

**Circles of Support and Accountability: The Characteristics of Core Members in
England and Wales**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Circles of Support and Accountability, or Circles, use community volunteers to help reintegrate sex offenders at risk of reoffending in the community.

Aims/hypotheses: The aims of this study are to describe the first 275 male sex offenders ('core members') in England and Wales supported by a Circle and to compare those attending the five largest Circles.

Methods: As part of their monitoring activity, 10 Circles Projects extracted data from case files and submitted anonymised data to Circles UK, the national oversight body.

Results: Circles have expanded rapidly with 165 (60.0%) of Circles commencing in the three years 2011-2013 compared with 110 in the nine 2002-10. Most core members were referred from the Probation Service (82%). Circles were provided to men with a range of predicted risks of reoffending – from low (26%) to very high (12%). There were some positive changes between the beginning and end of Circles, such as fewer men being unemployed and more living in their own chosen accommodation

Conclusions/implications for practice: Circles have been used to support the reintegration of a wide range of sex offenders. Given their rapid growth and flexibility, consistent recording standards are required across. These standards should be reviewed periodically to ensure all important fields of change are captured, including frequency of attendance, length per session and quality of engagement in the work.

INTRODUCTION

The reintegration of sex offenders into the community poses a challenge to statutory agencies, citizens, and the offender. Circles of Support and Accountability (Circles) originated in Canada in 1994, in response to the release of a high-risk sex offender.

His risk level meant he served his full sentence in prison but, under law at the time, could not be subject to formal supervision after release (Hannem & Petrunik, 2007; Wilson & Hanvey, 2011). Accordingly, a minister of religion and a few volunteers from his church met with him to provide him with support and hold him accountable for his actions..

What began as a spontaneous initiative later led to a more formal approach to providing Circles for released sex offenders, first in Canada and later elsewhere. The Circles model is closely associated with the therapeutic approach advocated in the Good Lives Model (Ward & Stewart, 2003). This is a strengths-based approach and focuses on improving how the offender functions as a person by enhancing his/her capabilities to attain goals, or 'primary human goods', through socially acceptable means (Ward & Gannon, 2006). Circles target several risk factors associated with offending behaviour by aiming to improve insight, problem-solving, social skills, coping and self-regulation skills, social integration, and participation in society (Höing et al., 2013).

The Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, were instrumental in setting up the first Circles in the UK in 2002, with support from the Home Office (Nellis, 2009; Quaker Peace and Social Witness, 2005; Wilson & Hanvey, 2011). Circles Projects in England and Wales have been funded by the government, statutory partners such as Probation Trusts, and charitable trusts and foundations. These Circles are often delivered in partnerships between charitable trusts and probation.

Circles UK, a charitable organisation, formed in 2007 is the national body which supports, develops and coordinates Circles in the UK (Wilson & Hanvey, 2011). The Circles UK Code of Practice (Circles UK, April 2013), with which all Circles have to comply, recommends that a Circle consist of between four and six

volunteers and one sex offender, referred to as the core member. A Circles coordinator manages the Circle and coordinates information sharing between the Circle and partner agencies, referred to as the outer Circle. A Circle meets regularly, initially weekly, progressing to fortnightly and then monthly. These meetings are supplemented by individual face-to-face or telephone contact by volunteers. Circles progress over time from regular contact (phase one) to more informal support when formal supervision from the coordinator ends (phase two). During this time, other appropriate support networks should develop as the Circle progresses.

Sex offenders who are released from prison in England and Wales are subject to statutory management and supervision (Wilson et al., 2010). Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) provide the framework for overseeing the agencies responsible for their community management. MAPPA have three tiers of risk management, based on the number of agencies involved (Wood & Kemshall, 2007): Level 1, 'ordinary', in which individuals are managed by the responsible agency without significant involvement of other agencies; Level 2, 'Local inter-agency', involves active involvement of more than one agency; Level 3, 'Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPP)', requires the collaboration of a number of key agencies and is for those thought to pose a high or very high risk of serious harm, sometimes referred to as the 'critical few'. MAPPA are also responsible for ensuring sex offender registration, management of Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPO) – civil orders under the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 – and community notification (Wilson et al., 2010).

