperienced staff.” - Joanna, staff, TP3.

As well as the receptiveness of the prisoners, the participants also believed that a peer-led intervention could be effective because the PSMs would be more available. This idea was discussed at all three time points;

“Whenever you talk to prisoners it’s like, oh, wing staff have got no more...no time, blah, blah, blah.” - Joanna, staff, TP1.

“They didn’t have to maybe come to a staff member or wait for an appointment so to speak, to talk to someone, they were just able to access like a peer and get assistance, get support that way.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

Reduce Staff Strain. As well as believing the PSMs could provide an effective intervention, another driving force towards peer-led schemes was how stretched the staff felt. This scheme appeared to offer the opportunity to alleviate this pressure;

“The reason it's so beneficial is because it's not a high...we're not using 30 members of staff to do it, we're using 30 prisoners to do it.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“You have got to bear in mind on a smaller unit there is only two staff to maybe 50 prisoners, you know, so you can't keep your eye on everything.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

“It's taking pressure off us so they must be doing something right.” - Vince, staff, TP2.

Vince in particular appeared to have benefited from this experience of the scheme and saw one of the main benefits being freeing up staff resource;

“It will help staff be able to do what they're actually meant to be doing, rather than being sat in here in an office.” - Vince, staff, TP3.

3.3.2 Theme 2: Need the ‘Right’ PSMs

Consistently across time points and participant groups the need for the ‘right’ PSMs was referenced;

“It's all about the guys that make it, do you know what I mean?” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

“If you haven't got suitable candidates, I'm not a firm believer of putting someone in a job just because we've got spaces in a job. If you want to maintain the standard you've got to maintain the standard.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

It appeared that the PSMs aren't completely trusted by prison staff, or indeed by each other. This contributed to their sense that the ‘right’ people needed selecting, as the ‘wrong’ people could abuse the position and undermine the scheme;

“If anything does go wrong or, say for example someone does traffic something and they get caught then that's it.” - Craig, PSM, TP1.

The staff echoed the PSMs and also believed that the ‘wrong’ PSMs could discredit the scheme;

“How well it works depends on how much it's undermined by the behaviour of the prisoners.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“You're a role model for other prisoners, so you having a scrap on yard and then going back to talk to somebody about not being violent is a little bit hypocritical.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

Qualities, Skills and Experiences that Make the ‘Right’ PSM. It was clear across the data set that whilst the participants all agreed that the ‘right’ type of people needed recruiting, there was very little consensus as to what that would look like. A wide variety of traits and skills were considered to be indicative of the ‘right’ sort of person. These included honesty, strength of character, patience, persistence, listening skills and an ability to manage your own problems;

“Someone who's learned to deal with their problems are in a better place to probably help someone try and address their problems.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“You've got to be honest to the person that you're delivering this to. If you're not honest with a prisoner you could get filled in and stuff.” - Leroy, PSM, TP2.

“I think the individual who has got time and who has got patience and who has got listening skills and who is not judgemental, you know, who is empathetic.” - Emily, staff, TP1.

“They're not going to go to somebody who's weak 'cause it's, like, why am I going to ask him when I know better myself. There's a little bit of that and then there's...if they are a big character, like the bully one was, would they go to him.” - Megan, staff, TP2.

“Someone that's relatable so that the other men can relate to them, you know, and, sort of, build up that rapport I suppose and not feel judged.” - Chloe, staff, TP3.

“They've got to want to do it, that they can see it as some kind of progression for them, rather than using it to gain ill-gotten gains.” - Joanna, staff, TP3.

Whilst in most of the interviews there was greater emphasis on skills and qualities, at time point three the staff participants focussed more on experiences as being key to someone being ‘right’ for the role;

“Somebody who’s actually had challenges with problem solving in the past and has seen the benefits in using such an approach to help themselves so they’ve got some integrity.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

“They don't really need to be mature, it's just the lads that have done plenty of prison, that know the ins and outs.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

This focus on experience is perhaps not surprising when considered alongside Theme 1 (Appetite for Peer-Led), where the participants felt that one of the added values of peer-led approaches was the shared experiences that a peer could offer another prisoner.

The PSMs all expressed confidence that they were ‘right’ for the role;

“I’ve always been kind of confident in that way to speak to people and try and help people, I think that’s just...I’m a caring person to be honest.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“I’m easily approachable, I’m not one of these that go round prison putting a spoiler on and all that.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Leroy drew on the idea that his experiences made him suitable for the role;

“I’m prepared to do this thing because the past, like what I’ve been through and know what I can do here to like help people.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

Being hand-selected for the role, and holding other positions of trust, also appeared to have reinforced some of the PSMs’ beliefs that they were the ‘right’ person for the role;

“He [a PSM] approached me and thought I would be a good candidate.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

“I obviously got picked out from the stuff that I already do. Like I say, I was a mentor anyway [...] So I think because I was already on all that, and I also do the PID desk on the wing voluntary.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

Challenges of Recruitment. Despite the PSM participants speaking about the need for the ‘right’ people and reflecting on themselves as being ‘right’ for the role, there was clearly variation between them. One example of this was in their expressed confidence;

“I’m always one of them, when it comes to groups, I think I think too much into things like oh, I’m not going to be able to answer this rightly.” - Craig, PSM, TP1.

“I’ve developed enough. I think I’ve got enough skills.” - Frankie, PSM, TP1.

This variety in the PSMs could be a strength of the scheme’s recruitment as several of the staff participants seemed to believe that the key to successful recruitment would be having a range of different men;

“I think you need a kind of a mixed bag of guys involved.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

Despite some participants seeing value in variety, the lack of a singular narrative as to what would make someone ‘right’ in terms of skills, qualities and experiences, plus the variation in the PSMs themselves, highlights the complexity of recruitment. This complexity was recognised by some of the staff participants, and Chloe reflected on the challenge of balancing the need to recruit the ‘right’ sort of PSMs, whilst also giving consideration to sentence length;

“It’s a hard one, because obviously you want people to have the skills, but I think in terms of keeping it going, you’re sort of looking at those longer-term prisoners.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

The staff participants spoke about the inevitability of selecting some PSMs who would not thrive in the role, and appeared to see the recruitment process as requiring some positive risk taking;

“Some of them deserve a chance, some of them that will backfire.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“It’s natural wastage. I mean, I would never say, don’t give them a chance because you’ve got to give them a chance, haven’t you, or there’s no point in doing it in the first place, but unfortunately, I think a few of them have fallen by the wayside.” - Thomas, staff, TP2.

Notably at time point two the staff participants appeared to be more resigned to the inevitability of some PSMs abusing the scheme. This may have been exacerbated by their knowledge that one of the PSMs had recently lost the position;

“It was a shame because from what I know he was good when he was doing his problem support stuff but, yeah, I think issues outside of that and he’s maybe not used the steps themselves and obviously he’s been involved in quite a serious assault.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

“The one who I’m thinking of, he was always very respectful to staff, so I could see why he’d come over as a nice guy but then we’d get the little notes passed and stuff that said he’s bullying and using [substances].” - Megan, staff, TP2.

Interestingly, evidence that the PSMs had abused the position was more readily accepted than evidence that they were doing well. This is shown in the quote below from Thomas where he reports only seeing PSMs be conscientious in the role, yet still held the view that some of them may not be taking the role seriously;

“Some of them, I got the impression were just there for the feathering the cap type situation, if you know what I mean, and were having a bit of a laugh with it and all that, although the meetings that I went to and the presentation, they all seemed to take it quite seriously.” -

Thomas, staff, TP2.

Recruitment Success. Despite these many complexities in recruiting the ‘right’ sort of PSMs, in most interviews the participants expressed some confidence that the ‘right’ people were being recruited;

“The guys they’re recruiting are decent lads, they’re not getting Joe Bloggs which he’s always spiced up out of his tiny...to come and do a course to help people because he can’t help himself.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

“Some of the guys that are on it that have been given a chance are really kind of smashing it.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“A lot of lads that volunteer for those, kind of, jobs do genuinely want to help out. The ones that we’ve had on here, out of the last six, I’d say five of them were decent.” - Megan, staff,

TP2.

However, there was some variation in this;

“Some lads are doing it to stick twos up.” - Joanna, staff, TP1.

At time point three the staff were less sure whether the right men were being recruited. This did not appear to be because they had heard of PSMs losing the role, as at time point two, but rather because they knew less about who the PSMs were;

“I have a recollection of conversations about people being problem solving mentors but it might be surprising that they are given maybe some of their behaviours that they’re involved in in prison which might not be positive. But I couldn’t say that with any confidence.” -

Jenny, staff, TP3.

However, Joanna, who was perhaps closer to the scheme than the other staff participants, felt confident that by time point three the right men were being selected;

“We’re eventually getting there. I think this last group that we’ve got through are good.” -

Joanna, staff, TP3.

This showed a shift in her perspective from time point one where she wondered if some of the PSMs were just doing it to ‘stick twos up’.

3.3.3 Theme 3: Motivation and Commitment

The PSM participants spoke at all three time points about what motivated them to join the scheme. The participants’ commitment to putting their motivation into practice and to the scheme itself was also discussed.

Motivation to Help Others. Consistently the participants expressed apparently selfless or pro-social motivations for becoming PSMs;

“I actually care about prisoners. You think they’ve got no one now, no family, no support, staff are bullying them.” - Frankie, TP1.

“I’ve been interested in trying to help change the system, and what I mean by the system is the help that people get.” - Eric, TP2.

Whilst this motivation to help others was referenced at all time points, it was most frequently raised at time point one, where the participants described this more often as their sole motivation.

Motivation to Help Self. The PSM participants also spoke about their motivation to gain personal benefits from partaking in the scheme. These benefits were varied and included having power, being appreciated, the excitement of being involved in something new and acquiring skills that could be applied to future work in the community;

“It gives you the power to sit down with someone and implement the ways that you’re going to be taught and I thought, that sounds amazing.” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

“I’m hopefully going to be a mentor when I got on the outside, like mentoring gang members and stuff, kids that are vulnerable to get into gangs and stuff like that. So, hopefully that will help.” - Leroy, PSM, TP2.

“We’re almost pioneers in a way. Quite nice that.” - Olu, PSM, TP1.

“Gives you an appreciation that you’re respected, your opinion matters to someone, so in that sense that’s what makes you feel better.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

At time point two, Eric and Theo expressed frustration about not feeling recognised and appreciated, suggesting that this motivating factor was not being actualised;

“You feel unappreciated for the role that you’re doing, you know, you’re helping staff out as well as other lads, because these problems, if we weren’t around, the staff would have to deal with this.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

“You need support from staff and obviously the prison, because the job you’re doing, you want to feel it’s valued and you want to feel that you’re respected for doing it.” - Theo, PSM,

TP2.

From most of the interviews the PSMs appeared motivated by both the desire to help others, and the desire for personal gain. Chris nicely summarised this dual motivation;

“I thought, well I might as well be able to help others but help myself at the same time, because with this course even though it's helping others with their problems it's also helping me as well with my problems.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

The Motivation of Others. Whilst all the participants felt that they themselves had valid motivations, at all time points there were questions raised about the motivation of their fellow PSMs, and their predecessors;

“George is young, yeah, he’s just daft upstairs, I think he just does it, yeah, just to look good and wear the T-shirt, do you know what I mean?” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

“Not one of them have got a sticker on the door saying that they’re a problem solver. So it makes me question it about why have you actually done it then?” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“Different lads that are in here for they want, to get their cat D, they want early release or they just going to do that to make it look good. There’s lads that generally want to do it ‘cause of self-development, might help them in career aspects. And, certain lads that actually want to do it ‘cause they want actually to help.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Commitment. Whilst the participants all described factors that had motivated them to engage in the scheme, there was some variation in their commitment to the role, and how committed they saw their fellow PSMs as being;

“Everybody’s really keen.” - Olu, PSM, TP1.

“A few people dropped out they didn’t really believe in the scheme, which I’m still on the fence.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

Some of the participants spoke about the future of the scheme, suggesting a longer-term commitment and an interest in its progression past their time as PSMs;

“Hopefully it will be like a snowball effect. Then hopefully in time the numbers of drug abuse and self-harm will go down a lot more.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

Whilst there was variation within each time point, a trend emerged with the participants being more committed to the scheme at time point one than at time point three. It is possible that this drop in commitment related to the increased barriers that the PSMs perceived to them being able to do their role, which is discussed in Theme 5 (Impact on Others). At time point two most of the participants had just completed their training, so it was not clear whether their motivation was sustained into committed action.

Whilst the PSM participants at time point three were not as active in the role as their predecessors, there was still belief in the principles underpinning the scheme and in its potential. Jake held a view that one day the scheme could become nation-wide, this appeared to underpin his motivation to be involved, with him viewing himself as a pioneer;

“It’s going to be a good couple of years before this actually starts to take shape and take movement. But I’m just doing it just for the long run ‘cause if there’s no one involved in it then it’s not going to happen.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

The participants appeared to see the 7-steps as an effective way of managing problems;

“Their [young offenders’] heads are full of all kinds of different problems and I just think that if they actually have people, even staff trained dealing with the...the 7-steps. It can stop people taking it further, smashing their cells.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

This idea that the steps would be most helpful for young offenders was shared by Chris, who spoke about how he had tried to introduce the steps to the youth offending team in the community, demonstrating a commitment to the ideas underpinning the project;

“It's like before I come back in I actually spoke to the youth offending team to try help the younger generation.” - Chris, TP3.

Chris's own experiences of talking about his problems and finding this beneficial also contributed to his belief in the scheme;

“I've had problems in the past where I haven't wanted to talk to people and it's made my problems worse, you know what I mean, until a few year back where at one point I needed someone to talk to, had that person to talk to and I felt better for talking.” - Chris, TP3.

3.3.4 Theme 4: Impact on PSMs

As discussed in Theme 3 (Motivation and Commitment), many of the PSM participants described a dual motivation for joining the scheme; the opportunity to help others, and the opportunity to help themselves. Many of the anticipated personal benefits appeared to have come to fruition, alongside additional unanticipated benefits, as the PSM participants spoke extensively about what they were gaining from the role. The staff participants also commented on the benefits they had seen the PSMs gain during their involvement in the scheme. The possible challenges and risks of the role were also reflected on by both groups of participants. As shown in Figure 2, there was some similarity in the benefits and challenges perceived between the two participant groups, and some differences.

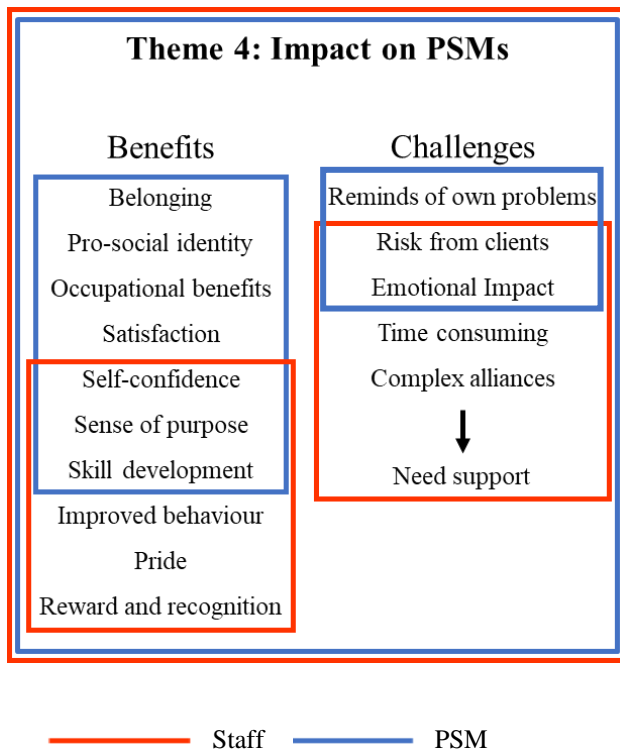


Figure 2: Thematic Map extract: Theme 4: Impact on PSMs

Benefits. The PSM participants identified a wide range of benefits, and at all time points commented more on the benefits of the scheme for themselves, rather than for their clients. This was stated explicitly by Jake;

“It’s helping me more than the like, prisoners.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Some of the PSMs described the scheme offering them something that none of the other projects or programmes in the prison did;

“I’ve done the Leeds Rhinos course, I’ve done emotions and wellbeing course, I’ve done a few things but nothing really appealed to me, I just did them for the sake of doing them. This, I actually thought I’d get something out of it, which I did.” - Craig, PSM, TP1.

Belonging. One of the benefits described was belonging to a community, in which they valued the connection with peers as well as the opportunity to network with professionals. This theme was most salient at time point one, but was also referenced frequently at time point two;

“You are not isolating yourself, you are involved with other people, involved with the group.” - Olu, PSM, TP1.

“It’s the people who run the group as well, you know. And then you coming in and doing this, it just builds up, I don’t know the word for it now, a connection for you all, innit.” - Craig, PSM, TP1.

“We had a table full of cakes, coffee and [the scheme facilitator] were in that day, but I didn’t know that she were in. And I seen her sat there in the office and that, you know what I mean? And then I invited her to come. She went, course I’ll come, Ollie. And she come, she had loads of cake with me and there was coffee and that.” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

This seems to be a particularly important issue, due, at least in part, to the prison environment in which the ability to build a supportive network where you are positively regarded is challenging.

“I had friends in here but like they weren’t obviously...friends in prison aren't going to help you, you know what I mean?” - Frankie, PSM, TP1.

Theo appeared to value this less than the other PSMs;

“I see it as a team when you’re all together, but then once you’re on a different wing and whatever, you’re an individual.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“There were ten prisoners and you’re all in one room and then you’re all introducing each other same time, you’ve got ten people talking at the same time, personally I think it can be a little bit off-putting.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

At time point three the sense of belonging was less present. Only Chris described a benefit from being part of a group;

“We’re all basically like a family.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

It is possible that the sense of the PSMs as a community was less strong at time point three as there was a vastly reduced group of just five PSMs when I conducted the interviews.

Pro-social Identity. The scheme seemed to give the participants the opportunity to have a different identity where they were not seen as prisoners;

“Just the togetherness. Sometimes in a jail there’s a hierarchy, and being Listener, being a Problem-Solver sorry, it eliminates that, which I liked.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

Satisfaction. At time point one the participants all spoke about a desire to help others being motivating, but none of them spoke about gaining satisfaction from acting on this.

