

Improving wellbeing of New Zealanders by reducing offending – what works?

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What is Investment Approach to Justice?

- **IA2J** is a new cross-agency initiative that is using data and evidence to support crime prevention.
- **IA2J** purpose is to boost crime prevention, and reduce harm from crime, in New Zealand communities.
- **IA2J** is part of a wider government initiative to improve the lives of NZers and and increase government efficiency through joined-up services.

IA2J structure – four workstreams

Workstreams

1 System level performance measure

Develop and implement a measure of the magnitude of future crime to track progress against our ultimate goal of reducing the future burden of crime on society.

2 Segmentation to understand risk concentration(s)

Build a lifecourse view of those people and places most at risk of offending and victimisation. This will provide the crime lens to support the development of a person-centric, agency-neutral picture of risk and need for Social Investment.

3 Investing in effective services

Analyse the return on investment of our crime prevention activities to understand which investments best reduce the future burden of crime. As social investment develops, this analysis will support Budget decisions in the social sector.

4 Supporting evidence-based practice

Deliver information to the frontline and practitioners across the sector in a way that supports agencies' investment agendas.

Why Evidence Briefs?

- Core product of the Workstream 3
- Improve understanding what works to reduce crime - not just in the justice sector, but right across government and at all stages of the lifecourse
- Provide information about the cost of intervention, current spend, unmet demand and how much crime would be prevented if we increased the level of investment
- Assess the strength of the evidence

INVESTMENT CLASS SUMMARY

Evidence rating:	Strong
Unit cost:	\$2,500 average per completed pre-sentence conference
Effect size (number needed to treat):	For every 15-20 low-risk offenders participating in a conference, one fewer will be reconvicted, on average
Current spend:	\$9.084m per year (15/16 budget)
Unmet demand:	Large

What methodology we use?

- Each Evidence Brief provides an evidence rating based on the same objective criteria.
- The final rating is built around two separate assessments, one reflecting international evidence, and another – New Zealand evidence.
- This approach reflects that effective programmes in one country often, but not always, work in other countries.
- Both international and New Zealand evidence is assessed using the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods, a 5-point scale with randomised controlled trials at the top (level 5) of the scale.
- Level 3 the minimum in order to conclude the intervention reduces crime.