While there is a growing evidence base for the effectiveness of Circles, samples studied have been small. Their core members generally fare better than controls on measures of general recidivism, but few differences in sexual recidivism

have been found. The only randomised controlled trial, in Minnesota, of 31 core members of Circles and 31 controls found that sexual recidivism was not significantly different between the groups (Duwe, 2012), although there were significant reductions in time to recidivism for three of its five measures (any arrests, technical violation revocations, and any reincarceration) for Circle members compared with controls. In Canada, two matched control studies found core members had significantly lower rates of sexual recidivism than controls (Wilson et al., 2007a; 2009).

In the UK, Bates et al. (2014) described the outcomes of 71 of the first 100 Circles run by South East Circles and compared them to 71 referrals not assigned to a Circle, but broadly matched on the basis of their risk scores. Four core members were reconvicted of a sexual offence, one of which one was historical, and the other three (4.2%) were non-contact offences. By contrast, three controls were reconvicted of a contact sexual offence and two of a non-contact sexual offence. The range of core members accepted into UK circles is, however, not clear and this makes longer term planning of circles difficult.

Our aim was to describe the characteristics of core members in a Circle supported by Circles UK from the first in 2002 until December 2013 and to compare the five largest Projects.

METHOD

Sample

The sample was of all the first 275 men who were core members of 10 Circle Projects in several locations across England and Wales, from the inception of the

first Projects in 2002 until December 2013. The number of women joining was very small so has been excluded from analyses.

Data source

All data were extracted from Circles case files and reports. Data are recorded by Circles Project team members at two time points: on acceptance as a core member and at the end of the members' time in the Circle. Circles UK developed a proforma so that all Circles Projects could record data systematically in a standardised format. This meant that some data were recorded retrospectively as Circles Projects developed over time. More recently, some of the response categories were revised. Consequently, there were some missing data, particularly from the earlier Circles.

Procedure

All data were extracted by the individual Circles Coordinators according to the following domains: demographic, offending, intervention history, risk, referral process, and living circumstances at the beginning and end of Circle (e.g., employment). Data were anonymised and submitted to Circles UK by the respective Projects as part of their monitoring activity.

Data analysis

Descriptive analyses were conducted using SPSS (v.19). Characteristics of men accepted into each of the five largest Circles Projects (those which have provided at least 20 Circles) were compared. Most data were categorical. McNemar's test of change was used to test for statistically significant differences in paired dichotomous

data, namely differences in core members' circumstances between the start and end of Circles.

Ethics

Ethical approval was not required as data were submitted to Circles UK in a fully anonymised format allow their data to be used for research.

RESULTS

Following the amalgamation of two of the three pilot sites, there were only two UK Circles Projects for the seven years between 2002 and 2008, providing between 3 and 18 Circles per year (see Table 1). One further Project was added in 2009. Since then, there has been a rapid expansion, with 10 Projects providing, on average, over 50 Circles between them in the years 2011, 2012 and 2013, yielding a total of 275 Circles delivered by December 2013.

TABLE ONE HERE

Demographics

The characteristics of core members from each of the five Projects which had provided at least 20 Circles and the combined smaller Projects are shown in Table 2. Average age was towards the late 40s, and similar between Projects. Only 19 (7.5%) were married or in common law relationships (n known = 255). Ethnicity, not shown in the table, was recorded for 261 core members; most were White British (97%) or White other (3%). Religious affiliation, similarly not shown, was recorded for 203 core members: 107 (53%) had none, while 86 (42%) were recorded as Christian and 10 (5%) had other religions, again not differentiating the groups. Sexual orientation was

disclosed by 233 core members. Of these, 169 described themselves as heterosexual (72.5%), 41 (17.6%) gay and 23 (9.9%) bi-sexual. The majority of core members lived on their own (42%) or in approved premises (36%). Level of education (n known = 231) varied from 86 (37%) not having any qualifications to 26 (11%) being educated to university level; few men were employed, and neither of these characteristics differed between Projects.

Referral source

Most referrals to Circle Projects were made the Probation Service (82%). However, Project B had fewer referrals from probation and more from the police and other sources than other Projects (see Table 2). Almost two-thirds had been released from prison on licence (parole) and approximately one-half were under a SOPO at the time of their referral; over one-quarter (79, 29%) were both on licence and a SOPO.. Median time from referral to the start of a Circle was 107 days (IQR: 69-189 days). Referral date was available for 166 (60.1%) men.

