

TRAVELLERS IN PRISON INITIATIVE

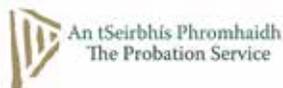


Mincéir in the Respoon



TOOLKIT AND STANDARDS FOR TRAVELLER PEER SUPPORT PROJECTS IN PRISON

April 2019



TRAVELLERS IN PRISON INITIATIVE

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Cover photos: John Walsh
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A photograph of a dark brown horse and a white and black horse in a field of yellow flowers. The dark brown horse is in the foreground, looking towards the left. The white and black horse is in the background, also looking towards the left. The field is filled with many small yellow flowers, and the background is a soft-focus green field.

DJ	Department of Justice and Equality
ETB	Education and Training Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
IPS	Irish Prison Service
IASIO	Irish Association for Social In
IPT	Irish Penal Reform Trust
ITM	Irish Traveller Movement
MTW	Meath Traveller
TMS	Traveller Mediation Service
MW	Mincéirs Whiden
NTWF	National Traveller Women Forum
PS	Probation Service
TCS	Traveller Counselling Service
TPI	Travellers in Prison Initiative
TRTP	Tipperary Rural Travellers Project
IRC	Irish Red Cross
SSGT	St Stephen's Green Trust



FOREWORD

MICHAEL MCDONAGH / Meath Travellers' Workshop

I was delighted to be part of the development of this toolkit. It has produced a very much welcome set of standards which will help guide the development of peer support projects for Travellers in Irish prisons.

The toolkit draws on the wealth of knowledge and skills we have gained through our work over the last 4 years as peer-support facilitators with Travellers in prison.

The standards set out in this toolkit will help us to monitor our work and ultimately assist us to live up to our commitment to good practice and community work values.

I hope that the insights and practical guidance in this toolkit will give ideas and inspiration to other peer-support facilitators working with Travellers.

I extend our gratitude to the Department of Justice and Equality and the Irish Prison Service, for 'putting their money where their mouth is' and providing funding for peer-support work with Travellers in four prisons in Ireland.

I would like to thank Grainne O'Toole for her dedication in undertaking a formative evaluation of the existing peer-support groups and using the learning to develop the toolkit and standards. I would also like to thank Tanya Lalor for her professionalism in editing and revising the toolkit; and of course to the St Stephen's Green Trust for their foresight in funding our pilot Traveller Prison Links Project in Wheatfield Place of Detention, the Travellers in Prison Initiative and this Evaluation and Toolkit.

Finally, I want to extend my deep appreciation to my fellow facilitators, the Travellers who actively engaged in our programmes and their families for their time, giving valuable input and to the Irish Prison Service for having the commitment and understanding of the need for Traveller Peer-Support Programmes in Prison.

FOREWORD

CARON MCCAFFREY / Director General, Irish Prison Service

I welcome the publication of this 'Toolkit and standards for Traveller Peer Support projects in prison' which sets out the standards to be applied in undertaking peer-support work with Travellers in prison. The toolkit has been developed based on an evaluation of current peer support practices in Irish prisons and lessons from peer support work elsewhere.

The Irish Prison Service has been an active supporter of the Travellers in Prison Initiative since 2015, working along with the Probation Service, St Stephens Green Trust and several other supportive organisations. In 2018 we agreed to support a further three year strategic plan.

Providing peer support is a key objective and action area for the Travellers in Prison Initiative and we recognise that peer support is a valuable means to strengthen self-identity and self-advocacy for Travellers in prison. We currently co-fund Traveller peer support services in four prisons, in conjunction with the Equality Division of the Department of Justice and Equality.

Peer Support has an important role to play in creating an encouraging environment which supports Travellers' participation while in prison. It is a person-centred and strengths-based approach, built on trusting relationships among peers. In 2018 we re-framed the ethnic identity question on our standard committal interview form and we undertook a census of the ethnic identity of our entire prison population. This will help us to ensure that services provided within prisons are conducive to participation by Travellers and other ethnic groups.

It is our aim that culturally-appropriate peer support services will encourage positive relationships between Travellers, non-Travellers and prison staff. Peer support services, working alongside existing prison-based services, will also help us to enhance access for Travellers to services and supports in prison and to develop pathways to prepare for life outside prison. Peer support can also facilitate links with family members and with other community-based services to assist in re-integration.

I am confident that these standards will be of enormous benefit to the organisations that provide peer support services and will lead to more positive outcomes for all of the participants.

FOREWORD

ANNE COSTELLO / Programme Coordinator, Travellers in Prison Initiative

It is recognised that Travellers are significantly over-represented within the prison system. Although only accounting for 0.7% of population in the Republic of Ireland, Travellers account for an estimated 10% of the entire prison population and 15% of the female prison population (based on a census of Travellers in prison undertaken by the Irish Prison Service in November and December 2018).

The over-representation of Travellers in the penal system is not unique to Ireland; the same trend arises in countries with an indigenous minority ethnic population. This over-representation has been documented in a TPI briefing paper available online: www.ssgt.ie/resources.

The Travellers in Prison Initiative (TPI) was developed in 2014 as a response to the particular needs and circumstances of Travellers in prison in Ireland.

It is a programme of the St Stephen's Green Trust, which is also funded by the Irish Prison Service, the Probation Service and the HSE (Social Inclusion). It is governed by a steering group, chaired by the National Traveller Women's Forum and its other members include: Pavee Point, the Irish Traveller Movement, IASIO, the IPS, the Probation Service, the Irish Penal Reform Trust, Mincéirs Whiden, Exchange House, Traveller Counselling Service, the HSE Social Inclusion Unit, the Irish Red Cross, the Education and Training Board, and the Traveller Mediation Service and Parish of the Travelling People.

The overall aim of the TPI is to embed positive change in policy and practice. Our five action areas are.

1. Building a knowledge base about Travellers in prison
2. Increasing and improving access to prison-based services for Travellers
3. Strengthening supports for families of Travellers in prison, and after prison, using a multi-agency approach
4. Strengthening self-identity and self-advocacy for Travellers in prison by mainstreaming a peer-support model
5. Documenting and Sharing the Learning of the TPI Initiative

Traveller prisoners experience isolation and loneliness in prison. Improvement in this situation is more likely to occur when prisoners themselves are involved in articulating their needs, rights and responsibilities, and that process in turn shapes service provision. This principle of participation is not only a core principle of peer support, but of the overall work of the TPI. There are currently peer support groups in four prisons (Limerick, Dóchas, Wheatfield and the Midlands prisons).

The peer support groups empower Travellers to access services in prison and to gain knowledge and pride in their own culture and history. Examples of work include planning and delivering Traveller Pride events; and gaining insights into the work and training courses that would be of most interest and benefit to Traveller prisoners post-release.

Our role in the TPI is to support peer support and to advocate for change based on the learning from peer support groups. We are delighted that the work of the four peer support groups has been formally acknowledged and mainstreamed by the Irish Prison Service, through its funding of these groups since 2019. It is our hope that in time, other peer support groups will be established across the prison estate.

We believe that this set of standards and toolkit plays an important role in this regard as it provides the tools and guidance for best practice peer support delivery. It has been developed by the established peer support projects, and it will ensure that future peer support work will follow these best practices.

The TPI gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the Meath Traveller Workshops, and the other peer support projects that have developed this toolkit, with the support of the researcher, Grainne O'Toole, and extends a special thanks to Tanya Lalor who facilitated workshops with the peer-facilitators and edited the toolkit.

INTRODUCTION



This document contains three individual sections:

A toolkit for undertaking peer support for Travellers in prison

Standards for Traveller peer support projects to follow

Resources and templates to support peer support groups and facilitators.

The toolkit, standards and resources were commissioned by Meath Travellers Workshop (MTW) in partnership with St Stephens Green Trust's Travellers in Prison Initiative (TPI).

MTW is a community development organisation involving Travellers and settled people. In 2014, MTW established the first peer support project for Travellers in Wheatfield prison called 'Traveller Prison Links'. This programme was supported by SSGT and subsequently received part-funding from the Irish Prison Service (IPS). There are three additional Traveller peer support projects as follows:

Limerick prison Traveller peer support project, delivered by Tipperary Rural Travellers Project (TRTP)

Midlands prison Traveller peer support project, delivered by TRTP¹

Dóchas women's prison Traveller peer support project, delivered by the NTWF.

As Traveller peer support in prisons is in its infancy, an evaluation of the four projects was carried out to capture the learning and good practice.² This document was informed by this evaluation, and it also draws on the 'All Ireland Standards for Community Work' published in 2016 by Community Work Ireland as well as the National Standards for Peer Support in HIV, produced by Positive UK.³

¹ In the initial phase of the peer support projects, the one in the Midlands prison was delivered by Laois Traveller Action Group in partnership with Irish Association of Social Integration of Offenders (IASIO).

² O'Toole G (2018), Formative Evaluation of Traveller Peer Support Projects in Prison, Travellers in Prison Initiative.

³ National Standards for Peer Support in HIV produced by Positive UK. Available online at: <http://hivpeersupport.com/>

AIMS

The toolkit and standards in this document aim to support Traveller organisations to deliver peer support work with Travellers in prison in line with good practice. Key to the success of the delivery of peer support by Traveller organisations to date is the use of a community development approach which is underpinned by such values as participation, empowerment and anti-racism. The success of the peer support projects has also been due to an in-depth understanding of Traveller culture, and this understanding informs the ongoing development of peer support projects. The standards provide guidance so that this approach will be applied by all Traveller organisations currently delivering peer-support projects in prison, as well as those who may establish peer support projects in the future.

The toolkit aims to provide a practical guide for setting up Traveller peer support projects in prison. It includes a step by step guide to establishing a project, and it provides a range of tried and tested resources that can be used to assist you on this journey.

WHO IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR?

This toolkit, standards and resources are aimed at people delivering peer support with Travellers in prison and those supporting such projects. This includes:

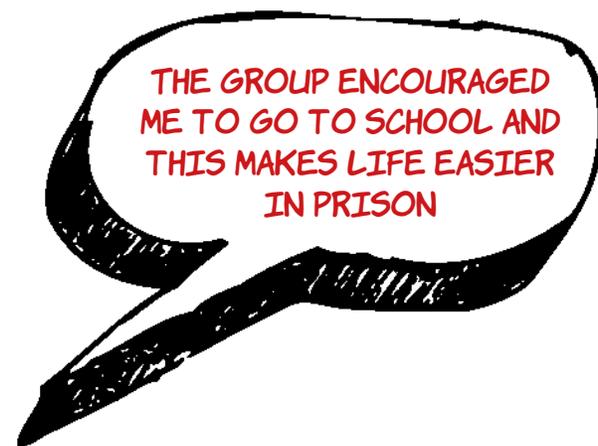
Traveller groups who are considering initiating peer support projects and individual facilitators

Traveller peer support groups already in existence

Wider community groups, including Traveller projects, as to how they could contribute to sustaining peer support measures in the wider community, such as follow up, after-care and post-prison support

Peer support facilitators and co-facilitators (both paid and unpaid)

Employers or funders who are involved in commissioning peer support projects.



2

TRAVELLER PEER SUPPORT WORK IN PRISON – AN INTRODUCTION



WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support is defined as

'a system of giving and receiving help founded on key principles of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful. It is about understanding another's situation empathically through the shared experience. When people find affiliation with others they feel are 'like' them, they feel a connection.'⁴

The peer support approach empowers the individual with the belief that they can, and do, have control over their life, and that they are the agents of change in their own lives. There is no single way to provide peer support and it can be delivered in ways which respond to the needs of the individuals or group. It can be:

- Delivered in a one-on-one setting, or in a group
- Delivered by volunteers or paid employees
- Peer-led or facilitated by another appropriate professional
- Utilise workshops or social activities
- In ad hoc or ongoing formats.

