



A national programme to coordinate better support for individuals facing multiple and complex needs

Revolving Doors Agency's submission to Spending Review 2015

About Revolving Doors

Revolving Doors Agency is a charity working across England to change systems and improve services for people who face multiple and complex needs, including poor mental health, and come into repeated contact with the police and criminal justice system. We work with policymakers, commissioners, local decision-makers, and frontline professionals to share evidence, demonstrate effective solutions, and change policy, while involving people with direct experience of the problem in all our work through our National Service User Forum.

1. Summary

- 1.1. We welcome the focus in the Spending Review on “*modernising public services through innovation, integration, and localism*”.¹ As the Troubled Families programme is showing in many areas, with appropriate support and drive from central government a locally-led approach to coordinating services for people facing multiple and complex needs can help to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged, while also leading to savings through more effective joined-up services.
- 1.2. However, there are still many *individuals* facing multiple and complex needs who are missing out. Recent research suggests that there are at least 58,000 people in England facing a combination of substance misuse issues, homelessness, and offending needs at one time, often exacerbated by poor mental health.² Many more are at risk, or face different combinations of need. Often considered the ‘hardest to reach’ by services, these individuals come into repeated contact with policing, criminal justice, homelessness, and emergency services, but struggle to access the kind of support they need to tackle their multiple problems.
- 1.3. This ‘revolving door’ situation generates significant costs to the public purse, with one conservative estimate suggesting £4.3 billion is spent on fragmented and often ineffective responses for individuals facing overlapping needs every year.³ However, there is promising evidence that a more effective approach to coordinating support can reduce these costs.⁴ Following the pledge in last

¹ HM Treasury (2015) *A country that lives within its means: Spending Review 2015*, p. 16.

² Fitzpatrick, S., Bramley, G., et al (2014) *Hard Edges: Mapping severe and multiple disadvantage – England* London: LankellyChase Foundation, p. 13.

³ Ibid, p. 41

⁴ Revolving Doors Agency & Centre for Mental Health (2015), *Comprehensive Services for Complex Needs: A summary of the evidence*. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/comp-services-complex-needs-summary-of-the-evidence/>

year's Autumn Statement to *"look to develop and extend the principles of the Troubled Families to other groups of people with complex needs from the next Spending Review"*, and the focus on multiple needs within the cross-government social justice strategy, there is a strong case for the government to champion a more effective approach.

1.4. **We call for a new national programme focusing on individuals facing multiple and complex needs, building on the principles of the Troubled Families programme to encourage identification and coordination of support for individuals with multiple needs in every area.** This submission makes the case for such a programme, and sets out some key considerations for what it could look like.⁵We recommend that this national approach should:

- **Require all local areas to identify a cohort of individuals facing multiple needs**, and hold them to account for the coordination of more effective support
- **Include a clear focus on the estimated 58,000 individuals facing the most entrenched multiple needs**, and mechanisms to ensure this group are included in support
- **Be flexible enough to allow local areas some discretion** to respond to a range of additional multiple needs groups
- **Provide a strategic framework to bring together relevant local and national work strands** to encourage a joined-up focus on multiple needs, and promote clear pathways into support whichever services people come into contact with
- **Include investment from central government** to support innovation in coordinating services at a local level
- **Have financial buy-in and oversight from a range of government departments**, as part of the government's ongoing commitment to both social justice and public service reform. At a minimum, this should include Department for Communities and Local Government; Department of Health; Home Office; Ministry of Justice; and the Department for Work and Pensions.
- **Encourage joined-up funding locally around multiple needs** through place-based budgeting and pooled funding initiatives, and by encouraging a focus on multiple needs in 'devolution deals'.
- **Ensure there is a clear individual accountable in each area**, responsible for delivering improved outcomes and reporting back nationally
- **Involve people with direct experience of the problem in the design of the programme at a national and local level**, including codesigning the overarching outcomes of the programme, with robust service user involvement mechanisms embedded at a strategic level to ensure that people with experience have an ongoing role in the development of the programme
- **Take account of the particular challenges in applying payment by results models to individuals facing multiple and complex needs**, and consider alternative ways of encouraging an outcome-focused approach
- **Use a range of outcome measures to monitor progress**, reflecting the complexity of need the programme aims to respond to. This should include 'distance-travelled' measures and outcomes relating to self-reported wellbeing and user satisfaction.