However, at time point two it was described as a clear benefit of the role;

“When you can see the difference in somebody physically, you can see that they’ve perked up a little bit, and stuff like that, that’s all you need.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

“To help others is giving back what I didn’t have, so if you can stop somebody going down the road you’ve gone down, then it’s all good, that’s all you need.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

Chris also described helping others being a positive experience at time point three;

“I’m grateful that I’m here able to help people in the prison.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Occupational Benefits. The PSMs hoped that their experiences on the scheme would help them gain employment and be successful in the workplace post-release;

“It’s like, the way she’s taught me, [the scheme facilitator], yeah, it’s like, she’s give me an education what I’ll have for the rest of my life.” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

“When I got out of here in October I took my certificate from the cells, and that, to say, listen, I’m a qualified peer mentor” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Self-Confidence. The PSM participants were gaining confidence and self-belief;

“I’d say, and it sounds over-confident, but I don’t know, that I’m more...how can I explain it? I’m more...without sounding big headed I’m...I don’t know, I seem...like how’s the word? Like I’m good at it, if you know what I mean?” - Frankie, PSM, TP1.

“It’s made me feel more comfortable in talking to people because before I would never...I’d never talk to people [...] So, it’s helped me overcome my fear.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

At time point three, Chris was the only participant who described a personal experience of gaining self-confidence, however Jake felt that he had seen other PSMs have this experience;

“When they first come in they’re quiet, oh yeah it’ll, you know, it’ll look good for the cat Ds and it’ll look good for their early release and they don’t really open up, but then, say, a few weeks later they’re actually giving their own opinions.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

This benefit was also observed by the staff;

“It gives them a bit of confidence as well.” - Joanna, staff, TP1.

Sense of Purpose. The PSMs also described gaining a sense of purpose;

“It’s nice to think that you are still functioning and using your brain and hopefully your skills.” - Olu, PSM, TP1.

“I like being useful, do you know what I mean?” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

This sense of purpose seemed to translate into increased self-worth;

“Doing something like this gives you benefits of worth, people actually need you, people actually want you.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

“You feel you’re worth more if you know what I mean.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

This benefit was also referenced by the staff participants;

“They’re doing something that’s productive they’re doing something that’s helpful. And, I think that’s important for the men, because they don’t really get the chance to do that in this environment.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

“He was still with the lads, but it just seemed to calm him, it just seemed to come at the right time and almost give him a purpose.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

Skill Development. As well as benefits from the delivering the intervention, the PSMs had also gained benefits from applying the 7-steps to themselves;

“Say if one of my friends is having a fight and I notice something like...straightaway I’d be involved before, you know what I mean? I think...I just think for like for him I’ve got to get involved, like I say but now it’s like I kind of sit back and I think, what a shit he’s in. I’m not trying to go on basic for him. I want to see my kids, I want to... You know what I mean? I don’t know, I kind of quickly break it down in my head before I jump into any situations now.” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

“If you’re there to try and help someone with the problems and give them the tools, then I’m sure that you can give yourself the tools.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

Hearing the problems of their peers also appeared to be giving some of the participants a sense of perspective;

“Problems that you come up against yourself, they might seem like a mountain at the time, but then somebody else comes along and theirs is absolutely ginormous and makes yours look nothing.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

The participants also spoke about other skills they had built;

“You learn to open up a bit more and think clearly.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

“Your development will increase and your social skills will increase.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

Some of the staff members also reported noticing these increases in skills;

“They just maybe enhanced how they can deal with people.” - Nicky, staff, TP3.

Improved Behaviour. The staff participants reported that they had observed an improvement in some of the PSMs’ behaviour;

“It’s meant a lot to him doing it, his behaviour’s really, really improved and the intelligence surrounding him and his activities has really dropped.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“I’ve known Pete probably ten years and I saw a completely different side to him when he did them delivery steps.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

Pride. The staff also gave examples of how they had seen the PSMs experience pride;

“It can seem a bit of an insignificance to the average person on the street, but something as simple as wearing a t-shirt that says it on it, you see a lot of them get a lot of emotion about it...emotion is probably a bit of a strong word, especially if you said it to them, but you know, they get quite a lot of, a bit of pride in being part of it.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

This quote from Thomas highlights a belief that some of the benefits of the role counter some of the negative experiences of being in prison such as feelings of shame and a lack of purpose. This arose frequently in the interviews and possibly underpins many of the benefits for the PSMs.

Reward and Recognition. The staff participants also reflected on the impact of reward and recognition for the PSMs;

“Do they get any money for doing it or is it a volunteer? Up that, it’ll make it worth their while.” - Vince, staff, TP2.

“They like a certificate, so they’ll come and show you their certificate.” - Megan, staff, TP2.

Megan’s quote illustrates how intertwined many of the benefits of being a PSM are, as the process of receiving reward and recognition may increase the likelihood of the PSMs experiencing or in increasing self-worth.

Exceptions. Whilst it was relatively consistent that the PSMs reported personal benefits, Leroy proved to be an exception at time point three and did not describe any personal benefits. However, when speaking about recruitment he felt there were certain benefits that ‘lifers’ would get;

“least they would be doing something positive for them, to help them move forward and probably help to get rid of certain demons they’ve got, however you want to call it, it’s like helping others, passing their experiences on.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

It was notable at time point three that the staff participants spent less time in each interview describing the benefits of the role to the PSMs. The ideas the participants had were

more speculative than in previous rounds where concrete examples of PSMs they knew were given. This is perhaps to be expected as many of the participants acknowledged at time point three that they were not sure which prisoners were PSMs. The reduced focus on benefits perhaps reveals that the salience of these benefits was reduced when the ideas were not tied to specific people.

Challenges. The PSM participants placed greater emphasis on the benefits of the role than the challenges, however they did report that the role could remind them of their own problems, other prisoners could pose a risk to them, and that there was the potential for the role to have an emotional impact. More challenges and risks were identified by the staff participants, including how time consuming the role could be and the difficulty the PSMs may experience taking up a role that could be seen as aligning themselves with the prison.

Reminding of Own Problems. The PSM participants spoke about the potential emotional impact, as people with their own problems;

“I recently lost my father, so to deal with somebody that’s going through the same thing kind of brings up your emotions and your feelings on that, so like kind of bringing your problem back even though you might have – dealt with it is the wrong word because you never actually deal with it as such, but it just brings it back.” - Eric, PSM, TP1.

Risk from Other Prisoners. Risk from other prisoners was only referenced at the third time point. This was a consistent pattern, with the PSM participants at time point three reflecting more on the risks than the participants at time points one and two;

“You don’t want to go by yourself, that’s in case they accuse you of anything.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

“If they were a psycho and I knew they were carrying knives and stuff like that in their cell, maybe, then I’d be a bit, you know, I wouldn’t want to go in there.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

The staff participants shared this concern;

“Another prisoner that is maybe quite emotionally charged, or quite volatile, that could be quite difficult.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

“Just to make sure there’s no allegations or no threat, maybe sometimes they maybe need to double up to see somebody.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

Emotional Impact. Chris considered risk in a different way to the other PSM participants at time point three and spoke more about the emotional impact;

“That's going to become a problem for you if you're constantly thinking about your client’s problems and then how's that going to affect yourself.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

The potential for the role to have an emotional impact was also raised by some staff participants;

“If they’re being told things that are personal to the other person it can be quite a burden, I think really, especially if it’s quite distressing.” - Thomas, staff, TP2.

“I imagine if it’s quite a big problem or quite a personal problem, that could be, sort of, quite mentally or emotionally challenging.” - Chloe, staff, TP3.

Time Consuming. Some staff participants wondered how the PSMs managed to balance the role with their other commitments in the prison, and whether it would consume their free time;

“Association is meant to be their time to phone their family, have their showers, do whatever, play pool, a few of their mates. I’m sure they don’t all want to just sit somewhere and wait for a load of lads to come and see them.” - Vince, staff, TP2.

Complex Alliances. The staff members reflected on how the PSMs managed being part of a scheme that could lead to them being seen as aligned with the prison rather than their fellow prisoners;

“They don’t like to feel like they’re necessarily doing things for us on a prison side because then they feel like they’re liable to be, well in their words, a grass or kind of on staff side.” -

Priya, staff, TP1.

“They can be seen as being loose lipped if you know what I mean, or pro-staff.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

“I might imagine sort of volunteering to do something like that could make yourself stand out and that’s not always what people want to do in a prison environment.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

Support. Due to the challenges, the staff reflected on the boundaries of the role;

“What’s the process of them getting in touch with somebody, you know, to deal...you know, how far can they go?” - Emily, staff, TP1.

“I don’t want them to become too...I don’t know, think of the role as bigger than what it actually is, do you know what I mean. Going, stepping beyond out of their boundaries because that will cause problems from all sides really.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

However, Priya, who managed a team that regularly referred to the PSMs and spoke with prisoners in crisis, felt that the PSMs were seeing clients with complex issues;

“A lot of the customers are guys that are in kind of extreme crisis.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

Chloe reflected on the challenges of knowing what clients may bring to the PSMs;

“A lot of the things that they’re focusing on with the other men, we might not have necessarily known about.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

There was a sense from some staff participants that they felt the PSMs would need support with the role due to the level of responsibility, and potential emotional burnout;

“If somebody was to like take their own lives, or there was a nasty situation, would it be identified that there’d been a specific problem solver working closely with them and they might need some extra support?” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“If you’re a counsellor, obviously you get supervision where you check your wellbeing, so potentially for the PSMs, I don’t know if they do have something like that, to just maybe check in.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

“It’s worth just having an ear to bend as well, you know, to offload because if they’re taking on everybody’s problems it’s nice to have somebody to turn to himself and say, look can we have a chat.” - Thomas, staff, TP2.

“Having somewhere to be able to share that would seem helpful.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

Vince considered support in a different way to the other staff participants, and thought about the practical support PSMs could need, which he felt they could get from wing staff;

“If they are unsure of stuff, they will come to us, if we are unsure, we go to RCM.” - Vince, staff, TP3.

Whilst the PSM participants also identified potential challenges, they all expressed confidence that they were equipped with the intuition and skills to avoid these situations, and referred less frequently to the need for support with the emotional impact or responsibility;

“If they are mental case as well, you know, if they were like really unpredictable, I wouldn’t put myself in that position anyway.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

“Forget about the problems, or just erase it from your mind because if not then you’re going to have a problem yourself.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

3.3.5 Theme 5: Impact on Others

The participants reflected on the impact that they felt the scheme was having on people within the prison. This is perhaps not surprising as the PSM participants all described their motivation to join the scheme as being partially a wish to help others. There was considerable variety in the participants’ accounts of the level of impact being achieved. This variety was paralleled in the staff members’ reflections on the impact the scheme was having on their workloads;

“It’s not been, oh that’s great that they’re in, it’s saved me working.” - Megan, staff, TP2.

“Say we get ten inductions, rather than all waiting to see me they’ve got elsewhere to go. So instead of all lining up, they’ve got four or five people to see rather than just two people. So that is a big help.” - Vince, staff, TP2.

Both participant groups spoke about what they saw as hindering and helping the scheme’s impact. There was some overlap in these factors and some ideas that were unique to each group. This can be seen summarised in Figure 3.

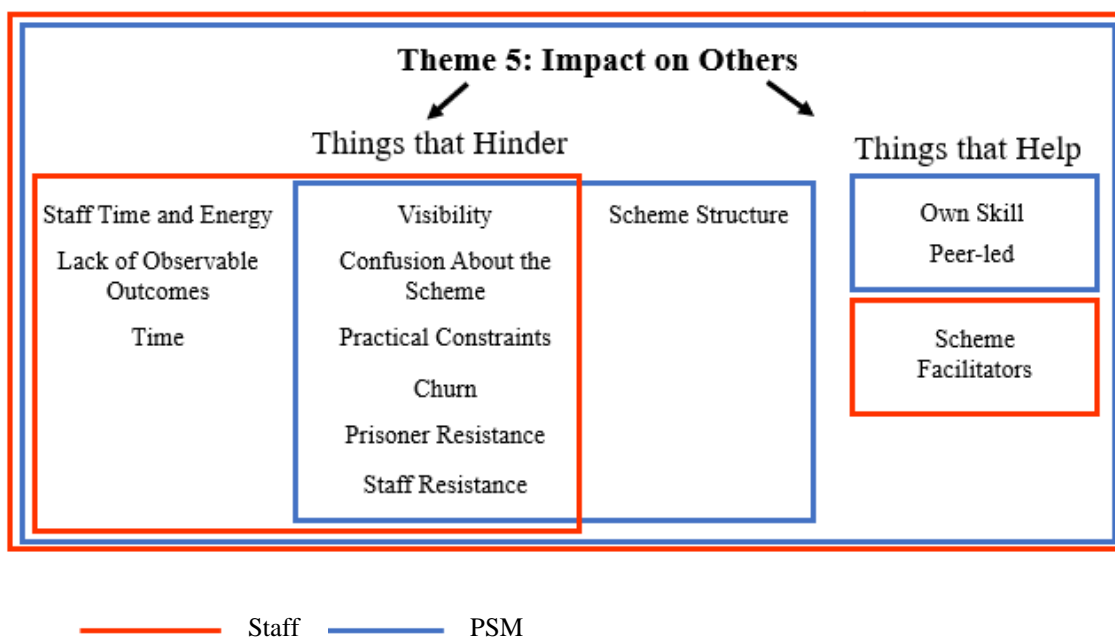


Figure 3: Thematic Map Extract: Theme 5: Impact on Others

Hindering. There were many factors that the participants saw as hindering the impact on others. These included the lack of visibility of the scheme, the churn of prisoners, confusion about the specifics of the scheme, practical constraints inherent in the prison environment, resistance from staff and prisoners, the structure of the scheme and a lack of readily observable outcomes. Possibly due to these factors many of the staff participants reflected that new initiatives can take a long time to embed into a prison system and for the impact to be felt. Each of these factors will now be explored in more detail.

Visibility. All the participants agreed that for the PSMs to be able to have an impact the scheme needed to be well-known and highly visible;

“Keep talking about it, keeping it at the forefront of people’s minds so that it just becomes as normal as any other aspect of prison life and listeners we know are always there and Samaritans and chaplaincy is avenues that people might go to for support, like those are quite well established avenues in prison.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

There was a lot of variety in how visible the scheme was seen as;

“I was in here for touching three months and I never heard of 7-steps.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“When I first started, I think it was last October, November time, it’d been growing a bit but it wasn’t as powerful, but I think now it’s becoming a real prison-wide thing.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

“When we leave that classroom it all...it’s like it all gets left there.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

“It’s just getting better and better because a lot more people are using it, it’s signposted everywhere now.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

As these quotes show, there was variety in the PSM participants’ perceptions of the scheme’s visibility within time points as well as between. There was also variety in the staff participants’ accounts of the scheme’s visibility, however a clearer pattern emerged, where the staff at time point three were less familiar with the scheme and less in touch with how it was progressing. Again, it is possible that this related to there being a reduced number of PSMs at this time point;

“I really don’t know if they’re fulfilling a role because I’ve not heard anyone speaking about them.” - Joanna, staff, TP3.

“I haven’t actually seen anything from the peer support for a while.” - Nicky, staff, TP3.

Many of the staff participants had ideas about how to improve visibility;

“I’d do more of a little bit of a staff initiative on our training days.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

“There’s lots of different coloured t-shirts going around with people that have different jobs so I presumed that they would have something that would identify them to the guys that they were there to be helpful. But I didn’t always see them in them or I don’t even know if they do have one.” - Megan, staff, TP2.

At this time point the PSMs did have t-shirts advertising their role. It is unclear whether the PSMs on Megan’s wing chose not to wear them, or whether Megan had not noticed, either way it appeared that the t-shirts were not having the desired effect of increasing visibility for Megan. Some PSMs felt that for the scheme to be impactful the marketing needed to increase in volume and quality;

“Probably more advertisement. Letting more people know.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.
“If I got something like that under my door I’d be honest, what the hell is this, you’d screw it up and chuck it away.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

However, the PSMs who had been involved with designing the marketing were proud of it, and felt it was helping raise the scheme’s profile;

“We’ve had a design team in, we’ve got new posters up, things like that, so it’s took off really well.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

Confusion About the Scheme. It is possible that the level of impact was reduced by how the PSMs delivered the intervention, with there being a lot of model infidelity described;

“I start to put my own little spin onto the role as well and try and give them a bit of counselling.” - Ollie, PSM, TP1.
“We don’t really use them 7-steps really, just like, you see them steps here, they’re alright on paper, but you’re not going to sit here, and oh, yeah, let’s go through these innit.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

Many of the PSMs alluded to the idea that they may be trying to solve people’s problems rather than equip them with transferable skills;

“Like for me telling him to put an app in, in his head it's kind of like, well I knew I had to do it anyway.” - Frankie, PSM, TP1.

“Just giving him a bit of encouragement, giving him ideas, giving him suggestions that you can always try this.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

Despite most PSMs describing a pull to provide clients with what they perceived as the solution to their problem, there were exceptions to this. This was particularly true for Chris at time point three, who described relatively high model fidelity;

“I can only normally get through about three or four of the steps out of the seven because half the time when I'm saying to them, right, gathering information, think of the pros and cons, and stuff like that, then people have come in...like people are saying to me, right, well, yeah, I hadn't thought about doing that.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

This inconsistency in delivery could be underpinned by the PSMs having different theories about the mechanism of change;

“I think that just touches on a human being, you know, everybody goes through problems and it's nice to know that somebody's there for you, it's nice to know that somebody cares enough to ask if you're alright.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

“Sometimes when you've got a problem it can be overwhelming. You can't see any answers and your mind's all over the place, so part of our role was just to sit down with them and break the problem down and see and get them in a good frame of mind.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

“We're not there to cure peoples' problems, but we're there to give people tools to help them with their problems.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“You need to listen to the problem and let them speak, and that's where you can you help them.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

The staff participants also held different perceptions as to the function of the role. This could conceivably hinder the referral process and therefore the scheme's impact;

“The problem solvers are going, right, we’ll go and get the ACCT, come with me and we’ll go and get the ACCT. And they’ll help them fill it out.” - Joanna, staff, TP1.

“It was about them helping others with their problem skills by enabling, you know, empowering them with the, sort of, skills that will help them.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

“It’s just offering them advice rather than actually being practical.” - Megan, staff, TP2.

“Somebody will kick off, and you’ll have two of your lads, maybe one or two of the lads who are a little bit more mature, who can see what’s happening and, for want of a better word, will step in and try and help you calm the situation down.” - Thomas, staff, TP2.

“They are just there to listen to them.” - Emily, staff, TP1.

Some of these quotes suggest that the staff participants saw the role as being generally helpful or supportive on the wing, rather than a scheme designed to teach problem-solving skills. This lack of clarity about the exact role of a PSM could contribute to the role being confused with other peer-led initiatives in the prison, and therefore make staff less likely to make referrals;

“What’s the difference between a PID worker and a problem solver?” - Megan, staff, TP2.

The confusion with other schemes that was present at the first two time points appeared greater at time point three. This was particularly true for Vince who spoke about different types of peer representatives rather than focussing his answers on PSMs;

“The ones in here, certainly like Harry, he is a St Giles Rep. He is really good.” - Vince, staff, TP3.