TABLE TWO HERE

Index Offence

Sexual assault on a child was the most common index offence (see Table 3). In total, 117 core members had been convicted of more than one category of sex offending, with 27 having an index offence combination which crossed at least three categories (e.g., rape, sexual assault, internet offences). Index offences categorised as 'other' included four offences of murder. Although there were some missing data, we never had less than 221 men (80%) in offence data categories. All Circles Projects

provided Circles to sex offenders under community sentences as well as those who had received a custodial sentence for their index offence and were returning (or had returned) to the community.

TABLE THREE HERE

Previous treatment

In about half of the 251 cases for whom data on both prison- and community-based sex offender programmes were available, half had participated in either prison- or community-based sex offender programmes, 73 (29%) of these in both, 56 (22%) in prison programmes only and 71 (28%) only in community programmes. Just one-fifth (51 men) had participated in neither.

Predicted risk

The Offender Assessment System (OASys; Home Office, 2002) is used by the Prison Service and Probation Trusts in England and Wales to assess the likelihood of the risk of reoffending or serious harm and inform risk management plans. It relies on both static and dynamic factors. Among men for whom OASys risk levels were documented, two-thirds were classified as being a high/very high risk to children and one-fifth as being a high/very high risk to the general public (see Table 4).

The Risk Matrix 2000/S (Thornton, 2010; Thornton et al, 2003) is used to measure risk of sexual offending more specifically, and scores showed that, since inception, Circles were providing for men with a range of risk levels. The largest Project, Project A, had the most men categorised as low risk (30%) on the Risk Matrix 2000/S.

Overall, similar percentages of men were managed at MAPPA Level One (42.3%) and MAPPA Level Two (44.4%). However, only Project B had similar percentages managed at these levels – other Projects had more managed at one of the two levels. Few men were managed at the highest MAPPA Level 3 (24; 9.5%).

TABLE FOUR HERE

Mental health difficulties and substance misuse at the start of the Circle

One-fifth of the men had had mental health difficulties recorded (53, 20%) though few of these had been noted as receiving general (13, 5%) or forensic (6, 2%) psychiatric treatment in the community at the start of the Circle. Some were documented as having problems with alcohol (47, 18%) and/or drugs (17, 6%), but only 12 (5%) were known to be in substance misuse treatment. These figures suggest a probable unmet need, although information may not have been available to Project Coordinators.

Ending of Circles

Just over two-thirds of the Circles (192, 70%) had ended at the time of data collection, of which 131 (68%) had a planned ending and 57 (30%) did not. Reasons for the latter included non-engagement, choosing to withdraw or recall of the man to prison (data were missing for 4 (2%) cases). The median time in a Circle was 365 days (IQR: 203-528 days; 8 missing cases). Ten Circles ended within the first month, of which two ended at the first meeting when the man withdrew. Nine Circles were still meeting after 2 years, two them after 3 years.

Changes in living circumstances

Changes in circumstances between the start and end of the Circle are shown in Table 5. Where there were changes, they were positive. Significantly more men were in a relationship at the end of the Circle than at the start, fewer were drawing benefits, more were in employment and substantially more were in more stable accommodation of their own or with a partner or family. Many fewer were in a sex offender treatment programme, but this was likely to be indicative of completion in most cases.

TABLE FIVE HERE

The characteristics of Core Members during different time periods

We compared the key characteristics of the men in Circles beginning before 2011 ($n = 110$) to those beginning from 2011 ($n = 165$), when there was a noticeable increase in provision. The mean age was similar. There were no significant differences in risk as measured by the Risk Matrix 2000/S and OASys. However, the level of MAPPA management was significantly different, with 20%, 66%, and 14% of the 2002-2010 starters and 55%, 38%, and 7% of the 2011-2013 starters being managed at Level One, Two and Three respectively, $\chi^2(2, n = 253) = 29.974, p < 0.001$.

The types of index offences were broadly similar. However, significantly more of the 2011-2013 starters (28%) than the 2002-2010 starters (11%) were convicted of internet offences, $\chi^2(1, n = 236) = 9.659, p = 0.002$. Similarly, significantly more of the 2011-2013 starters (37%) than the 2002-2010 starters (16%) were convicted of possession of child sexual abuse images, $\chi^2(1, n = 236) = 12.210, p < 0.001$.

While more of the 2011-2013 starters (26%) than the 2002-2010 starters (19%) had received a non-custodial sentence, and more of the 2011-2013 starters (57%) than the 2002-2010 starters (45%) were subject to a SOPO at the time of referral, these were not significantly different. However, significantly more of the 2002-2010 starters (74%) than the 2011-2013 starters (57%) were on licence at the time of referral, $\chi^2(1, n = 264) = 8.024, p = 0.005$.

