

## Moving Forward Making Changes

### Target population

The Moving Forward Making Changes (MFMC) programme was developed to provide treatment for moderate-high risk adult men (aged 18 and above) convicted of sexual offences, and to increase their capacity to meet their needs by non-offending means.

### Delivery organisation

MFMC is a Scottish government accredited programme which was designed by the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Government's Community Justice Operational Practice Unit. It was introduced in 2014, following accreditation by the Scottish Advisory Panel on Offender Rehabilitation (SAPOR). MFMC is delivered in 4 prisons and in the community (currently 11 sites).

The delivery organisation varies depending on the Scottish area. For example, in Highland it was originally delivered by the Aberdeenshire Joint Sex Offender Project (JSOP), and in Forth Valley it was delivered by the Forth Valley Accredited Programmes Team (FVAPT) in partnership with Sacro Groupwork Services, Falkirk Council Children's Services Criminal Justice, Stirling Criminal Justice Social Work Service and Clackmannanshire Criminal Justice Social Work Service. However, some areas have now brought the programme in house (probation and prison service).

### Mode and context of delivery

When adult males are convicted of sexual offences they are instructed to undertake individual and/or group sessions of MFMC. Providing the programme is assessed as suitable for an individual then it forms part of their Court Order or Post Custody License. Referrals are taken from Sheriff Courts, Scottish Prison Service and Criminal Justice Social Work Teams.

### Level/Nature of staff expertise required

There is no information available online regarding nature of staff expertise, however it would be intuitive for staff to have experience of delivering group programmes and an understanding of sexual offending.

### Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

MFMC takes approximately two years to complete. There are three parts to it:

- (1) Pre-programme work – e.g. pre-cursors to change; introduction to the keep safe plan
- (2) Essential modules – e.g. introduction to thinking styles and self-management; introduction to healthy sexual functioning)
- (3) Optional modules – e.g. social supports; relationship skills

There is no set start date and end date for the programme – each participant works at their own pace supported by facilitators and existing participants. In addition to the programme, the participant may also have appointments with other professionals such as psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health, addictions etc.

### Description of intervention

MFMC is designed to help participants lead a satisfying life which does not involve harm to others. The programme is delivered in modules and tailored to meet participants' treatment needs. Programme benefits include:

- To reduce offending
- To increase self-confidence and self-esteem
- To improve relationships
- To identify positive goals and the steps to achieve them

MFMC's implementation and delivery is supported by a set of manuals, covering the programme theory, structure, content, management requirements, and framework for collecting evaluation data.

### Evaluation

The Scottish Government commissioned Ipsos MORI Scotland to conduct an evaluation of MFMC to inform considerations on SAPOR's reaccreditation of the programme in 2018. The key findings are as follows:

- “The report provides evidence that most men who completed the programme (69%) were rated as having a lower risk score by the end of the programme. Among the men rated as ‘high risk’ at the start of MF: MC, 53% remained high risk at the end of the programme, 38% had moved into the ‘moderate’ category and 9% were rated low risk. Among those initially rated as ‘moderate’ risk, 72% remained in this category, but 26% moved into the ‘low risk’ category, while a very a small number (3%) were rated ‘high risk’ at the end of the programme. However, there are serious question-marks over the reliability of some of the risk data and without a control group we cannot be certain that these shifts in risk scores were caused by MF: MC or by other factors.”
- “Alongside reduced assessed risk levels, other perceived benefits identified by staff and men interviewed for this evaluation included improved ability to sustain healthy social relationships, regulate their emotions, cooperate with supervision, and understand and change problematic attitudes. 85% of men who completed an exit survey on leaving MF: MC said they thought it would stop them reoffending in a similar manner.”
- “Overall, the programme is being delivered broadly as intended with respect to length of group sessions, group size, staff roles, staff participation in mandatory MF: MC training, and practitioner supervision and support. However, in the community, the programme is typically only being delivered once a week rather than twice as recommended in the manual. This was primarily attributed to a lack of staff resourcing.”
- “The main areas identified for improvement were: staff resources; access to psychological support; the clarity of some aspects of the MFMC manuals; processes for assessing programme suitability;

the programme's ability to meet the needs of all types of men who commit sexual offences; and data collection and use."

- "At least 911 men were recorded as starting MF: MC (81% in the community) although this is likely to be an under-estimate due to data collection issues. Participants generally met the target group criteria, with 98% assessed (at the start) as moderate or high risk of future sexual offending. However, some concerns were raised over whether the current assessment process is always identifying those most suited to the programme."

To summarise, the evaluation broadly demonstrated that the programme was being delivered as intended. However, given the changing nature and pattern of sexual offending, it has been agreed by the National Moving Forward Making Changes Advisory Board that the current programme should be revised to ensure future flexibility and sustainability. This should include a particular focus on ensuring a revised programme can effectively meet the needs of both moderate and high-risk offenders in custodial and community settings.

## References

Moving Forward Making Changes: evaluation of a group-based treatment for sex offenders - gov.scot. (2019). Retrieved 14 December 2019, from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/moving-forward-making-changes-evaluation-group-based-treatment-sex-offenders/pages/3/>

"Brockville Social Work Office." *Criminal Justice - Moving Forward Making Changes*, Falkirk Council, [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/crime-antisocial/criminal-justice/moving-forward-making-changes.aspx](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/crime-antisocial/criminal-justice/moving-forward-making-changes.aspx)

*Key Developments in Criminal Justice Social Work Services*. Highland Council, 2019, *Key Developments in Criminal Justice Social Work Services*.

## Contact details

Criminal justice, Brockville Social Work Office, Hope Street, Falkirk, FK1 5RW  
01324 506 070  
[criminaljusticefalkirk@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:criminaljusticefalkirk@falkirk.gov.uk)

**RATING: PIONEERING**