Further complicating matters, it seemed that some of the PSMs could be going beyond the boundaries of the role;

“They are more likely to come to us on like a daily basis.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

“I always buy him an extra vape and I’ll put it in pen as a nice, like...walk in pad, hiya, my name’s Ollie, I’m a problem-solver, yeah? What can I do for you? Do you know what I

mean? It's like, oh, blah, blah, blah, so do you smoke? Yeah, yeah. You got any vapes?

No? Here." - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

The PSM participants also held differing views about the severity of problems they could work with;

"It may be sexuality issue, an illness issue, things like that. That's probably a bit far I would say for a problem-solver." - Olu, PSM, TP2.

"With listeners though, for someone that has issues, they just want someone to speak to. Nine out of ten times, they just want someone to speak to, they're bored. But a problem-solving mentor, that is like for someone having serious issues." - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

"I just think more your day to day problems, you know, not too life threatening, not a high risk to themselves or anything like that. 'Cause, like I say, we haven't had the correct training on stuff like that." - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Considered together these discrepancies about the function of the scheme and suitable clients could make embedding the scheme more challenging as neither staff nor prisoners hold a consistent narrative about what the scheme offers and what this looks like in practice, and therefore who would benefit from it.

Practical Constraints. Practical constraints of the environment were regularly described as reducing the scheme's impact;

"If that [lack of movement] don't change, that will definitely hinder it." - Craig, PSM, TP1.

"Things happen when it's our last bang-up, when that's it for the day, that's when people think a lot. So, I think it should be then, that we are allowed to come out of our pads more often, and help the people that are in need." - Jason, PSM, TP1.

"There were some issues in terms of being able to get to access people." - Chloe, staff, TP2.

"It's like a high security prison, where you're not allowed to move nowhere. The only place you're allowed to move to, is from your wing to work, from your wing to healthcare, and the

wing to visit the gym, and that's it. Other than that, you can't do nothing. So everyone is getting frustrated." - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

Churn. Both staff and PSM participants felt that prisoner turnover could be making it more challenging to embed the scheme and for its impact to be felt. The effect of this was most acutely felt at time point three following a significant number of PSMs being released or moved to different establishments;

"You're going to train ten people and wait until you've finished that training, then ten people, five or six might move on." - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

"We did have a couple of lads on here that had gone through the process. Unfortunately, they've both gone now but...so we haven't currently got one." - Megan, staff, TP2.

Some participants suggested recruiting men with longer on their sentence to counter-act this;

"They could have benefited by looking into it thinking, who's here longest, and then doing it that way because they know for a fact they're not going to lose out on people." - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Prisoner Resistance. Some of the PSMs described challenges in engaging prisoners;

"You've got people who are behind the doors and because there's that much bullying and stuff that goes on. I don't even think they'd speak to people like me." - Craig, PSM, TP1.

"A lot of people are shy. Obviously if I couldn't read and write I wouldn't really want to tell another prisoner, oh, I can't read or write. You're 20 odd and you can't read or write, you're fucking dumb." - Frankie, PSM, TP1.

"The problem as well is they have a huge turnover. Some people are only in for a few weeks and things like that. So, they are not going to really want to talk to people." - Olu, PSM, TP1.

Olu's quote identifies how churn could be contributing to prisoner resistance.

Resistance prompted frustration in some participants who felt that not all prisoners were heeding their advice;

"Some people don't want to be helped, do you know what I mean?" - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

Some of the staff also saw this as a barrier;

"There's always the clique side of it, you know, some lads will just be like no, it's not happening." - Thomas, staff, TP1.

"I don't think you can rehabilitate somebody unless they want to be rehabilitated." - Nicky, staff, TP2.

Staff Resistance. The PSM participants believed that one of the biggest challenges for building the scheme's profile and ensuring its efficacy was staff engagement;

"Pushing it more to staff, this is the thing." - Eric, PSM, TP2.

Negative attitudes and poor motivation were ascribed to some staff members;

"You've got staff in here, yeah, that's just...I could do their job eyes closed." - Ollie, PSM, TP1.

"Some officers they're not motivated to help the prisoners do good." - Leroy, PSM, TP2.

"They tried to train staff first and used a load of money to get that done and the comments that staff were coming out with, oh, it's not for us to do, they should be doing it, it's nothing to do with us, I wouldn't want to help them, and that's the kind of stuff we come up against all the time, every single day, do you know, we're trying to make progress and get the door shut on us." - Eric, PSM, TP2.

At time point two the PSMs spoke about staff motivation reducing their ability to have an impact despite describing good relationships with staff and reporting that their own experiences of staff had been largely positive;

"All the staff on my wing is quite good." - Leroy, PSM, TP2.

“I can only speak for our wing, but the staff have been really good.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

Despite frustration there was also some empathy expressed for the staff;

“I know people get frustrated and things don’t get done, I can understand that, but I know from the staff point of view that they have a lot on their plate.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

Some staff participants agreed that the PSMs were likely to encounter resistance from staff, who were seen as being resistant to change;

“We’re all a bit cynical here as well, we didn’t know how much it would take off and how successful it would be.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“I just think it’s the staff’s mindset, they don’t like change.” - Joanna, staff, TP3.

Conversely, despite holding this view that there is something fundamentally resistant to change in prison staff, some of the staff participants spoke about their own enthusiasm for new ideas;

“I’m not shy of trying new things and bringing new things into the establishment, because it’s all about safeguarding and helping our prisoners.” - Emily, staff, TP1.

“It’s always nice to see new things coming in.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

At time point three staff continued to reflect on staff resistance, however unlike in the first round where there was a playful, conspiratorial way in which the staff participants spoke about this, a more accusatory tone was noted. The staff participants appeared to blame other groups of staff rather than speaking about prison staff as a whole that they were a part of;

“I’m trying to think of how nicely to put this. So I don’t know that maybe some discipline staff would maybe recognise good value.” - Chloe, staff, TP3.

“One thing is that we’ve got a lot of new staff, so they’re quite young, so I don’t think they’ll really buy into it.” - Joanna, staff, TP3.

Staff Time and Energy. Whilst the staff did share the PSMs’ theory that some staff may not be motivated or interested in a new scheme, they also described a picture where high

workloads and the challenging situations that arise in prison do not leave them with the time or energy to give the scheme the priority it needs to become embedded. This coupled with some resistance to new ideas was not facilitating the growth of the scheme;

“They can't do their job really because they need one of us to go out with them. And me or [one of the scheme facilitators] do it, and you know how busy she is, she's crazy-busy.” -

Joanna, staff, TP2.

“People at my rank are so busy they just don't really get a chance to concentrate on stuff like that.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

This idea that the staff were too stretched to be able to give the scheme the time and attention it needed was felt more acutely at time points two and three. There was a sense from some of the participants that they were struggling;

“My heads buzzing because I'm tryna do all that work. Whilst we were talking I've still been going through numbers. It used to be a two-person job, now it's a one-person job. I'm not being off, you know, I'm just not as talkative as last time, or as relaxed.” - Vince, staff, TP3.

“It's hard to say without making it sound like it's a battlefield, but it can be, and it's quite scary.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

It is possible that this increase in expressed stress was due to recruiting more wing staff at the later time points. However, some of the participants did elude to there being specific factors contributing to a particularly challenging environment at that time;

“Prison is quite irate at the minute.” - Joanna, staff, TP2.

Thomas appeared to feel that these challenges in the prison may have made raising the profile of the scheme more difficult;

“The prison works now on an almost knee-jerk reaction to things, so if something's going wrong, we look at that and we concentrate on that. And because the problem-solving mentors

haven't really become an issue that needs sorting, they're sort of not looking at it." -

Thomas, staff, TP2.

He acknowledged that at present he didn't know who the PSMs on his wing were;

"I couldn't even tell you who they are on B wing, to be honest with you, which is probably a little bit a fault of my own, but it's been that busy." - Thomas, staff, TP2.

As described above, these difficulties were also seen by the PSMs. However, despite some recognition that the staff may be feeling stretched, overall the PSMs conceptualised this as the staff not caring or being motivated to help the scheme flourish.

Lack of Observable Outcomes. The staff participants also felt that for staff to invest in the scheme they needed to be able to see outcomes, which they felt at present they could not;

"It's difficult to be able to...from my job be able to kind of identify where there've been successful outcomes." - Priya, staff, TP1.

Thomas's quote below describes the challenge of demonstrating any outcomes in a busy prison environment;

"I would like to think that in time that violence and things like that will reduce once the system is really embedded, but unfortunately [this prison] is a victim of quite bad violence at the moment, so that's hard to measure." - Thomas, staff, TP1.

Time. The staff participants spoke about the length of time it can take to embed a new idea into a prison system in relation to all of the barriers discussed;

"You are in the prison service yes, you are talking years before anything really starts to change." - Vince, staff, TP3.

"I think it's a time, maybe just a time thing and proving you know what, we'll keep on going with it." - Chloe, staff, TP3.

Scheme Structure. Scheme structure was a unique issue for the PSM participants at time point three. They spoke extensively about embedding the scheme and in particular had ideas about how the structure could be improved to increase its impact;

“It just need to set it up as like how the listener scheme is set up, so if someone needs a listener, they press the bell, they ask the officer for a listener and then whoever’s on duty that day, will go and the officer will take them to go and see that person.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

“Making sure there’s a problem solver on every single wing, so when a new lad comes onto the wing the officers go to the problem solver and say, go and introduce yourself.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Whilst there was a lot of criticism of the current scheme set-up, at times the PSMs spoke positively about elements of the scheme’s structure;

“They’ve done a good job with the way they’ve trained people up and I like that fact that she comes in as often as she can.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

Chris appeared to have experienced the embedding of the scheme as more successful than the other two participants, and he spoke positively about some of the systems that were in place;

“Self-referrals, they are working and obviously myself going and there’s me and Theo on same wing so normally know who’s got a problem because with living with them sort of we know.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

“Like listeners can signpost to a client that, these are other people that you can talk to, which it’s helped a lot because they’ve actually gone from us to them back to us and they’re able to use the services like provided like they should be.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Frustration. Many of the PSM participants appeared to be finding the barriers to the scheme frustrating;

“I find it frustrating for not being able to like help them as much as I want to help them.” -

Ollie, PSM, TP1.

Helping. Despite a wide range of barriers being identified there were elements of the scheme that the participants perceived as increasing its impact.

Peer-Led. The fact that the intervention was peer-led was valued by the PSM participants and they saw this as an essential feature for its success. This was largely because they felt that shared experiences between prisoners enabled them to relate and empathise, and would also make the prisoners more willing to engage, thus echoing some of the staff ideas described in Theme 1 (Appetite for Peer-Led);

“The main problem is most of youth offending team and probation, no offence to yourself, but have done degrees and stuff like that, been through universities, never actually been involved in trouble, never been where the lads are and had to come through that, but then try to dictate like they have been and, oh, think this is best for you, and I think, how would you know?” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

“They might express they’ve got problems with you and feel comfortable as they feel that you’re on their kind of side.” - Theo, PSM, TP2.

“They will listen to you more than the officers.” - Leroy, PSM, TP3.

The participants also spoke about their shared experiences putting them in a position where they could advise;

“I’ve been in prison for 14 years, and I feel like what I’ve been through and what I’ve learned in those 14 years I will be able to contribute towards the system.” - Leroy, PSM,

TP2.

“When people have spoke to me, I’ve known that’s exactly what I were thinking when I first came in, that’s exactly how I felt. So you know you’re in a position to be able to point them in the right directions.” - Olu, PSM, TP2.

“I’ve worked with people that are feeling suicidal that have cut up, but then I can relate to it because I’ve been in that situation and half the problems that I spoke to people about are similar problems that I’ve had in my past, which I felt it easier to be able to talk and help them with because I’ve been through it.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Despite valuing the peer-led approach some participants reflected that not all prisoners would engage with a PSM;

“It’s embarrassing for a lot of people if they’re sat stood talking to a listener or a problem solver, it’s seen as weak, isn’t it, especially in the man’s prison.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

“One, they’ll either think you’re a screw boy, two, they might think you’re fishing for information to pass on” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

The participants spoke about how they needed to consider their approach when speaking to prisoners to overcome this;

“It’s our role to try make them over-think that and think nothing’ll get said out, nothing will get spreaded around.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Own Ability. Particularly at time point one the PSM participants spoke confidently about their ability to have an impact. This is also reflected in Chris’s quote above where he reflects on the skills required to reassure prisoners.

“If you help a prisoner then they will settle more in the jail, like stop getting nickings, and not reduce themselves to drugs, which is proven to the people that I’ve worked with.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

“The people I’ve spoke to have told me I’ve been helpful.” - Olu, PSM, TP1.

Scheme Facilitators. It appeared that the staff participants attributed the scheme’s impact to having a strong core team;

“They seem quite dedicated to do it, but I think that’s because of the work [the scheme coordinators] have put in.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

“That’s the main thing, you know, (a) getting the right men and (b) sort of having whoever oversees that being the right person.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

“You’ve got to have a central point or you are going to have bits of people doing bits everywhere.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

Despite the importance placed on the core team, most of the staff participants appeared to believe that for the scheme to be properly used buy-in and active participation was needed from everyone within the prison. This parallels the PSM participants’ ideas about the need for staff to be motivated to support the scheme, as described previously;

“An all staff, sort of, approach.” - Chloe, staff, TP2.

“Wing staff, key workers have a big role in sort of encouraging that as an option for support, management publicising it and showing the benefits of that approach, other prisoners sharing the success of it and when they might have been a customer and used that service and it’s been helpful to them, sharing that with others. A psychologist maybe recommending that.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

3.4 Superordinate Themes

As well as the themes that emerged from the individual analyses, there were also two themes that appeared to sit across the entire data set. These were “Us and Them” and “Responsibility”, which will both be discussed in turn. Figure 4 shows how I perceived these superordinate themes to be related to the subordinate themes.

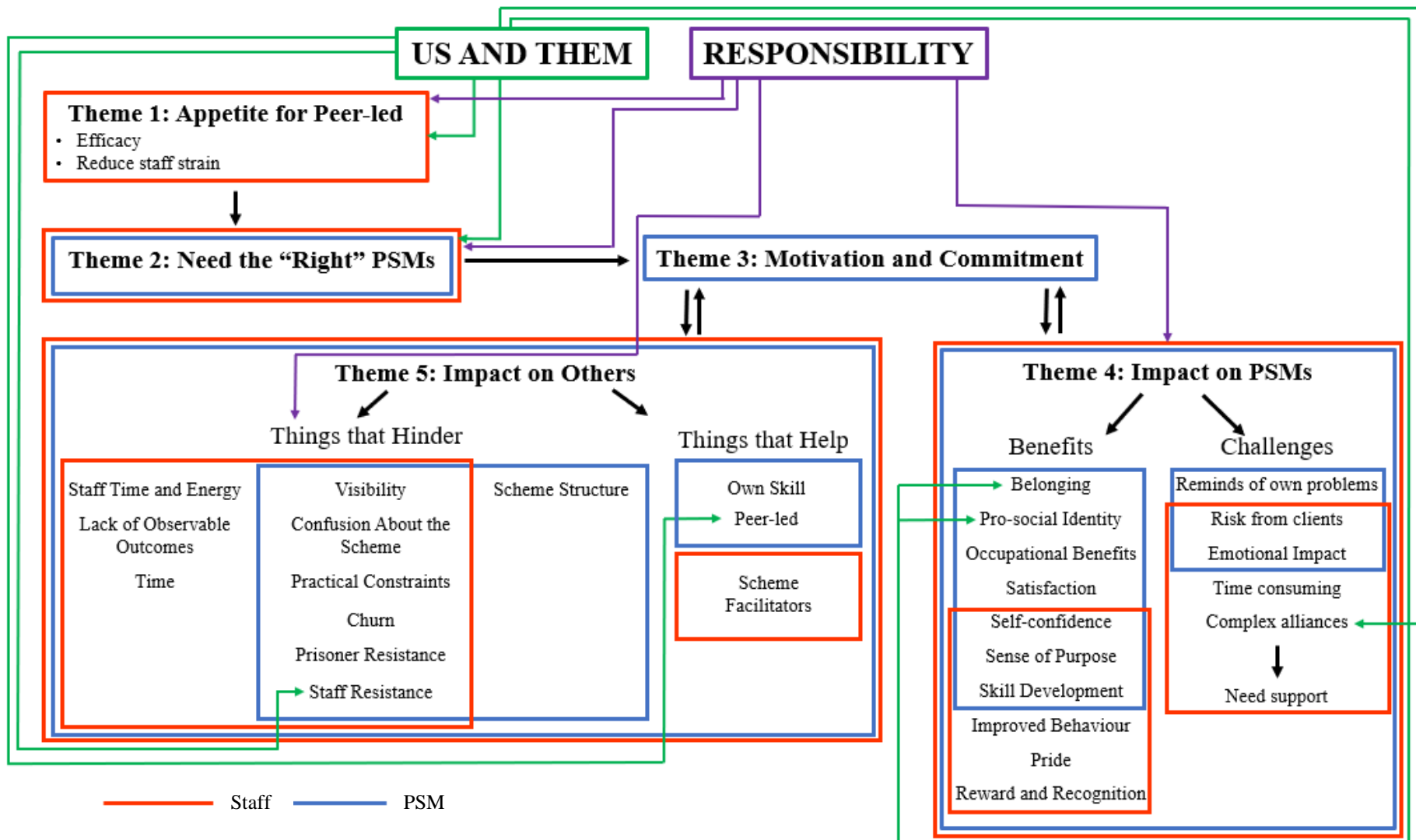


Figure 4: Thematic Map Illustrating Staff, PSM and Superordinate Themes.

3.4.1 *Us and Them*

Group membership and identity seemed to be very important to the participants. There appeared to be several distinct groups in the prison, which were at times pitted against one another. Some of the key distinctions appeared to be; prisoners and staff, uniformed staff and non-uniformed staff, and ‘good’ prisoners and ‘bad’ prisoners. I will now describe how I see ‘us and them’ as underlying the subordinate themes depicted in Figure 4.

Appetite for Peer-Led. The staff appetite for peer-led was to an extent underpinned by an ‘us and them’ mentality that at times tipped into othering. It was clear that the staff considered the prisoners to be very different to them and that this was partially why a peer-led approach could be beneficial.

“They are from a different side of the tracks from us.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

This idea that prisoners are fundamentally different to staff threaded through many of the interviews, and was particularly clearly demonstrated by this quote from Vince;

“If one of us two wanted a car, that's a nice car, we would have saved up for it, we would have, oh we'll go half and half on a bit of finance or part exchange our old car or things like that. Whereas, the criminal will go, that's a nice car and just go and pop it and drive away.”

- Vince, staff, TP3.

