



Stopping the revolving door

Strategic Plan 2016-2020



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Revolving Doors Agency | 2 |
|-------------------------------------|----------|

Our Aims:

| | |
|--|---|
| Aim 1: Integrated policy and commissioning | 3 |
| Aim 2: Better prevention..... | 4 |
| Aim 3: Improved crisis support | 4 |
| Aim 4: A fair and effective justice system..... | 5 |
| Aim 5: Promoting long-term change..... | 6 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| The Way Forward..... | 6 |
|-----------------------------|----------|

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Our Approach..... | 7 |
|--------------------------|----------|

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| What We've Learned | 8 |
|---------------------------------|----------|

Revolving Doors Agency

What We Do

Revolving Doors Agency was set up in 1993 to change systems and improve services for people who have multiple problems and are in contact with the criminal justice system. Problems such as mental ill-health, drug and alcohol abuse, crime and homelessness can reinforce each other, and people easily end up in a downward spiral. There are 60,000 adults in this situation in England.

Our Vision

Our vision is that by 2025, no-one will be stuck in the revolving door of crisis and crime. Instead, people with multiple problems and poor mental health will be supported to reach their full potential. As a result, there will be fewer victims and communities will be safer.

Our role

Established in 1993, we defined the "revolving doors group" of people caught in a cycle of crisis and crime. We work to reform public services and improve support for this group. We do this by working with policymakers, commissioners and service providers. We act as a trusted "critical friend" to government departments, local authorities and service providers.

We are consciously impartial and independent of service provision; this allows us to be intellectually curious and challenging of accepted thinking. Our impact comes from being a credible voice, with a long history and expert knowledge. We bring independent research, evaluations, policy and lived experience together to support effective solutions.

Most importantly, we always start with what is actually happening with the individual who experiences the problem first hand.

This Strategy

This strategy is built on the direct experience of individuals in the revolving doors group. It was developed with the National Service User Forum (of people with lived experience) by the staff and Board of Revolving Doors Agency. The objectives that underpin the aims were developed with the support of our Patrons and friends.

We need to stop the revolving door of crime and crisis by making it possible for people to recover from different multiple problems at the same time. But we also need to prevent people entering the revolving door in the first place, and we need to support those who leave this cycle to rebuild good lives.

Our Aims:

Aim I: Integrated policy and commissioning

All leaders and commissioners take responsibility for working together across different systems to integrate and improve services to tackle the revolving door problem - and are supported to do this by the government.

We will:

- Work with national and local policymakers to:
 - Promote the case for addressing the revolving door problem
 - Provide the evidence base for effective policies and programmes
- Develop and share learning with commissioners and services so people get effective help as quickly as possible.
- Test and promote approaches through which people with lived experience co-produce, inspect and improve services, nationally and locally.

Tracking progress

- Senior policymakers from across government departments will introduce policies that reflect the multiple and complex needs of people in repeat contact with the criminal justice system
- Devolution plans will increasingly recognise multiple and complex needs and introduce new systems and policies to address people in the revolving doors group
- Our National Service User Forum of people with lived experience remains as a key consultative body for national decision-makers
- Our new Regional Service User Forums become key consultative bodies for regional decision-makers

Aim 2: Better prevention

More people receive help that prevents their situation getting worse, especially when they are facing multiple problems and difficult changes in their lives.

We will:

- Within healthcare and/or housing services, identify upstream points for intervention that could prevent crisis; and model and promote responses.
- Work with partners to improve responses for young adults who are at risk of repeat contact with the criminal justice system.

Tracking progress

- A model of upstream intervention (across housing, social care or health) developed and then piloted in one or more local areas
- Increased reference to evidence and increased use of effective approaches by Police and Crime Commissioners to young adults in the criminal justice system

Aim 3: Improved crisis support

More people get effective help when they are facing a crisis.

We will:

- Build the evidence base around repeat use of services (such as police, ambulance, A&E, crisis teams) by people who are in crisis, focusing on people's real experience.
- Continue to promote and support the successful national roll out of liaison and diversion services to all police custody suites and courts; and work with partners such as the Bradley Report Group to promote wider evidence around crisis.

Tracking progress

- Design and undertake user-led or peer research into repeat use of crisis services and disseminate findings
- Successful national roll out of Liaison and Diversion services nationally

Aim 4: A fair and effective justice system

More people get help to address their multiple needs when they are in contact with the criminal justice system.