Peer support is increasingly recommended in the UK as a key way of 'ensuring continuity of support for those released from prison; making mainstream services go further; and providing employment opportunities for those displaying an aptitude for such roles.'⁵ Three main reasons for adopting a peer support approach have been identified:

1. Peers can be effective 'role models' for offenders - people they can identify with and are living proof that turning away from crime is possible
2. Peer support works because offenders are more likely to listen to individuals that have 'walked in their shoes' as opposed to professional staff who they may view as authority figures
3. The approach can build social capital⁶ and resilience within deprived communities.⁷

4 Mead S, (2001) quoted by Centre of Excellence in Peer Support <https://www.peersupportvic.org/index.php/2014-12-15-22-41-58/2014-12-15-22-59-27>

5 Fletcher D.R & Batty E. (2012), *Offender Peer interventions: What do we know?* Centre for Regional, Social and Economic Research Sheffield Hallam University.

6 Social capital broadly refers to those factors of effectively functioning social groups that include such things as interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared values, trust, and cooperation.

7 Fletcher D.R & Batty E. (2012), Op Cit.

APPROACH

Peer support is shaped by those involved and adapts to the needs of individuals and the group; however, it is guided by a set of principles and standards.

The peer support projects with Travellers in prison adopt a community development approach; they are non-judgemental, and participation is voluntary. This involves meeting the group of Travellers 'where they are at', responding to individuals and peer group needs, and supporting group members' participation and their empowerment to bring about positive change in their situation (this is discussed in greater detail in section 3 below).

WHY IS PEER SUPPORT WITH TRAVELLERS IN PRISON NEEDED?

It is recognised that Travellers are significantly over-represented within the prison system. Although only accounting for 0.7% of population in the Republic of Ireland, Travellers account for an estimated 10% of the entire prison population and 15% of the female prison population (based on a census of Travellers in prison undertaken by the Irish Prison Service in November and December 2018).

The disproportionate representation of Travellers in the penal system is not unique to Ireland - the same trend can be found in other countries with a minority ethnic population.⁸

For example

In New Zealand, while the Maori population account for 12.5% of the total population, they account for 51% of the prison population

In Australia, Indigenous communities account for less than 3% of the total population, and account for 27% of the prison population

In Canada, indigenous communities account for 4% of the total population, but 28% of the prison population

These figures are even more stark for women, and for young people – in New Zealand, Australia and Canada, young people from indigenous groups account for more than half of those in youth detention.⁹

The situation of Travellers in prison must be understood in the context of their poor life experiences, such as discrimination and racism; poor access to culturally appropriate services such as accommodation, health and education; high unemployment rates; high rates of suicide; and increasing drug misuse. Recent studies have been carried out to document the experience of Travellers in prison and the challenges they face post-release, and are useful reading, as there is little written about the experience of Travellers in prison. These include 'Travellers in the Irish Prison System, A Qualitative Study' (Irish Penal Reform Trust, 2014) and 'Hearing their Voices: Traveller Women in Prison' (Rachel Doyle on behalf of the TPI, 2017).

These studies revealed a range of issues that disproportionately affect Travellers in prison, including: racist abuse, discrimination, literacy problems, high rates of suicide, substance

8 Irish Penal Reform Trust (2014) *Travellers in the Irish Prison System: A Qualitative Study*. Dublin: IPRT

9 See TPI (2019) Briefing Sheet No. 1 Indigenous and minority ethnic groups in prison. www.ssgt.ie/resources

misuse, and particular challenges that separation from family can bring to members of the Traveller community. The report from the Irish Penal Reform Trust highlights the isolation and loneliness experienced by Traveller prisoners, particularly for the disproportionately high number of Travellers in protection wings. Doyle found that the situation of Traveller women in prison is particularly acute given the strain and stress which separation from family takes on Traveller women. Furthermore, Traveller women can lack confidence to access services in prison, report name calling and stigmatisation on the part of settled women in prison, and some Traveller women are reluctant to make a formal complaint about these experiences to prison authorities.¹⁰ In relation to post-release, Traveller women experience barriers in meeting their basic needs such as finding accommodation and employment. These issues are compounded by stigma from their own community and relationship breakdown leading to estrangement and isolation.

Peer support is therefore an important mechanism to develop the participation, representation and decision-making of minority communities within the prison system because ethnic minorities in custody face a range of challenges beyond those of the majority population. Research conducted by Fountain et al. (2007) identified that Black and minority ethnic prisoners may rely on peers as sources of information to a greater extent than white prisoners.¹¹ Factors that contribute to this are fears about prison staff's lack of understanding about cultural diversity, discrimination and institutional racism, and because of the lack of Black and minority ethnic staff within the prison environment.

The evaluation of the peer support projects found that peer support work with Travellers in prison must also take place outside of prison at community level, through providing linkages to extended family networks. For example, understanding the importance of extended families within Traveller culture and how these networks operate is critical to supporting Travellers in prison.

Feedback from Traveller peer support groups in the UK prison system indicates that these groups are instrumental in ensuring that Travellers' needs are identified and brought to the attention of prison staff. However, in order to work effectively, an understanding of Traveller culture is required, and this involves the participation of community-based Traveller organisations.¹²

The model of peer support with Travellers in Irish prison is underpinned by a community development approach which acknowledges that societal factors contribute to high rates of Travellers in prison and works with Travellers to improve their individual and collective circumstances. Using this approach moves away from seeing the prisoner as a problem to supporting the prisoner to be an agent of positive change for themselves and their community.

BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT – TRAVELLER PERSPECTIVES

The formative evaluation undertaken of the four Traveller peer support initiatives in Irish prisons consulted with different stakeholders about the benefits of peer support.¹³ Travellers in prison identified the following benefits:

10 Travellers in Prison Initiative 'Hearing their Voices' Traveller Women in Prison, Rachel Doyle, 2017.

11 Roy, A., Davies, K., Mir, Y and Fountain, J. (2007) Helping prisons to meet the drug service needs of Black and minority ethnic prisoners: a practice guide. Centre for Ethnicity and Health Faculty of Health, University of Central Lancashire.

12 Irish Penal Reform Trust (2014): Op Cit

13 O'Toole (2018): Op Cit

Builds confidence and solidarity	<p>Travellers gain more confidence in dealing with staff and with other issues that come up in prison</p> <p>Travellers can discuss negative thoughts, and frustrations in a safe place</p> <p>Travellers are encouraged to help other Travellers, including young Travellers, who come into prison. They listen to them and encourage them to be active and not to become isolated.</p>
Participation	<p>Travellers get encouragement to get involved in education workshops and training opportunities and are supported to participate in prison life</p>
Representation	<p>Traveller representatives engage with prison authorities (including the Governor) and represent the peer support group at steering group and structures which oversee peer support groups in prison. This representative role instils pride amongst the Travellers</p>
Empowerment	<p>It is an independent space where Travellers can work out problems, including problems with the prison, and try to think of ways forward</p> <p>The group helps Travellers to think about their situation and how they ended up in prison</p> <p>The group helps Travellers to reflect and think of ways they can make positive changes in their lives</p> <p>The group helps Travellers to challenge discrimination from other prisoners and from prison staff (e.g. name calling or loss of privileges)</p>
Respect	<p>The group is based on respect for each other and others within the prison</p> <p>There is pride in Traveller culture amongst the group</p>
Support for maintaining family links	<p>Support from the peer support facilitator makes it possible for Travellers to link with their families. This may include providing practical supports for families (e.g., to access prison visits) to maintain relationships</p>
Skills development	<p>Travellers have developed skills around negotiation, listening, facilitation, and representing others in meetings</p>

WE LEARN MORE ABOUT TRAVELLER IDENTITY AND RIGHTS AND ABOUT OURSELVES

THE GROUP GIVES US A VOICE IN PRISON AND A PLACE TO TALK OUT ISSUES WITH NO JUDGEMENT

THE PEER GROUP GETS YOU OFF THE LANDING AND PULLS DOWN THE WALLS

BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT – OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Other stakeholders identified benefits arising from the Traveller peer support projects. These included the IPS, Education and Training Board staff, the Prison Chaplaincy service, and the Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders (IASIO). The benefits include:

Participation and engagement	Peer support has enhanced Travellers engagement in prison life and there has been an increase in the uptake of services
Confidence	<p>Travellers have confidence in the projects and their self-confidence has been enhanced</p> <p>The projects have empowered Travellers and have generated hope for them</p> <p>Tangible goals have been developed by Traveller prisoners in response to their needs</p>
Improved relationships	Improved relationships between Travellers and prison staff were identified
Attitudinal change	Changed attitudes towards Travellers amongst some IPS staff, and this has enabled them to support Travellers more effectively
Skills development	Travellers have acquired new skills and are better able to interact with prison staff and deal with issues with more confidence than before
Understanding of Traveller culture	Promotion of Traveller identity builds confidence of, and generates understanding among, IPS staff
Representation	The participation of Traveller representatives at the Traveller peer support project steering group meetings had a positive impact. The representatives' ability to represent the issues of the group as a whole (as opposed to focusing on their individual issues) and to engage in discussions gave the peer support work credibility and status within the prison environment
Supporting change in the prison environment	<p>Peer support groups find practical solutions to problems and issues that could otherwise escalate. Members of the groups have assisted prison staff in diffusing potential problems among prisoners (including drug misuse, self-harm and group conflict), and have worked with prison staff to address issues of common concern</p> <p>Changed perceptions of Travellers and how the IPS delivers services, with greater moves towards a prisoner-centred service, and a more responsive approach</p>

3

TRAVELLER PEER SUPPORT MODEL

This section describes the peer support model currently used in the four prisons in Ireland, and as described in the evaluation of these peer support projects.¹⁴



14 O'Toole (2018): Op Cit

COMMON OBJECTIVES

While all the peer support projects have differences in their delivery (in order to respond to needs identified) common objectives include the following:

- To reduce isolation experienced by Travellers in prison
- To increase access to prison-based services and post-release supports
- To work with services to inform and support them to respond to the needs of Travellers in prison
- To support and develop pathways to prepare for life outside prison, by providing information and links to services (both inside and outside prison)
- To build pride and confidence in their identity and culture
- To strengthen supports for families of Travellers in prison and responding to the needs of children
- To support the emergence of Traveller leaders who will have the potential to become peer support co-facilitators post-release

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Underpinning peer support is the principle that it is shaped by those involved and that it adapts to the needs of individuals and the community. As a result, there is no single way to do peer support. However, it is guided by a set of principles and standards that inform its development. These principles are community development principles.

A community development approach is a feature of the peer support projects that were evaluated.

Community development is about working with groups of people to:

- Help them to develop an analysis of their situation
- Involve them in working together to identify their common needs and issues, and
- Work together to bring about positive change to address the issues.

It is informed by a set of values; participation, empowerment, equality, positive change that are set out below. These values should inform peer support work in the following ways:

Participation	Travellers should be supported to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of the peer support groups.
Empowerment	Increase Travellers' knowledge, skills, and confidence to become active participants in the peer support group and in prison life.
Equality and anti-discrimination	Create respect in the peer support group through an inclusive approach (listening to each other, respecting each other's point of view, confidentiality and non-discrimination) and challenging oppression, stereotyping and prejudice.
Working in partnership to achieve positive change	Make change together to improve the situation of all Travellers in prison and to create better opportunities for Travellers post-prison.

In practice, community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.

The use of this approach enables a focus to be placed on both individual and collective changes. The practice of community development moves away from seeing Travellers as a problem, and it involves working in partnership with Travellers to solve problems taking into account the societal context under which these problems have arisen.