Vince’s quote also reveals how he viewed himself in terms of this divide. The staff all held strong views that the prisoners contributed towards, or perhaps even caused, this divide;

“You are probably aware that a lot of lads, they don't care what's wearing the uniform; they won't even give you a chance to speak to them.” - Nicky, staff, TP2.

“I've met hundreds of them over the years that, see it as a them and us type thing, which I think a lot of staff do as well, you know, because, you know, you don't take your work home with you, it's them and us, so we do our bit and we go.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

Thomas's quote suggests that he sees the divide as caused by both prisoners and staff, but also by some of the realities of their differing situations. In some of the interviews it seemed that the staff found it hard to be viewed as a homogeneous group;

"We are not all the same. We might dress the same but we don't all act the same." - Nicky, staff, TP2.

Nicky reflected on why prisoners could treat staff this way and wondered if prisoners' previous experiences with people wearing uniforms could underpin this;

"The first introduction is police isn't it, somebody in a uniform. It might not be...I'm not saying the police have abused them; what I'm saying is the first port of call is if you've been caught stealing, driving, it's a negative uniform response isn't it, so it just follows, unfortunately." - Nicky, staff, TP2.

It seemed at times that staff focussed more on the commonalities between prisoners and perhaps missed the similarities between themselves and the prisoners. This was particularly clear in these two quotes from Thomas and Joanna, where they were considering how peer mentors can use their shared experiences;

"They probably all been through a bereavement." - Thomas, staff, TP1.

"It's alright me saying, your missus will be alright. Like I'm a member of staff, I would, wouldn't I? See, if a prisoner said it to him they've got the experience." - Joanna, staff, TP1.

Both these example scenarios are common human experiences, and I would expect that many members of staff had also experienced bereavements and difficulties in their relationships, yet both participants saw this as a unique strength of a peer-approach. It is perhaps understandable however that staff focussed on the similarities between prisoners and differences to themselves in the context of thinking about what a peer-led approach could offer.

The PSMs also reflected on the value of a peer-led approach, seeing it as something that increased the likelihood of the scheme having an impact on prisoners. Whilst the PSMs were at times critical of the staff, they appeared more drawn to the similarities between themselves and the other prisoners than the differences between them and staff. Perhaps this is to be expected since the focus of the intervention is on them being peers. However, I can also envisage how othering could have occurred with them viewing themselves as someone who has solved all of their problems and is just there to help ‘other’ prisoners who cannot manage their own problems;

“We’re all in the same boat and we’ve all got problems.” - Jason, PSM, TP1.

Need the ‘Right’ PSMs. This idea that there were people who were intrinsically right or wrong for the role of a PSM demonstrates the divide that the participants saw between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ prisoners.

“A lot of prisoners here just like to get out of their cell. Hopefully none of these lot because I know these guys.” - Leroy, PSM, TP2.

Despite a clear belief in this distinction, the staff reflected at time point one on how it can be challenging to identify the ‘right’ prisoners and the inevitability of some prisoners who were not ‘right’ being recruited.

Impact on the PSMs. Some of the described impact on the PSMs could also be affected by a prisoner-staff divide. The PSMs appeared to value having a non-prisoner identity where they were positively regarded and viewed as someone making a contribution. Living in an environment where you are so often othered and not seen in this positive light could have contributed to the value placed on this. The sense of belonging that the PSMs described at time point one and two could similarly be underpinned by the prisoner-staff divide. Prisoners are assigned to the group of ‘prisoners’ when entering the prison, whereas

the PSMs have actively chosen to be a member of the peer-deliverers involved in this scheme.

“Everybody’s open-minded so they all come to the course because they want to make a change for others, so you’re all on the same path.” - Eric, PSM, TP2.

When reflecting on the impact on the PSMs some of the staff spoke about the challenge for the PSMs of managing the divide between prisoners and staff;

“You’ve got, like, the prisoners and us, and the mentors in the middle, you know, you can see it as a pendulum swinging from side to side and think do I trust this lad because, you know, he’s obviously part of the establishment.” - Thomas, staff, TP2.

Staff Resistance. Another salient ‘us and them’ divide was between uniformed and non-uniformed staff;

“There’s prisoners, then there’s us and then there’s people...you know, the civilians, we call the civilian staff. And that doesn’t mean that we don’t respect them or admire them but the connection’s not there.” - Thomas, uniformed staff, TP2.

Both groups of participants alluded to this when thinking about staff resistance or motivation to support the scheme. At times it appeared that the non-uniformed staff viewed the uniformed staff as less committed to their roles, or the rehabilitation of prisoners;

“More staff might come down and have a little bit of a nosey, especially if it's free food and drink. That sounds a good one for the uniformed staff.” - Joanna, non-uniformed staff, TP1.

This again shows some othering, whereby uniformed staff are seen to be more tempted by free food and drink than perhaps a non-uniformed staff member would be. When prompted to think about the possible reasons why uniformed staff are not as familiar with the scheme Chloe responded;

“None that I can say on record! I’m trying to think of how nicely to put this. So I don’t know that maybe some discipline staff would maybe recognise good value.” - Chloe, non-uniformed staff, TP3.

This divide was felt by both sides, and efforts were made to be cautious in how this was spoken about;

“Cause I’m not sort of bad-mouthing them here, but their job role is very different to ours.”
- Chloe, non-uniformed staff, TP1.

“I don’t want to sound disrespectful to anybody, but prison officers in general will listen to prison officers, rather than what they consider to be civilian staff.” - Thomas, uniformed staff, TP1.

Some of the difficulties that the staff described when experiencing the prisoner-staff divide appeared to be heightened by being in uniform;

“I’m not in uniform anymore, so they [the prisoners] treat me very differently.” - Joanna, non-uniformed staff, TP1.

“Obviously, ‘cause we’re in a uniform, they don’t take any reference to what we say.” - Nicky, uniformed staff, TP3.

The PSMs also referenced this divide and most of their frustration with staff appeared to be targeted towards uniformed, wing-based staff whom they saw as deliberately making their role more challenging.

Non-Othering. Whilst across the dataset there were many times where the divides between groups of people in the prison were deeply felt, there were also times where the participants reflected on the commonalities between everyone within the prison.

“As you get older, you mature and you come to the sense where they’re here to do a job, you’ve got good and bad in everyone, so you have to give respect to gain respect and it’s just

don't tarnish them all with the same paintbrush, they're just there to help.” - Theo, PSM,
TP2.

This recognition of commonalities is also exemplified in the quotes below where Thomas and Chloe reflect on how the PSMs may encounter similar problems in their attempts to support their fellow prisoners as the staff do;

“You'd like to hope they don't get involved with things like that, but you know, it's human nature if somebody is opening up to you, you might start rolling with it and saying things.” -

Thomas, staff, TP2.

“I know as a facilitator, sometimes it's quite difficult to refocus someone, and do something productive rather than just giving them an ear to sort of rant, rant, rant, rant, without trying to look at how to solve it.” - Chloe, staff, TP1.

3.4.2 Responsibility

Throughout the interviews there also appeared to be a superordinate theme of responsibility framing many of the other themes. The participants appeared to see the management of risk and rehabilitation as a considerable responsibility. Perhaps partially due to the challenges of this responsibility it appeared that there were attempts to shift responsibility on to others in the prison system.

Appetite for Peer-Led. Part of the appeal of a peer-led scheme was that it could reduce the burden on staff by prisoners taking some of the responsibility for supporting their peers with their rehabilitation. This also appeared to be generated in part by staff seeing their own attempts to support prisoners as being thwarted and hoping that their peers could have a greater impact. Some staff participants also reflected on how under-resourced they felt for managing the responsibility of rehabilitation.

“We don't have many interventions in our toolkits.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

Thomas worried that this desire to get support from prisoners could tip into a shift of responsibility, and lead to staff relying too heavily on the PSMs;

“If they see that it's working really, particularly well in a certain area, they might think, oh they can deal with that as well, well it's not acceptable.” - Thomas, staff, TP1.

Need the ‘Right’ PSMs. There was significant responsibility being placed on the scheme coordinators to recruit the ‘right’ sort of people for the role. This was quite a significant responsibility as both the PSMs and staff saw this was pivotal to the success of the scheme.

“We only need kind of one bad egg in there and then the whole thing’s undermined for six months and everybody loses faith.” - Priya, staff, TP1.

Impact on PSMs. When reflecting on the challenges the PSMs may encounter it was apparent that the staff participants saw the role as a big responsibility;

“You know, making that decision [to tell staff about another prisoners problems], because, end of the day, it is a big responsibility.” - Emily, staff, TP1.

“Not taking on the responsibility of somebody else’s problem whilst supporting them, that kind of balance, I could imagine might be difficult.” - Jenny, staff, TP3.

Whilst the PSMs focussed on this less, it did seem that some of them also saw risks in the role and felt a personal responsibility to manage this;

“You’ve just got to have a straight head on you because you can't dwell on other people's problems.” - Chris, PSM, TP3.

This contrasted with the staff perception of where the responsibilities for ameliorating the risks to the PSMs lay. The staff believed that support should be provided by either the scheme coordinators or other unspecified staff.

Impact on Others. All the participants spoke about how awareness of the scheme needed to be increased. Both participant groups focussed on the many barriers they saw in the

scheme getting embedded and having an impact. However, very few participants appeared to take responsibility for raising this awareness, helping to spread the word about the scheme, or identifying clients. Reference was made to posters, discussions at staff team meetings, PSMs telling staff about the scheme, clothing, emails and customers identifying themselves.

However, this responsibility was very rarely felt to fall to the participant I was interviewing.

This is exemplified by this quote from Craig;

“I don’t know if it’s the wing that I’m on that it doesn’t seem to be, like, a big thing.” - Craig,

PSM, TP1.

Craig felt the scheme was not a ‘big thing’ on his wing, but as the PSM representing the scheme on his wing he does not reflect on his responsibility in raising its profile.

Similarly this quote from Olu shows he would consider it not to be his responsibility to approach clients;

“I haven’t been approached myself yet as someone said, you are a problem solver.” - Olu,

PSM, TP2.

Jake and Leroy at time point three also took limited responsibility for increasing staff and prisoner knowledge of the scheme, as neither spoke about things they could do to improve visibility;

“Never spoken to staff about it whatsoever.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

“I’d say it as a joke when I go round wing and the workshop, you know, if I hear someone whingeing or moaning, I’m a problem solver come and tell me your problems, you know like kind of, that.” - Jake, PSM, TP3.

This quote from Jake suggests a lack of confidence in promoting of the scheme, or possibly in promoting himself as a PSM.

These ideas very much contrasted with the staff's accounts, where they appeared to consider it to be the PSMs' responsibility to both raise awareness of the scheme and to get clients. Vince described how this had worked with a previous PSM on his wing;

"[I first heard of it] when one of the prisoners came on the wing and started putting posters up." - Vince, staff, TP2.

"Literally, they're not waiting; they're proactive not reactive." - Vince, staff, TP2.

The staff often spoke about not knowing about the scheme's progress or being unaware of who the PSMs were, but did not reflect on what they could do to change this. Instead there was a lot of focus on how the scheme coordinators could increase staff members' knowledge. Again demonstrating another level of 'us and them' appearing to exist in the prison. Chloe did however state;

"They've got the t-shirts, they've got their jumpers, there are the posters. So I'm not too sure what else could be maybe do to push it." - Chloe, staff, TP2.

At time point three it was clear that Chris was having a very different experience of being a PSM than his two peers who participated in interviews. Chris was quite active in the role and told me about the clients he had worked with. When asked about how he gets clients Chris replied;

"We've got the self-referral forms, we've got the officers' referral forms, and we've got our own approaches." - Chris, PSM, TP3.

This quote, alongside Chris's experiences, possibly demonstrate that the scheme can be effective and adequately supported subject to all parts of the system taking on the full range of their responsibilities.

"I've noticed from the 18 months of me doing this we've helped quite a lot of people within the prison establishment." - Chris, PSM, TP3.

Chapter Four: Discussion

In this chapter I will reacquaint the reader with the aims of this research and how these were achieved. I will revisit the findings and discuss these further in the context of the wider literature. I will then go on to consider the strengths and limitations of the current research, the practical and clinical implications and recommendations for future research. Finally, I will provide my closing reflections and summarise the research in a conclusion.

4.1 Summary of Research

This research project had three aims; to understand the experiences of the problem-support mentors (PSMs) delivering a peer-led problem-support intervention; to understand the experience of staff stakeholders working within the same establishment; and to understand the sustainability of such a scheme with a focus on development and improvement. These aims were addressed by conducting interviews with PSMs and staff members at three time points. The transcripts from these interviews were then analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA). The themes that were identified address these aims by capturing some of the most consistent elements of the participants' experiences. The aim to understand the sustainability of the scheme was addressed through conducting the interviews at three time points to understand how the scheme developed, and through the participants' reflections on what helps and hinders the scheme.

4.2 Summary of Key Findings

There was considerable consistency between the participants' accounts of their experiences of the scheme. The staff participants were enthusiastic about peer-led interventions. This was because they believed that peers could be more effective than staff due to their shared experiences which was seen as enhancing their understanding of the problems prisoners present with. Prisoners were also seen as being more receptive to information and advice from their peers and the PSMs were seen as having more availability

than staff. This enthusiasm for peer-led scheme was also underpinned by a belief that they could reduce the strain of staff and free them up to focus on other elements of their role. This enthusiasm was all with the caveat that the ‘right’ people were recruited, a view that was shared by the PSMs. Both participant groups believed that some prisoners would undermine and discredit the scheme. There was a lack of clarity about what skills, qualities and experiences made someone ‘right’ for the role, but there appeared to be a belief that the recruitment for the scheme was relatively successful. The PSM participants reflected on their dual motivations for becoming PSMs; to help others and to help themselves. Whilst this dual motivation was accepted in themselves, there was a tendency to criticise other PSMs for wishing to attain personal benefits. They went on to reflect on the impact the scheme was having on themselves, describing a wide range of personal benefits, such as a sense of belonging, skills development, forming a pro-social identity and gaining a sense of purpose. Despite these benefits, there were also elements of the role seen to be challenging, such as the risk from other prisoners and the emotional strain. The staff participants also observed benefits for the PSMs and wondered about the possible challenges of the role. It seemed the staff participants saw the role as carrying greater risks than the PSMs did, and they spoke about the need for supervision and support for the PSMs. Both participant groups spoke about a wide range of things they saw as hindering the impact of the scheme, including its visibility, staff confusion about the scheme, practical constraints and prisoner resistance. It appeared that many of these experiences were fuelled by an ‘us and them’ mentality, where many distinct groups of people were seen as existing in the prison. This contributed to some of the staff enthusiasm for the scheme and may have influenced some of the experiences of barriers to the scheme having an impact on others. The responsibility of managing risk and rehabilitation also appeared to play into the participants’ experiences, and attempts appeared to be being made to shift this responsibility on to other groups within the prison.

4.3 Results in the Context of Previous Literature

These findings will now be discussed within the context of the wider literature. I will begin by addressing the first two aims of the research; to understand the staff and PSM experiences. This will be broken down into their experiences relating to the scheme being based on problem-solving therapy (PST), their experiences of a peer-led scheme, and finally their experiences of the scheme within a prison context. I will then go on to consider what this research has uncovered in relation to the final aim; to understand the sustainability of the scheme.

4.3.1 *Experiences of a Problem-Support Intervention*

It was notable that across the interviews there was an absence of experiences relating to self-harming behaviours. This suggests that whilst the rationale for a PST-based intervention was initially around its applicability to those who self-harm, in fact, working with individuals who were self-harming was not a central part of the PSMs' experiences.

Despite the brief nature and simplicity of this intervention there were high levels of model infidelity reported, which was contributing to confusion in the staff participants who did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the intervention. It also appeared that some of the barriers to having an impact on others were related to the intervention being based upon problem-solving therapy.

Model Fidelity. It is possible that, counterintuitively, the simplicity of the intervention could have exacerbated model infidelity. In Pierce and Gunn's (2007) research on General Practitioners' (GPs) experiences of delivering a PST intervention, several participants felt that they had already been delivering PST to their patients without having labelled it as PST. This was echoed by some of the current PSM participants who described their experience as a continuation of the support they had previously provided to their peers before becoming PSMs. Similar reflections were made by staff who at times described the

PSMs as being just generally helpful on the wings. The perception that the intervention does not differ significantly from standard practice could create an overly confident attitude where the importance of delivering the intervention with high fidelity is not appreciated (Pierce & Gunn, 2007).

The question of the importance of model fidelity is a complex one, and it is perhaps unsurprising that the participants held different perspectives on this when the academic community continues to disagree on the issue. Rosenzweig (1936) coined the term ‘dodo bird hypothesis’, which over the past eighty years has encapsulated the idea that common factors create the greatest therapeutic change, rather than the technical aspects of any given therapeutic method. Debate has raged, with numerous meta-analyses being conducted arguing for model-specific mechanisms of change (e.g. Gloaguen, Cottraux, Cucherat, & Blackburn, 1998; Svartberg & Stiles, 1991) and others for common factors being the underlying cause of change (e.g. Wampold et al., 1997). Yet further research has focused on the scientific methodologies used to investigate this debate, arguing that they are inappropriate for addressing the question of what makes a therapeutic intervention effective (Budd & Hughes, 2009; Shapiro & Shapiro, 1982). Whilst the PSMs are teaching skills rather than delivering therapy, they drew on some of the ideas argued for by proponents of the dodo bird hypothesis. For example, they described the mechanism of change for their clients as being the cathartic experience of talking to someone, the experience of building rapport with another person or of being listened to. It is essential to note however, that those arguing for the dodo bird hypothesis are clear that any therapeutic approach should be applied competently (Rosenzweig, 1936), and meta-analyses have only included ‘bona-fide’ therapies (Wampold et al., 1997). Whilst the PSMs shared some of the ideas about common factors creating change, clinicians and researchers supporting the dodo bird hypothesis would not

advocate some of the current participants' ideas, such as Ollie's report that he tries to give his clients "*a bit of counselling*" without any formal training.

As well as issues around practicing within the limits of one's own competency, there are other aspects of the participants' experiences that suggest fidelity to the model could be important. For instance, Chris, who reported high model fidelity, also described being able to have a greater impact on his peers than some of the other PSMs who worked with lower fidelity. Whilst this suggests that greater efficacy can be achieved by following the 7-steps, it is possible that other factors moderated this relationship, for instance Chris's higher model fidelity could have led to greater clarity for his prospective clients and the staff on his wing about what he is able to offer, leading to more appropriate referrals. However, in Pierce and Gunn's (2007) research, they also found that GPs expressing a higher level of understanding of the nuances of the model and greater fidelity also reported better outcomes. The ability of PST specifically to create change is further supported by the PSMs' reflections on using the steps on themselves, as they reported gaining a benefit from learning to identify their problems and consider their actions, skills specifically taught in the 7-steps. Although, at times it did appear that the PSMs struggled to take an active problem-solving approach to some of the barriers they saw to their having an impact, suggesting that possibly there was an element of impression managing when they spoke confidently about their own reformed approach to problems. When, Abas et al. (2016) looked at the impact of a problem-solving intervention, which was delivered to people experiencing mild depression symptoms in Zimbabwe, they also found that those delivering the intervention benefitted from using PST on themselves.