DISCUSSION

This is the first study of sex offenders supported in the community by a Circle since their inception in the UK, irrespective of time spent in a Circle. Each Circle is a unique entity in that, while they all follow a Code of Practice (Circles UK, April 2013), there is flexibility in how they operate (Bates et al., 2014) and each is focused on a different offender supported by 4-6 volunteers. The Projects which support these Circles vary in the length of time they have been operating and number of cases they take on.

Hanvey and Höing (2012) argued that Circles are consistent with the risk principle of the RNR model (Andrews et al., 2006) in that they are used for medium to high risk sex offenders. In our sample 42% of men were managed at the lowest level of MAPPA management – a figure much higher than found by Bates et al (2014). The more recent core members were managed at lower MAPPA levels. However, given that 98.2% of MAPPA-eligible Category One Registered Sex Offenders are managed at Level 1 (Ministry of Justice, 2014) this may not necessarily be indicative of low risk. Of most importance, we found that men estimated to be at any level of risk appeared to benefit from a Circle. So, Circles in the UK may well be different from Circles in Canada, where they were intended for

highest risk offenders (Wilson & Prinzo, 2001). It is likely to be important to make country specific evaluations of this service.

In keeping with the possibly lower-risk for many in the UK Projects, one-quarter of the men had received a non-custodial sentence for their index offence. Here, too, the Circle was not used, as initially intended, to support the transition of the offender from prison to the community. A community sentence for sex offending may also be socially isolating, however, and becoming a core member of a Circle valuable for diverting men from further offending. Certainly, there was, overall, evidence of good in a number of areas and no evidence of harm for the men in the UK Circles.

White men were over-represented compared to what one would expect for a population of sex offenders (Ministry of Justice, 2013). It may be that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) sex offenders are not being referred to Circles. Cowburn et al. (2008) reported that BME men are not accessing prison based sex offender treatment despite being over-represented in the prison population in England and Wales as sex offenders, particularly in younger groups. Accordingly, our findings may indicate unmet need for community support among BME sex offenders. Cowburn et al. (2008) developed a tripartite explanatory model of low inclusion rates – comprising social, cultural and therapeutic factors – which may apply to referrals to Circles.

Where sexual orientation was documented, over one-quarter of men self-reported being either gay or bisexual – markedly higher than the combined estimated 5-7% of people in the adult population being lesbian, gay or bisexual (DTI, 2004). The sexual orientation of core members has not been reported elsewhere in Circles research and reasons for the over-representation remain unclear.

More than one-quarter of Circles had an unplanned ending. There are several implications of a Circle ending early and further investigation is required to put these in context. They do not necessarily mean a Circle has been unsuccessful. For example, while a recall could be viewed as a negative outcome in response to a new offence, it could be a positive one if it prevented behaviour from escalating into an offence, particularly if the Circle identified this behaviour.

While Circles provided practical support to their core members, it was not possible to attribute outcomes, such as fewer being unemployed, to being in a Circle. There are some changes which would have occurred over time regardless of Circle involvement, such as the men moving out of approved premises. There are a number of plausible ways that Circles may, however, help promote or contribute to change in these generally socially isolated men, although without qualitative data it was not possible to explore reasons for changes or the quality of the changes (Thomas et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2007b).

Inevitably, our study had a number of limitations, in particular missing data. Since the formation of Circles UK, data are collected routinely by Circles Projects in a standard way, but there is, nevertheless, reliance on the resources and goodwill of the coordinators, and the coordinators being informed of outcomes. Accordingly, Circles coordinators and volunteers should be helped to recognise the value of research and be afforded the necessary resources. Data were not available to gauge any 'dose effect', that is frequency of sessions or number and level of involvement of the volunteers. It is vital that sufficient data are collected in the future to be able to fully describe the core members and evaluate their outcomes.

No control group was available to compare men in Circles with sex offenders who were not in Circles, and, given that some of the positive changes observed may

have been time related, or related to other aspects of management, a randomised controlled trial might be indicated, although the small comparison studies undertaken so far do indicate benefits from Circles. Only men were included as core members, and therefore these findings are not generalisable to the small group of women who are convicted of sex offences and may also benefit from Circles.