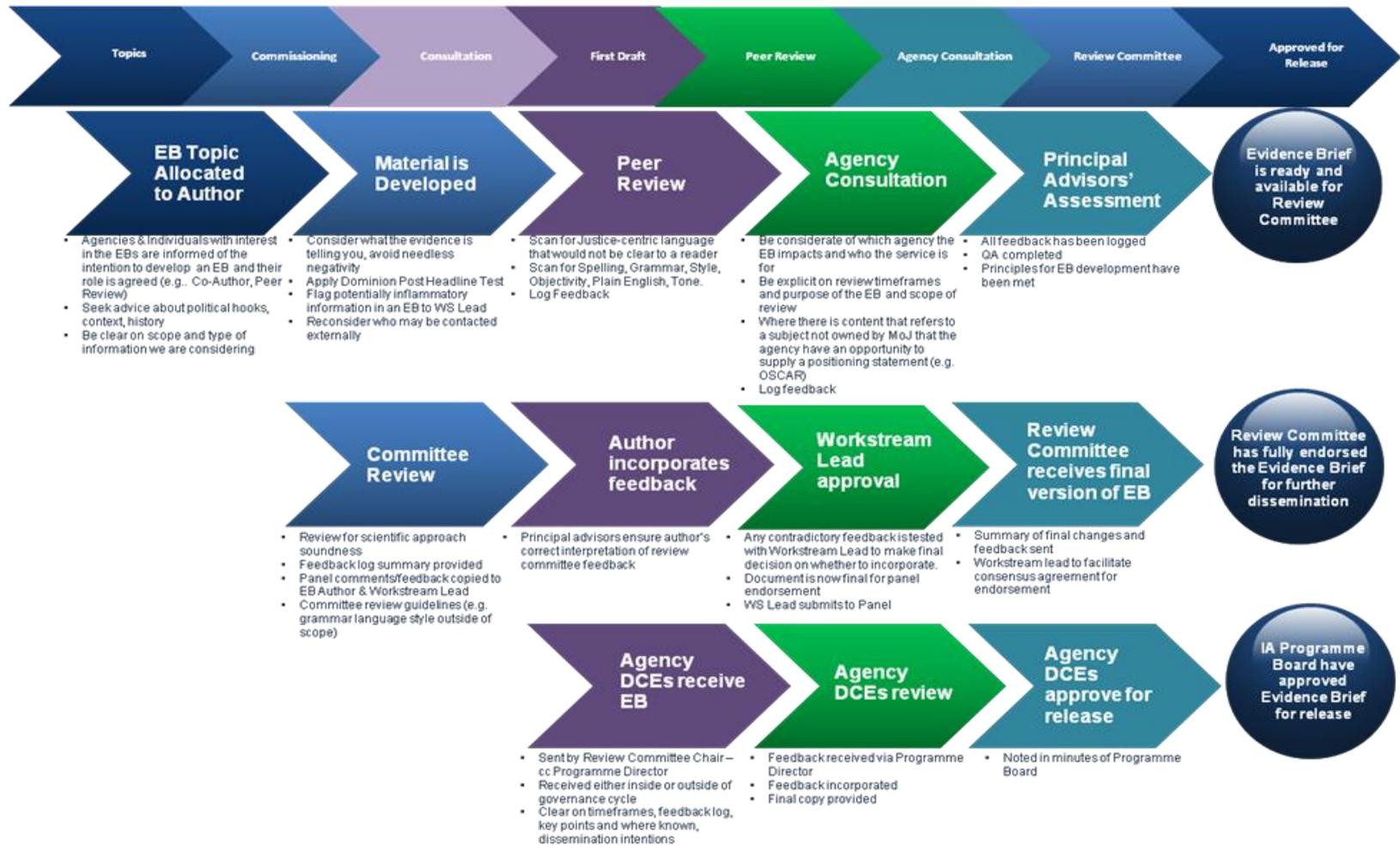
Final rating – six-grade scale

		New Zealand studies				
		At least one level 4 or 5 study finds a statistically significant negative impact, no conflicting L4+ studies	Studies show conflicting results, or no impact, or no level 3+ study exists	At least one level 3 study finds a statistically significant positive impact, no conflicting L3+ studies	At least one level 4 study finds a statistically significant positive impact, no conflicting L4+ studies	At least one level 5 study find a statistically significant positive impact, no conflicting L5 studies
International studies	Meta-analysis/systematic review of 5+ studies finds a statistically significant positive impact, no conflicts	Fair (promising)	Very promising	Strong	Strong	Very strong
	MA/SR with fewer than 5 studies finds positive impact, or no MA/SR exists and level 4 or 5 studies find a positive impact	Speculative	Fair (promising)	Fair (promising)	Very promising	Strong
	MA/SR find conflicting results	Speculative	Speculative	Fair (promising)	Very promising	Strong
	MA/SR shows no impact, or no MA/SR exists	Poor	Speculative	Fair (promising)	Very promising	Strong
	MA/SR shows negative impact, no conflicting results	Poor	Poor	Speculative	Fair (promising)	Strong

How to interpret the rating?

Investment category	Interpretation
Very strong	<p>Very robust international and local evidence that investment tends to reduce crime.</p> <p>Investment likely to generate a return if implemented well.</p> <p>Simple monitoring approach should confirm the investment is providing a positive return.</p> <p>Little additional evaluation required.</p>
Strong	<p>Robust international and local evidence that investment tends to reduce crime.</p> <p>Investment likely to generate a return if implemented well.</p> <p>Could benefit from additional evaluation to confirm investment is delivering a positive return and to support fine-tuning of the investment design.</p>
Very promising	<p>Robust international or local evidence that investment tends to reduce crime.</p> <p>Investment may well generate a return if implemented well.</p> <p>Further evaluation desirable to confirm investment is delivering a positive return and to support fine-tuning of the investment design.</p>
Fair/promising	<p>Some evidence that investment can reduce crime.</p> <p>Uncertain whether investment will generate return even if implemented well.</p> <p>May be unproven in New Zealand or be subject to conflicting research.</p> <p>May benefit from trial approaches with a research and development focus.</p> <p>Robust evaluation needed to confirm investment is delivering a positive return and to aid in detailed service design.</p>
Speculative	<p>Little or conflicting evidence that investment can reduce crime.</p> <p>Highly uncertain whether investment will generate return even if implemented well.</p> <p>Primarily suited to trial approaches with a strong research and development focus.</p> <p>Full rollout should be subject to high-quality evaluation to ensure investment is delivering a positive return, and to deliver insights into detailed service design questions.</p>
Poor	<p>Robust evidence that investment does not reduce crime or that it increases crime.</p> <p>Should be priority for divestment.</p>

Robust development process



Publicly available evidence briefs

Three evidence briefs are currently released for general public and available from MOJ website:

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy

EVIDENCE BRIEF

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a core form of psychological treatment for offenders. CBT has been well researched and shown to reliably reduce reoffending among many groups of offenders. There is substantial potential to increase its provision for young offenders.

