

Summary

Given the well-documented relationship between substance misuse and offending behaviour, increases in alcohol and drug consumption in Ireland are a cause for concern for criminal justice agencies. In one attempt to address this problem, the Probation Service established a residential treatment facility for men who come before the courts on alcohol/drug-related offences and for male probation clients who are at risk of reoffending due to an addiction problem. This study, part of a larger evaluation, examined whether the programme impacted on future propensity to reoffend in a group of male substance-abusing offenders (n=14). The impact of the treatment programme on two dynamic criminogenic needs – substance misuse and attitudes towards the criminal justice system – was explored, as was the relationship of these dynamic criminogenic needs to future offending behaviour. Although 64% of clients relapsed after completing the programme, the majority (64%) had not reoffended. The offences of those who did reoffend were all alcohol related. No significant relationship was observed between propensity to reoffend and attitudes towards the criminal justice system. There were no significant changes in client attitudes over the treatment programme.

Holway, T., Mawhinney, S., Sheehy, N. (2007) Treating addiction, tackling crime: the impact of probation-led residential treatment on offender substance misuse, recidivism and attitudes towards the criminal justice system. *Irish Probation Journal*, 4, (1) , pp. 108-124