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Table 1: Number of New Circles Started Per Year

Circle Project	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
A	1	7	4	7	8	5	13	12	9	15	11	15	107
B	2	2	1	3	1	7	5	7	4	6	2	4	44
C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	13	8	28
D	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	8	7	22
E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8	7	4	20
F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	11	17
G	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	5	3	4	16
H	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	2	0	14
I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	5
J	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Total	3	9	5	10	9	12	18	20	24	57	52	56	275

Table 2 – Characteristics of Core Members

Circle Project	A (<i>n</i> = 107)	B (<i>n</i> = 44)	C (<i>n</i> = 28)	D (<i>n</i> = 22)	E (<i>n</i> = 20)	F to J (<i>n</i> = 54)	Total (<i>n</i> = 275)
Age – Median (IQR)	47.0 (38-50)	49.0 (39-57)	44.5 (38-57)	42.5 (32-50)	50 (25-60)	42.5 (30-52)	46.0 (37-56)
Marital status - <i>n</i>	101	33	28	22	18	53	255
Married/common-law	9 (8.9)	3 (9.1)	0 (-)	3 (13.6)	0 (-)	4 (7.5)	19 (7.5)
Divorced/Separated	50 (49.5)	13 (39.4)	10 (35.7)	11 (50.0)	10 (55.6)	12 (22.6)	106 (41.6)
Never married	38 (37.6)	17 (51.5)	18 (64.3)	8 (36.4)	8 (44.4)	37 (69.8)	126 (49.4)
Widowed	4 (4.0)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)	4 (1.6)
Sexuality	88	41	26	22	9	47	233
Heterosexual	70 (79.5)	26 (63.4)	18 (69.2)	14 (63.6)	7 (77.8)	34 (72.3)	169 (72.5)
Gay	14 (15.9)	11 (26.8)	3 (11.5)	4 (18.2)	0 (-)	9 (19.1)	41 (17.6)
Bi-sexual	4 (4.5)	4 (9.8)	5 (19.2)	4 (18.2)	2 (22.2)	4 (8.5)	4 (8.5)
Accommodation status - <i>n</i>	100	44	28	22	20	39	253
On own	31 (31.0)	30 (68.2)	16 (57.1)	7 (31.8)	7 (35.0)	16 (41.0)	107 (42.3)
Approved premises	48 (48.0)	12 (27.3)	4 (14.3)	9 (40.9)	7 (35.0)	11 (28.2)	91 (36.0)
With partner	5 (5.0)	0 (-)	0 (-)	1 (4.5)	0 (-)	1 (2.6)	7 (2.8)
With other family	8 (8.0)	0 (-)	2 (7.1)	4 (18.2)	2 (10.0)	3 (7.7)	19 (7.5)
Other	8 (8.0)	2 (4.5)	6 (21.4)	1 (4.5)	4 (20.0)	8 (20.5)	29 (11.5)
Employment status - <i>n</i>	102	43	28	22	20	52	267
Employed	6 (5.9)	8 (18.6)	3 (10.7)	1 (4.5)	0 (-)	7 (13.5)	25 (9.4)
Unemployed	80 (78.4)	31 (72.1)	18 (64.3)	17 (77.3)	17 (85.0)	42 (80.8)	205 (76.8)
Student/Retired/Disabled	16 (15.7)	4 (9.3)	7 (25.0)	4 (18.1)	3 (15.0)	3 (5.8)	37 (13.9)
Referral Source - <i>n</i>	90	44	28	22	20	38	242
Probation (%)	80 (88.9)	24 (54.5)	26 (92.9)	19 (86.4)	17 (85.0)	32 (84.2)	198 (81.8)
Police (%)	6 (6.7)	8 (18.2)	1 (3.6)	3 (13.6)	1 (5.0)	5 (13.2)	24 (9.9)
Other (%)	4 (4.4)	12 (27.3)	1 (3.6)	0 (-)	2 (10.0)	1 (2.6)	20 (8.3)
Currently on SOPO (%)	40 (50.0) ^a	12 (27.3)	19 (67.9)	9 (40.9)	10 (50.0)	38 (77.6) ^b	128 (52.7) ^c
Currently on licence (%)	88 (52.4) ^d	15 (34.1)	15 (53.6)	13 (59.1)	13 (65.0)	24 (49.0) ^b	168 (63.6) ^e