Implementing these values in a prison peer support project involves the following

Supporting Travellers to access the peer support group	<p>Raise awareness about the group by placing information posters in key areas of the prison; (these should be designed by Travellers; be literacy friendly, and be representative of Traveller culture)</p> <p>Liaise with the Red Cross and IASIO who can promote awareness of the peer support group amongst Travellers in prison</p> <p>Place a stand at prison workshops that promote awareness about prison services to prisoners</p> <p>Liaise with prison staff to identify ways to include Travellers who are on protection wings</p> <p>Encourage Travellers in prison to raise awareness through word of mouth.</p>
Supporting Travellers to participate	<p>Engage participants in developing and agreeing the ground rules for how the group will operate</p> <p>Consult with them on programme content</p> <p>Celebrate and explore Traveller ethnicity and build pride and visibility in their identity</p> <p>Facilitate them to express their views on what works well and what doesn't in the peer support group and make relevant changes in group</p> <p>Build their confidence to speak out and raise issues</p> <p>Engage in discussions about topics and issues raised in the peer group.</p>
Supporting Travellers to make positive change	<p>Work together to address problems as they arise and follow through with clear outcomes</p> <p>Support Traveller peer group representatives at the peer support project steering group in the prison to raise issues</p> <p>Raise wider policy issues with the TPI.</p>

TRAVELLER ETHNICITY AND TRAVELLER ORGANISATIONS' KEY ROLE

Peer support work with Travellers emphasises the importance of Traveller culture and ethnicity. Traveller organisations knowledge of Traveller culture and ethnicity, of the experiences of Travellers and the issues they face in society, and their 'know-how' in designing programmes with Travellers about Travellers has led to the establishment of peer support projects that are culturally appropriate and relevant for Travellers in prison. In addition, Traveller representative organisations have significant connections with prisoners' families, and with services and initiatives in the community. This has proved invaluable, as it enables the development of linkages between prisoners and community, services and initiatives post-release.

It is important that peer support workers create opportunities to raise awareness about issues that can impact on Travellers. Family and its role in Traveller culture is different to the settled community. For example, extended family (cousins, aunts) often plays a similar role for Travellers as immediate family (parents, children) plays for settled people.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Traveller organisations, IASIO, and the IPS have formed new partnerships to maximise the impact of peer support projects. It is recognised that a focus on potential collective benefits to Travellers in prison and post-release is needed (rather than focusing on benefits solely to individuals).

THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN WIDER SOCIETY

It is acknowledged that change must occur in the situation of the Traveller community as a whole, in order to i) reduce the number of Travellers going to prison, ii) improve the situation of Travellers in prison, and iii) to create better opportunities for Travellers post-release.

The situation of Travellers can only be changed if there is an understanding of, and commitment to addressing, the racism and discrimination experienced by Travellers. There is also a need to address the social determinants of health (accommodation, unemployment, etc), to address the root causes of poverty and trauma experienced by Travellers.

I LOVE MY CULTURE, I'M NOT ASHAMED OF THAT AND I WANT TO HEAR MORE ABOUT TRAVELLERS AND HOW HISTORY AFFECTS OUR LIVES

THERE'S A LOT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TRAVELLERS IN THE PRISON. DAY ON DAY.

4

DEVELOPING A PEER SUPPORT PROJECT WITH TRAVELLERS IN PRISON



This section outlines the key steps and considerations that are needed in order to establish a peer support project – including preparation, oversight, peer support meeting formats, and key policies. There are resources that support these steps, and they are in section 7 of this document.

PREPARATORY WORK

Preparation in setting up a peer support group is very important. Time, effort, and resources need to be put in to this phase. The following outlines the groundwork and steps that need to take place:

- Make contact with the TPI to discuss the project and gain knowledge of the prison and the criminal justice system and particular issues for Travellers in prison
- Become familiar with background documents on peer support projects listed in resources section below
- Build relationships through meeting with other Traveller peer support facilitators in Traveller organisations, to find out how the peer-support operates, what systems are in place, and what services are available in and outside of prison.

TIP:

Before you start, be realistic and have defined expectations. Remember, it is a prison environment and security and resource issues will be the prison's priority.

RESOURCES

The Formative Evaluation of Peer Support Projects with Travellers in Prison ¹⁵

TPI has published a range of reports focused on documenting and sharing the learning of the TPI which are available for download <https://www.ssgt.ie/resources/>

MEETING THE GOVERNOR

This will involve contacting and meeting with the Governor of the prison, and undertaking the following steps:

1. Write to the Governor requesting a meeting
2. At the meeting, introduce yourself, your organisation and the work you do with Travellers
3. Discuss the peer support project outline and agree the logistics. For example, how many times a week will the group meet, over how many weeks, what will be its focus, and where will it be held
4. Request that a steering group be set up in the prison to address any issues emerging from the peer support group

¹⁵ O'Toole (2018): Op Cit

5. Provide a copy of this 'toolkit and standards for Traveller Peer Support projects in prison' document
6. Agree key contacts in the prison to liaise with regarding the day to day operations of the peer support group (for example, one of these could be the person who will represent the prison on the steering group)
7. Provide a template terms of reference for a steering group (see section 7).

RESOURCES

Template letter to the Governor is included in section 7, Resources

A checklist for meeting the Governor is included in section 7, Resources

A template terms of reference for a steering group is included in section 7, Resources

STEERING GROUP

One of the first steps is to establish a steering group. This should be established in each prison to oversee and advise on the Traveller peer-support group and address issues emerging from the group. The IPS should support the setting up of the group, and their participation is needed to ensure the group can operate effectively.

The following organisations and roles should be represented on each steering group:

Senior prison staff (Chief Officer, Industrial Manager or higher rank)
Integrated Sentence Management Coordinator
Education Training Board (a teacher or head teacher)
Irish Red Cross staff
Chaplain
Probation Service
IASIO
Traveller representatives from peer-support group (minimum two)
Peer-facilitators from the Traveller organisation

A Terms of Reference for the steering group should be developed and agreed by all at the first steering group meeting. The steering group should meet regularly at least twice per year. The peer support facilitator should present a progress report at the meetings. Issues and concerns emerging in the peer support group should be raised at the meetings and a response to this sought. A maximum of two weeks should be given to the representatives on the steering group to provide a response to issues emerging.

The Steering Group should work with the prison authorities to consider whether participation in the peer group should count towards incentivised systems (for example, in the same way as training and education certification does).

RESOURCES

A template for the Terms of Reference is included in section 7, Resources.

FIRST STEERING GROUP MEETING:

The first steering group will be important in planning the peer support group and logistics, as well as clarifying the future role of the steering group. The following should be included as agenda items

- Terms of Reference – agree the terms of reference for the steering group
- Prepare and present a draft programme of the topics for the peer support group. Seek any information you need regarding inviting guest speakers from within and outside the prison to present to the group on various topics¹⁶
- Access and admission process for facilitators and speakers: clarify the identification required by the prison and admission process for facilitators, and guest speakers (these could include Traveller role-models, ex-prisoners, representatives from Traveller organisations and other community organisations)
- Agree a publicity and referral strategy (for example, posters, and inviting Travellers prisoners through the Red Cross and IASIO)
- Agree logistics (when and where) for sessions
- Agree access to resources (flip charts, DVD, etc.)
- Agree the start date and times for the first peer-support session

RESOURCES

A template agenda for the first steering group meeting agenda is included in section 7, Resources.

16 See Section 5 for sample topics and session outlines

THE FIRST PEER SUPPORT SESSION

The first session of the peer support group should cover the following:

Introduce yourself and give some personal information e.g. how long involved in work with Travellers and why you got involved. This will establish trust and confidence with the group.

Start with an informal chat. It is important to give time for a chat at the beginning of each session. For example, you can share an interesting incident that happened to you or a programme that you saw on television, and ask others about their week. It helps to create a welcoming and informal atmosphere.

Introduce the project and explain what peer support is about. Provide information about the number of sessions that will take place, and what types of topics might be included in the sessions. Ask the group about what they would want to be included in the sessions.

Facilitate participants to develop a group agreement which will outline how the group will operate. This is important to establish an effective group and a strong working relationship. Items for the agreement could include: respecting each other, listening to others, and trying not to interrupt. The group can always re-visit this agreement, or refer to it if any group member feels that any part of the agreement is not being adhered to.

Discuss and agree the agenda of group meetings. This could include:

- ➔ Check-in (ask people how they are feeling before the session starts)
- ➔ Topic to be explored
- ➔ Issues coming up
- ➔ Follow-up needed
- ➔ Reflection on the meeting
- ➔ Close

Introduce a discussion on expectations from the group. Ask each person to think about what they would like to get out of the group: List this and discuss what emerges. This should be revisited throughout the programme.

Ensure that expectations are realistic. While it is important that the peer support project brings benefits and delivers change both for the individual and for all Travellers, expectations need to be managed and should not be unrealistic. For example, a prisoner may hope that they will get early release from prison by participating in the group. It must be stressed that the group has no power to make or influence decisions on individual cases. Focus on the choices and decisions that can be made – but always within the restrictions of a prison environment.

Discuss and plan the programme content, share ideas of topics, and seek views on what people's interests are. Stress that the programme can be adapted as the needs develop or change.

TIPS:

Allow time for informal networking and a chat at the start of each session. This is very important for developing relationships and setting a good atmosphere.

Facilitate the group to establish a group agreement themselves, and don't impose this on them. Once group agreement is agreed put it in a visible place on the wall at each session.

Remind the group that resolving issues will be challenging as it is a prison setting and this will take time. It is important to manage expectations and be realistic.

Be conscious that a prison setting can create a particularly powerless and negative environment. Invite the group to share positive moments since the last session and to reflect on those situations where they have power over their decision making, e.g. to attend gym, classes, peer-support group, contact families.

Do not allow certain people to dominate the discussion. If people dominate, it may cause others to leave. The facilitator must be aware of this and manage the process.

While the group should not be too rigid, if the discussion wanders too far from the topic, ask for issues to be 'parked' for discussion at a later time.

If participants have engaged in role plays during the session, it is necessary to facilitate them to come out of the roles before the session ends.

Refer to confidentiality in the group – while all members should maintain confidentiality, this cannot be guaranteed and the facilitator should advise people not to share sensitive information, or information that may make members vulnerable. The facilitator should let members know that they can approach them after a meeting if they wish to discuss something particularly sensitive.

At the end of the meeting, re-cap on decisions made during the meeting. Set deadlines for follow-up actions. Act on decisions made. Follow up on commitments in the group is important to build trust and confidence in the peer support group and programme and ensure that outcomes are achieved.

RESOURCES

Template letter to the Governor is included in resources section

A template for group agreement is included in resources section

Sample poster designed by MTW is included in resources section

FOLLOW-ON SESSIONS

Once the programme content for the peer support group has been discussed and decided by the group, the peer support group facilitator should:

Conduct one-to-one meetings with relevant stakeholders to organise their input and presentation to the group. These stakeholders include the Education and Training Board staff, prison psychologist, addiction counsellor, Chaplain, Traveller role-models, representatives from Traveller organisations, Probation Services, IASIO, Irish Red Cross, as well as mental health services

Run the programme as agreed and adapt its format as needs emerge

New members will join the group at various stages and they should be introduced to the group agreement at the beginning of the session. A group member can volunteer to explain this to each new member

Make a note of what has been agreed, or what needs to be followed up

Follow up on issues raised and agreements made in between meetings, and report back on this at subsequent meetings.

PEER SUPPORT GROUP AND OTHER KEY POLICIES

The group should be informed of a number of policies that impact on the work of the group in an accessible way:

- Child protection requirements
- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Data protection
- How to address issues
- Peer support group facilitator debriefing

Key peer support group policies

Child protection

Even though prison is an adult environment, members of the group might be aware of child protection issues from outside prison and these may come to light during peer group sessions. Inform the group that anyone who suspects that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a duty to report their suspicions.