Abas et al. (2016) identified some problem-solving specific factors that contributed to the success of the intervention. They found that problem-solving skills were of particular benefit to the population studied who typically conceptualised their distress in terms of

'problems' rather than focussing on emotional experiences such as feeling sad. This made the intervention readily acceptable to those delivering and receiving it. There is evidence suggesting that prisoners are also more likely to seek support for practical problems than emotional support (Hobbs & Dear, 2000). This is a bias which is more pronounced in adult prisoners than young offenders (Liebling, 2007). In the current research some of the staff reflected on the prisoners as avoiding emotional expression, and certainly the PSM participants spoke more about the practical problems they were experiencing in the role than the emotional challenges. This suggests that PST could be a particularly acceptable intervention for the prison population. Whilst acceptability is important, research has demonstrated that emotional avoidance can lead to reduced well-being (Kahn & Hessling, 2001) and reduced emotional disclosure is associated with depressive symptoms (Kahn & Garrison, 2009). It is therefore possible that a problem-solving approach, which focusses on tangible practical problems, could enable further emotional avoidance. This is problematic because mood disturbances have been demonstrated to induce impaired problem-solving ability (Williams et al., 2005), meaning that not tackling emotional disturbances could be neglecting the root cause of the issue.

As well as PST specific factors, Abas et al. (2016) also describe an interaction between the characteristics of those delivering the intervention and the nature of the intervention as being crucial. The socio-cultural similarity between those delivering and receiving the intervention was found to be one of the greatest agents of change. This was because it facilitated a stronger connection, as well as helping the PST-deliverers to identify expressions of distress and develop solutions that were culturally appropriate. This was echoed in the current research, where the participants focussed on the peer-led aspect of the intervention being pivotal to its success. This idea of cultural similarity facilitating identification of expressions of distress is perhaps contradictory to the notion that PST is an

appealing intervention due to its focus on practical problems rather than emotional distress. Abas et al. do not directly tackle this contradiction, but it seems undeniable that whilst there may be a bias in the Zimbabwean population away from emotional expression this cannot be universal, and there will be variety in levels of emotional disclosure. This was also apparent in the current project where, as described in section 1.6 the PSMs reported their clients presenting on occasion with emotional problems, such as feelings of anger and fear. It is likely that the variety of problems the PSMs were working with could also be contributing to the variance in model fidelity, with the 7-steps appearing more useful for certain problems.

Barriers to Having an Impact. Despite differences in population between Pierce and Gunn's (2007) research and the present study, there were commonalities in the participants' experiences of barriers to delivering PST. These similarities included the pull to solve the problems, patient resistance, lack of a consistent narrative about what PST is, and the challenge of working with unsolvable problems. Whilst similar barriers were described by Pierce and Gunn's participants, the GPs appeared more able to generate solutions to these barriers. As noted in the previous section, it is interesting that the PSM's narrative was so problem-saturated with little time spent considering how to tackle these problems, when the skills they are delivering aim to teach an active problem-solving method. Instead the PSMs were focussed on how others could solve these problems, a stance D'Zurilla, Chang, Nottingham and Faccini (1998) describe as being indicative of poor problem-solving skills. It was however notable that many of the GP's solutions relied on clinical skill and experience, for instance the use of a strong therapeutic rapport. It would perhaps be unreasonable to expect the PSMs with no specialist clinical training to be able to achieve similar impact. On the other hand, part of the rationale and appeal of peer-led initiatives is the perception that peers may find it easier to form a rapport. Perhaps this demonstrates the need to achieve balance, where both peer knowledge and expert training have important roles to play.

In summary, the participants' reflections on delivering PST were relatively limited, mainly focussing on the barriers to doing this and demonstrating high levels of model infidelity. This experience appears relatively consistent with other qualitative research looking at the experiences of delivering a PST intervention. It is possible that greater model fidelity could have led to the PSMs being more effective in supporting their peers, however it is not possible to claim this with any certainty.

4.3.2 Experiences of a Peer-Led Intervention

The following section will turn to focus on the participants' experiences related to the scheme being peer-led. Most participants saw a peer-led approach as being beneficial for those receiving the intervention, in reducing staff strain and in producing benefits for the PSMs themselves.

Appetite for Peer-Led. The enthusiasm for peer-led initiatives seen in the current study has not always been found in previous research. Fletcher and Batty (2012) reported that their staff participants had significant concerns about peer-led schemes, including that they could be exploiting prisoners, whose job they did not see as being to help others, and that such schemes can be tokenistic and not make a real impact. Some of their reticence was related to fears around their own job security. They worried that peer-led schemes are seen as effective cost-saving and could lead to the replacement of paid staff. It is possible that these fears did not arise in the current research due to differences in the peer roles. Fletcher and Batty's peer-workers held a varied role, working with prisoners whilst detained and post-release. The role was described as providing additional support to that of a paid caseworker. This overlap and the vagueness of the role could have contributed to staff concerns, whereas the PSM role is clearly differentiated from that of a prison officer.

Whilst there were differences in staff opinions on peer-led schemes between the current study and Fletcher and Batty's (2012), there were also similarities. In both studies

there was a belief in the value of peer-led schemes being the shared lived experiences. This was found less consistently in Fletcher and Batty's study however, with some participants not believing that lived experience is essential to helping others. It is unclear why this difference occurred, however it is possible that the concern about peer-providers being used as staff replacement prompted Fletcher and Batty's participants to take a more critical view of their utility, and to emphasise that they, as paid staff, without shared experiences, could still make a valuable contribution.

Interestingly in the current research, whilst the participants spoke about peers having greater credibility and perhaps being more respected or listened to than professionals, there was scarce evidence of this occurring. No examples were given of prisoners who had declined staff input but accepted it from the PSMs. In fact, several of the PSMs spoke about the challenges of getting through to prisoners, with this perceived as an insurmountable barrier. This highlights that whilst there may be benefits of a peer approach it should not be seen as a 'magic bullet' for reaching prisoners who often have complex issues, including histories of trauma (Armour, 2012; Maschi, Gibson, Zgoba, & Morgen, 2011), traits consistent with a personality disorder diagnosis (Fazel & Danesh, 2002) and high levels of interpersonal distrust (Haney, 2003). In fact, there is a body of literature suggesting that prisoners find it particularly hard to trust one another (Jaffe, 2012). This lack of trust between prisoners was also evident when the PSM participants spoke about their peers motivations for becoming PSMs. Building friendships in prison has been argued to be tricky due to the associated risks (Jewkes, 2002; Liebling, 2004). Liebling and Arnold (2012) conducted an ethnographic exploration of a category A prison in 1999, and again in 2010, and described a deterioration in prisoner relationships. They reported these relationships as having become more cautious and limited, based on convenience or self-protection, and lacking in substance. Prisoners described living in the prison as 'swimming in a shark tank' (p420). They found

that prisoners were focussed on their own progression and were cautious in whom they formed friendships with. The authors had several theories accounting for this degradation of prison relationships, including a diversification of the prison population, with deep mistrust between different 'groups' of prisoners. They also point to the changing political climate and report a decrease in the rehabilitative activities and sense-making opportunities that prisoners had in the early 2000s, due to a stronger public narrative against 'pampering' prisoners. It is noteworthy that Libeling and Arnold's research was conducted in a category A prison. It is possible that the levels of fear between prisoners could be less prominent in a category C prison, as the prisoners have been deemed to present as less risky than prisoners in category A establishments. Furthermore, Liebling and Arnold's conclusions about current prisoner relationships were based on fieldwork conducted between 2009 and 2010, making it now ten years out of date. As their very conclusion is how rapidly prisoner relationships declined between the early 2000s to 2010, it would be a mistake to not anticipate that further changes in prisoner relationships have occurred in the following decade. Whilst it cannot be assumed that fear and distrust has further increased between prisoners, it is perhaps worthy of note that in 2010 11500 prisoner on prisoner assaults were reported (Ministry of Justice, 2012) this has more than doubled to 23592 in the 12 months preceding September 2019 (Ministry of Justice, 2019). Whilst this cannot be taken as a measure of the quality of prisoner relationships it certainly does not allude to the understanding, trusting relationships seen as being the key benefit of peer-led interventions. This possibly sheds further light on why some of the participants did not feel the scheme had the impact they had hoped for. It also highlights the need to neither over-state, nor over-estimate, the impact that peer providers could have.

Impact on PSMs. This research contributes to the evidence base suggesting there are significant and achievable benefits experienced by those delivering peer-led interventions. Consistent with other studies (e.g. Backett-Milburn & Wilson, 2000; Collica, 2010; Fletcher

& Batty, 2012; Keller, 1993; Moran, Russinova, Gidugu, Yim, & Sprague, 2011) the current participants reported improved self-concept, a feeling of belonging, skill development, improved behaviour and pride. Some of the PSM participants spoke about gaining unique benefits that they had not accrued from any other programmes or experiences in prison. This was also described by the prison-based peer-providers in Perrin's (2017) study, and assumed to be related to the active role peer-providers can take in contrast to other more passive rehabilitation programmes such as taught courses.

The participants in the current research alluded to the idea that some of these benefits may be particularly important in a prison sample, referencing the lack of opportunity to be perceived positively, to build supportive relationships and to experience pride in prison. However, many of these benefits are consistently reported in the literature despite different populations being studied. For example, the participants in Backett-Milburn and Wilson's (2000) research were teenagers, many of whom were described as being from the higher end of academic achievement. This demonstrates that a less marginalised group, who may already be held in high esteem by others through their academic attainment, still report similar benefits in gaining confidence and self-esteem. In line with South et al.'s (2014) conclusion, this suggests that the benefits the PSMs experienced may not have been solely a product of their circumstances, but rather a consistent experience of peer-providers across populations and delivery models.

Despite largely similar benefits being uncovered across populations and intervention types, research has revealed individual differences in the nature of the benefits experienced and the degree to which these occurred (Backett-Milburn & Wilson, 2000). This was echoed in the current research with variety existing between the participants. Moran et al. (2011) looked at the factors moderating the benefits peer-providers experienced, finding that the ethos of the environment, support they received and ability to help and support others

influenced the extent to which peer-providers experienced benefits of the role. This is interesting when considering the current study, as the PSMs described a wide range of benefits, despite appearing to find the prison environment restrictive and describing many barriers to being able to deliver the intervention to their peers. This possibly reveals the impact that having a supportive person-centred team around peer-providers can have, even in circumstances where the wider system is less enabling. This was a pattern repeatedly described in the interviews, and many of the PSMs described the benefits they experienced as being due to other elements of the scheme. For instance, some PSMs spoke about gaining confidence from promoting the 7-steps at events and a greater sense of self-worth because of the way the scheme coordinators interacted with them. This was also recognised by the staff participants, who described the core team around the PSMs as helping the success of the scheme. As noted in the Results chapter, the PSMs were a diverse group, so it is not surprising that they experienced different benefits. However, these differences could also be attributed to the fact that the PSMs worked on different prison wings with different subcultures.

One of the key responsibilities of HMPPS is to reduce reoffending. No clear conclusions have yet been drawn on the impact of peer-led schemes on recidivism rates (South et al., 2014). The current study did not include a measure of recidivism, so is limited in its ability to contribute to this discussion. However, many of the staff participants reflected on the improved behaviour they had seen from the PSMs. This echoes Collica's (2010) finding that there was a reduction in misdemeanours in their peer-providers. A similar mechanism appears to underpin this, as many of the PSMs and staff reflected on how the PSMs attempted to protect the image of the scheme for themselves, their peers and the scheme-coordinators, a process also described by Jaffe (2012). Whilst a reduction in prison misconduct does not necessarily equate to a reduction in the likelihood of recidivism, it is

possibly an indicator of a new non-criminal identity being formed and of the participants internalising a new set of law-abiding norms (Keller, 1993). It has previously been found that prison programmes that lead to the greatest reduction in prisoner misconduct produce the most significant decrease in offending post-release (French & Gendreau, 2006). However, we are far from concluding that there is a link between prisoner misconduct and recidivism with numerous studies arguing for (Heil, Harrison, English, & Ahlmeyer, 2009; Huebner, Varano, & Bynum, 2007; Lattimore, MacDonald, Piquero, Linster, & Visher, 2004) and against (Hill, 1985; Trulson, Delisi, & Marquart, 2011) a predictive relationship between the two. Cochran, Mears, Bales and Stewart (2014) claimed that methodological flaws and attempts to overgeneralise findings from adult to juvenile populations and vice versa were contributing to the lack of clarity on the misconduct-recidivism link. In their study they separated juvenile and adult populations and found that adult prisoners who engage in misconduct when in prison are more likely to reoffend post-release (Cochran et al., 2014).

Predicting recidivism is a divisive and complex task, and the factors associated with an increased risk of re-offending vary by population and type of crime. However, Loza (2003) attempted to summarise the literature on factors associated with both violent and non-violent reoffending in adult male prisoners. Many of the factors identified were static, such as age, history of criminal behaviour, history of childhood difficulties and a history of substance misuse. However, other factors were dynamic, and parallel areas where the PSMs report having experienced change, such as loneliness, hopelessness, and aimless and unproductive leisure time. Whilst this is not a suggestion that being a PSM necessarily reduces recidivism it is possibly an area that warrants further investigation.

Need the ‘Right’ PSMs. One of the other key focuses of the participants in the current study, in relation to peer-led initiatives, was the need to recruit the ‘right’ sort of people for the roles. This appeared to be underpinned by a lack of trust between the PSMs

and between staff and the PSMs, with the perception that the ‘wrong’ sort of person could undermine the scheme. This was also apparent in Hall and Gabour’s (2004) research, where many correctional officers expressed concern that peer-providers could use the scheme as a way to facilitate illegal activity or to transfer information. A similar concern appeared to underpin the design of the peer-led programme described by Keller (1993), where any prisoner applying to become a peer-mentor was first assessed to see whether their desire for the role was ‘legitimate’. It is understandable that these concerns arose when as stated by Joanna at time point one, people are not in prison for *‘having like the world’s best behaviour.’* Across the interviews this lack of trust and assumption of good intentions was apparent.

No consistent narrative emerged from the interviews about what would make someone ‘right’ for the role. This is possibly due to the diversity of prisoners themselves. If we are to assume that a peer-led scheme is effective when there are commonalities or shared experiences between the peer-provider and the person receiving the intervention, then presumably the PSMs would need to be as diverse as the wider prison population. In Liebling and Arnold’s (2012) research they describe, albeit crudely, eight distinct groups of prisoners, defined by their religion, race, status in prison, geographical area, length of time in prison and age. They describe tensions between these groups, which could make it challenging for the benefits of a peer-led intervention to be actualised without a degree of matching occurring.

This need to recruit the ‘right’ people, often prompted the PSMs to reflect on their motivations for becoming PSMs, and that of their fellow PSMs. These motivations paralleled the multi-faceted motivations described by Fletcher and Batty’s (2012) participants who also described both altruistic and self-interested motivations. Similarly to Perrin (2017) some of the current participants questioned the motivations of other PSMs, again alluding to a lack of trust between people within the prison. This was interesting as most of the PSM participants

were open about their own dual motivations, but at the same time were scornful of other PSMs who may be attempting to gain personal benefit.

To summarise, despite significant concerns about the ‘wrong’ type of prisoner being recruited, this research found high levels of belief in peer-led schemes. However, it appeared that not all the anticipated benefit was actualised, possibly due to the over-emphasis on the trust and rapport between prisoners. On the other hand, it is clear that, consistent with previous research, this peer-led scheme had significant benefits for those delivering it.

4.3.3 Experiences Relating to the Prison Context

It was evident in the interviews that many of the participants’ experiences related to the wider institutional environment. At times it was hard to separate the experiences of the intervention from the experiences of existing in such a stretched and challenging environment. In the following section I will consider these experiences and how they relate to the wider literature on the organisational impact on both peer-led schemes and problem-solving schemes.

Other research into PST schemes has found that their success is to an extent dependent on the context in which it is being delivered. The GPs in Pierce and Gunn’s (2007) study identified several service-level constraints. Whilst these constraints were different to the ones the PSMs experienced, this highlights that even a simple brief intervention such as PST needs to be facilitated by the setting. This was further echoed by Abas et al. (2016), who looked at a layperson delivery model of PST in Zimbabwe, concluding that the flexible, patient-focussed approach they were able to take due to a lack of service constraints, was key to the success of the intervention.

Some of the experiences described by the current participants were explicitly related to operational processes and procedures inherent in a prison environment. This was particularly true for some of the barriers ascribed to the scheme having an impact on others,

for instance the practical constraints and turnover of prisoners affecting continuity. Prisons are notoriously difficult settings to conduct successful therapeutic work in (Perrin, Frost, & Ware, 2018) and previous research has identified similar difficulties, with restrictions placed on prisoners and lack of resource affecting the efficacy of peer-led schemes (Boothby, 2011). Another barrier encountered by both the current participants, and those in Boothby's (2011) research, was a lack of staff clarity about the scheme. Whilst this can be understood in the context of model infidelity, as outlined previously, there is also evidence that this could be a product of the prison environment. Previous research has revealed that staff confusion about peer-led schemes may be a result of the multiplicity of peer-led schemes available in prisons (Perrin, 2017). This was certainly an idea shared by some of the current participants, who stated they were confused because of the volume of peer-led schemes running concurrently. The array of barriers and hindrances to embedding the current scheme and having an impact on others in the prison, demonstrates the complexity of designing and implementing peer-led schemes into existing systems.

It seemed that many of the participants were experiencing strain caused by the prison environment. This was exemplified by staff participants frequently referencing an unmanageable workload and the PSMs reporting frustrations that they saw so many prison-related barriers affecting their role. It is possible that this strain was fuelling some of their experiences of the scheme. For instance, staff members described being too stretched to focus on the scheme and give the PSMs the support and recognition they felt they needed. This was noticed by some of the PSM participants, who experienced a drop in morale and commitment to the scheme when they were not receiving sufficient recognition for the contribution they were attempting to make. The need for recognition and appreciation to maintain peer-providers' enthusiasm has been identified in previous research examining the peer roles in prisons (Dhaliwal & Harrower, 2009; Perrin, 2017).