Note: ^a *n* = 80; ^b *n* = 49; ^c *n* = 243; ^d *n* = 100; ^e *n* = 264

Table 3 – Offending and treatment history of Core Members

Circle Project	A (<i>n</i> = 107)	B (<i>n</i> = 44)	C (<i>n</i> = 28)	D (<i>n</i> = 22)	E (<i>n</i> = 20)	F to J (<i>n</i> = 54)	Total (<i>n</i> = 275)
Index Offence^a							
Rape adult female (%)	4 (3.9)	1 (2.3)	1 (4.5)	N/A	0 (-)	2 (5.4)	8 (3.6)
Rape adult male (%)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)	2 (N/A)	0 (-)	0 (-)	2 (0.7)
Rape child female (%)	17 (16.7)	3 (6.8)	4 (19.0)	3 (N/A)	1 (5.3)	4 (10.8)	32 (14.2)
Rape child male (%)	9 (8.8)	3 (6.8)	2 (9.1)	1 (N/A)	0 (-)	4 (11.1)	19 (8.5)
Sexual assault adult female (%)	11 (10.8)	2 (4.5)	2 (9.1)	2 (N/A)	0 (-)	4 (10.8)	21 (9.3)
Sexual assault adult male (%)	1 (1.0)	2 (4.5)	0 (-)	N/A	0 (-)	2 (5.6)	5 (2.3)
Sexual assault child female (%)	41 (40.2)	16 (36.4)	10 (45.5)	6 (N/A)	10 (52.6)	15 (37.5)	98 (42.1)
Sexual assault child male (%)	20 (19.6)	11 (25.0)	9 (37.5)	2 (N/A)	6 (30.0)	11 (26.8)	59 (25.3)
Incest (%)	8 (7.8)	1 (2.3)	1 (4.5)	N/A	1 (5.3)	1 (2.8)	12 (5.4)
Internet offences (%)	6 (5.9)	7 (15.9)	7 (29.2)	4 (N/A)	4 (21.1)	20 (45.5)	48 (20.3)
Possession of images (%)	15 (15.0)	8 (18.2)	9 (36.0)	8 (N/A)	6 (31.6)	21 (47.7)	67 (27.9)
Abduction of Child (%)	3 (2.9)	1 (2.3)	0 (-)	N/A	0 (-)	2 (5.6)	6 (2.7)
Indecent Exposure (%)	4 (4.0)	1 (2.3)	5 (22.7)	N/A	2 (10.5)	3 (8.1)	15 (6.7)
Voyeurism (%)	1 (1.0)	0 (-)	0 (-)	N/A	0 (-)	2 (5.4)	3 (1.4)
Index Offence Sentence - <i>n</i>	105	36	26	21	18	51	257
Non-Custodial ^b	14 (13.3)	7 (19.4)	7 (26.9)	6 (28.6)	5 (27.8)	22 (43.1)	61 (23.7)
Prison < 1 year (%)	2 (1.9)	2 (5.6)	0 (-)	1 (4.8)	0 (-)	0 (-)	5 (1.9)
Prison 1-3 years (%)	31 (29.5)	13 (36.1)	6 (23.1)	6 (28.6)	3 (16.7)	13 (25.5)	72 (28.0)
Prison 4-5 years (%)	17 (16.2)	5 (13.9)	3 (11.5)	5 (23.8)	7 (38.9)	5 (9.8)	42 (16.3)
Prison 6-9 years (%)	20 (19.0)	5 (13.9)	4 (15.4)	0 (-)	1 (5.6)	5 (9.8)	35 (13.6)
Prison 10+ years (%)	16 (15.2)	3 (8.3)	5 (19.2)	1 (4.8)	1 (5.6)	4 (7.8)	30 (11.7)
Indeterminate/Life (%)	5 (4.8)	1 (2.8)	1 (3.8)	2 (9.5)	1 (5.6)	2 (3.9)	12 (4.7)
Prison Sex Offender Programme - <i>n</i>	103	41	24	19	18	54	259
Completed	61 (59.2)	20 (48.8)	14 (58.3)	8 (42.1)	10 (55.6)	10 (18.5)	123 (47.5)
Yes but completion not known	3 (2.9)	1 (2.4)	1 (4.2)	0 (-)	1 (5.6)	7 (13.0)	13 (5.1)
Community Sex Offender Prog. - <i>n</i>	99	43	25	22	19	54	262
Completed	46 (46.5)	11 (25.6)	5 (20.0)	3 (13.6)	3 (15.8)	13 (24.1)	81 (30.9)
Yes (ongoing)	17 (17.2)	1 (2.3)	3 (12.0)	4 (18.2)	3 (15.8)	6 (11.1)	31 (13.0)
Yes but completion not known	12 (12.2)	2 (4.7)	1 (4.0)	3 (13.6)	2 (10.5)	16 (29.6)	36 (13.7)