Under the IPS Child Protection Policy every prison has a Designated Liaison Person (DLP), as required under Children First 2015. The DLP is the point of contact for all child protection and welfare issues in the prison. If anything arises of this nature in the peer support group, this should be discussed with the prison DLP. The peer support group facilitator should find out who is the DLP in their prison.

In addition, every organisation delivering peer support should have a child protection policy and a DLP. It will be the responsibility of the peer support organisation's DLP to report the matter to Tusla if required. Liaising with the prison DLP is important from a security perspective.

Reporting can be direct to the local social worker if an emergency situation exists, or via the Tusla on-line reporting portal if a non-emergency or retrospective issue. Tusla will then follow up as appropriate.

Protecting vulnerable adults

Inform the group that all adults have:

- The right to be safe
- The right to be free from abuse
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to have any concerns regarding abusive experiences addressed.

All persons are entitled to these rights, regardless of the setting in which they live, including prisons.

It is the responsibility of all service providers, statutory and non-statutory, to ensure that, service users are treated with respect and dignity. The 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse - National Policy and Procedures'¹⁷ which applies to all HSE and HSE funded services, is a useful resource which outlines a number of principles to promote the welfare of vulnerable people and safeguard them from abuse. All services must have a publicly declared "No Tolerance" approach to any form of abuse and must promote a culture which supports this ethos. Any concern about abuse or neglect should be brought to the attention of the peer support facilitator who can assist the person in reporting this to a senior IPS staff member.

17. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/personsatriskofabuse.pdf>

Data protection

Individuals have privacy rights in relation to the handling of their personal data (subject to limits to confidentiality which are discussed below). Strict rules apply to the collection and storage of personal data, under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) . All organisations delivering peer support should have a policy on handling and storing personal information to comply with GDPR.

If you need to collect personal information (e.g., names of individuals), make sure that you:

- Keep all personal information in a locked filing cabinet
- Keep your computer or laptop password protected
- Delete emails with prisoners' personal information once they are no longer needed
- Do not let anyone access prisoners' personal information unless they need to.

Where the prisoner requests that the peer support facilitator make an enquiry on his/her behalf about aspects of his/her case undertake the following steps:

- Tell the person that their details or notes about them will not be held beyond the time necessary
- Make sure that any notes taken on the person or their situation are destroyed following the enquiry
- Make sure that permission to make the enquiry is set out in writing and signed by the person. A template letter is included in Section 6 – Support tools
- If you need to refer the query to another service, only do this when the person has given their permission for this. Do not pass on his/her details or the nature of the query if this permission is not given (except in exceptions where harm to self, children or other specific circumstances – see limits to confidentiality below)
- Remember – at all times, make sure that you protect all personal information while you hold it, and take all steps to ensure that no-one else can access the information.

Confidentiality

While it is important to stress confidentiality in peer groups, at the same time, confidentiality can never be absolute, and absolute confidentiality should never be promised. There are limits to confidentiality and this can arise in the following instances:

- There is disclosure of information which reveals a substantial risk of harm to the individual (self-harm) or others. This may involve calling medical services, prescribing GPs, or if the case involves harm to another person, An Garda Síochána
- There is a suspicion or risk of harm to children - this will involve reporting to Tusla, or prison authorities
- There is a court or tribunal order, or as otherwise required by law
- Other circumstances such as where disclosure is required for the purposes of preventing, detecting or investigating offences, apprehending offenders, required urgently to prevent injury or other damage to the health of a person, or serious loss of or damage to property.

It is important that peer group members are aware that there are limits to confidentiality, and also that it is wise to be cautious about revealing any confidential information in a group setting.

How to address group issues

When broader issues come up within the group here are some suggestions on how to address them:

General issues: - certain things will be outside of the scope of the peer support group, e.g. individual sentence issues, prison rules, etc. However, time can be spent to explore how prisoners can manage this at a personal level;

Traveller specific issues - issues that affect Travellers only, such as Travellers not accessing services and experiencing isolation can be dealt with in the following ways:

- Organise a presentation from a service that group members have limited access to. This is a useful way to introduce the service to Travellers, and examine and address any barriers to access and participation (e.g. access to literacy supports or education or training)
- If discrimination of Travellers is the issue raised, the peer support facilitator can engage with a member of the steering group outside the meeting structure and ask their advice about how to address the problem. This advice can help the peer group to come up with a strategy to address the problem
- Present the issue to the steering group at the next meeting and seek solutions
- Refer broader policy issues (e.g. the high percentage of Travellers on protection wings) to the TPI for discussion with all stakeholders.

Debriefing for peer support

It is important that peer support facilitators should have regular opportunities to 'debrief' with colleagues, for example, as part of staff meetings, or as part of their regular support and supervision. This should happen whether or not a stressful incident has occurred in peer support. However, if a stressful event has occurred, a dedicated 'debrief' session should be made available. The purpose of debriefing is to:

- Evaluate the emotional and physical impact of the work on staff
- Provide support to reduce the isolation of staff
- Relieve stress at an early stage
- Reinforce team spirit
- Decrease isolation at a time when staff may want to withdraw from social contact.
- Reduce dysfunctional reactions or health consequences over time
- Identify the need for and provide counselling or support for all individuals, in relation to any trauma which may have resulted or emerged from an incident

If there are occasions where the peer support facilitator undertakes the work as a lone worker, this is particularly important. For more information see HSE (2013) Supporting Staff following an adverse event

RESOURCES

For further information about and how to report child abuse concerns see http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/parents-and-guardians/how_report/

For further information about the protection of vulnerable adults see <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/socialcare/safeguardingvulnerableadults>

For more information on GDPR see http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/data_protection/overview_of_general_data_protection_regulation.html

Letter for permission to conduct an advocacy intervention is included in the section 7, Resources.

TRAVELLER LEADERSHIP

Travellers who are group members, and who regularly attend the group should be encouraged to take up roles in the group setting, as well as representative roles at the steering group. At each group meeting, Traveller peer group members should be provided with the opportunity to:

Welcome new people to the group. The new person should be asked to say their name and how they heard about the group

Remind the participants of the group agreement at each meeting and check if anything new needs to be added

Ask group members how they felt the meeting went (at the end of the meeting) and to use one word to describe how they felt about the meeting

Set the agenda for the next meeting based on views of the group.

Travellers (for example, those from Traveller organisations or ex-prisoners) should be lead facilitators (or if this is not possible, co-facilitators as appropriate). If it is not possible for Travellers to act as lead facilitators at the outset of the peer support group, they should be supported to develop the skills to enable them to act as facilitators or co-facilitators. The necessary skills and attributes of a facilitators include:

A clear analysis of Travellers' position in Irish society, and the particular issues for Travellers in prison

Strong facilitation and group work skills

A commitment to community work values such as empowerment, participation, equality, and non-discrimination.

TIP: Encourage participants to take up roles and offer opportunities where possible, but they should never be pressurised into doing so.

RESOURCES

Sample job description for peer support facilitators and co-facilitators are included in resources section.

TRAVELLER PEER GROUP MEMBER REPRESENTATION AT THE STEERING GROUP

Traveller prisoner representation on the peer support project steering group is essential. The following guidelines can be used to introduce the role and select a representative.

Explain the role of the steering group and who is involved

Ask the peer group why they think it is important to have Traveller prisoners represented on the steering group

Discuss and draft the role of the representative on the steering group with the group. For example, the role should include:

- ➔ Representing everyone's views, not their own views
- ➔ Bringing forward issues and ideas from the peer support group,
- ➔ Putting forward suggestions about how issues can be addressed
- ➔ Feeding back to the group about the meeting, and the follow on needed

Discuss and agree the requirements for peer group members to take on the role of Traveller representatives. These include:

- ➔ Regular attendance at the peer support group
- ➔ Good participation in the group, for example; lets others speak, contributes actively, expressed an interest in topics raised at meetings, has good analytical and communication skills and is empathetic
- ➔ Can feedback to the group regarding the steering group meeting.

The group then selects volunteers to be representatives based on these requirements

Rotation of the representatives can also be considered

TIP: Provide role play sessions to help the rep develop their skills

PREPARING FOR STEERING GROUP MEETINGS

Once the representative has been selected, the peer support group and representatives need to prepare for the steering group meeting. This will involve:

- Exploring the issues that need to be addressed
- Exploring potential solutions
- Explaining the role of representatives at the meeting
- Practicing skills needed e.g. through role play
- Review and feedback from the steering group meeting to the peer support group
- Review and reflection, as well as forward planning

5

SESSION OUTLINES



ACTIVITIES AND TOPICS FOR SESSIONS

Peer-support group sessions should be varied and interesting. They should be structured but not rigid. It is important to start each session with informal chats and check-ins. The facilitator needs to be flexible to allow time for topics and issues raised in sessions to be discussed, and to introduce Travellers to services (inside and outside of the prison) that can address these issues. The group members should also be facilitated to discuss concerns for Travellers and be supported to consider potential solutions. Suggested topics include:

- Traveller ethnicity – culture, identity and history
- Prejudice/ discrimination/ racism
- Oppression and internalised oppression
- Family history
- Family relationships
- Developing our skills
- Decision-making
- Traveller health
- Gender
- Mental health/well-being
- Facilitation skills
- Preparation for release
- Conflict and mediation

TIP: Ideally, each session should be 'stand-alone' so that it can benefit participants who only come to one session

RESOURCES

A session outline for each topic and links to resources are included in section 7, Resources.

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY WITH TRAVELLER PRISONERS

Peer support with Travellers in prison can often involve one-to-one advocacy with Traveller prisoners. This work can involve liaising with services and agencies, or the prisoner's family.

It is important that confidentiality is followed, and permission is sought from the prisoner to advocate on his/her behalf. No documents or personal data regarding the prisoner should be kept once the query is

resolved. The peer support facilitator should try to avoid duplicating the work of other service providers, and should refer to the existing services who may be best placed to assist in resolving an issue.

See 'Data Protection' in section 4, Peer support group policies, for further details on the steps to take.

While a personal issue should always be kept confidential, if the issue affects more people, the peer group facilitator should raise this issue (ensuring that the confidential nature is not compromised) with the Steering Group and the TPI. This is important to ensure there are outcomes that have collective benefits for the Traveller community as a whole, as well as individual benefits.

MAKING LINKS WITH SERVICES AND ORGANISATIONS

New relationships can be developed between Traveller prisoners and prison staff, relevant services, programmes and organisations operating in and out of prison through the peer support group. These relationships can be nurtured in the following ways:

Invite relevant services, programmes and organisations operating in and out of prison services to share information, ideas, explain roles and discuss issues of interest. This can generate new opportunities and interests for Travellers. For example, given that many Travellers experience literacy difficulties, a meeting with the education service would be of benefit.

The facilitator should help the group prepare for the meeting with guest speakers, before the speaker is due to attend the peer group session.

The facilitator should also have a post-session discussion with the group to gain their feedback on the session and answer any outstanding queries or issues.

Invited guests should be briefed about the group's expectations

Issues should be followed up by guest speaker, making enquiries with appropriate colleagues. It is important to follow up with guest speakers on issues raised in order to provide feedback at the next peer group meeting.

Potential guest speakers include; Education and Training Board staff, psychologist, addiction counsellor, Chaplain, Traveller role-models, representatives from Traveller organisations, Probation Service, IASIO, Irish Red Cross, and mental health services, etc.

RESOURCES

A checklist for meeting with guest speaker attending the peer support project is included in the section 7, Resources.

