



Our New Way: Sharing Local Practice

The Five Minute Intervention (FMI)

Introduction

The Portland Five Minute Intervention (FMI) approach trained officers to turn everyday conversations into rehabilitative interventions. This involved prison officers:

- being trained in how to identify and respond to criminal thinking styles and criminal attitudes
- being trained in how to enhance the skills of decision making, planning and perspective-taking in prisoners
- using these skills to make every opportunity with prisoners count.
- FMI helps staff have conversations with prisoners that improves their custodial behaviour and relationships and also sets them up to succeed in a different life after release.

What's the idea?

As a concept, FMI originated with Jan Knake, Head of Reducing Reoffending, who felt that residential staff were “unsung heroes”, deserving of further investment, and that as a staffing group have a lot of contact with prisoners, have the potential to be effective facilitators of meaningful conversations and interventions.



Staff have highlighted their role in giving hope to prisoners and felt they were well placed to identify and utilise opportunities for inspiring and enabling prisoners in seeing their future in a more positive light.”



Jo
FMI Training
Package Author

Key Points

- Emphasis is put on staff asking questions to get prisoners thinking for themselves rather than staff thinking they need to tell prisoners what to do
- Prison officers and staff working with prisoners can make a positive difference to prisoner's lives
- FMI is not about having more conversations. It is about having the conversations we already have in a more effective manner
- FMI, when delivered effectively, helps develop prisoners into becoming not only compliant, but self-aware individuals taking responsibility for their future



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What did they do?

In order to turn an idea into something that could be implemented and tested:

- a member of Portland staff wrote a training package
- 10 staff from 4 different wings were selected and trained over 2 days
- staff were briefed to try, wherever possible, to have different conversations with prisoners
- Commissioning Strategies Group (CSG) in NOMS headquarters were asked to help understand whether the FMI worked and if so, how

What results did staff see?

At Portland, they noticed that prisoners engaging with staff using FMI:

- thought more for themselves
- became less impulsive
- took more control of their lives
- increased in confidence
- became more settled and improved their behaviour
- became more respectful to staff



The officer sees that I'm better than what I'm doing in here or I could achieve more, like I could get somewhere"

– Portland Prisoner

Do we know if it works?

Portland involved Commissioning Strategies Group in NOMS headquarters at an early stage in development of this idea as they were keen to know whether FMI made a difference, and if it did, how.

An evaluation was arranged, with CSG and the researchers working with the prison during development and implementation of FMI.

The evaluation report shows promising results and is due to be published by Autumn 2014.

This has only been tested in 1 prison so far so before rollout into further prisons we need to understand the impact.

BDG are now responsible for the implementation of FMI and together with CSG in NOMS headquarters are currently supporting four other prisons to implement a form of FMI suitable for their local needs.



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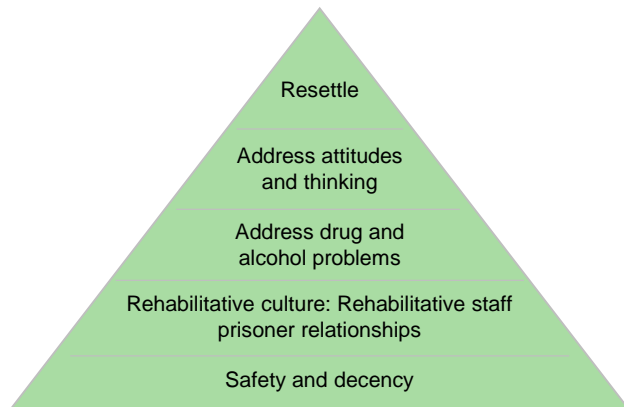
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What's the link to rehabilitation?

We know that to help reduce reoffending we need to develop rehabilitative cultures in prisons by:

- 1.making prisoners feel safe enough to engage with rehabilitation
- 2.having constructive relationships between staff and prisoners (where interactions are defined by courtesy and respect)
- 3.reducing the potential for prison to have a negative influence by helping staff challenge anti-social and offence-supportive cultures.

FMI aims to help staff maximise their role in creating a positive rehabilitation culture.



Hierarchy of Rehabilitation

What FMI is not

- FMI is not about teaching staff to do their job. FMI acknowledges the vast array of skills and qualities demonstrated by staff, and seeks to enhance these existing characteristics in order to maximise effectiveness
- FMI is not an overnight quick-fix, but a cultural change. Ongoing, committed management support at establishment level (particularly senior management) is essential to its success
- FMI is not a magic wand. Only staff who are motivated and who are committed to rehabilitation in some way are appropriate for FMI training. FMI is not a poor performance management tool.

“ FMI is designed, and operates as a model which doesn't require extra time, just the commitment of staff to use the time they already have in a constructive and purposeful manner.”



Steve Hodson Dep,
HMP & YOI Portland