Note: ^a Index offences are not mutually exclusive and there were missing data (e.g., overall total for the offence categories ranged from *n* = 221 to 240), percentages are not given for Project D because only 'Yes' responses were recorded; ^b Caution, Community Order, or Suspended Sentence

Table 4 – Risk and management levels of Core Members

Circle Project	A (n = 107)	B (n = 44)	C (n = 28)	D (n = 22)	E (n = 20)	F to J (n = 54)	Total (n = 275)
OASys Risk of Harm Children - <i>n</i>	59	13	25	22	5	50	174
Low (%)	5 (8.5)	0 (-)	2 (8.0)	3 (13.6)	0 (-)	3 (6.0)	13 (7.5)
Medium (%)	21 (35.6)	1 (7.7)	2 (8.0)	10 (45.5)	0 (-)	12 (24.0)	46 (26.4)
High (%)	31 (52.5)	10 (76.9)	19 (76.0)	7 (31.8)	4 (80.0)	32 (64.0)	103 (59.2)
Very High (%)	2 (3.4)	2 (15.4)	2 (8.0)	2 (9.1)	1 (20.0)	3 (6.0)	12 (6.9)
Risk Matrix 2000S - <i>n</i>	102	28	25	9	13	48	225
Low (%)	31 (30.4)	5 (17.9)	3 (12.0)	1 (11.1)	2 (15.4)	16 (33.3)	58 (25.8)
Medium (%)	34 (33.3)	8 (28.6)	8 (32.0)	3 (33.3)	4 (30.8)	12 (25.0)	69 (30.7)
High (%)	26 (25.5)	11 (39.3)	7 (28.0)	4 (44.4)	6 (46.2)	16 (33.3)	70 (31.1)
Very High (%)	11 (10.8)	4 (14.3)	7 (28.0)	1 (11.1)	1 (7.7)	4 (8.3)	28 (12.4)
MAPPA Level - <i>n</i>	104	28	26	22	20	53	253
MAPPA 1 (%)	25 (24.0)	12 (42.9)	21 (80.8)	2 (9.1)	13 (65.0)	34 (64.2)	107 (42.3)
MAPPA 2 (%)	70 (67.3)	11 (39.3)	4 (15.4)	18 (81.8)	5 (25.0)	14 (26.4)	122 (44.4)
MAPPA 3 (%)	9 (8.7)	5 (17.9)	1 (3.8)	2 (9.1)	2 (10.0)	5 (9.4)	24 (9.5)

Table 5 – Changes in Circumstances between the Beginning and End of Circle

	Frequency (%)		<i>p</i>
	Start of Circle	End of Circle	
In a Relationship (n = 147)	21 (14.3)	30 (20.4)	0.049
Family contact (n = 172)	116 (67.4)	118 (68.6)	0.814
Claiming Benefits (n = 164)	145 (88.4)	136 (82.9)	0.012
Known Debts (n = 123)	18 (14.6)	14 (11.4)	0.454
Mental Health difficulties (n = 173)	29 (16.8)	31 (17.9)	0.824
Alcohol problems (n = 176)	27 (15.3)	20 (11.4)	0.143
Drug problems (n = 177)	11 (6.2)	9 (5.1)	0.727
Community Sex Offender Programme (n = 159)	51 (32.1)	22 (13.8)	0.001
Community Forensic Psychiatric Treatment (n = 174)	6 (3.4)	2 (1.1)	0.125
Community General Psychiatric Treatment (n = 154)	6 (3.9)	2 (1.3)	0.219
Substance Abuse Treatment (n = 155)	4 (2.6)	4 (2.6)	1.000
Employment status (n = 175)			
Employed/Student/Retired/Disabled	43 (24.6)	57 (32.6)	0.001
Unemployed	132 (75.4)	118 (67.4)	
Accommodation status (n = 166)			
Partner, family, own accommodation, tenant	81 (48.8)	133 (80.1)	0.001
Approved premises, hostels, institution, others	85 (51.2)	33 (19.6)	

Note: McNemar's test of change was used to test significance