⁵ Other organisations have also called for a national focus on multiple and complex needs, including the Making Every Adult Matter Coalition (see <http://meam.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Individuals-with-multiple-needs-the-case-for-a-national-focus.pdf>) and Frameworks (<http://fiveactions.org/>). This submission supports these calls.

2. Defining a multiple needs cohort

- 2.1. In every local area, there are people caught in a negative ‘revolving door’ cycle – facing multiple and complex needs, living chaotic lives, and not receiving the coordinated support that they need to help them overcome their problems. They face a range of interacting needs at once, which can include poor mental health; substance misuse issues; offending; homelessness; unemployment and poverty; domestic and sexual violence; and past trauma. These problems are mutually reinforcing, and our mainstream health and welfare services, designed to tackle one problem at a time, struggle to respond.⁶
- 2.2. Given that this group are defined in part by a lack of structured engagement with support services, it can be challenging to identify a precise cohort. There is currently a significant accountability gap, **and more needs to be done to ensure that local areas are responsible for identifying the most excluded adults who face multiple needs, and are held to account for the coordination of more effective services.**
- 2.3. The most comprehensive statistical study of overlapping need to date is Lankelly Chase Foundation’s *Hard Edges: Mapping severe and multiple disadvantage* report. This mapped across key homelessness, criminal justice, and substance misuse databases in England to identify an estimated:
- 58,000 individuals facing all 3 needs (offending, substance misuse, homelessness)
 - 164,000 individuals facing two of these needs
 - 1,470 cases facing 2+ of the above needs in an average local authority each year
- 2.4. Other characteristics of this cohort included: poor mental health (40% had an identified mental health problem); high levels of unemployment and poverty (with over half of those experiencing all 3 needs reliant on welfare benefits for most of their adult lives); and histories of trauma (85% had traumatic experiences in childhood).⁷
- 2.5. **Any national programme should include a clear focus on the estimated 58,000 people facing the most entrenched multiple needs.** However, it is also important to understand that the definition used above also misses particular groups who may face a different, but no less severe or complex, combination of problems. In particular, women and black and minority ethnic groups are underrepresented by this definition due to different need profiles and patterns of service use.
- 2.6. **A multiple needs programme should also be flexible enough to enable local areas to target different ‘clusters’ of multiple needs, responding to a range of groups who currently fall through the gaps and generate repeated unplanned demand on public services.** This may include:

⁶ See Revolving Doors Agency (2011) *Complex Responses: Understanding poor frontline responses to adults with multiple needs* for literature review and discussion of systemic factors leading to poor service responses. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/complex-responses-2011/>

⁷ Fitzpatrick, S., Bramley, G., et al (2014) *Hard Edges: Mapping severe and multiple disadvantage – England* London: LankellyChase Foundation, p. 13. Available here: http://www.lankellychase.org.uk/assets/0000/2858/Hard_Edges_Mapping_SMD_FINAL_VERSION_Web.pdf

- High-frequency visitors to police custody, A&E, and/or mental health crisis services
- women involved in prostitution (who are likely to face high levels of trauma and complex needs)⁸
- repeat victims of domestic violence
- repeat perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

2.7. A national programme should also provide a strategic framework for local areas to bring together a range of relevant national and local work strands which currently impact on people in this situation. A variety of current schemes impact on individuals multiple needs, each coming from different government departments and service perspectives.⁹ However, they are not often 'joined-up' locally to understand how they can work more effectively for the most excluded individuals who cut across a number of these initiatives. Ensuring that there is a strategic focus on this group would create the opportunity for greater integration across these initiatives, and the development of clear pathways into support for those facing the most complex needs from a range of services that they may come into contact with. This could reduce the number of individuals who currently fall through the gaps, and would help to improve outcomes relevant to a range of government departments.

A national programme for individuals facing multiple needs should:

- require local areas to identify a cohort of individuals facing multiple needs, and hold them to account for the coordination of more effective support
- include a clear focus on the estimated 58,000 individuals facing the most entrenched multiple needs
- be flexible enough to allow local areas to respond to a range of multiple needs groups
- provide a strategic framework to bring together relevant local and national work strands and encourage joined-up focus on multiple needs, promoting clear pathways into support whichever services people come into contact with.

⁸ See Anderson, S. (2013) *Street Talk: An evaluation of a counselling service for women involved in street based prostitution and victims of trafficking* London: Revolving Doors Agency. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/street-talk-evaluation/>

⁹ This includes the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat; the rollout of criminal justice liaison and diversion services for suspects and offenders; the Transforming Rehabilitation programme and extension of rehabilitative support to short-sentenced prisoners; DCLGs focus on rough sleeping and vulnerable homeless people; violence against women and girls and domestic violence strategies; the better care fund; and the Work Programme, to name just a few with national profile.