One useful framework for considering some of the organisational processes that were impacting the problem-support scheme is the psychoanalytically-informed thinking of Menzies-Lyth (1960). According to Menzies-Lyth there are various organisational defence mechanisms that can arise in an attempt to contain some of the anxiety professionals experience when faced with the complex emotions generated by caring for others. Menzies-Lyth's ground-breaking research was conducted in a nursing service in a general hospital, where there were significant challenges in terms of staffing and training. These defence mechanisms have since been recognised in many other health and social care settings where similar anxieties arise (Cooper, 2010; Krantz, 2010; Van Der Walt & Swartz, 1999). Prisons have been described as particularly emotionally laborious environments to work within, due in part to the anxieties caused by the care-custody conflict (Walsh, 2009). This suggests that Menzies-Lyth's organisational defences could be applicable to understanding some of the organisational and interpersonal processes in prisons (Brown & Walker, 2010; Walsh, Freshwater, & Fisher, 2013). Many of these defences can be recognised in the participants' experiences in the current study, including; splitting, depersonalisation and categorisation, the attempt to eliminate decisions by ritual task performance, shifting of responsibility and avoidance of change.

Menzies-Lyth described a process whereby close relationships between nurses and patients, or in this case prisoners and staff, heightened the anxieties staff felt relating to the emotional challenges of their work. To manage this anxiety prisoner-staff contact is reduced, both on an individual and a broader organisational level. This was very clearly described by the participants in this study, with many of the staff referencing their lack of in-depth knowledge of individual prisoners. This reduced closeness between prisoners and staff may have been contributing to the obscuration of the scheme's impact, as many staff participants reflected on the lack of observable outcomes, partially due to their own lack of familiarity

with prisoners who may have accessed the scheme. Menzies-Lyth also described a defence where depersonalisation and categorisation help manage the complex emotions that occur when we consider people as individuals. The ‘us and them’ divides that were observed, and the ‘othering’ of different groups can be seen as stemming from this lack of recognition of the individual. The divides described between the staff groups, for example uniformed and non-uniformed staff, were also observed by Menzies-Lyth. She described a process whereby staff complained about the inadequacies they saw in other groups of staff. These inadequacies were often uniformly applied to whole groups of staff, whilst simultaneously being denied as existing within themselves. Menzies-Lyth described this as a response to the intrapsychic conflict experienced due to the heavy responsibility of caring for others and the conflicting emotions this can produce, such as pity, compassion, anger and hatred. Rather than recognising this conflict in oneself staff project their own undesirable urges, qualities and experiences into others. One example of this in the current research would be the frequent derision of uniformed staff by non-uniformed staff. Non-uniformed repeatedly insinuated their uniformed colleagues were unable to hold the value of rehabilitation in mind, instead focussing on the control element of imprisonment. It is likely that non-uniformed staff also struggled with this tension, but instead of acknowledging this in themselves, the less desirable, punishment-focussed thoughts were projected into uniformed staff.

Whilst it seems that these divides and depersonalisations were prominent features of life in the prison, it is also possible that divides were so frequently emphasised in the current research because of the focus on a peer-led scheme. As the participants reflected on the benefits of a peer-led approach, it is understandable that they considered differences between prisoners and staff. However, an over-emphasis on differences between prisoners and staff has not been consistently found in research on peer-led initiatives. Conversely some research has found that peer-providers report improved relationships with all groups of people in

prison (Perrin, 2017), which was argued to be due to the positioning of the peer-providers as a bridge across the classic prisoner-staff divide. This was not the case in the current research, if anything the role appeared to exacerbate this divide with the PSM participants experiencing overcoming the barriers to the scheme being an additional thing that certain staff groups were not supporting them with. It is unclear why this disparity exists, but it is possible that the barriers experienced by the current participants were preventing them from having the opportunity to experience their role to its full potential and be that bridge between prisoners and staff. It is perhaps disheartening to note that so many of the current participants saw the other groups of people in the prison as fundamentally different to themselves, despite the fact that very similar experiences were described by the different participant groups, suggesting more similarity than was recognised.

In the current research it appeared that the burden of responsibility, both for risk management and rehabilitation, was high, and the participants made attempts to redirect this responsibility from themselves. This was a process also conceptualised by Menzies-Lyth as a defence against anxiety. One way in which organisations attempt to manage this responsibility is through processes underpinned by a belief that with enough checks and counter-checks risk can be eliminated. This was demonstrated in the participants describing the need for the scheme-facilitators to be rigorous in their recruitment. Menzies-Lyth also described attempts to eliminate decision making by a focus on ritual task performance. This emergence of more ritualistic risk orientated practice has been identified as occurring in the prison system (Liebling & Arnold, 2012). This was raised by some of the staff participants who reflected on the time they were spending in the office conducting risk assessments and other paperwork as impinging their ability to support the PSMs to carry out their role. This was both in terms of movement around the prison but also in terms of staff having the time, inclination or ability to give the scheme the priority it needs to flourish. This was also

apparent in some of my own experiences in accessing the prison, where there was a heavy reliance on processes rather than staff's own judgement of risk. One example of this was when I was let into the 'airlock' to leave the prison by my escort. As the Reception staff had not heard my name be called I was unable to proceed out of the prison, despite having ID, a visitor pass, and being a female in a male prison. It was explained to me that protocol must be adhered to as I could be a prisoner attempting to escape. This is an example of procedures reducing the need for staff to make complex, anxiety-provoking decisions based on their own judgment. The PSM participants appeared to feel this acutely and argued for individual risk decisions to be made about their freedom of movement in the prison amongst other things. As described in section 4.3.1, there was very limited adherence to protocol in terms of the PSMs' model fidelity, instead the PSMs relied heavily on their own skills and judgements. This difference in staff and PSM behaviour is possibly related to the perceived burden of responsibility. None of the PSMs spoke about the burden of responsibility for risk. This is likely because as peer-providers the ultimate responsibility does not lie with them, and they are far less likely to face the scrutiny that a paid staff member would were there to be a failure in risk management. Without feeling this anxiety related to accountability for managing risk the PSMs may have been more able to confidently use their own judgement than staff members did.

Finally, Menzies-Lyth described a defence whereby people working in such institutions become resistant to change as this fear of uncertainty and journeying into the unknown can further heighten the anxiety they are attempting to manage. This was acknowledged and expressed explicitly by many of the staff participants. This reluctance to try new things was also seen by some as underpinning the lack of staff support for the scheme and therefore affecting its ability to have an impact.

It is important to acknowledge at this point, that prisons are challenging environments to exist within, be that as a prisoner, a staff member or a manager attempting to provide an effective regime. Blame culture is prevalent in our society (Walsh et al., 2013), with audits and inspections often being highly critical of public institutions. Most staff working within the prison system are working to provide both rehabilitation and management of risk. My examination of some of these defences is not intended to add to this criticism, and in fact further criticism and pressure on those working in such institutes is likely to heighten anxiety, thereby exacerbating rather than reducing these defences.

Whilst it is argued that complex emotional experiences, anxiety, and attempts to defend against it are perhaps innate in roles such as that of prison staff, Menzies-Lyth also points to organisational features exacerbating this. Specifically she mentions the pressure staff were under, and the fear of impending disaster, due to the work-staff ratio. Many of the staff I spoke with described a similar experience, where they felt unable to meet the demands of their role. Should this level of strain continue it appears unlikely that space can be given to reflecting on the dynamics within a prison, or for new initiatives such as the problem-support scheme to reach their full potential.

It is unlikely that the experiences of strain described by the participants and perceived to be impacting on the success of the scheme, is unique to the prison where this research was carried out. Prisons have been recently described as characterised by resource burden (Perrin et al., 2018). A parliamentary report in April 2019 (Justice Committee, 2019) described the Ministry of Justice as having '*adopted a crisis management approach*' (paragraph 104). This parallels some of the comments made by the participants in this research, such as this one by Custodial Manager, Thomas;

“The prison works now on an almost knee-jerk reaction to things, so if something’s going wrong, we look at that and we concentrate on that.”

The parliamentary briefing argues that various factors are increasing strain in the prison system, including reduced staffing, inexperienced staff, prisoner complexity, lack of funding, over-crowding and poor estate management. The paper states that *“regime restrictions related to staffing shortages and other disruptions severely undermine the delivery of rehabilitative services.”* (paragraph 156). This certainly appeared to have rung true in the current research, with the participants describing many of the factors identified in this paper as undermining the ability of the scheme to have an impact. It should be noted that this briefing took place in April 2019, just prior to the current research taking place. Unfortunately, the briefing’s concerns around lack of staffing and overcrowding hindering the rehabilitative potential of incarceration appear to still be relevant. In April 2019, when this briefing took place, prisons were operating at 95.2% capacity, with 82,293 prisoners being incarcerated. While capacity has increased in the last year, so has the number of prisoners, and prisons remain 95.2% full in March 2020. In terms of staffing, there was a 0.5% increase in staffing levels between December 2018 and December 2019, when these figures were most recently released. This suggests that rehabilitative programmes are likely to continue to struggle to have the desired impact.

One of the other elements of this briefing which was also echoed in the current research, was the turnover of prison staff. The report states that in some prison establishments as many as 40% of staff are new. This can be seen in the current research both in the churn of staff participants, and the divide reference by some participants between ‘new’ and ‘old’ staff. Bringing new staff in could be particularly challenging in a prison environment where many staff reflect on how they are ‘stuck in their ways’ and ‘resistant to change’. These new staff could present as a threat to the status quo.

4.3.4 Sustainability

The need for wide-spread support for the scheme was frequently referred to by the current participants. It appeared that this was considered to be essential for the scheme to be sustained. Organisational support and investment has been argued to be pivotal for the success of other processes in prisons, such as the ACCT process (Forrester & Slade, 2014), as well as other peer-led initiatives (Deville et al., 2005). Many of the staff and PSM participants appeared to believe that the scheme was not receiving the wide-spread support it required to flourish. There are likely to be many reasons for this, as outlined above, but it is possible that this was compounded by the commonly held view that peer-led programmes are resource light. Despite this view being widely stated by the current participants, and previous researchers, evidence of the cost-effectiveness of peer-led schemes is phenomenally scarce. In their systematic review Bagnall et al. (2015) only identified one study examining the cost-effectiveness of peer-led initiatives. This study was conducted by Zhang, Roberts and McCollister (2009), and whilst they did find that the intervention reduced management costs incurred by prisoner misdemeanours, the costs of running the scheme far out-weighed the money saved. This highlights a possible reality, that a substantial amount of professional time and resource is required to support peer-led schemes if they are to be impactful. However, it is acknowledged that research in this area is in its infancy and more economic evaluation is required before we can understand the balance between resource given to a peer-led scheme and the level of impact it can achieve. It is possible that economics of scale could also play a role, with larger and more embedded peer schemes having a reduced relative cost. This again warrants further investigation.

The staff interviewed in Fletcher and Batty's (2012) research worried about over-reliance on under-supported peer-led schemes in economically stretched times. Perrin's (2017) statement, that it may be unrealistic to recommend more staff dedicated to supporting

peer-led schemes in the context of a much depleted prison workforce in recent years does ring true. However, attempting to embed a new scheme into an over-stretched system with no time, money and low morale without adequate resource requires an equally realistic outlook with regards to the level of impact it is likely to have.

A paradoxical situation appeared to exist in the current research, which was impacting on the sustainability of the scheme. The staff participants spoke about how staff support would help sustain the scheme, but that it was unlikely that staff would fully support the scheme until it could be seen to have an impact. This creates a situation where the scheme cannot have a substantial impact until it is supported by staff but is unlikely to be fully supported by staff until it is clearly having a substantial impact. This is further compounded by concurrent changes occurring in the prison, which at times swamped any impact that the scheme could be having, for instance a regime change in 2019 led to a spike in violence and in self-harm referrals. Self-harm and violence rates in prison are impacted by a wide range of factors, making it very challenging to determine the impact of individual interventions (Fazel et al., 2016; South et al., 2014). This makes it even more challenging to demonstrate the possible value of the current scheme to staff.

There is unlikely to be a single solution to resolving the complexities of sustaining such a scheme in a prison environment. This was recognised by some of the staff participants who felt solutions could include a more top-down enforcement of staff support for the scheme, increases in staffing levels to facilitate the scheme, a dedicated full-time staff position to facilitate the scheme and promotion of the scheme's impact through testimonials from prisoners who have benefitted from using the scheme.

4.4 Critique of the Research

4.4.1 Recruitment

A relatively large sample was recruited for this research. The PSM sample was diverse and included participants from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Thirty per cent of the PSMs who participated in the research came from a minority ethnic background, which is comparable to the wider scheme, where 36% of the participants came from a minority ethnic background, although shows a slight over-representation in comparison to the wider prison population, of which 27% come from a minority ethnic background (Sturge, 2019). The participants were also varied in age and reflected the spectrum of ages seen in the wider PSM population. Despite the diversity of the PSM participants there was a high level of consistency between their accounts, lending greater confidence in the themes that were extracted. Although there were some challenges with recruiting wing staff at time point one, I was able to interview staff holding a wide range of positions in the prison, and was therefore able to access a broad spectrum of opinions and experiences that deepened my understanding of how the scheme was being received. However, it should be acknowledged that participation was voluntary so there may well have been a bias towards participants who held strong views about the scheme. This is particularly pertinent to some of the findings such as the appetite for peer-led schemes consistently reported by the staff participants.

In the early stages of designing this research it was envisaged that I would interview the same participants at each time point to understand how their experiences evolved longitudinally. Whilst a degree of drop-off was anticipated and factored into the design, I did not foresee the extent to which this would happen. This has limited my ability to compare the themes that were identified in the data and explore the patterns over time, as differences between time points could result from different participants being recruited. On the other hand, I believe that this process revealed the difficulties caused by churn in the prison system,

which has expanded my understanding of the very real challenges of developing a sustainable peer-led scheme. I believe that conducting interviews at three time points was still a worthwhile feature of this research. Had I only interviewed at one time point this would have given a narrower snapshot of experiences of the scheme, and not enabled me to get a full sense of the duration of time over which momentum must be maintained for such a scheme to become integrated in to prison life.

As described in the Method chapter, due to barriers to my accessing the prison it was necessary for recruitment to be facilitated by the scheme coordinators. This could be a limitation of the research as the coordinators lack neutrality and could have targeted their promotion of the research towards PSMs who they expected to engage well with the research or to speak positively about the scheme. Despite this risk, it appears that the coordinators were unbiased in their promotion of the research as the PSMs presented as having a wide range of views about the scheme, including some participants who were critical of elements of the scheme. A further limitation of requiring escorting was its impact on the timing of the interviews. The process used at time point one, where each PSM was escorted to the Interventions department for their interview required a considerable amount of staff time and was not feasible to repeat at time points two and three. To avoid this resource usage the interviews at time point two and three took place on training days when the PSMs were already together as a group. This could potentially have affected their reflections on the scheme, both in terms of increasing the likelihood of their opinions being shaped by their peers who they were with directly prior to interview, and to how salient the training was for them. It is possible that the reflections would have differed were I to have been able to interview them on the wings on non-training days.

4.4.2 Data Collection

The use of semi-structured interviews is seen as a strength of this research. Using an interview guide informed by previous research, discussion with my supervisors and an expert reference group allowed me to shape the interviews to investigate different elements of the participants' experiences that I believed could be pertinent to addressing the aims of this research. In addition, the ability to use probing questions and follow each participant's narrative meant I could get a more in-depth picture of their experiences. I was also able to refine and develop the interview schedule between time points to delve deeper into ideas that were emerging from the earlier interviews and understand how shared certain experiences were. Whilst I believe that semi-structured interviews were the most effective method of accessing detailed and personalised accounts of my participants' experiences, I also acknowledge that my own biases will have played a role in influencing the direction each interview took. Inevitably I will have pursued different lines of enquiry than those which another researcher may have done.

4.4.3 Analysis

As with all qualitative methods, it is likely that a different researcher would have identified different themes from the dataset. The issue of researcher bias felt particularly pertinent in the context of the current research, where many of the participants reflected on the idea that you cannot understand an experience unless you have lived it. This is a central ethos of many peer-led schemes. Based on this assertion it appears more likely that I could have misunderstood or misinterpreted the meanings of the participants, with whom I do not have shared experience. However, discussions took place with my supervisors to enhance my confidence that the themes identified accurately reflected the content of the interviews. Upon reflection, this research could have been improved by consulting regularly with an expert by

experience to check out my assumptions during the analysis, a feature that would have been befitting for research into a peer-involvement scheme.

An additional option could have been participant validation checks. Whilst the results of this study were presented to the PSMs, participant validation checks were not carried out. In addition to the usual limitations of participant validation checks, such as the possibility of participant resistance to being understood or conversely the strong desire to accept the researcher's understanding (Ashworth, 1993), the longitudinal nature of the research was further prohibitive. Most of the participants had left the prison by the time the analysis was complete, making participant validation unfeasible. Furthermore, a longitudinal design was selected to access the participants' experiences over time. It is possible that if participant validation were used the participants could feel differently about their experiences when looking back on them several months later. A feature of this research was the aim to access these experiences at different time points with the expectation that they could change over time.

4.4.4 *Generalisability*

The findings of this research are not readily generalisable. The research investigated the experiences of delivering a very specific problem-support intervention in a category C establishment. As the participants regularly stated, prisons are unique environments and the patterns of experiences across the data set could have been very different were the scheme to exist in a different establishment, or with a different population, such as women or young offenders. However, I have aimed to supply sufficient contextual detail to allow the reader to assess the applicability of the findings to other settings.

The purpose of this research was to understand the participants' experiences of the peer-led problem-support scheme. However, whilst conducting this research a regime change took place within the prison, leading to changes to structures and processes within the prison.

As discussed, it was clear in some of the interviews that the staff felt under significant strain. This appeared to impact on their reflections on the scheme. However, reflecting the stance of this research as being embedded in critical realism, it is likely that the social and political context influences experiences of peer-led interventions in a wide range of settings, and staff strain is unlikely to be a unique feature of this prison at this time.

4.5 Practical Implications

This research draws attention to the complexity of successfully embedding a peer-led, problem-support scheme into a prison. It is apparent that a spectrum of factors, relating to the form of intervention, delivery method and environment require consideration by those attempting to develop similar schemes. Some of the practical implications of the current research are discussed below.

Clarity. This research also demonstrates the need for clarity about roles and responsibilities, including for the peer-providers themselves, the core team and the wider system. This is also complex to achieve, due to the variety of ideas about how and why peer-led schemes can be effective. The participants reflected extensively on how to increase prison officers' and prisoners' understanding of the scheme. Examples included attaching details of the scheme to all prison staff members' pay packets, providing all staff with small cards summarising the scheme that can be kept in wallets, getting the peer-providers to join the prison induction, which takes place every morning for new prisoners, to provide an overview of the scheme and regularly attending wing-level meetings to promote the scheme. It is worth noting that this final idea would be challenging to achieve without greater levels of resource.

