

RESHAPING YOUTH JUSTICE: JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS AS A BASIS FOR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

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Background

- Mental health needs of young people not met by the YOS (Jud *et al.* 2012, Khan 2010, Townsend *et al.* 2010)
- Attempts to improve this focus on process (Bradt *et al.* 2009, Muncie 2006)
- Looking at structure could be a better way (Haines *et al.* 2013, Weick *et al.* 2005)



Balancing Philosophical Perspectives

- Majority of mental health workers in YOS are seconded from CAMHS (Khan and Wilson 2010)
- This means two different perspectives are expected to work together: social and criminal justice (Smith 2005)
- There isn't balance between the two views, which is leading to tensions and issues within practice (Blyth 2005, Khan 2010)
- As criminal justice is inherent in the work the YOS does, basing the structure of social justice could bring this balance.

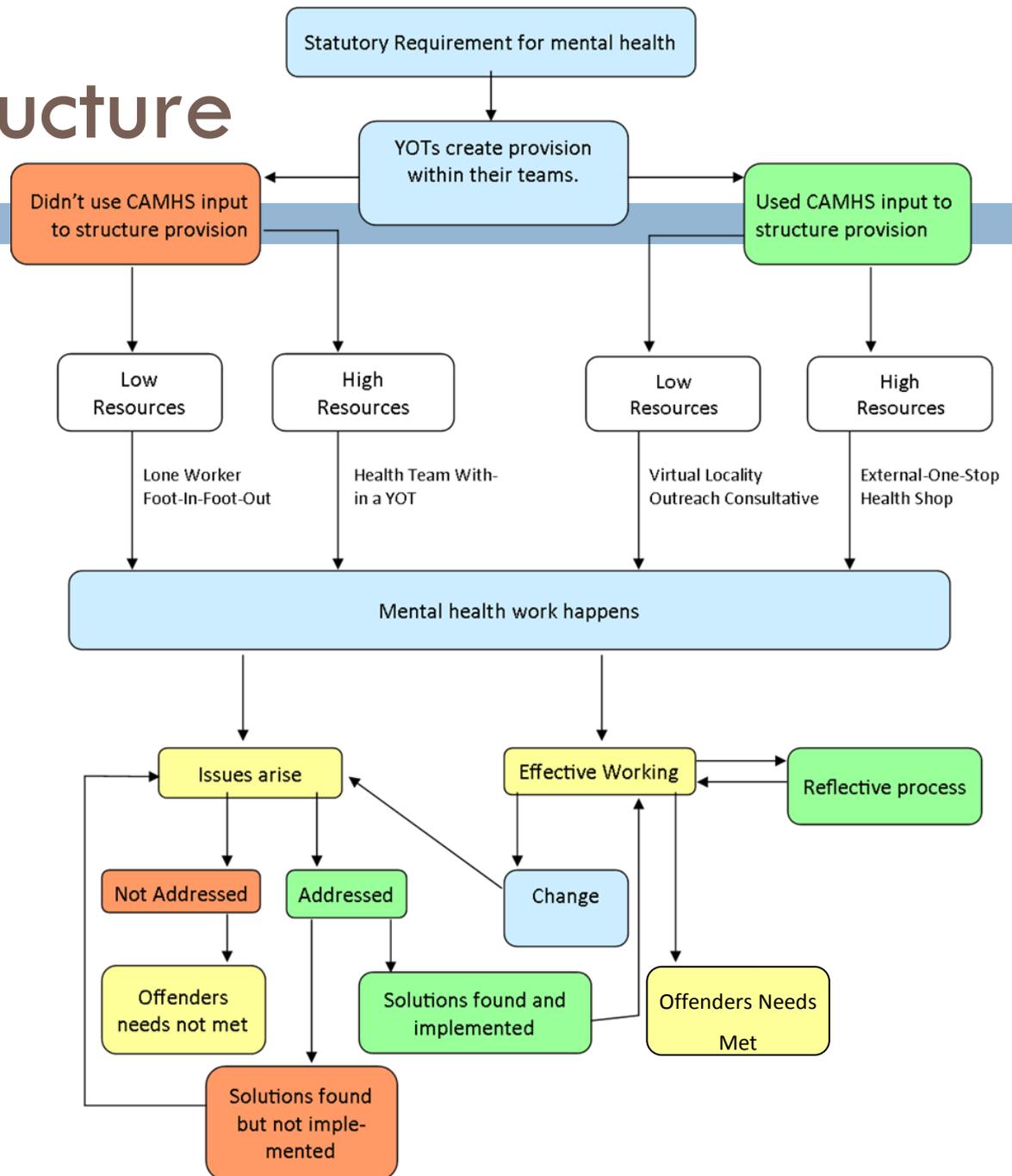


Method

- Interviews with mental health workers within the YOS and managers
- 8 YOTs across the UK
- In depth interviews discussed the structure of provision, good practice, issues within practice, what they change about provision, and if the current provision is “fair”.
- Thematically analysed to understand the structure of mental health provision within the YOS