TRAVELLER ETHNICITY AND EVENTS

Traveller events in prison are important to promote understanding of Traveller ethnicity and culture, and they provide useful opportunities to build and maintain momentum in the group. Traveller events serve the dual purpose of instilling pride in their culture amongst Travellers and helping break down barriers and misconceptions and can be educational for non-Traveller prisoners and staff. Events could include:

- Making images and information about Travellers culture and history visible throughout the prison
- Making crafts that symbolise Traveller culture
- Inviting Traveller role models to come to speak in the prison
- Promoting Travellers' music, storytelling and/or traditional food
- Religious services which include opportunities to remember loved ones
- Films, documentaries and images relevant to Travellers. These are useful mechanisms to instil pride and stimulate discussions about Traveller culture and identity. Possible choices could include
 - Showing TV programmes such as 'I am Traveller'
 - Circulating TPI Newsletter
 - Community radio link featuring Travellers.

CLOSING EVERY SESSION

It is important for facilitators to bear in mind that prisoners may be returning to a cell immediately after the session. It is important that the facilitator allows time for closure and de-briefing at the end of each session, particularly if difficult topics have been discussed. If participants have engaged in role plays during the session, it is necessary to facilitate them to come out of the roles before the session ends. Sessions should end on a positive note and offer an element of hope.

TIP: Remember to include a session on preparation for steering group meetings with the peer group (see section 4.10).

6

STANDARDS FOR PEER SUPPORT FOR TRAVELLERS IN PRISON



INTRODUCTION

A standard can be defined as 'a level of quality or attainment' and 'something used as a measure'. Quality standards are 'agreed measures designed to ensure that services meet agreed thresholds of quality'. They are designed to provide guidance and support so that the underpinning principals of, and approaches to, the development of peer support are maintained and applied by all who establish peer support projects in prisons.

Four standards are outlined for peer support work with Travellers in prison. These are:

Travellers should have access to, and be supported by, peer support in prison

Peer support groups promote active participation, empowerment of, and equality for Travellers

Peer support involves working in partnership to achieve positive change

Strong governance and policies are in place for Traveller peer support

HOW TO USE THE STANDARDS

Each standard is set out below and the table accompanying each standard follows the format:

Rationale/Why: the reason for having the standard and what it means

Keeping track: A template to record outcomes and progress on achieving them.

Peer support groups will know that they have achieved the standard if the outcomes highlighted in the tables below have been achieved. These outcomes will be achieved by carrying out the tasks for each of the standards listed in the tables. Peer support groups should report on whether they have completed these tasks, and if any are outstanding, steps to be taken to complete the tasks should be listed, and included in the tables. The toolkit can be used to guide the delivery of tasks, as it contains guides for completing actions under each standard.



THE KNOW HOW

To deliver the standards peer support facilitators need certain knowledge, skills and values to carry out their role.

KNOWLEDGE OF

- Traveller history and culture and issues facing Travellers
- National policy in Ireland on issues relating to Travellers
- Community development principles and practice
- The prison and criminal justice system
- Group work theory, principles and practice

SKILLS

- Know-how and experience of building of partnerships
- Group work and leadership development
- Facilitation

ATTITUDES

- Anti-discriminatory and equality-based values
- Empathy and non-judgement attitude
- Motivated by social justice and human rights
- Committed to working collectively for the benefit of Travellers in prison.

STANDARD 1: TRAVELLER PRISONERS SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO, AND BE SUPPORTED BY, TRAVELLER PEER SUPPORT

Rationale/Why: The disproportionate representation of Travellers in the penal system is not a situation that is unique to Ireland, and the same trend can be found in other countries with an indigenous minority ethnic population. The TPI has developed a briefing paper on this topic,¹⁸ A range of interventions are needed to break this cycle. The situation of Travellers in prison must be understood in the context of their poor life experiences such as: discrimination and racism, poor access to culturally appropriate services such as accommodation and health and education, high unemployment rates, high rates of suicide, and increasing drug misuse. Peer support work with Travellers in prison that is underpinned by a community development approach has the capacity to improve Travellers knowledge, skills and confidence and contribute to achieving better outcomes for Travellers in prison and post-release.

18 Travellers in Prison Initiative (2019) TPI Briefing sheet No.1 Indigenous and minority ethnic groups in prison. Available at <https://www.ssgt.ie/resources/>

KEEPING TRACK

Outcome	Tasks	Y/N	Evidence ¹⁹
Traveller prisoners are aware of the Traveller peer support group	Place posters about the peer support group in key areas of the prison Liaise with the Red Cross, ETB and IASIO to promote awareness amongst Travellers in prison Encourage Travellers in prison to spread the word and encourage other Travellers to join the group – by word of mouth		
Group agreement is developed at the initial group by participants and adapted as needed	Group agreement visible on the wall at each session, referred to at each group, and adapted as recommended by the group		
Travellers joining the peer support group for the first time are welcomed and introduced to the group agreement	Group member(s) to introduce new member to the group agreement		
Information is provided to peer group members on how individual needs can be responded to	The facilitator informs members about the steps that will be taken to respond to individual queries (including permission and data protection rules)		
Individual queries responded to	The facilitator will respond to individual needs/ queries by providing information or an onward referral within a week of the request		
A list of support services in prison and in community available to each prisoner	Facilitator provides a list to the group within the first month of set up.		

¹⁹ Evidence could include copies of posters, notes of meetings, records of attendance, correspondence with speakers or anything else that provides evidence that the task was done.

²⁰ In all prisons where peer support groups operate, there should be a steering group to address issues arising for Travellers in prison, as articulated through the peer support group. This steering group will include participation of peer support group representatives, IPS staff, and other stakeholders such as the TPI, IASIO, Red Cross and others.

STANDARD 2: ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT OF AND EQUALITY FOR TRAVELLERS

Rationale/Why: The community development values underpinning peer support work with Travellers inform the approach, focus and direction of the work. These values are:

Participation: Travellers should be supported to participate in the planning, implementation, decision-making, and monitoring of the peer support groups.

Empowerment: Travellers should be supported to build their knowledge, skills, and confidence, in order to become active participants in the peer support group and in prison life.

Equality and anti-discrimination: Respect should be created in the group through an inclusive approach (listening to each other, respecting each other's point of view, confidentiality and non-discrimination), and oppression, stereotyping and prejudice should be challenged.

KEEPING TRACK

Outcome	Tasks	Y/N	Evidence
Regular attendance by Travellers at the peer support group	Record attendance at the group. This may be particularly important if certification forms part of the peer support group participation, and that the certification requires evidence of attendance.		
Travellers actively engage in identifying agendas and activities and feel respected and heard	Once a month all participants are asked to complete an anonymous satisfaction survey Findings are acted upon as appropriate		
Travellers actively engage in identifying speakers / services that they want to know more about	Twice a year, participants are asked to complete an anonymous satisfaction survey which asks about services in prison Findings are acted upon as appropriate		
Each group should cover at least seven of the peer group topics (see section 5.1)	Seven topics covered		
Travellers in the prison are supported to develop skills to enable them to be peer group co-facilitators	Facilitators put in place supports for Travellers in prison to develop these skills Participants offered opportunity to facilitate		
Travellers representatives are supported to discuss issues with prison staff	Travellers are supported to take part in peer group project prison steering group meetings ²⁰ Travellers attend peer group project prison steering group meetings Debriefing takes place after meeting		

STANDARD 3: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE CHANGE

Rationale/Why: Working together to achieve positive change with Travellers requires the peer support project to focus on achieving benefits for all Travellers, both in prison, and post-release (rather than focusing only on benefits to individuals). The situation of Travellers as a community must change, and opportunities for Travellers must be improved, if the number of Travellers going to prison is to be reduced and their prison experiences and post-release outcomes are to be improved. Working in partnership with the IPS and other stakeholders will assist in achieving identifiable outcomes.

HOW TO USE THIS STANDARD

Outcome	Tasks	Y/N	Evidence
Key service providers are supported to engage effectively with the peer support group	All guest speakers presenting to the group are given the checklist and are supported to understand each point on it and why it is important.		
Traveller peer support groups are supported to articulate their views and raise strategic issues	The facilitator prepares the group for meetings with any service provider by holding dedicated preparatory sessions.		
Recommendations for change and follow-up that arise in the peer support group discussions are documented and pursued	Facilitator records recommendations on the session template and this is followed up to ensure that a response is provided at next meeting.		
Service providers/ organisations respond to the Traveller peer support group regarding issues raised by the group	Facilitator follows up with service provider requesting a response from them to the group within one-month of the issue(s) being raised.		
Outcomes for partnership arrangements (e.g. steering group) are monitored and evaluated	Members of the steering group have agreed their terms of reference. The peer support facilitator reviews the steering group each year with the input of the steering group members.		

STANDARD 4: STRONG GOVERNANCE AND POLICIES IN PLACE

Rationale/why: strong governance of the Traveller peer support projects and clear policies are needed to ensure accountability and oversight and are also required by funders and partners. Procedures should be in place to ensure the active participation of Traveller prisoners in measuring progress. Oversight and participation in the evaluation of Traveller peer support projects will help make for effective projects.

KEEPING TRACK

Outcome	Tasks	Y/N	Evidence
All participants informed of policies on child protection, data protection and working with vulnerable adults	Each organisation delivering peer support comply with GDPR, child protection and working with vulnerable adults requirements and have policies in place. Within the first two sessions of the group forming (or new members attending), the facilitator informs participants of these policies in an accessible way. This briefing is repeated and updated as necessary, and all new group members are informed of the policies.		
A steering group that provides oversight and advice to the peer support project is established	The steering group has been formed It comprises a representative from the prison, the peer facilitator/s, two representatives from the group, and other relevant service providers Terms of reference have been agreed for the steering group The steering group meets at least twice annually and operates in line with the terms of reference		
Traveller peer support group representatives participate fully on the steering group and are satisfied with its operation	The facilitator supports the representatives to take part through preparatory sessions prior to each meeting The facilitator and representatives hold debriefing sessions after each steering group The facilitator consults with the representatives about their satisfaction with the operation of the steering group		

Outcome	Tasks	Y/N	Evidence
Accountability is ensured and outcomes are met	Facilitators engage in evaluations organised by the TPI network or funders Facilitators report on activities and outcomes		
Barriers to, or complaints regarding, the implementation of the peer group are recorded and addressed	Any complaints, gaps or blocks in the running of the group are reported to TPI coordinator for action to address The TPI network meets to consider gaps and blocks		
Peer support group facilitators are supported in their work	Support and supervision is undertaken monthly or more often if required Staff have access to de-briefing and additional support as required		



REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PUBLICATIONS

ADASS (2016) *Seeing Prisoners as Assets - Peer to peer support as a means of identifying and responding to prisoners with social care needs - building future capacity*. Paper produced by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in England (ADASS).

Available at: recoop.org.uk/dbfiles/news/274/ADASS-Seeing-prisoners-as-Assets-Sept-16.pdf

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Available at: http://www.iprt.ie/files/IPRT_Travellers_Report_web.pdf

Community Catalyst, Inc. (2004) *The ABC's of Negotiation: An Advocate's Guide to Negotiating with Providers to Improve Access to Health Care Services*.

Available at: https://www.communitycatalyst.org/doc-store/.../the_abcs_of_negotiation_feb04.pdf

Community Work Ireland (2010) *All Ireland Standards for Community Work*. Dublin: Community Work Ireland. Available at: <http://www.communityworkireland.ie/all-ireland-standards-for-community-work/>

Fletcher D.R & Batty E. (2012) *Offender Peer interventions: What do we know?* Sheffield: Centre for Regional, Social and Economic Research Sheffield Hallam University.

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Available at: <https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/diversity-workshop-guide-to-discuss>

Irish Prison Service (2016) *Strategic Plan 2016-2018*. Available at: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Irish-Prison-Service-Strategic-Plan-2016-2018.pdf/Files/Irish-Prison-Service-Strategic-Plan-2016-2018.pdf>

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Dublin: Travellers in Prison Initiative.