Resource. This research suggests that for the benefits of a peer-led scheme to be fully actualised it is important that the resource requirements are not underestimated. For such schemes to have a significant impact staff resource is required to train, support, advertise and promote the scheme. It is therefore recommended that a dedicated role would be set up for

managing the scheme internally. An alternative would be adding responsibility for the scheme to the job description of an existing member of staff, for instance a member of the Programmes department, however based on the high workloads described by the participants it appears it would be challenging for an existing staff member to take the scheme on as an additional responsibility. It is possible that the level of resource required could decrease as the scheme grows and becomes more self-sustaining, however it is clear from this research that this is a process that takes time. Additionally, there is the need for wide-spread buy-in across the system. This is complex to attain particularly when staff have demanding roles and little capacity for considering additional tasks. It appears that efforts are needed to bring together the disjointed system within the prison around a common goal.

Value for peer-providers. One of the main values of a peer-led scheme, over a staff-led scheme, appears to be the benefits acquired by the peer-providers themselves. Whilst some of these appear relatively generic, there are others that are linked to the specifics of the intervention. For those designing such schemes in the future it is important to consider what form of intervention could be beneficial for the wider population, but also it appears at least as advantageous to consider what would be beneficial for the peer-providers themselves in terms of personal development and skills building.

4.6 Research Recommendations

In the current research the voices of the clients receiving the problem-support intervention were absent. This was due to challenges round the anonymity of the PSMs' clients. Across the research I have read the voices of those receiving the interventions are consistently missing. Future research could therefore benefit from understanding the experiences of those receiving interventions from their peers. This could also be beneficial in helping to tease out the question of model fidelity, or at least to get an additional perspective on what the helpful ingredient of such a scheme is. This research raised several questions

about the efficacy and impact of this peer-led scheme, accessing the opinions and experiences of clients of such schemes will be an essential feature of future research attempting to gain further understanding of this.

As discussed, prisons are unique environments, so it would be interesting to research how a peer-led problem-support scheme would be implemented and received in a different establishment, in order to understand the commonality of experiences across settings, security levels, and prison populations.

In the PSM interviews the participants held a future focus and spoke about how they would like to apply their new skills and mindset to building a new future once they were released from prison. It would be beneficial to understand whether the benefits experienced by the PSMs are carried forward with them in to the community, and what, if any, impact their experience of being a PSM has on their ability to reintegrate and contribute to society. This could be done through longitudinal research, which includes follow-up interviews with PSMs post-release.

4.7 Final Reflections

I have worked in various Forensic Mental Health and Criminal Justice settings but have never worked in a prison before. This experience of conducting research into a prison has tested some of my assumptions about prisons and highlighted the difference in experience between being held in a prison and a forensic mental health ward. I was surprised by how entrenched the 'us and them' divide was and reminded of historic research into the dehumanising processes that can occur in prisons for example through prisoners being referred to by number rather than name. Working in a Forensic Mental Health setting I have long been aware of the tension between managing risk and rehabilitative needs. I assumed a similar tension would exist in prisons but had perhaps naively not anticipated how much more restrictive prisons can be.

This research project appealed to me partially due to the peer-led element of the scheme, of which I have long been an advocate. However, whilst going through the process of conducting this research I was struck by the bias in the literature towards the benefits of peer-led initiatives, with very little focus on what we may be losing in terms of professional expertise. This has made me question my own views on peer-led schemes and made me aware of the need to have realistic expectations about what such schemes can achieve.

Some of the barriers I encountered whilst conducting this research and the rigid adherence to protocol over what appeared to be common-sense caused me frustration. I was struck by what a hard environment a prison is to be detained in, to work in, or even to do research in. I felt a lot of empathy for the participants in this research, who, regardless of group within the prison, appeared to want the best for others.

As a final reflection, this research has taught me a lesson in how complex and time-consuming it is to develop and embed a new process into an existing system. This is certainly not a task I will underestimate going forward, and I admire those attempting to bring a rehabilitative focus when faced with many barriers to achieving this.

4.8 Conclusion

Peer-led initiatives have a place in the prison system. Such schemes are readily acceptable to staff and appealing to prisoners wishing to get involved for both personal gains and the opportunity to help others. The peer-providers in the current research undoubtedly benefitted from being in this role, changes that were seen by staff as well as themselves. These changes fall in line with some of the rehabilitative goals of the prison system. However, this research has highlighted the complexity of embedding such a scheme and the numerous barriers that must be overcome for the impact of such a scheme to be felt by others.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval



Lisa Edmondson
Chartered and Registered Forensic Psychologist
Yorkshire and North East Prisons Psychology Service
HMP Humber, Beck Road, Brough, HU15 1RB

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University of Leeds
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20.12.18

2018-355 Prisoner delivery of a problem solving intervention: an analysis of the sustainability and experience of the intervention – HMP Wealstun

Dear Katherine,

Thank you for your re-submission of the above research. I have reviewed your very clear clarification of the points raised by us on 04.12.18.

I am pleased to grant approval to this interesting study. I ask that you please note the following:

- You will kindly send an electronic copy of the research report, with an executive summary, to the Regional Research Lead (myself). I will pass this onto the Governor of the establishment and any other relevant stakeholders.
- In addition, you will kindly prepare a summary, to go the above stakeholders, approximately 3 – 5 pages which sets out the implications of the project for NOMS decision makers.
- We ask that you inform the NRC and the Regional Research Lead of the date / location of publication of the research.
- Please note that the Governor at HMP Wealstun will need to give final approval for this work. **Please note, you are not authorised to proceed with the research without the Governor's express permission to do so.**
- Researchers are under a duty to disclose certain information to NOMS. For applicants wishing to conduct research in prisons this includes behaviour that is against prison rules and can be adjudicated against (see Section 51 of the Prison Rules 1999), illegal acts, and behaviour that is harmful to the research participant (e.g. intention to self-harm or complete suicide).
- **Please note that your work has been approved based on the details provided in your application. Please do not go outside of the agreement.** If you wish to modify the scope of this work, for example, using populations at another establishment, you will need to contact the NRC to ask for permission.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Edmondson

Chartered and Registered Forensic Psychologist

Regional Research Lead

Yorkshire and North East Prisons Psychology Service

HMPPS

Appendix B: PSM Information Sheet

THE UNIVERSITY *of* York

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS 

PROBLEM SUPPORT MENTOR RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

What is our project about?

We recently completed a study which explored the problems of people in prison. In this study we spent time training HMPPS staff in using problem solving skills but found that staff did not use these skills to help people with problems in prison.

In this new study we want to try an alternative approach which will involve 'problem support mentors' teaching other prisoners how to use these skills. We want to find out what it is like to be a problem support mentor and what your opinions about the programme are.

Who is doing the study? The study is being conducted by the Universities of York and Leeds and is organised by Dr Amanda Perry and Professor Mitch Waterman. Katherine Grindheim is assisting with this project and will be conducting the interview with you if you choose to take part.

Why have you been asked to participate? We are approaching problem support mentors, because we are interested in how you are finding the role. We would like to speak to people that have been doing the role since the beginning and people who are new to it.

What does this mean for you? If you agree to take part in the study, you will be invited to meet with Katherine Grindheim on up to three occasions. These interviews will take approximately thirty minutes and are your opportunity to give feedback.

Can I withdraw from the study? You can decide to stop taking part at any time and ask to finish the interview, if this happens then you can choose to not have your data used in the research. After the interview is completed you will have fourteen days in which you can still choose to withdraw your data from the study. After this fourteen-day period, your data will have been included into the wider data set and it will not be possible to separate it out. The data will be presented on an aggregated level and there will be no identifying information.

Will what I say be confidential? The information that you give will not be told to staff or to other prisoners unless the researcher believes there is a risk to you, to anyone else or to the security of HMP Wealstun.

What will happen to the study information? The data we collect will be anonymised and after a period of five years destroyed. The data will be stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). When the study has finished, we will contact you by way of letter to describe what we have found.

Who has reviewed this study? The study has been reviewed by the HMPPS ethics committee.

Who do I contact in the event of a complaint? If you have any concerns or questions please write to Amanda Perry, University of York, Alcuin C Block, Heslington, York or Mitch Waterman, Room 2.12, Psychology Department, University of Leeds.

Appendix C: PSM Consent Form

CONSENT FORM - PROBLEM SUPPORT MENTORS

Statement of agreement	Please put our initials in the box to confirm agreement
I have understood the participant information sheet	
I understand that what I say WILL NOT be told to staff unless the researcher believes there is a risk to my safety, the safety of others or the security of the establishment, at which point confidentiality will be breached.	
I am aware that if I feel upset or anxious during the research study that I can talk to my personal officer or any member of HMPPS staff.	
I agree to provide the researchers with my personal information, for the purposes outlined. I understand that my personal information will be held securely. I agree to provide the researchers with my personal information, for the purposes outlined. I understand that my personal information will be held securely in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 for research purposes and will not be shared with any other parties outside the study.	
I understand that my data will be anonymised to protect my identity. This means that even though we will report back your stories and ideas no-one will be able to identify who you are.	
I understand that any information I give may be included in published documents, but all information will be anonymised	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time. If I choose to withdraw I understand that I have fourteen days from the point of the interview to decide whether I would like to withdraw my data.	
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study	
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions	
I have received enough information about the study	
I agree to take part in this study	

Participant signature:

Date:

Name of participant:

Participant ID Number:

Researcher signature:

ONE PARTICIPANT COPY & ONE COPY FOR THE RESEARCHER

Appendix D: Staff Information Sheet



STAFF RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

What is our project about?

We recently completed a study which explored the problems of people in prison. In this study we spent time training HMPPS staff in using problem solving skills but found that staff did not use these skills to help people with problems in prison.

In this new study we want to try an alternative approach which will involve 'problem solving champions' teaching other prisoners how to use these skills. We want to find out what staff working in the prison think about the programme.

Who is doing the study? The study is being conducted by the Universities of York and Leeds and is organised by Dr Amanda Perry and Professor Mitch Waterman. Katherine Grindheim is assisting with this project and will be conducting the interview with you if you choose to take part.

Why have you been asked to participate? We are approaching staff, because we are interested in how you are finding the programme. We would like to speak to staff from a variety of departments.

What does this mean for you? If you agree to take part in the study, you will be invited to meet with Katherine Grindheim on up to three occasions. These interviews will take approximately thirty minutes and are your opportunity to give feedback.

Can I withdraw from the study? You can decide to stop taking part at any time and ask to finish the interview, if this happens then you can choose to not have your data used in the research. After the interview is completed you will have fourteen days in which you can still choose to withdraw your data from the study. After this fourteen-day period, your data will have been included in to the wider data set and it will not be possible to separate it out. The data will be presented on an aggregated level and there will be no identifying information.

What will happen to the study information? The data we collect will be anonymised and after a period of five years destroyed. The data will be stored in accordance with the GDPR (2018). When the study has finished, we will contact you by way of letter to describe what we have found.

Who has reviewed this study? The study has been reviewed by the NOMS ethics committee and a Research Governance committee at the University of Leeds.

Who do I contact in the event of a complaint? If you have any concerns or questions please write to Amanda Perry, University of York, Alcuin C Block, Heslington, York or Mitch Waterman, Room 2.12, Psychology Department, University of Leeds.

Appendix E: Staff Consent Form

CONSENT FORM - STAFF

Statement of agreement	Please put our initials in the box to confirm agreement
I have understood the participant information sheet	
I agree to provide the researchers with my personal information, for the purposes outlined. I understand that my personal information will be held securely. I agree to provide the researchers with my personal information, for the purposes outlined. I understand that my personal information will be held securely in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 for research purposes and will not be shared with any other parties outside the University study.	
I understand that my data will be anonymised to protect my identity. This means that even though we will report back your stories and ideas no-one will be able to identify who you are.	
I understand that any information I give may be included in published documents but all information will be anonymised	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time. If I choose to withdraw, I understand that I have fourteen days from the point of the interview to decide whether I would like to withdraw my data.	
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study	
I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions	
I have received enough information about the study	
I agree to take part in this study	

Participant signature:

Date:

Name of participant:

Participant ID Number:

Researcher signature:

Name of researcher:

ONE PARTICIPANT COPY & ONE COPY FOR THE RESEARCHER

Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Schedules

Semi-structured interview prompts: problem-support mentors.

How did you learn about the problem-support project?

What motivated you to become a PSM?

How did you find the training?

How are you finding being a PSM?

What sort of support are you getting in the role?

Is the role what you expected?... in what ways is it different?

What have you liked about the role?

Have you learned anything new?... about yourself?

Do you think that anything you have learned will benefit you in the future in the community?

Are there any skills you'd like to develop in the role?

Are you finding anything challenging about the role?... what would make it easier for you?

Are there any problems that you don't think it would be suitable for a PSM to work with?

Is there anything stopping you from doing the role?

What's it like to be part of a team of PSMs?

How have you dealt with difficult things that have come up?

What have you found rewarding?

Do you think being a PSM is worthwhile?

What's it like being part of a group of PSMs?

Is there anything you'd change about either becoming or being a PSM?

How do you think an intervention like this can be sustained within this prison or prisons generally?

Anything else you'd like to say?

Semi-structured interview prompts: problem-support mentors.

How did you learn about the problem-support project?

What motivated you to become a PSM?

How did you find the training?

How are you finding being a PSM?

What sort of support are you getting in the role?

Is the role what you expected?... in what ways is it different?

What have you liked about the role?

Have you learned anything new?... about yourself?

Do you think that anything you have learned will benefit you in the future in the community?

Are there any skills you'd like to develop in the role?

Are you finding anything challenging about the role?... what would make it easier for you?

Are there any problems that you don't think it would be suitable for a PSM to work with?

Is there anything stopping you from doing the role?

What's it like to be part of a team of PSMs?

How have you dealt with difficult things that have come up?

What have you found rewarding?

Do you think being a PSM is worthwhile?

What's it like being part of a group of PSMs?

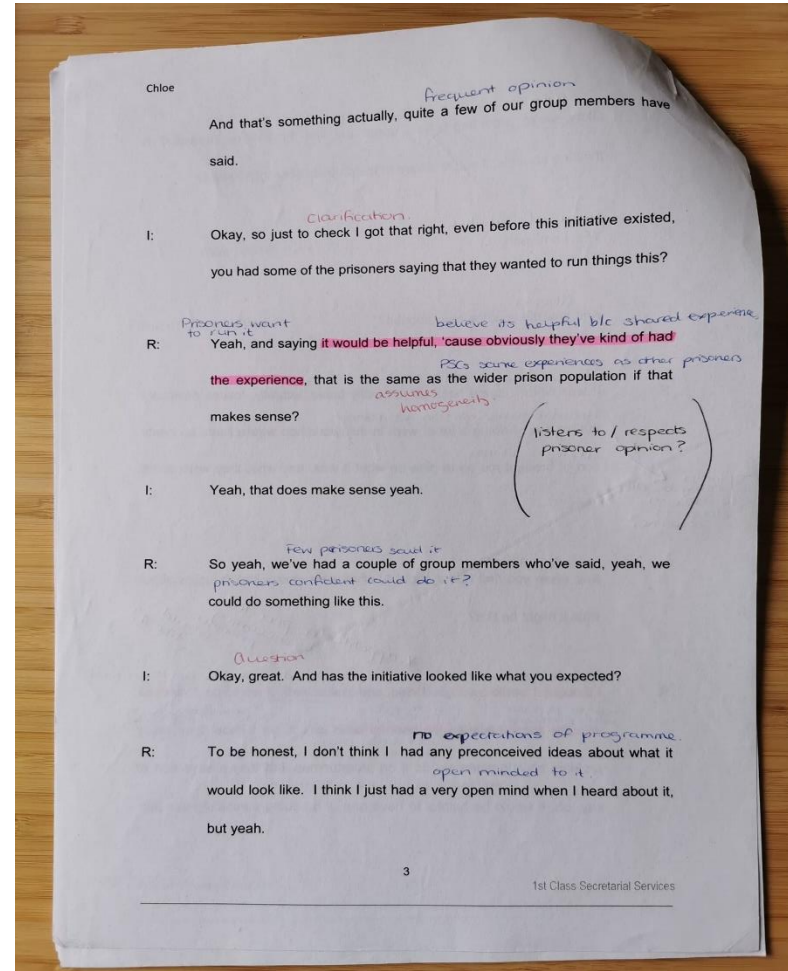
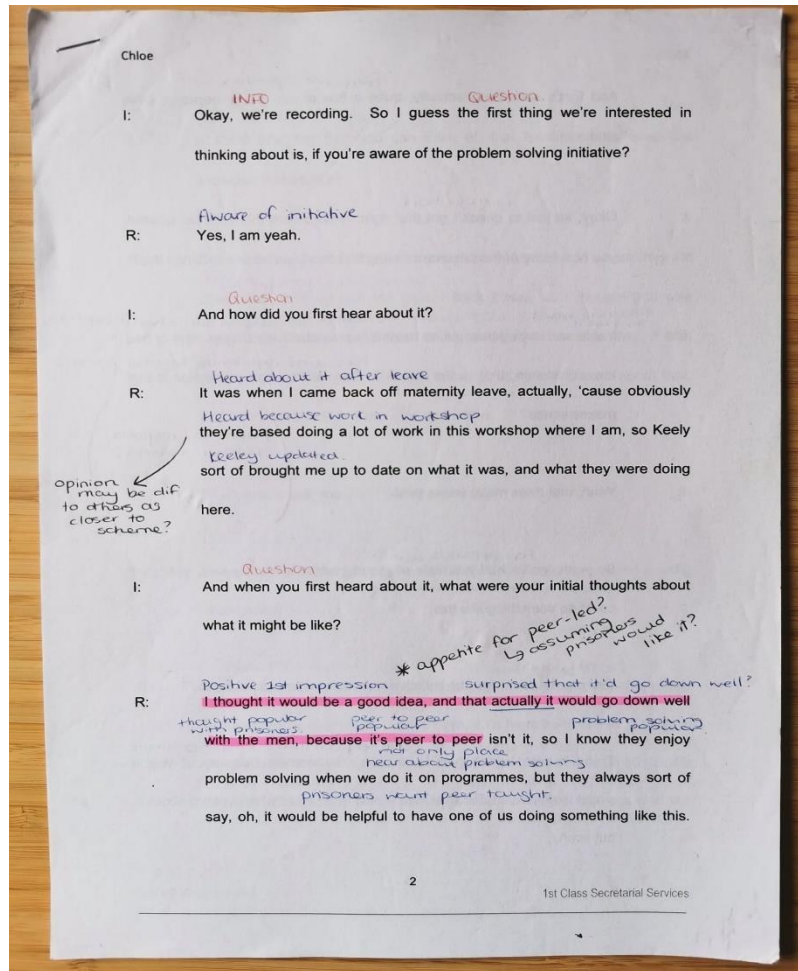
Is there anything you'd change about either becoming or being a PSM?