OVERVIEW

- Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy is the cornerstone of modern approaches to rehabilitate offenders.
- CBT has been extensively implemented in Corrections for adult offenders. There is strong international and New Zealand evidence that this reduces reoffending.
- There is also strong international evidence that CBT reduces reoffending by young offenders.
- The scope of investment in CBT for young offenders is currently modest, at just over 10% of the level of investment for adult offenders.
- There is strong evidence that expanded investment in CBT for young offenders would reduce crime.
- The health sector also needs trained psychologists and reports there is currently a shortage.
- As a result, expansion would require increasing the number of trained psychologists and other professionals in New Zealand who can deliver CBT.

- In expanding the workforce, appropriate training would be vital as to be effective, CBT needs to be delivered by people with the relevant skills.

INVESTMENT CLASS SUMMARY

Evidence rating:	Strong
Unit cost:	\$5,000-\$20,000 per person given treatment
Effect size (number needed to treat):	For every 5-15 offenders receiving treatment, one less will reoffend
Current spend:	c. \$25m (Corrections) c. \$3m (MSD) Unknown (Health)
Unmet demand:	High (young offenders) Low (adults)



Restorative Justice

EVIDENCE BRIEF

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a process where offenders and victims meet to discuss the impact of the offence on the victim and how to right the wrong. While preventing reoffending is not the primary aim, there is clear evidence that RJ reduces reoffending.

OVERVIEW

- The latest reviews of high quality international evidence have found that restorative justice (RJ) conferencing reduces reoffending.
- This conclusion is supported by robust research from New Zealand.
- The latest results from New Zealand research show that for every 15-20 low-risk offenders participating in a conference, one fewer will be reconvicted.
- RJ can be cost-effective, particularly when used as a substitute to the relatively more costly traditional court process.
- The international evidence shows that RJ also provides benefits for some victims.
- Provision in New Zealand is growing, but there remains extensive scope for expansion.
- The combination of strong evidence and unmet demand suggest that this is a good area for new investment.
- The key questions for those seeking to expand RJ relate to the scale and pace of expansion, and the kind of market settings best suited to delivering RJ at scale while maintaining quality.

- Any expansion would also need to take care to avoid pressuring victims to attend, or expanding to cover victims or offenders for whom RJ is inappropriate.

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Correctional Alcohol and Drug Treatment

EVIDENCE BRIEF

Two-thirds of prisoners have problems with abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD). In response, the Department of Corrections provides a range of prison- and community-based AOD treatment programmes. These programmes are effective at reducing crime.

OVERVIEW

- There is a robust international and local evidence base that alcohol and other drug treatment can reduce offending and improve broader social outcomes.
- Both psychological and pharmacological treatment have been shown to be effective, particularly services such as the Drug Treatment Units (DTUs) that apply the Therapeutic Communities model.
- Rehabilitation programmes are most effective when targeted at people at high risk of reoffending.
- For New Zealand-based programmes in prison, one person is prevented from being re-imprisoned for every 20 prisoners receiving the programme.
- Treatment for adolescent offenders can reduce substance use, but it does not tend to reduce reoffending.
- There are nine DTUs in prisons and a range of shorter programmes for prisoners unable to complete the full DTU programmes. There is also a range of services for community-based offenders.
- Demand within the Corrections system is now largely being met, limiting the need for further investment.

INVESTMENT CLASS SUMMARY

Evidence rating:	Strong
Unit cost:	\$5,155 per start
Effect size (number needed to treat):	According to the latest Corrections outcomes analysis, treatment reduces re-imprisonment rates by at least five percentage points. This means that for every 20 people who receive treatment, one fewer is re-imprisoned
Current spend:	\$5.8m (Corrections – excludes health-funded programmes)
Unmet demand:	Low



<https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/key-initiatives/investment-approach-to-justice/what-works-to-reduce-crime/#cbt>

Priority themes for 2017-18

Substance abuse



Young offenders



Maori reoffending



Mental health



Questions and discussion