Royal College of Surgeons and University of Edinburgh (2017) *Study on ancestry of Irish Travellers*

Available at: <http://www.rcsi.ie/index.jsp?n=145&p=107&a=10373> and <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep42187>

Roy, A., Davies, K., Mir, Y., Fountain, J. Anitha S., Bashford J., & Patel, K. (2007) *Helping prisons to meet the drug service needs of Black and minority ethnic prisoners: a practice guide*. University of Central Lancashire: Centre for Ethnicity and Health Faculty of Health

Department of Justice and Equality (2017) *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021*. Dublin: DJ&E

Doyle, R. (2017) *'Hearing their Voices' Traveller Women in Prison*. Dublin: Travellers in Prison Initiative.

Available at: <https://www.ssgt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Hearing-their-Voices-Traveller-Women-in-Prison.pdf>

School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science, University College Dublin (2010)
All Ireland Traveller Health Study. Dublin: UCD

Pavee Point (2013) *Mental Health and Suicide in the Traveller Community*.
Available at: <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/music-and-culture/> <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/racism-and-discrimination/> <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/health/>

Travellers in Prison Initiative (2019) *TPI Briefing sheet No. 1 Indigenous and minority ethnic groups in prison*. Available at <https://www.ssgt.ie/resources/>

FILM AND TV

Blood of the Travellers, Scratch Films Production for RTE - documentary series

Stevenson Bryan Ted Talk on injustice:
https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice

WEBSITES

Citizens Information Data Protection
http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/national_government/standards_and_accountability/data_protection.html

Centre for Excellence in Peer Support
<http://www.communityworkireland.ie/all-ireland-standards-for-community-work/>

Community Catalyst, Inc.(2004) *The ABC's of Negotiation: An Advocate's Guide to Negotiating with Providers to Improve Access to Health Care Services, 2004*.

European Network Against Racism Ireland <http://enarireland.org/racism/>

Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Service www.exchangehouse.ie

Find my past <https://www.findmypast.com/>

iHeed, Race, Racism, Prejudice and Discrimination - What are they? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jt0f5WyoAGU>

Irish Times, Traveller groups welcome findings of DNA study, 2017
<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/traveller-group>

Irish Traveller Movement <http://itmtrav.ie/strategic-priorities/anti-racism-interculturalism/traveller-ethnicity/> <http://itmtrav.ie/strategic-priorities/anti-racism-interculturalism/traveller-pride/>

Meath Travellers Workshop <http://www.travellerheritage.ie/traveller-heritage-culture/culture-history/>

Mental Health Ireland <http://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

Mind Tools <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/essential-negotiation.htm>

Mind Tools https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TED.htm

Pieta house <http://www.pieta.ie/>

Show racism the red card
<http://theredcard.ie/travellers-racism>

Skills you need
<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/negotiation.html>

St Stephen's Green Trust <https://www.ssgt.ie/current-work/>

Training for change https://www.trainingforchange.org/training_tools/power-shuffle/

Traveller Equality project
<http://www.epea.org/traveller-equality-project-report/>

Travellers in Prison Initiative
<https://www.ssgt.ie/resources/>

Túsla Child Protection Policy
http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/parents-and-guardians/how_report/ and Protection of vulnerable adults <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/socialcare/safeguardingvulnerableadu>

University of Michigan, Inclusive Teaching, College of Literature, Science and Arts,
<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/sample-activities-templates/>

World Health Organisation
http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

USEFUL CONTACTS

Travellers in Prison Initiative,
St Stephen's Green Trust, PO Box 950, Newbridge, Co. Kildare.
Tel: 087 657 7666 / Email: anne@ssgt.ie

Peer support projects

National Traveller Women's Forum,
4-5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: 01 672 7430 / Email: ntwf@iol.ie

Meath Travellers Workshop,
Fair Green, Dillonsland, Navan, Co. Meath.
Tel: 046 902 7801 /Email: adminntw@eircom.net

Tipperary Rural Travellers Project,
Unit 4, Rossmore Village, Dundrum Rd.,
Co. Tipperary, E34 AC82.
Tel: 062 31138

National Traveller Organisations

Irish Traveller Movement,
4-5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: 01 6796577 / Email: info@itmtrav.ie

Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Service,
61 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1.
Tel: 01 872 1094
Email: info@exchangehouse.ie

Traveller Counselling Service,
6 Cabra Road, Phibsborough, Dublin 7.
Tel: 086 308 1476
Email: info@travellercounselling.ie

Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre,
46 Charles Street Great, Dublin 2.
Tel: 01 8780255 / Email: info@pavee.ie

National Traveller Women's Forum,
4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: 01 672 7430 / Email: ntwf@iol.ie

National Traveller MABS,
Unit 2, North Park, North Road, Dublin 11.
Tel: 0761072230 / Email: info@ntmabs.org

Traveller Mediation Service,
C/o Athlone Community Taskforce, Ball Alley Lane,
Parnell Square, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
Phone: 0834322076
Email: mtcmichris@gmail.com

Parish of the Travelling People,
St Lawrence House, 6 New Cabra Road, Phibsborough, Dublin 7.
Tel: 01 8388874 / Email: info@ptrav.ie

Prison Services and Probation Services

Irish Prison Service,
IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford,
Co. Longford.
Tel: 043 333 5100 / Email: info@irishprisons.ie

IASIO (Irish Association Social Inclusion Opportunities),
Block 3, Grove Court, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.
Tel: 01 866 2706

Irish Probation Service,
9 Haymarket, Smithfield, Dublin 7, D07 TNR4.
Tel. 01 8173600 / Email: (+353) (0)1 8173600

Other

Education and Training Boards Ireland,
Piper's Hill, Kilcullen Road, Naas, Co Kildare.Tel: 045 901070 /
Email: info@etbi.ie

Irish Red Cross,
16 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Ireland
Tel: 01-642 4600 / Email: info@redcross.ie

Pieta House Dublin,
First Floor, Greenhills Retail Park, Greenhills Road, Tallaght,
Dublin 24.
Tel: 1800 247247 / Email: info@pieta.ie

Irish Chaplaincy & Traveller Equality Project,
52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB.
Tel: 020 7482 5528
Email: admin@irishchaplaincy.org.uk

7

RESOURCES – PEER SUPPORT PROJECT SUPPORT TOOLS



INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR GOVERNOR

This should be written on organisations' headed paper

Date

Dear Governor,

I am writing to you regarding the establishment of a Traveller peer support group in {Insert name of prison} prison. {Name of organisation} is a Traveller organisation set up in {date} that aims to {insert aims}. We are committed to promoting the rights of Travellers and to this end we provide a range supports to the Traveller community in the area. In particular, we link with Traveller families affected by the criminal justice system. {add here, if any, research you have done, or engagement with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families}.

We are aware that currently there is no Traveller-specific initiative in the prison and we would be committed to addressing this gap in partnership with the prison. We are linked in with the Travellers in Prison Initiative and have briefed ourselves on the model of Traveller peer support and good practice in this area.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the setting up of a Traveller peer support project.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

{Insert name and title}

CHECKLIST FOR MEETING WITH THE GOVERNOR OF THE PRISON

At the meeting, introduce yourself, your organisation and the work you do with Travellers. Explain the context for high levels of imprisonment. See 'TPI Briefing sheet No. 1 Indigenous and minority ethnic groups in prison' which is available at <https://www.ssgt.ie/resources>

Discuss the peer support project; outline and agree the logistics. For example, how many times a week should the group meet, over how many weeks, what will be its focus, and where will it be held.

Provide a copy of Toolkit and Standards for Traveller Peer Support Projects in Prison.

Request that a steering group is set up in the prison to address any issues emerging from the peer support group.

Agree a key contact to liaise with for example the person who will represent IPS on steering group.

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARATION WITH GUEST SPEAKER ATTENDING GROUP

Explain purpose, role and operation of the peer support group.

Advise the speaker to share some personal information about themselves with the group such as why they got involved in this work, experience/knowledge about Travellers, where they have worked before, etc. This is important for the group to establish trust and confidence in the speaker.

Provide some background information about Travellers and the context for the high levels of imprisonment. Provide information about some of the issues emerging in the group which may be relevant to the speaker? For example, some Travellers experience shame in relation to poor education levels and have had very negative experiences in school.

Ask them about what their service/organisation does for prisoners in general and for Travellers in prison. Also, ask if they have any special interventions or approaches to working with Travellers.

Clarify how issues raised by the group be addressed and by when (i.e. feedback in a month).

Agree format of presentation/discussion.

SAMPLE GROUP AGREEMENT

Our peer support group is a Traveller only space. If non-Travellers are invited it must be by agreement of the group and they must be informed that the group focuses specifically on Traveller issues.

Our group is based on respect, trust and non-discrimination.

We will listen to each other and we won't interrupt each other.

The peer support facilitator will respect the privacy and personal information of members. However, if a child protection issue is disclosed within the group, the peer support facilitator will have a duty to report this to the relevant body.

All new members will be told about the group agreement before each session begins.

If a group member has an individual query, the peer support facilitator can help and s/he will follow this up and let the person know the outcome at next meeting.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STEERING GROUP

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE TRAVELLER PEER SUPPORT STEERING GROUP

The Traveller peer support steering group will:

- Provide advice, support and assistance in the implementation and delivery of the project
- Respond to identified, and emerging issues raised by Traveller representatives and put in place strategies to address them as appropriate
- Assist the Traveller peer support project to develop initiatives to improve outcomes for Travellers in prison.

ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL GROUP MEMBERS

Individual steering group members will be expected to:

- Attend regular meetings at least twice per year and actively participate in the group's work
- Commit to developing a better understanding of the context of Traveller imprisonment and issues impacting on them in prison
- Commit to supporting equal rights of Travellers in the prison context from their organisations perspective
- Advocate for the project's outcomes.

MEMBERSHIP

The steering group shall be made up of:

- Senior prison staff (Chief Officer, Industrial Manager or higher rank)
- Integrated Sentence Management Coordinator
- Education Training Board (a teacher or head teacher)
- Irish Red Cross staff
- Chaplain
- Probation Service
- IASIO
- Traveller representatives from peer-support group (minimum two)
- Peer-facilitators from the Traveller organisation

CHAIR/CONVENER

The group will be chaired by a senior prison staff member of the prison. Meetings will be convened by the Chair and supported by the peer support group facilitator.

AGENDA ITEMS

The peer group facilitator will draft the agenda. The agenda, with minutes or other relevant documents, will be circulated by email at least three working days prior to the scheduled meeting by IPS rep or peer-facilitator. The facilitator of the peer group will be responsible for taking minutes of the meetings and circulating the agenda and minutes in advance.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The steering group will meet at least two times per year.

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR FIRST STEERING GROUP MEETING

Agree Terms of Reference for the steering group

Agree draft programme of the topics for the peer support group

Agree access and admission process for facilitators and speakers

Agree the publicity and referral strategy

Practical issues:

- Logistics (when and where) for sessions
- Access to resources (flip charts, DVD, USB sticks, etc.)
- Start date and times for the first peer-support session
- How it will be promoted amongst Travellers in prison, which prisoners, how many will be allowed attend etc.

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR PEER SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATOR

The role of the peer support facilitator will be focused on coordination, governance and support for the group members to use their experience of the criminal justice system to inform the sessions and the approach to the work of the group.

The role of the peer support facilitator is outlined below.