How do you think an intervention like this can be sustained within this prison or prisons generally?

Anything else you'd like to say?

Appendix G: Extracts from Transcripts and Thematic Maps

Chloe, staff, time point one.



Chloe

Question

I: Is there anything that you can think of, that is different to what you expected it to be like?

R: So, when they did the, was it the design sort of, you know where they sat PSCs helping with brand down and came up with the logo, I think it was, so I thought that was positive about dif ways PSCs involved pretty cool, 'cause it was them being involved in another way, if that makes sense. So yeah, that was really good, when I heard about that, and saw the work they'd been doing on that.

I: Yeah, ace, thank you.

Question

Do you feel that the right people are being identified to be problem-solving champions?

R:

recruitment successful?

Right PSCs identified Know some PSCs
To be fair, yes, 'cause I know a couple of the problem-solving champions at the moment, and yeah, I would have, if I'd have been asked to think of some PSCs clear choices. Not all PSCs been good for role. But yeah, I know there's been some issues with some of the been problems.

Chloe

Some problematic bhr. champions, in terms of behaviour and such like, but apart from that, I think overall right people. generally, yeah, it's the right people.

Question

I: Could you tell me a little bit more about what you mean, about there's been some issues with behaviour and things?

R: Okay, so I know one of the PSCs can lose role. problem solving champions, has been removed due to, I think he had some items in his possession he wasn't supposed to, just general behaviour, and then I know there's another one broke rules that got found in possession of hooch, I think, and something else, so he's going to be removed as well. You can't foresee things like that unfortunately, but yeah. not possible to predict bad bhr inevitable that there will be some that break rules?

Question/clarification

I: So it sounds like there's been a few issues, like those examples you just gave, but overall you feel the right people have been identified?

R: overall right people in prison can't predict perfect. Yeah, oh definitely, overall, in the environment we're in you're not going to get it 100 per cent.

I: Yeah.

Emily, staff, time point one.

I: So it sounds like you're, sort of, saying that because people have to identify themselves, that means the right people are naturally found.

* NEED THE 'RIGHT' PSMs.

R: Yeah, because end of the day, it's not everybody's cup of tea, is it? Not everybody is comfortable going and knocking on the door and saying, come one, what's your problem? Or would you want to talk to me? You know, it's not everybody's cup of tea. So hence the reason we...it's difficult for us to identify, oh, you know, we can give them an idea, end of the day, the choice is theirs. So hence we encourage them and empower them to make that decision.

I: Yeah, great thank you. And so you were saying that you do think that because of what you've just described, that the right people are being identified. Do you have a sense of what makes a good problem solving champion?

R: Yeah. I think the individual who has got time and who has got patience and who has got listening skills and who is not judgemental, you know, who is empathetic towards, you know, an individual who is in crisis. I

* links with chbe + Joanna
↓
LOTS of skills

7
1st Class Secretarial Services

* Barriers.

not problem solvers.
know they're not there to give them advice, but sometimes if somebody is being heard mechanism of change?
there just to listen, you know, that can solve a lot of problems, because sometimes it's all about talking to somebody, isn't it? And they are just listening there to listen to them.

sees role as
Confusion about scheme.

I: Yeah, so it's, sort of, those personal qualities that are important.

R: Yeah.

I: And do you feel that the champions are fulfilling the role?

R: I can't comment on that, because I don't know.

I: Okay, that's absolutely fine, as we said at the beginning, different roles mean that people can answer different questions.

R: Yeah. I can see them on the unit, you know, I do hear about them, but because I don't get any feedback, I don't know.

doesn't see outcomes
visibility?
familiarity?
exposure?
not confident making assumption
need for numbers

8
1st Class Secretarial Services

I: Yeah, no, that's good thank you and this next question might be similar.

Overall, do you think that the champions are having a positive or a negative impact on the prison or no impact?

R: *hard to see impact*
It's difficult to say. As I say, I know it's working, but I don't know how well it's working or what impact they have.

I: So it sounds like, I'll just check that I've understood correctly, that you're, sort of, saying that the impression that you get is that it's working, but you couldn't identify specific aspects.

visibility again?

lack of tangibles?

R: *only data will show its working*
Yeah. Because, as I say, you know, if I'm collating the data and I'm, like, okay, could you tell me how many prisoners you've spoken to? And how *asking champions would prove it.* many prisoners felt better after talking to you? So that's me collating this and then I'm able to tell you, yeah, it's working or it's not working, you know, but I'm not doing that.

believes its being used.
So, as I see, there are problem solving champions there on the unit and *don't know impact.* they are getting used, but how well the scheme is working, I won't be able to tell you that.

unsure about any details.

I: That's absolutely fine, thank you. And, again, it might not fit with your role, but have you noticed any changes in any of the champions?

R: I don't know.

I: And have you noticed any changes in any of the customers, any of the people that have been accessing the champions?

R: Again, I can't answer that, I don't know.

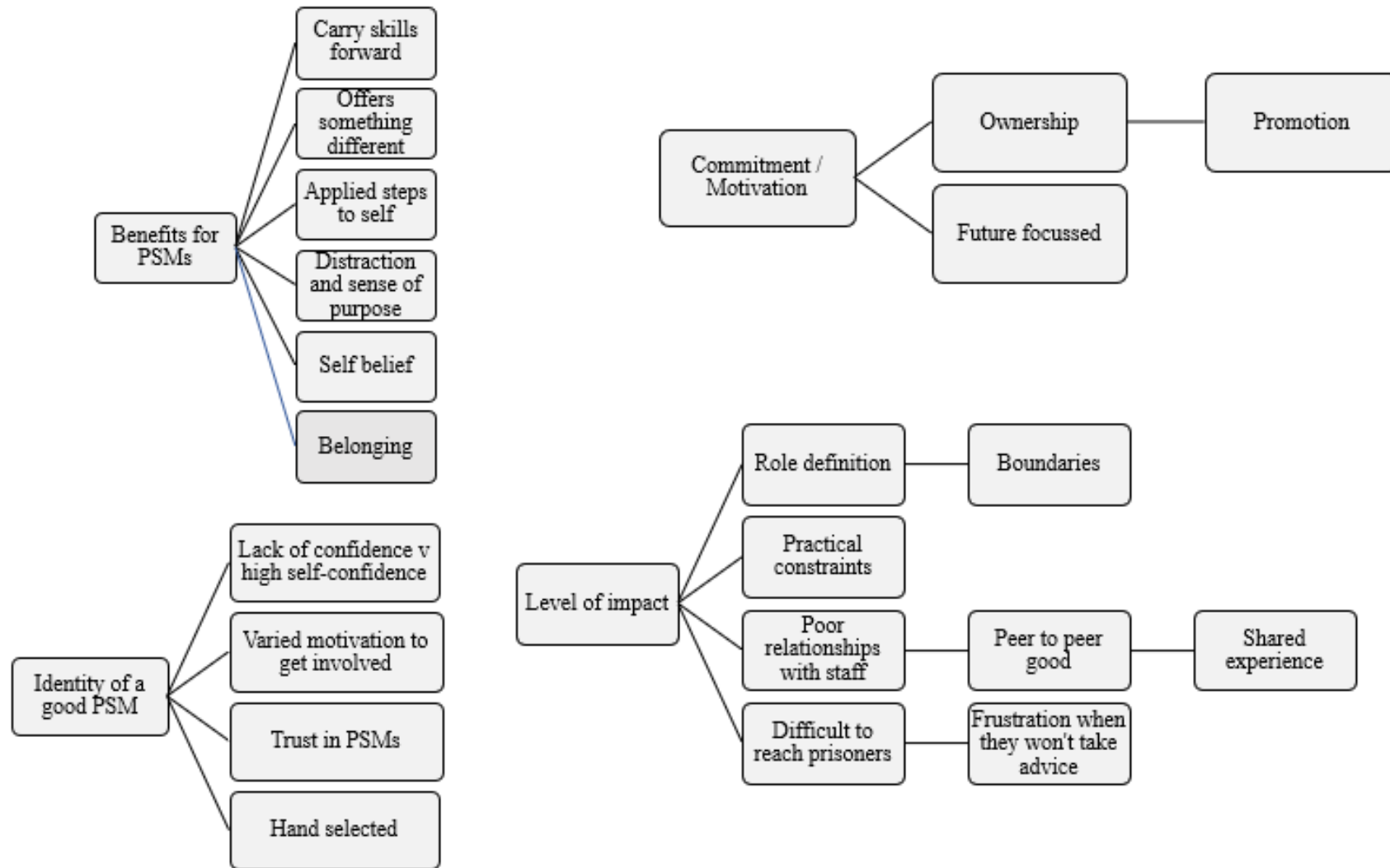
I: Yeah, that's absolutely fine. Yeah, I'll just ask all the questions even if there's some that don't fit your role.

R: Yeah, no, that's fine.

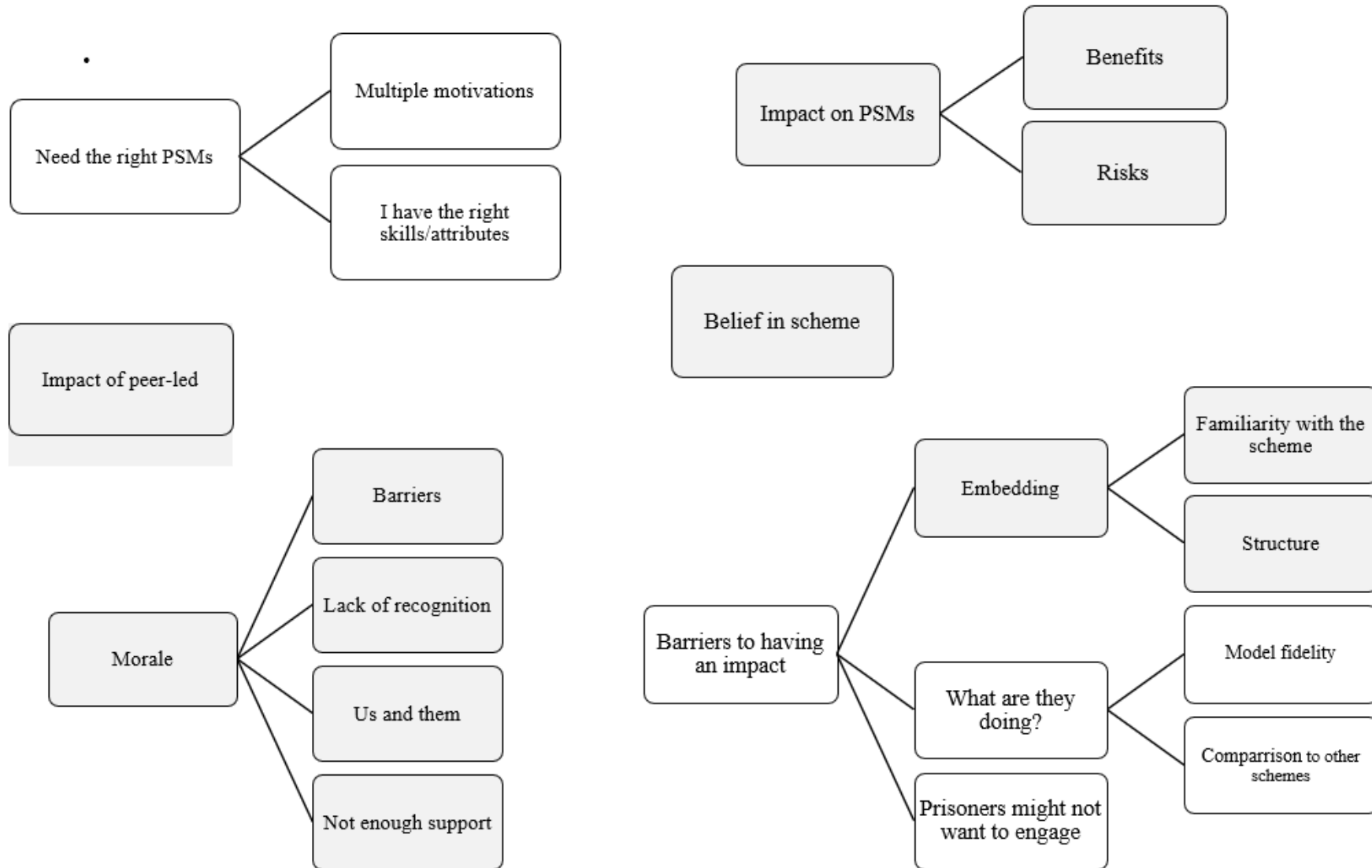
I: So do you get the impression that the champions have the necessary support that they need to do their role?

R: I don't know.

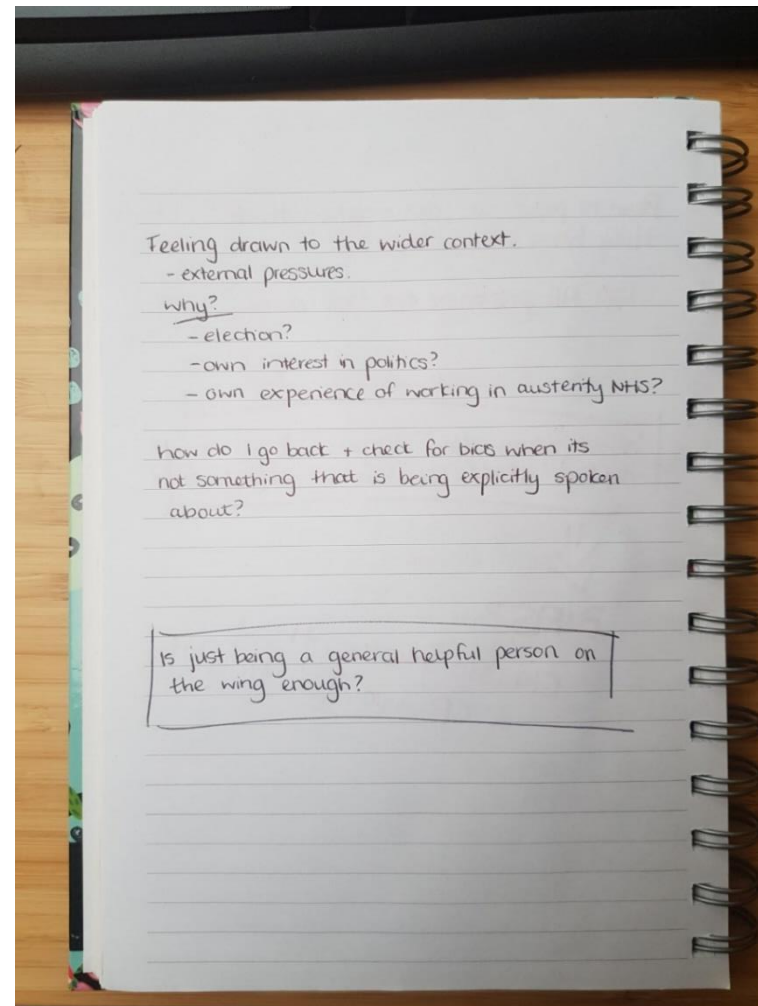
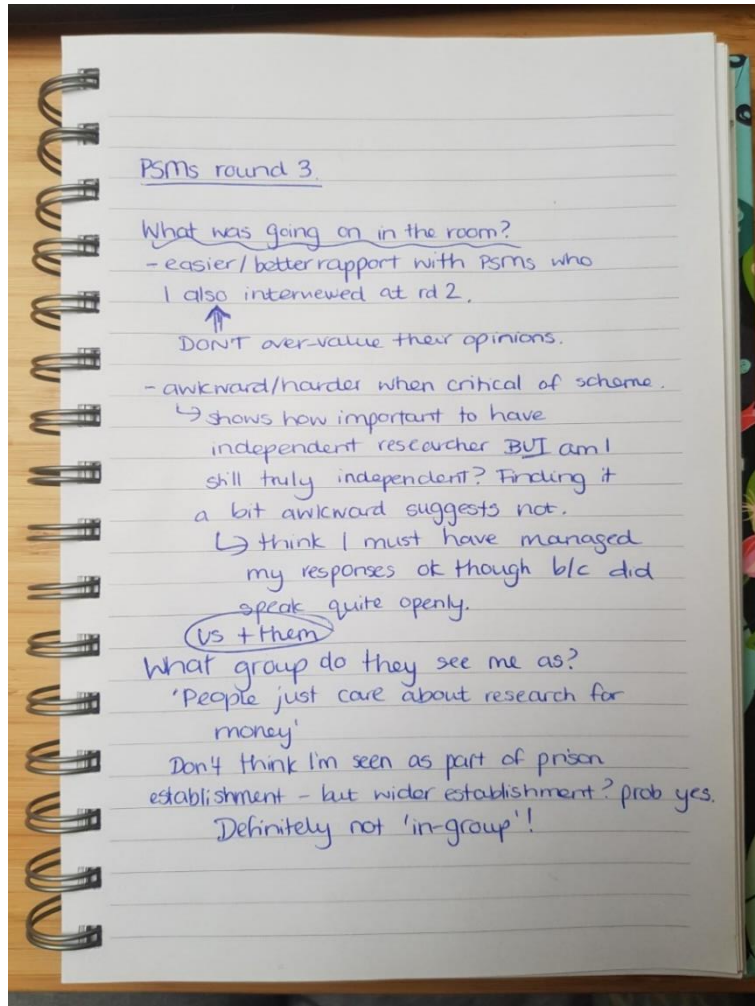
PSM Thematic Map - Time Point One



PSM Thematic Map - Time Point Three



Appendix H: Extracts from Reflexivity Journal



Friday 8th March 2019.

2nd visit.

- Amanda here too - different?
- welcoming team → this felt 'safe'/'familiar'
- flu → am I aligning with interviewers team?
- things from 1st 2 interviews
 - +ve take on intervention
 - interesting about not 'over-stepping' the role.
- convo with Keeley
 - ↳ balance of popular/respected lad on the wing but will also toe the line - need to be respected by staff + prisoners - not always the same qualities.
- everyone mentioning differences between uniformed + non-uniformed staff
 - ↳ hypothesising about wing staff
 - * need to access their perspective.
- discussion with Amanda - interview Keeley?
 - ↳ parallels own experiences on placement
 - ↳ care homes team + care staff.
 - don't pick a side!

How to capture that idea that a lot of offenders can be skilled at 'saying the right thing'?

- ↳ all interviews felt open and honest but even with 'revolving door' offenders can still feel that they mean it
- ↳ actually it's more complicated than that
- ↳ not about lying or deception but about self-belief.

Am I just naive? or coming at it differently to wing staff?

- ↳ do want to see the best in people

part of role as CP to hold hope - have to believe clients can change

BUT need to balance with risk/knowledge of past experience.