3. The financial case for investment

3.1. This 'revolving door' situation generates significant demand and costs to public services, as individuals come into repeated contact without receiving the help that they need. *Hard Edges* estimates that:¹⁰

- £1.1 billion in costs to services is generated by the 58,000 individuals facing the most entrenched needs
- £4.3 billion is generated by the wider group identified as facing 162,000 individuals facing 2+ overlapping needs
- £10.1 billion costs across all needs domains identified
- £19,000 per year average estimated costs per individual facing complex needs per year

3.2. This is the cost of service failure. The majority of expenditure is on ineffective and uncoordinated responsive interventions, rather than supporting individuals to address their underlying problems. Where more effective responses for people facing multiple and complex needs have been developed, there is promising evidence that they could help to reduce this cost in the long-run.¹¹

- An evaluation of the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) pilots suggests that over two years overall service use costs can be reduced by up to 26.4%. The pilots adopted a lead professional approach to coordinate better support, which helped to shift service use from emergency and criminal justice services to planned engagement with health, housing and treatment.¹²
- Financial analysis in our *Counting the Cost* report suggested an investment of £18million per year in gender-specific services for women facing multiple and complex needs could generate savings of almost £1billion over 5 years.¹³ New Economics Foundation research also suggests women's centres return a social value of between £3.40-£6.70 for every £1 invested.¹⁴
- There is strong evidence that multi-systemic therapy (MST), a specific model of providing holistic support for multiple needs which has been largely targeted at young people, delivers cost-benefit. Evidence from the Social Research Unit suggests a saving of £2 for every £1 invested in MST through reduced use of healthcare and the criminal justice system, fewer victims of crime and increased future earnings of participants. One further study into the application of MST in an offending context found a cost benefit of £1,222 per client over 18 months compared with standard youth offending provision.¹⁵

¹⁰ Fitzpatrick, S., Bramley, G., et al (2014) *Hard Edges*, p. 41.

¹¹ Revolving Doors Agency & Centre for Mental Health (2015), *Comprehensive Services for Complex Needs: A summary of the evidence*. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/comp-services-complex-needs-summary-of-the-evidence/>

¹² Battrick, T., et al (2014) *Evaluation of the MEAM pilots – update on our findings* London: MEAM. Available here: <http://meam.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/MEAM-evaluation-FI-update-17-Feb-2014.pdf>

¹³ Page, A., (2011) *Counting the cost: The financial impact of supporting women with multiple needs in the criminal justice system*. London: Revolving Doors Agency. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/counting-the-cost/>

¹⁴ New Economics Foundation (2012) *Women's community services: A wise commission* London: nef

¹⁵ Revolving Doors Agency & Centre for Mental Health (2015), *Comprehensive Services for Complex Needs*, p.8

- Analysis of the Troubled Families programme has found that coordinating support for families facing multiple and complex needs generated average savings of £11,200 per family in 7 areas analysed, with the £448 million invested in the programme estimated to have saved £1.2billion through more effective and coordinated intervention for 120,000 families so far.¹⁶

Principles of effective support

Through our research and local development work, Revolving Doors Agency have developed 10 emerging principles of effective support for people facing multiple and complex needs that should inform the development of any national programme:

1. **'Someone on your side'**: Lead professional approach, with opportunity to build consistent, positive and trusting relationships.
2. **Assertive and persistent**: An assertive and persistent 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 individuals' 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 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 the client, helps clients 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.

There is promising evidence that taking this approach improves outcomes for those facing the most complex needs. Our recent review of the evidence-base for three models adopting this kind of approach to working with clients facing complex needs found promising evidence of improved outcomes, including clients achieving stable housing, reduced reoffending, and improved health and wellbeing outcomes.¹⁷

- 3.3. While the strongest cost-benefit evidence highlighted above is related to family-based programmes, the limited evidence on schemes targeted at adults facing multiple and complex needs specifically does suggest that through improved coordination and reduced demand on costly emergency

¹⁶ DCLG (2015) *The Benefits of the Troubled Families Programme to the Taxpayer*, London: DCLG.

¹⁷ Ibid.

services overall savings can be made. These potential savings represent a clear incentive to collaborate and develop better coordinated responses to these shared problems.