Coordinate the development and delivery of a peer support project with Travellers responsive to their needs

Support the development and participation of Travellers post-prison as co-facilitators of the peer support projects

Support the development of peer support co-facilitators to use their experience of the criminal justice system to inform peer support sessions, and undertake planning and debriefing support meetings with co-facilitators

Participate in, and resource the peer support project steering group and support Traveller peer support group representatives in their role on steering group structures

Advocate on behalf of individual Travellers in response to their needs

Build trust and relationships with services and agencies within the prison to ensure that peer support is communicated to them and supported within the prison

Support links between Travellers in prison and their families, as well as links between Travellers and services and supports post-release

Record the issues, responses, outputs and outcomes from the work, and record and circulate the minutes of steering group meetings

Establish trust and relationships with the Traveller peer support group and Travellers in prison through listening to their concerns

Promote peer support with Travellers within the prison setting, and encourage Travellers to attend

Provide a link between Travellers and key services and agencies as appropriate

Support Travellers to input into the development of policies and strategies that seek to improve prison policy for Travellers as an ethnic group, and create better conditions for Travellers post-release.

A co-facilitator may work alongside the peer support facilitator in the delivery of the sessions, and both roles should meet before and after sessions to plan, reflect and debrief on the work. The role of the co-facilitator may regularly rotate and be taken up by different members of the peer group.

TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING ATTENDANCE, ISSUES RAISED AND RESPONSES

Session theme and date	
Attendance Number of Travellers Number of non-Travellers, if any	
Issues raised - provide detailsw	
Follow up. Issue raised with (select all that apply): Steering group: [] Staff member: [] Service: [] Travellers in Prison Initiative (TPI): []	Describe the outcome of the follow-up / responses
Name of facilitator	
Name of co-facilitator	



TEMPLATE LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO MAKE ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS

Address

Date

Dear (insert name of the service you are contacting)

I (insert name) hereby authorise (insert name of Peer Support facilitator) of (insert name of Traveller organisation) to make enquiries about my legal case/training opportunities/ health issue/family matter/ {delete as appropriate or add new one} on my behalf.

Yours sincerely

{signed by the prisoner}

CONFIDENTIAL SATISFACTION SURVEY

The facilitator calls out a set of questions and asks participants to circle one of the faces in response to each question. The facilitator will explain that the faces reflect the range of responses, from excellent, good, normal, bad, or awful.

In the peer support group:

Do you feel that you are listened to?



Do you feel that you have a say within the group?



Are the topics interesting and useful to you?



Are you encouraged to speak up & speak out?



Do you enjoy the group?



Do you feel that all members have an equal role in the group?



TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING OUTPUTS

This template is designed to assist peer support facilitators to complete reports for IPS as funder of peer support groups. It should be filled in on a regular basis, and the information collected can be used in the six month reports to the IPS.

Activity	Outputs	State yes if completed, and give details
Set up of the peer support group	<p>The Governor has been written to, requesting meeting</p> <p>A meeting has taken place with the Governor:</p> <p>The Governor has been given a copy of Toolkit/standards for Peer Support with Travellers in Prison + draft Terms of Reference for steering group</p> <p>Liaison person in prison has been established and has been contacted</p> <p>A start date, session start and finish times and length of programme have been agreed with a prison representative</p> <p>Prison security clearance requirements for speakers are discussed with the governor and are in place</p> <p>A steering group has been established and meetings held</p>	
Support Travellers to access the peer support group	<p>Posters about the peer support group have been produced and placed in key areas of the prison</p> <p>Liaison with the Red Cross and IASIO to promote awareness of the peer support group amongst Travellers in prison has taken place</p> <p>A stand at prison workshops (which are occasionally held) has been taken to promote awareness about prison services to prisoners</p> <p>Options have been explored to undertake actions to include Travellers who are on protection wings</p> <p>Travellers in prison have been encouraged to raise awareness about the group through word-of-mouth</p>	
Support Travellers to actively participate in the peer support group	<p>Travellers have been supported to:</p> <p>Develop and agree the group agreement for how the group will operate</p> <p>Input into programme content</p> <p>Give their views on what works well and what doesn't and to change what is not working – the participant satisfaction survey has been administered monthly.</p>	

Activity	Outputs	State yes if completed, and give details
Support Travellers to make positive change in their circumstances	<p>Travellers have been supported to:</p> <p>Develop and agree the group agreement for how the group will operate</p> <p>Input into programme content</p> <p>Give their views on what works well and what doesn't and to change what is not working – the participant satisfaction survey has been administered monthly.</p>	
Sessions	<p>The sessions have taken place (name the title of each session)</p> <p>Details of service providers attending sessions are documented</p>	
Traveller representation on the steering group	<p>Preparation session for group has been held</p> <p>Reps from the group have been selected</p> <p>Training of reps has taken place</p> <p>Reps have attended meeting of steering group</p> <p>Meetings have been held with peer support group to debrief</p> <p>Follow up has taken place with relevant steering group members</p>	
Advocacy work	<p>No. of cases/ issues is documented</p> <p>No. of follow-ups conducted is documented</p> <p>No. of referrals to existing services is documented</p> <p>No. of liaisons with families is documented</p>	

SESSION OUTLINES AND RESOURCES

THEME: ETHNICITY, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Aim of the session: To explore and build pride in Traveller culture and identity

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER:

Brainstorm with the group, encouraging everyone to participate, to answer the following:

- Where do Travellers come from – their origins?
- Where did you learn this?

INPUT

Input on Traveller history and culture from a Traveller who is from a Traveller organisation and has experience/expertise on the issue, to talk about the following:

- Introduction to Traveller history and state policy towards Travellers
- Travellers situation – discrimination/racism, health, education, employment statistics etc
- Recognition of Traveller ethnicity and its importance
- Traveller role models
- Introduce the Traveller pride events and give examples of the type of work that is being done to promote Traveller culture in prison? Or in broader society?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The links to fact sheets in the resource section below include facts about Travellers and information about culture and ethnicity.

EXERCISE:

Ask each person to discuss the questions below with the person beside them

- What do you think of what you've heard?
- What did you learn?
- Share with the bigger group.

Find out how the group would like to see Traveller ethnicity highlighted and represented in the prison. Give examples from other prisons in Ireland and the UK. The ideas generated can be used to plan future projects and discussions on this issue.

RESOURCES:

Irish Traveller Movement <http://itmtrav.ie/strategic-priorities/anti-racism-interculturalism/traveller-ethnicity/> <http://itmtrav.ie/strategic-priorities/anti-racism-interculturalism/traveller-pride/>

Meath Travellers Workshop <http://www.travellerheritage.ie/traveller-heritage-culture/culture-history/>

Pavee Point <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/music-and-culture/>

Traveller Equality project <http://www.epea.org/traveller-equality-project-report/>

THEME: PREJUDICE/DISCRIMINATION/RACISM

Aim of the session: To explore and discuss the impact of prejudice, discrimination and racism on members of the group and on the Traveller community generally

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

People can get to know one another individually and begin to think about discrimination etc. You can replace any of the questions with your own but keep them simple and bonding. Ask members of the peer support group to form into pairs, and talk about the following:

- What one thing have you in common with each other?
- When was the first time you noticed that you belonged to an ethnic group that is different to settled people?
- Do you feel that you were ever treated differently because you are a Traveller?

After several minutes, come back together and ask the group to share what they have learned about each other to the whole group.

INPUT

Provide an input on what the terms prejudice, discrimination and racism mean. Use video clips and diagram below etc.

DISCUSS:

- What is your response to what you heard?
- Did you learn something new?
- If so what was it?
- If not, please explain why not

EXERCISE:

Discuss with the group:

- Personal experiences of prejudice, discrimination and racism and
- The Traveller communities' experiences.

It's important to move from the individual to the community experience to build an analysis of how racism is structural – that is, that society is structured to exclude communities of people.

RESOURCES:

European Network Against Racism Ireland <http://enarireland.org/racism/>

iHeed, Race, Racism, Prejudice and Discrimination - What are they? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jt0f5WyoAGU>

Irish Traveller Movement <http://itmtrav.ie/strategic-priorities/anti-racism-interculturalism/>

Pavee Point <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/racism-and-discrimination/>

Show racism the red card <http://theredcard.ie/travellers-racism>

Stevenson Bryan [https://www.ted.com/talks](https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice)

[bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice](https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice)

Oppression dynamics - the relationship between prejudice, discrimination and racism

ATTITUDES/ASSUMPTIONS/PREJUDICES

- + Power to Act
- = DISCRIMINATION
- + Ideology of Superiority (white, straight, male etc.)
- = RACISM/SEXISM/HOMOPHIA

(which subordinate, subjugate, marginalise, because of race, ethnic background, sex, sexual orientation, age, class, disability, etc.)

THEME: OPPRESSION/INTERNALISED OPPRESSION

Aim of the session: To build an analysis of oppression and how Travellers internalise it.

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

Ask each person to tell the story about their name. Use the following questions to help you:

- Who are you named after and why?
- Where does your name come from?
- Do you have any memories or stories about your name?
- Do you like your name? Why or why not?

EXERCISE: The Power Shuffle

This diversity exercise helps group members examine their understanding of diversity, their feelings about belonging to a particular group and their assumptions about one another.

Give the group a set of instructions. Emphasise that they do not have to identify as a member of any group. It is important that people have the right to self-identity. If they are unsure which group to go with, they can make a choice based on what makes the most sense to them.

Ask the group to assemble on one side of the room.

Go through the points below one by one. Introduce each one by saying "Please step to the other side of the room if (read out each point from the list, for example, 'you attended secondary school')". Ask the group "Notice how you feel. Come back together again." Repeat for all items on the list.

1. You attended secondary school
2. You were born outside Ireland
3. You are 45 or over
4. You are under 25
5. You lived in a caravan

6. You have children
7. You have lived outside Ireland
8. You were refused admission to a school
9. You were ever evicted from a camp
10. You were ever in a separate Traveller class in school
11. You were called names in school because you are a Traveller
12. Your parent is a settled person
13. You were ever refused entry to a pub or restaurant because you are a Traveller

DISCUSS:

- How did it feel to be in the group which had to walk across the room?
- How did it feel to be in the main group and watch others cross?
- If you didn't cross the line at first but later started to cross, why was that? (increased confidence?, trust?, rapport?)

INPUT

Give an input on what privilege and oppression means and explore the following in a group discussion:

- In what ways do you see that oppression affects the Traveller community?
- What feelings does this stir up for you?
- How can we address oppression?
- Come up with recommendations with the group about how they can address oppression within their current circumstances, for example:
 - group agreement
 - how they treat others
 - contribute to change to improve outcomes for Travellers in prison and their families.

Ask the group to suggest ways to deal with negative feelings that stem from oppression, such as anger, suicidal thoughts, and others.

Develop follow on sessions based on their suggestions.

RESOURCES:

Goldbach J (2017), Diversity Toolkit: A Guide to Discussing Identity, Power and Privilege, <https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/diversity-workshop-guide-to-discuss>

Training for change: https://www.trainingforchange.org/training_tools/power-shuffle/

Traveller Counselling Service: <http://travellercounselling.ie/>

University of Michigan, Inclusive Teaching, College of Literature, Science and Arts, <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/sample-activities-templates/>

THEME: FAMILY HISTORY

Aim of the session: To explore what family means as part of the Traveller community

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

In small groups come up with a short poem or statement (a few lines) about what we mean by family in the Traveller community and why is family important to us?
Say your poem or statement back to the group.

EXERCISE: Family Tree.

Give each person a large page and get them to draw a tree and use branches to indicate their family tree. Each person presents their family tree back to the group.

INPUT

Discuss how family history is linked to ancestry. Explore the misconceptions about who Travellers are and what their history is.

Although Irish Travellers come from an Irish ancestry, they are genetically distinct from the settled Irish.

Use the resources listed below to explore this and how Travellers can self-identity as members of the community. Invite in a speaker with expertise on this issue from a Traveller organisation to discuss with the group in a further session.

