

Offender Personality Disorder Pathway

The OPD pathway programme is jointly commissioned by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and NHS England Specialised Commissioning. It is jointly delivered by the National Probation Service, HMPS, Mental Health and third sector providers and was established in 2011

It aims to provide a pathway of psychologically informed services for a highly complex and challenging group who are likely to satisfy a diagnosis of personality disorder (significant psychological and social difficulties usually originating in deprived, abusive, neglectful or difficult childhoods); and who pose a high risk of harm to others (men), or are managed by the National Probation Service (women)

Core aims of the pathway ⁽¹⁾:



Reduce repeat serious sexual and/or violent offending



Improve psychological health, wellbeing and pro-social behaviour



Improve confidence, competence and attitudes of staff working with complex cases who are likely to satisfy a diagnosis of "personality disorder"



Increase efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quality of OPD pathway services

The pathway involves the following core elements:



People who may benefit from being on the pathway are identified through completion of a case ID screening tool by offender managers with or without support from specialist practitioners



Probation staff can request a case consultation with a psychologist or PD Probation Officer. This will be recorded on probation systems and uses a bio-psychosocial approach



Joint meetings between an individual, their Offender Manager, and OPD pathway practitioners to resolve specific issues or observe relational dynamics in order to improve understanding of risk

Intensive Intervention and Risk Management Services (IIRMs) where probation and mental health staff jointly deliver interventions and support. The pathway may also provide a gateway into other mental health services



Some probation Approved Premises now operate a Psychologically Informed Planned Environment (PIPE) model

This offers an environment intended to support pro-social development

All Approved Premises are also working towards the Enabling Environments award (Royal College of Psychiatrists)

The structure of this model offers opportunities to improve partnership working and information sharing between health and justice staff. It recognises that neither criminal justice nor health staff can manage such complex cases alone. Therefore, a partnership approach is essential

The pathway is commissioned as a whole - extending from the community into prison and back out with treatment and PIPEs also being offered in prisons as well as in the community

Various evaluations of the pathway are currently underway