3.4. However, with significant cuts to local budgets across the public sector, we acknowledge that it is a challenging time for local areas to make the upfront investment required to work intensively with individuals facing multiple and complex needs. Furthermore, cost savings will not be spread evenly across public services. Costs may well rise in some locally commissioned health and substance misuse services in the short term as individuals move from crisis to greater stability with structured support in place, while savings will be in policing and nationally commissioned criminal justice services. This has traditionally proved a barrier to local areas developing a comprehensive approach to individuals in this situation, with little financial incentive for any single agency to grip the problem.

3.5. For this reason, we argue **that it is appropriate for initial investment in the programme to come from central government.** Given the importance of local leadership, this could be match-funded with local areas (as with the Troubled Families programme). Reflecting on government investment in the Troubled Families programme, the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coalition have recently estimated the cost of a potential multiple needs programme at around £216 million over three years targeted specifically at the 58,000 most entrenched individuals.¹⁸ A further estimate linked to a wider group suggests a higher cost of £500 million per annum.¹⁹

3.6. While further work is required to understand the costs of any scheme, these figures compare favourably with the potential for cost savings suggested above. Furthermore, the broader aim of coordinating a range of government programmes more effectively for this group could help to reduce duplication and improve impact more widely.

3.7. **Given that positive outcomes would cut across a number of government departments, there should be cross-government oversight and funding of this programme,** with a range of departments including Department for Communities and Local Government; Department of Health; Home Office; Ministry of Justice; and the Department for Work and Pensions involved. **Joined-up funding for multiple needs should also be encouraged in local 'devolution deals', and as part of the government's ongoing support for pooled budget approaches.**

A national programme should:

-include funding from central government to support innovation in coordinating services at a local level

-Have financial buy in from a range of department as part of the government's ongoing commitment to both social justice and public service reform. At a minimum, this should include Department for Communities and Local Government; Department of Health; Home Office; Ministry of Justice; and the Department for Work and Pensions.

¹⁸ MEAM (2015) *Individuals with multiple needs: the case for a national focus*, London: MEAM, p. 7.

¹⁹ Framework (2015) *Simple Change for Troubled Lives: Five action for effective help*, p. 10.

-Encourage joined-up funding locally around multiple needs through local pooled budget initiatives and in including a focus on multiple needs in 'devolution deals'.

4. A role for central government – what would a multiple needs programme look like?

4.1. Initiatives to improve services for individuals facing multiple and complex needs should be locally-led and will require a 'whole-system' view with commissioners, services, and service users working together across sectors and service boundaries to deliver change. However, a national programme would have an important role to play, making it clear that every area must improve responses to individuals facing multiple and complex needs, setting a broad framework, and providing investment and support to enable local leaders to achieve this.

4.2. With local areas taking the lead, the role of a cross-government multiple needs programme would be to provide:

- **Investment** – as noted above, local areas will require an initial investment to incentivise a focus on individuals facing multiple and complex needs and begin delivering an enhanced service to some of those facing the most entrenched complex needs. Like the Troubled Families programme, this could take the form of match funding with local areas.
- **Sharing promising practice and providing support**, with a programme of capacity building and support, building on existing knowledge of effective approaches for individuals facing multiple and complex needs to support local areas in developing their approach and sharing knowledge between areas.
- **Oversight and accountability** – The programme should overcome the current accountability gap around adults facing multiple and complex needs, ensuring there is a clear individual responsible in each area delivering improved outcomes and reporting back nationally.

4.3. **The specific aims and outcomes of the programme should be designed in partnership with people with direct experience of the problem, with robust service user involvement mechanisms embedded at a strategic level to ensure that people with experience of facing multiple and complex needs are involved in the design and delivery of the programme.** As with the Troubled Families programme, a combination of different outcome measures will be most appropriate given the complexity of need. This may include outcomes relating to: increased stability for individuals facing multiple and complex needs; reduced demand on emergency and criminal justice services; and improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

A Good Life: Exploring what matters to people facing multiple and complex needs²⁰

Recent research by Revolving Doors Agency explored the priorities and goals of a group of individuals with direct experience of multiple needs, using creative research methods and asking what a 'good life' looked like to them. Key reflections from this research that should be considered when developing an outcomes framework for a national multiple needs programme include:

- **The importance of achieving stability.** The desire for stability and security was the strongest theme of the research. This was often linked to a desire for stable accommodation, but also to greater consistency in experience with support services more broadly and also a greater sense of mental wellbeing.
- **Quality of service is important,** with a particular focus placed on relationships with staff members. When working with a difficult to engage group, user satisfaction measures should therefore be considered as an important.
- **Understanding the journey,** participants stressed that recovery from facing multiple and complex needs is a journey, which inevitably involves a series of setbacks and difficulties. It may require a long period of engagement to achieve the kind of final 'results' such as employment or abstinence from substance misuse, and as such distance-travelled outcomes are important as signifiers of progress and greater stability.

