



SOVA - Newham Substance Misuse Partnership and Crime Reduction Partnership Mentoring
Project

Project Report: 01/11/2009 – 31/03/2010

By

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Introduction

The SOVA Newham Mentoring Project (the Project) is design to assist offenders classified as Priority Prolific Offenders (PPO) and service users that misuse substances - who may also be PPO. This support is provided by way of volunteers who assist their clients/mentee on a one to one basis in various aspects of their lives and/or rehabilitation programmes; from meeting once a week to support in court and help with job/benefits applications. The Project is based with the Drug Action Team in Stratford London. It was set up in May 2007 with the aim of recruiting and training a pool of ordinary members of the public to act as volunteering mentors to substance misusing clients and in some cases their families.

The volunteers are not meant to substitute the work of paid staff, rather they are vital in providing much needed support and motivation in a way that paid staff could not and their civic perspective facilitates a greater range of times that a mentee could be seen as opposed to the regular working hours of paid staff.

The project is funded by the London Borough of Newham through the Newham Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and the Primary Care Trust (PCT). Additional funds are provided by the New Drugs Intervention Programme (DIP) through accommodation costs. The project is staffed by Frank Jaja working within the Newham Substance Misuse Partnership (SMP).

Volunteer - Work & Process

The general mode for recruiting volunteers to the project is by advertising in local publications such as the Newham Magazine or Newham Recorder. At present I have arranged to have a piece of literature about the project put out on the Newham Magazine every quarter. The project recruits a good number of volunteers from the service providers that it works with. The recruitment process is as follows: once interest in becoming a volunteer is registered, formal application form is completed. Following that, an interview is arranged and the CRB application process is initiated. The next stage is to arrange a volunteer training session which focuses on Core Skills of volunteering and any other skills or activities pertaining to the Project.

Project Development

The SOVA Newham Mentoring Project liaises with a number of other agencies. Chief amongst these is the Criminal Justice Intervention Team (CJIT). CJIT is designed to provide a comprehensive and holistic service to substance misusing clients. It does so by offering a full assessment of the needs of the clients and making available services and resources to the clients so as to deter the client from re-offending or engage in a detox programme. The SOVA Mentoring Project is a vital and dynamic part of this

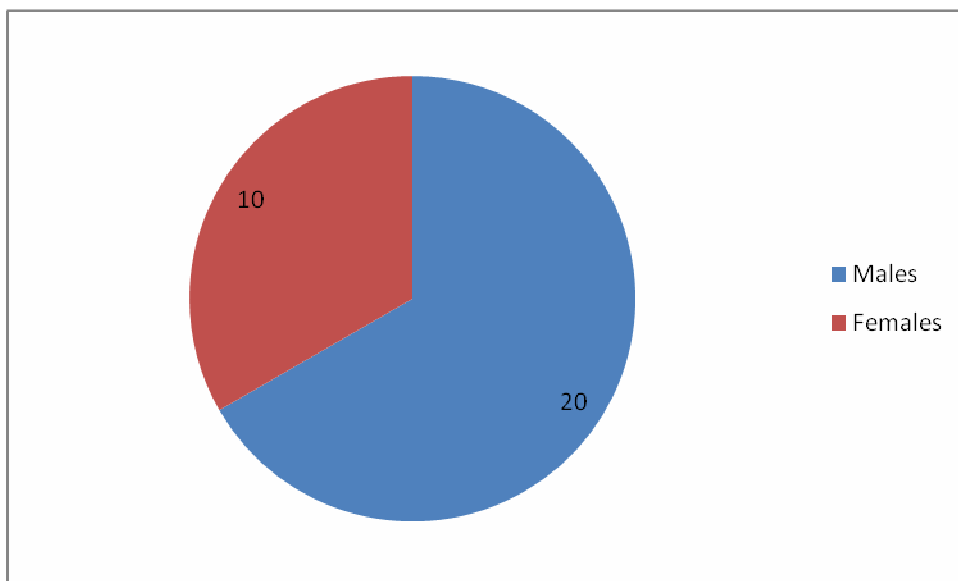
Objectives and Targets

The referrals started fairly low from the referring agencies. However, following a brief meeting with the staff or service Manager of a particular agency there has been an increase in the flow of referrals.

At the date of this report we have twenty nine active volunteer working with over thirty clients.