RESOURCES:

Blood of the Travellers, Scratch Films Production for RTE - documentary series

Find My Past <https://www.findmypast.com/>

Irish Times, Traveller groups welcome findings of DNA study, 2017 <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/traveller-group>

Royal College of Surgeons and University of Edinburgh, Study on ancestry of Irish Travellers

THEME: DEVELOPING OUR SKILLS

Aim of the session: To develop communication and negotiation skills

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

Ask everyone to share a story with the person next to them about a time they negotiated for something they wanted. For example, bartering for tools at a market. Share the stories with the group.

EXERCISE:

Role plays are an acting activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's shoes, or when you stay in your own shoes but put yourself in to a fictional situation.

At the previous session ask the group for scenarios where they have negotiated and build scenarios around this.

For example, Martin wants to use the phone in the prison to call his daughter to wish her a happy birthday but there is a long queue, and he is anxious to get to the phone before a particular time as his daughter will be out. Before he gets to use the phone, he is called away by a prison officer.

Set up a scene and give people roles. Ask the prison officer to be rigid in their position. Ask those in the role of prisoners queuing for the phone to be dismissive. Ask Martin to consider the tactics he will use as each barrier to using the phone presents itself. Give the group a few minutes to practice. Carry out the drama.

Discuss with the group:

- How did they feel undertaking the roles?
- What tactics did they use?
- What tactics did Martin use?
- What was effective and what was not?
- Ensure that everyone gets a chance to try and negotiate.

INPUT What is negotiation?

The basics of effective negotiation

- Identifying the issues
- Communicating clearly
- Understanding power dynamics
- Separating the people from the problem
- Building relationships.

DISCUSS with the group examples of where they have negotiated well or not so well in a prison context. Explore possibilities to develop better negotiation skills in a prison context.

RESOURCES:

Community Catalyst, Inc.(2004) The ABC's of Negotiation: An Advocate's Guide to Negotiating with Providers to Improve Access to Health Care Services, 2004

Mind Tools <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/essential-negotiation.htm>

Skills you need <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/negotiation.html>

THEME: DECISION-MAKING

Aim of the session: To examine how decisions are made and how we can influence them

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

Ask each group member to share a good decision they made, ask why it was good and give the reason why they made the decision.

EXERCISE The lifeboat exercise

This exercise enables us to explore how we make decisions. The scenario is that the group are involved in a shipwreck. 12 of them managed to get into a lifeboat. However, after a short time everyone realises that there are too many people on board. The boat will capsize, and everyone will drown unless five people are thrown out. Which five will it be? You can throw yourself over too! Nobody can swim and there are no life jackets!

Margaret, 47, foster mother who has helped so many children. Her husband and five foster children are back at home.

David, 28, Single. Lives at home with parents.

Katie, 6, was knocked unconscious due to the shipwreck. Schoolgirl.

Laura, 32, mother of Katie. Absolutely hysterical that her daughter is unconscious, may be putting others in danger if she doesn't calm down.

Sally-Ann, 22, single mother, 2 young children at home. Unemployed.

Misty, 21, student, studying medicine. Suffers from depression and has attempted suicide in the past.

Sam, 16, HIV positive. Student.

Jack, family dog.

Grandpa John, 89, noted for his courage and heroism when saving fellow soldiers in World War II.

Johnny, 45, Traveller man married with 6 children, businessman focused on his own needs.

Jenny, 55, Carer of older people from the Philippines, working in Ireland for fifteen years.

In small groups discuss who should be asked to leave the boat. Remember the people who we leave behind will drown.

Bring the group back and ask them:

- How did they feel about making such decisions?
- What criteria did they use?
- What problems or issues did they face?

INPUT

Brainstorm with the group, encouraging everyone to participate, to answer the following:

- What decisions are made day-to-day in the prison that affect me?
- What decisions affect only Travellers?
- Who makes these decisions?
- What decisions do I make for myself day-to-day?

List these on a flip chart.

Explore the control people do have over some of their personal decisions and encourage those who don't feel they have any control to think about options.

Examine the decisions that are made in the prison and how they impact on Travellers.

Discuss if there is scope to influence any of these decisions. This can be revisited at a later stage in for example, in preparation for the steering group.

RESOURCES:

Mind Tools https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TED.htm



THEME: TRAVELLER HEALTH

Aim of the session: To discuss and understand the context of Traveller health issues

SAMPLE ICEBREAKER

Ask everyone to brainstorm about things that effect their health.

INPUT

Input on the social determinants of health. Spread a range of photographs on the floor - Pavee Fotochat, available from Pavee Point is a pack of 94 photographs designed to be used for training. Ask the group what they think are the things that effect their health.

Give examples, such as poor accommodation, discrimination, lack of education etc.

Encourage group members to select photographs that they can use to give examples of the things that affect their health. Ask everyone to feedback what they selected and why.

Note these on a flip chart.

Put a large diagram of the social determinates of health, provided in the resources section below, on the wall and explain the factors that impact on health. Link this with the things that people have already said that effects their health. This will enable the group to develop a broader understanding of health and what impacts on it.

Question and answers

EXERCISE:

Ask each person to talk to the person beside them and name a health issue that they think might impact on each of the following groups:

- Traveller men
- Traveller women
- Young Traveller
- Older Travellers
- Traveller children

Present a series of facts on each of the groups health status

Discuss:

- What did you think of what you've heard?
- Did you learn something new?
- What would you like to hear more about?

Plan follow up sessions with the group on health impacts of imprisonment and how to address them.

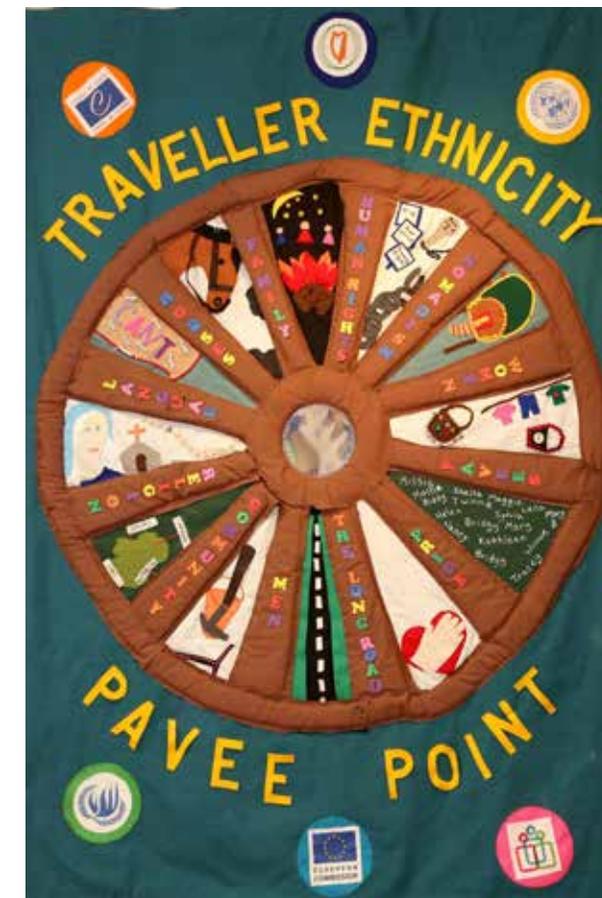
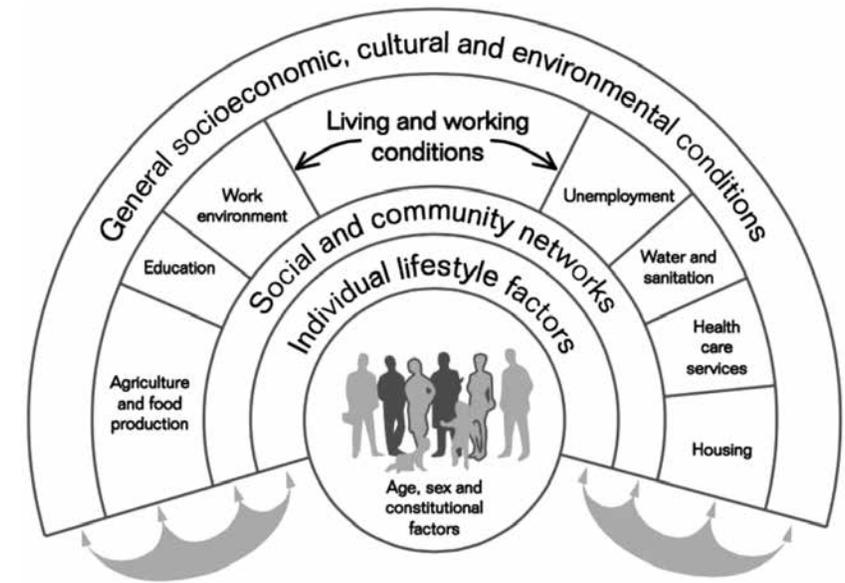
RESOURCES:

All Ireland Traveller Health Study, 2010 School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science, University College Dublin

Pavee Point <http://www.paveepoint.ie/resources/health/>

World Health Organisation http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



THEME: MENTAL HEALTH/WELLBEING

Aim of the session: To discuss mental health issues and how they impact on Travellers

ICEBREAKER

Ask everyone in the group to name one thing that makes their head feel good on the inside! For example, talking to a friend, working out in the gym, seeing their children. Then, highlight Mental Health Ireland's Five Ways to Wellbeing:

- Connect with the people around you: Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
- Be active: Exercising makes you feel good.
- Be curious. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.
- Keep learning: Try something new. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being enjoyable.
- Give: Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger.

You can highlight that in the prison, these five ways are evident and it's important to do more of them.

INPUT

Provide a context to the discussion on Traveller mental health containing the following:

- Maintaining mental health is a challenge for everyone but for Travellers it can be more difficult due to the added experience of racism, exclusion and discrimination.
- The uptake of mainstream services by the Traveller community is historically low due to the lack of culturally appropriate services and Travellers experience of shame and fear.
- There is a high rate of mental health illness and suicide within the community and suicide is the cause of 11% of all Traveller deaths. The suicide rate for Traveller women is 6 times higher than settled women and is 7 times higher for Traveller men. Suicide is most common in young Traveller men aged 15-25.

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study found that:

- Traveller women were over three times more likely to say that their mental health was not good enough for one or more days in the last 30 days compared to the total population of female medical card holders (62.7% compared to 19.9%).
- Traveller men were almost three times more likely to say that their mental health was not good for one or more days in the last 30 days compared to the total population of male medical card holders (59.4% compared to 21.8%).
- Travellers were over twice as likely to say that poor physical and mental health restricted their normal daily activities compared to the total population of medical card holders (56% compared to 24%).

Questions and answers

EXERCISE:

Ask each person to talk to the person beside them and discuss the following questions:

- What do you think about what you've heard?
- Did you learn something new?
- What do you think are the mental health issues facing Travellers in prison?

Then ask the group to share with the bigger group.

Come up with areas that the group want to explore in subsequent sessions. Consider bringing in the Traveller Counselling Service, prison psychologist and Pieta House to do workshops on mental health.

RESOURCES:

Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Service www.exchangehouse.ie

Mental Health Ireland <http://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

Pieta house <http://www.pieta.ie/>

Pavee Point <http://www.paveepoint.ie/document/traveller-health-factsheet/>

Pavee Point, (2013) Mental Health and Suicide in the Traveller Community

Traveller Counselling Service <http://travellercounselling.ie/the-traveller-community/traveller-mental-health/>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Sample poster to advertise peer support group in the prison

WHO DO YOU THINK TRAVELLERS ARE? WHERE DO YOU THINK WE COME FROM?

Join us to discover the answers and together we will celebrate and enjoy Traveller culture

Name of group
Peer group meets [insert dates, e.g., every Thursday]
To put your name forward for the group, contact [name]

Places are limited and we expect lots of interest, so get your name in soon!



TRAVELLERS IN PRISON INITIATIVE

St Stephen's Green Trust

PO Box 950, Newbridge, Co. Kildare

Email: anne@sstg.ie | website: www.sstg.ie