

Ongoing research :

Circles of Support and Accountability: Countering the Risk Discourse?

Country leading the research: England (PhD)

Other countries involved in the study: None

Aim of the study: To examine core members' perspectives of Circles of Support and Accountability and its contribution to supporting their reintegration.

The more specific objectives are to:

- examine the characteristics of core members;
- explore core members perceptions of the Circles process;
- consider core members views about the effect of their participation in Circles on their behaviour and actions in the short and medium term;
- explore the relationship between Circles of Support and Accountability and other interventions (and the effects of this relationship on sex offenders experiences of Circles of Support and Accountability);
- investigate the extent to which Circles of Support and Accountability offers a strengths-based approach to the resettlement of sex offenders.

Brief summary of design: This qualitative research study collected data from 30 Core Members from across England and Wales using semi-structured interviews. Interviews adopted the Appreciative Inquiry approach to elicit 'best' experiences of Core Members' participation in CoSA as well as to complement the strengths-based model of CoSA.

Core members were also asked about their experiences of participating in CoSA, how they heard about CoSA, their expectations and motivations for joining. Core Members were also asked about their understanding and experiences of Support and Accountability and where they felt their reintegration had been assisted by the Circle volunteers. In addition, Core Members completed short questionnaires to collect socio-demographic data. Administrative data on each Core Member was also collected with the assistance of regional project coordinators.

All of the Core Members who were interviewed had participated in CoSA for approximately 6 months and understood their participation to be voluntary.

Study start date: November 2010

Study end date: August 2015

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Research institution involved: [University of Leeds](#)

Who is the research funded by: [Wates Foundation](#)

Additional comments: This PhD study is linked to the wider Circles of Support and Accountability evaluation conducted at the University of Leeds and which David was employed as lead Researcher.