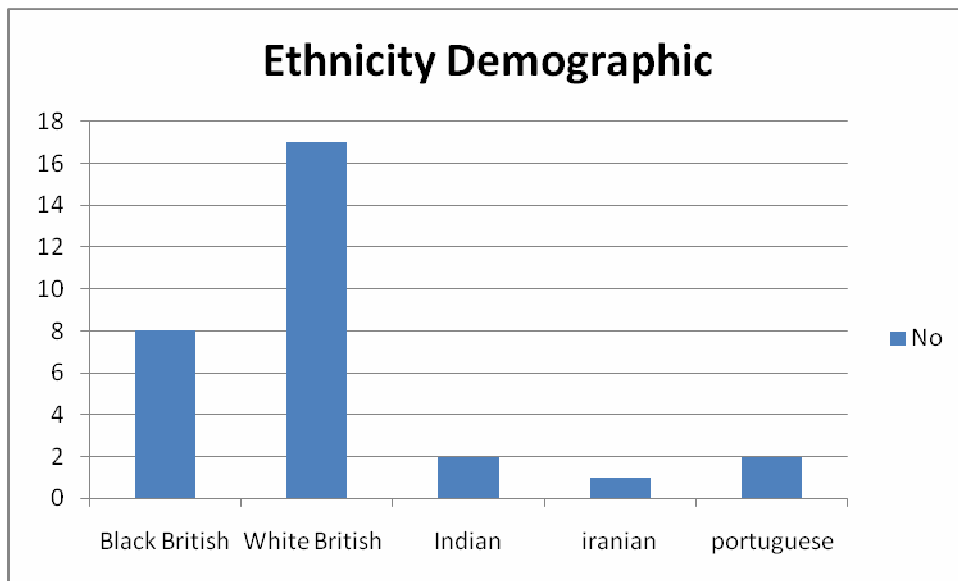
The target for this year is as follows:

The Chart below represents the number of Male and Female active mentee the project has.



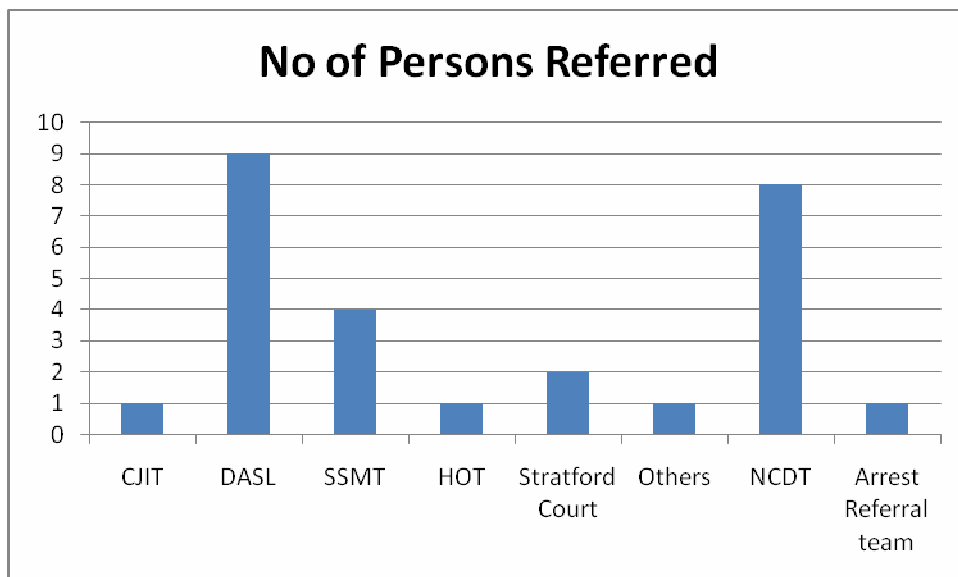
The collective, minimum, number of hours of volunteering service that is available to the above mentees is over 250 hours a month. This does not include the hours spent in telephone conversations or of escorting clients to classes or helping clients by doing some extra research for them.

The demographic by Nationality is charted below.



It must be appreciated that the demographic of Newham is changing. There is an increasing number of Europeans, especially Eastern European, settling in Newham. Moreover the population is getting younger.

The following chart shows where the project gets referral from



The number of referrals from the PPO team is relatively low. Therefore, increasing the number of referrals from the PPO, CJIT and HOT is a top priority.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the project has had another successful year. The referrals are at times a little slow in coming in but are sent when managers are reminded of the service. That is why it is a constant priority to remind case managers regularly of the service.

The demographic of Newham is changing, therefore, the Project must evolve with it in order to continue to provide a relevant and dynamic service.

During this year the project has had some difficulties, such as the change of project manager and the project manager losing their work base. However, the project has ended the year having serviced all referrals made and in a strong position to increase its workload in the coming year