

MYTH BUSTING ABOUT PRRT

By Julia Ritchie, Counselling Psychologist, Deputy Head of Psychological Therapies Department

I was delighted to have the opportunity of providing some Well Being training for Members of the Care Forum on the 29th September in PRRT (Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust), Maryfield Complex. This half day course was entitled **Minding Yourself-Minding Each Other** and was aimed at providing some practical strategies to help retired police officers deal with some of the psychological and emotional difficulties we know they face.

Those in attendance reported that they found the session useful and reported that their understanding and knowledge of Mental Health Issues and Personal Resilience had improved and that their confidence in accessing support and signposting people to appropriate services was also improved. I think we all felt that the session had been very worthwhile in terms of networking.

For me as a Psychologist working in the Psychological Therapies Department in PRRT for the last 10 years, I am always interested in breaking down perceived barriers to people attending our service. Throughout the training, representatives from the DPOANI, the NIRPOA, the RE-Union Magazine, the PSNI, CAPG, the Police Fund and Members of these groups had the opportunity to ask me frank questions about our service. As a result, I'm writing this article to myth bust and encourage people to access the excellent psychological aftercare services they are entitled to attend in PRRT.

FACTS PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES:

- Based in Maryfield Complex, Holywood with clinics in Coleraine and Enniskillen.
- The service is FREE and confidential.
- All clinicians and members of staff are CTC security cleared and are qualified and experienced to a high level.
- We provide Evidence Based Psychological Therapies in accordance

with NICE guidelines (www.nice.org.uk)

- The service is for Retired or Retiring Police Officers, their spouses and children, bereaved parents, widows and any other family member impacted by the service of an officer.
- We provide a Specialist Child and Adolescent Service for children of police officers experiencing psychological, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- Problems we treat: Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms (including Intrusive thoughts or memories, flashbacks and nightmares, avoidance, fear), Sleep Problems, Complicated Grief, Anxiety and Panic, Depression, Suicidal thoughts and feelings, Phobias, OCD, Anger and Irritability, Relationship Difficulties.
- People are seen for assessment within 14 days of contacting the service
- Treatment length is mainly between 12 to 15 sessions. This varies and is bespoke to client need. Together, client and therapist review progress every 6 sessions, with regards to their problems reducing and achieving their goals.
- At discharge from treatment 85% of clients presenting problems are resolved or resolving with 100% of clients who provide feedback stating they were extremely satisfied with the service.
- Clients, following discharge, are able to access the service again if they need to.
- We are very aware of the importance of TRUST with our client group and discuss the parameters of CONFIDENTIALITY in relation to treatment with every client before any treatment starts.
- We provide training to groups, for example Specialist Trauma Resilience, and are very happy to attend any groups, meetings or roadshows if it helps people access the right support.
- We are happy to refer and can link with other agencies and support groups if this is appropriate and helpful to the clients progress.
- Clients self-refer by phoning Clinical Admin on 028 9042 7788.

Our Psychological Therapies Department together with our PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT and PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE (PDETS) form the Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust. As a team our goal is to provide a safe and secure environment for individuals to deal with their past, engage in the here and now and enjoy the future.

Where consent is given, our psychology department works with our other departments in PRRT to provide the client with a holistic treatment programme. Our clients experience psychological benefits from physiotherapy programmes such as Tai Chi for Health, Chronic Pain Programmes, Core Stability Courses and Reactivation Programmes which are often run in tandem with one to one psychological treatment.

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Our clients also benefit greatly from receiving one to one support from PDETS in terms of planning for retirement, engaging in new employment or engaging in proactive leisure activities and interests. PRRT clients can avail of our Citizens Advice Bureau Outreach Service are on Wednesday mornings from 10 am to 12 am in the Maryfield Complex.

For further information about any of our services please contact 028 9042 7788 www.prrt.org

TRUSTCALL: Our 24 hour helpline is available on 0800 0324802.

PRRT is based at Maryfield, Holywood and provides psychology, physiotherapy, personal development and training to the retired police population. PSNI employees can access our healthcare services via referrals from PSNI occupational health. Serving officers can access personal development and training directly. For further information or to make an appointment please call 028 9042 7788.



For further information on all PRRT services please visit www.prrt.org.