Current Structure

- Top down, little recourse for bottom-up feedback
- Carrying out work actually is not significant part of the structure
- Issues have to be dealt with on a micro level





A socially just structure

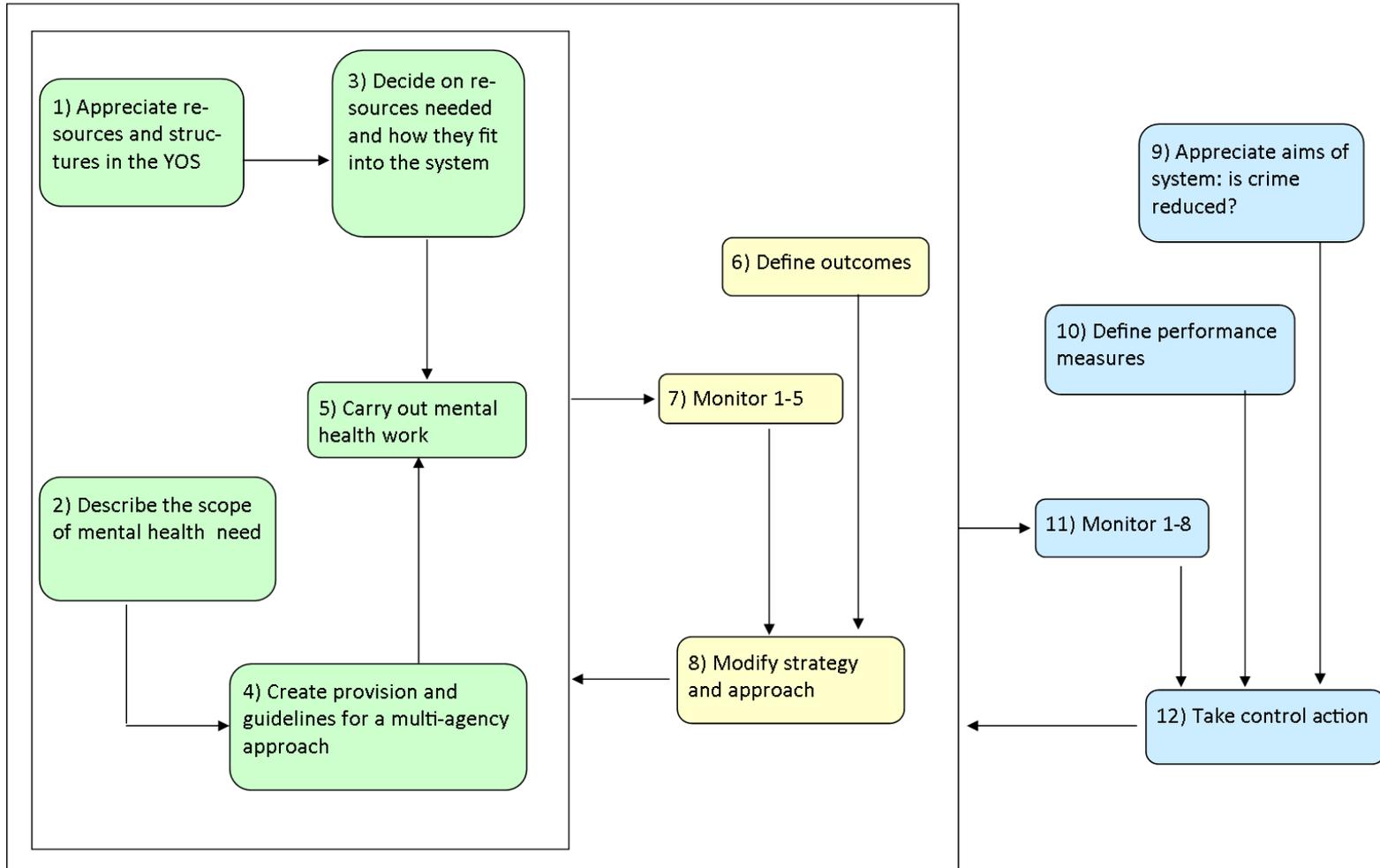
- Based on John Rawls's principles of justice as fairness (1975: 53)
 - ▣ "First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others.
 - ▣ Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged to that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all."
- Specifically created to apply to societies or institutions
- Means that the criminal justice aims can be met in a way that ensures social justice for the service users

Proposed Structure

Level A: Youth justice workers

Level B: Managers

Level C: YJB





Why would this be better?

- The current structure does not enable effective practice.
- Areas where managers have been able to create their own structures have led to innovative and well-resourced practice.
- Having clearer accountability measures and responsibility will ensure that practice is effective as well as efficient.

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