4.4. While acknowledging that payment for outcomes is part of the current Troubled Families model, we would also raise some concerns over the application of payment by results models to individuals facing multiple and complex needs. Our recent report *Adding value? Reflection on payment by results for people facing multiple and complex needs* highlighted significant challenges in applying PbR models to people in this situation, including: difficulties in keeping outcome metrics sufficiently simple; the need to support long-term recovery with a complex client group rather than chasing short-term outcomes; the risk of creating perverse incentives and encouraging the more complex cases to be 'parked'; and challenges in attributing cause to particular interventions where coordination of support from a range of partners is required.²¹

4.5. Given the mixed record of PbR schemes to date,²² we suggest considering alternative ways to support an outcome-focused approach. If a PbR approach is decided on, it should take account of the key consideration raised in our review of PbR schemes for people facing multiple and complex needs.²³ These include:

²⁰ Terry, L., et al (2015) *A Good Life: exploring what matters to people facing multiple and complex needs* London: Revolving Doors Agency. Available online here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/goodlife/>

²¹ Britton, S. (2015) *Adding Value? Reflection on payment by results for people with multiple and complex needs* London: Revolving Doors Agency. Available here: <http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/documents/adding-value-reflections-on-payment-by-results/>

²² National Audit Office (2015) *Outcome-based payment schemes: government's use of payment by results* London: NAO

²³ Britton, S. (2015) *Adding Value? Reflection on payment by results for people with multiple and complex needs*

- **Setting a range of outcomes** - Avoiding overly simplistic outcomes that fail to appreciate the breadth of need. Balancing the desire for PbR models to use simple payment metrics with the need to accurately reflect the needs of the group
- **Service user involvement in setting outcomes:** User satisfaction outcomes could be explored as part of the picture, and outcomes should be designed in partnership with services users
- **Ensuring outcome measures support long-term recovery-** Outcome measurement should support long-term recovery for a group that are often poorly served by existing services, rather than processing them towards overly simplistic single outcomes more effectively. A focus on providing stability and rewarding 'distance-travelled' is crucial
- **Adequate resources for intensive support** - Schemes must be adequately resourced to provide intensive, relational support up-front, helping to build a strong foundation for recovery. This could involve limiting the size of the PbR element in contracts for this group
- **A joined-up approach** - Commissioners should seek to pool funds around shared outcomes to develop targeted approaches to this group. Savings come from taking a 'whole system' view and reducing high demand on emergency and criminal justice services in the long-run.

A national programme should:

-Support a locally-led approach, while ensuring that every area is working to improve responses to individuals facing multiple and complex needs

- ensure there is a clear individual accountable in each area delivering improved outcomes and reporting back nationally

- Design the specific aims and outcomes of the programme in partnership with people with direct experience of facing multiple and complex needs, with robust service user involvement mechanisms embedded at a strategic level both nationally and in local areas to ensure that people with experience of facing multiple and complex needs are involved in the design and delivery of the programme

-Take account of the particular challenges in applying payment by results models to individuals facing multiple and complex needs, and consider alternative ways of encouraging an outcome-focused approach.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. A national programme to coordinate better support for individuals facing multiple and complex needs holds potential to reduce demand on costly emergency and criminal justice services and save public money, while improving outcomes for some of the most disadvantaged individuals in society. Local leadership should be central to any programme, and as well as ensuring that there is a focus on the estimated 58,000 individuals facing the most entrenched complex needs it should provide a broader strategic framework for partners to focus on improving outcomes the most excluded individuals across all public services. This would bring together a range of current national and local schemes that are likely to impact on people in this group.
- 5.2. Such a programme would fit with wider government aims set out within the Social Justice Strategy, as well as the goal of improving public services through person-centred support and greater integration, innovation, and localism. We hope that the government will build on the promising commitments in the 2014 Autumn Statement and the March 2015 Budget statement to take this approach this approach forward. In doing so, we urge the government to consult extensively and in a meaningful way with people who have direct experience of the problem, and invite key decision makers to discuss next steps with members of the Revolving Doors Agency National Service User Forum.

For further information, or to discuss these issues with members of our National Service User Forum, please contact:

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