We will:

- Monitor the implementation of Transforming Rehabilitation and work with the government and local partners to improve outcomes for people facing the revolving door problem.
- Promote improvements to sentencing that support both reduced reoffending and better outcomes for people in the revolving doors of crisis and crime.
- Promote service user involvement in the design, commissioning and assurance of services in the criminal justice system.
- Continue to build and share evidence on how the transition from prison to community, for people on short sentences, can be improved.

Tracking progress

- Increasing recognition in policy and practice of the multiple and complex needs of short sentence prisoners
- Uptake of service user involvement in the design, commissioning and assurance by criminal justice agencies
- Fewer people in the revolving door group are given ineffective short prison sentences
- More effective transitional arrangements between custody and the community that better meet people's multiple needs

Aim 5: Promoting long-term change

More people live in communities that support their efforts to achieve recovery and desistance from crime, where they can be active citizens and escape the revolving door problem once and for all.

We will:

- Enable more people with direct experience of the revolving door situation to be active citizens, contributing to their communities, improving services and influencing policy.
- Support people to share their stories of recovery to show the potential for change, challenging stigma, changing attitudes and exploding the myths that can slow down the change we want to see.
- Improve opportunities for people who have faced multiple problems to move into volunteering, mentoring and sustainable employment.

Tracking Progress

- Extend the Service User Forum national footprint through two hubs in each of the five regions (North West, North East, Midlands, South West and South East) and increasing Forum membership to 200 nationally
- Progression routes for National Service User Forum members and other Lived Experience Experts with whom we work articulated and measured

The Way Forward

This strategy is supported by our business plan and by our operational plan. It is underpinned by our annual context review and the learning we have taken from our previous work. This strategy will be reviewed by the Revolving Doors team (the Forum members, trustees and staff) every year. It will form the basis of the work we undertake and we will judge our success against its aims.

Our Approach

Our Mission

Our mission is to demonstrate and share evidence of effective interventions and to promote reform of public services through partnerships with political leaders, policy makers, commissioners and other experts and by involving people with direct experience of the problem in all our work.

Our Values

Through our work and in our relationships we will uphold our core values so that everyone who works with Revolving Doors is proud to be associated with us.

We will always:

- **Put people first**

We believe in people and their capacity to change. We recognise the primary importance of relationships in achieving happiness and promoting change. We assert the right of everyone to a fulfilling life as active citizens in their community. We value diversity and actively challenge stigma, inequality and exclusion.

- **Bring people together**

We believe those with direct experience of the revolving doors situation should have a leading role in developing solutions. We collaborate with partners, building a movement for change while maintaining our independence and capacity to challenge when necessary.

- **Seek lasting change**

We act as a catalyst for change through innovation and by sharing evidence-based solutions. We take a strategic, long-term view of the problem, seeking permanent systemic change across society.

What We've Learned

Informed by desistance and recovery theory, as well as our research and development work over the last 20 years, we have identified ten emerging principles for effective services working with people in the revolving doors group.

- 1.** 'Someone on your side': An opportunity to build consistent, positive and trusting relationships.
- 2.** Assertive and persistent: An approach to engagement that does not give up on people. Continuous and consistent support over a prolonged period, responding positively and constructively to setbacks.
- 3.** Tailored: A personalised approach which addresses the full gambit of an individual's needs and is culturally sensitive to particular needs of specific groups including women, people of black and minority ethnic backgrounds and young adults.
- 4.** Building on strengths: Supports the client to recognise and develop their personal strengths, recognising more than a 'bundle of needs and problems'.
- 5.** Coordinated and seamless: Understands and links with other services, pulls services together around service users and helps them to access and coordinate support through brokerage and advocacy. Ensures continuous support across key transitions, avoiding gaps in care.
- 6.** Flexible and responsive: Flexible approach to support and an ability to react quickly in a crisis.
- 7.** 'No wrong door': If a service cannot provide support, they take responsibility for connecting the client with someone who can.
- 8.** Trauma informed: Understands the emotional and behavioural impact of traumatic childhood and life experiences on clients and vicarious trauma on staff, avoids re-traumatisation, facilitates reflective practice, builds resilience and supports recovery.
- 9.** Coproduced: Designed in partnership with service users.
- 10.** Strategically supported: Has the buy-in of senior, strategic stakeholders.

Revolving Doors Agency

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