

# Helping Groups to Grow – Structured Counselling Service

Service Report  
May – October 2011



**Helping Groups to Grow – Structured Counselling Service**  
**Evaluation of CORE Scores May – October 2011**

**Introduction**

This report evaluates the Helping Groups to Grow Structured Counselling Service for the reporting period of Year 2, first and second quarter. The same outcome measure (CORE) has been used to evaluate this year's work as for last year so comparative observations can be made. The reporting period for last year's report was from May-December (8 months) which is a slightly different time scale but, where possible, comparative data for last year will be in brackets after the figure.

**CORE outcome measure**

The use of CORE has been outlined in detail in Year 1 report. However, to summarise its use, CORE:

- Is a widely researched and tested outcome measure regularly used by a wide range of psychological therapy services in a variety of settings
- Consists of a pre and post-therapy questionnaire divided into four measures, or 'domains',
  - Well being
  - Problems
  - Functioning
  - Risk
- Can measure reliable and clinical change
- Can help measure change during, throughout and after therapy if necessary

The added value of using CORE is that national benchmark data is available against which we can measure the quality of our service.

**Referrals for May to December 2011 (Figures for the previous year are given in brackets)**

During this reporting period 134 (68) counselling cases were closed. Of these closures 95 - 71% (68%) of the clients engaged in some level of counselling and 43% (25%) of those referred completed a pre and post therapy CORE outcome measure. This compares very favourably with the national benchmark of 74% engagement in a service with 26% having completed CORE pre and post therapy forms. A breakdown by County and Service can be seen in Appendix I and II at the end of this report. Client engagement can be seen in Appendix II and figures indicate that there was better engagement in the work with more clients completing the full 6 session's episode and more accessing the 12 session option. Only .7% of our clients deteriorated during the intervention, compared with a

national benchmark of 7% deterioration. These clients were referred back and more specialist intervention was put in place.

The age range of the clients is outlined below:

**Table 1.**

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Total</b>
< 14	0
14 - 18	11
19 - 25	17
26 - 35	36
36 - 45	39
46 - 55	20
56 - 65	10
65+	1
	134

**Male:** 66

**Female:** 68

**Outcome**

The value of CORE data is that it can be compared with national data as well as with annual data for the service. For completed CORE results, the scores for this client group can be compared with the previous year and with national outcome data as shown below:

**Table 2: Comparison of HG2G client group average scores with 2010 and national data (Pre-therapy)**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>May-Dec 2010 HG2G Pre-therapy</b>	<b>May-October 2011 HG2G Pre-therapy</b>	<b>National Non-Clinical sample</b>	<b>National Clinical sample</b>
<b>Well-being</b>	2.5	2.4	0.91	2.37
<b>Problems</b>	2.25	2.35	0.9	2.31
<b>Functioning</b>	1.9	1.9	0.85	1.86

<b>Risk</b>	0.66	0.6	0.2	0.63
<b>All items</b>	1.82	1.81	0.76	1.86

These figures indicate that the client profile in terms of measure of mental distress has remained fairly constant and also indicates that the level of distress is well above that which would be measured nationally for a non-clinical group of the population and slightly higher than a comparative clinical group from figures obtained nationally. This therefore makes comparisons with national outcome data relevant and appropriate.

**Table 3: Average Post-therapy change in client scores May-October 2011 (national non-clinical post-therapy average scores in brackets for comparison)**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>May-Dec2010 Post-therapy</b>	<b>May-October 2011 Post-therapy</b>
<b>Well-being</b>	1.06 (0.91)	1.34
<b>Problems</b>	1.01 (0.9)	1.37
<b>Functioning</b>	0.84 (0.85)	1.0
<b>Risk</b>	0.23 (0.2)	0.3
<b>All items</b>	0.78 (0.76)	1.0

This indicates that scores are slightly higher for this year's CORE returns but there has been an 18% increase in the number of CORE pre and post therapy outcome measures completed indicating that a wider sample of clients has been brought into this year's figures, so a change might be expected. Outcomes still represent a significant change for clients and are still similar to national data outcomes.

Individual client total scores pre and post therapy can be seen in Appendix III at the end of this document.

### **Specific Structured Counselling Service Projects**

One of the greatest benefits of the counselling service is that it is flexible and adaptable which enables HG2G to tailor the service to the needs of the client group, whilst maintaining the quality of the service. This means we can work with the individual treatment services to create the counselling

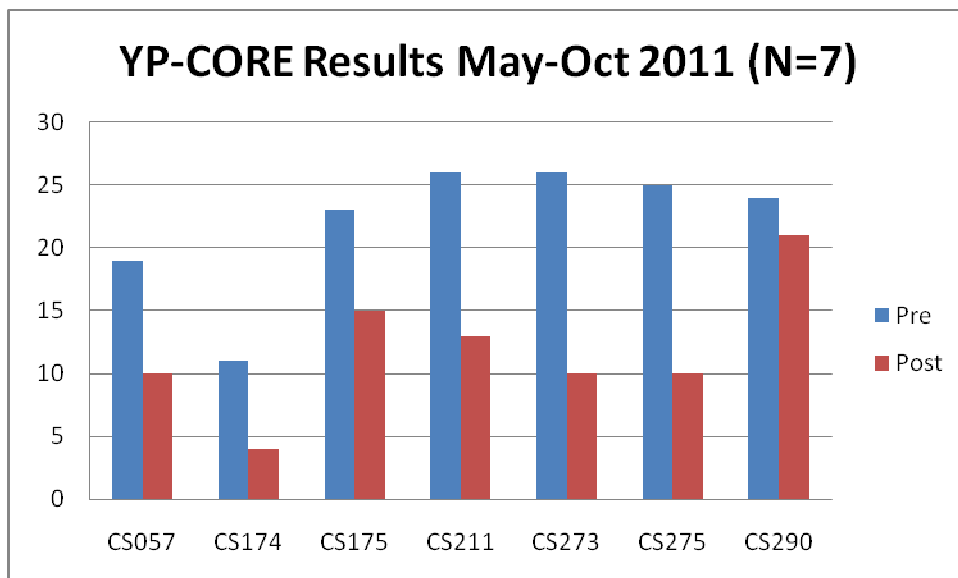
provision they need whilst keeping costs to a minimum. During the second year of the service HG2G has provided a tailor made service to suit the needs of:

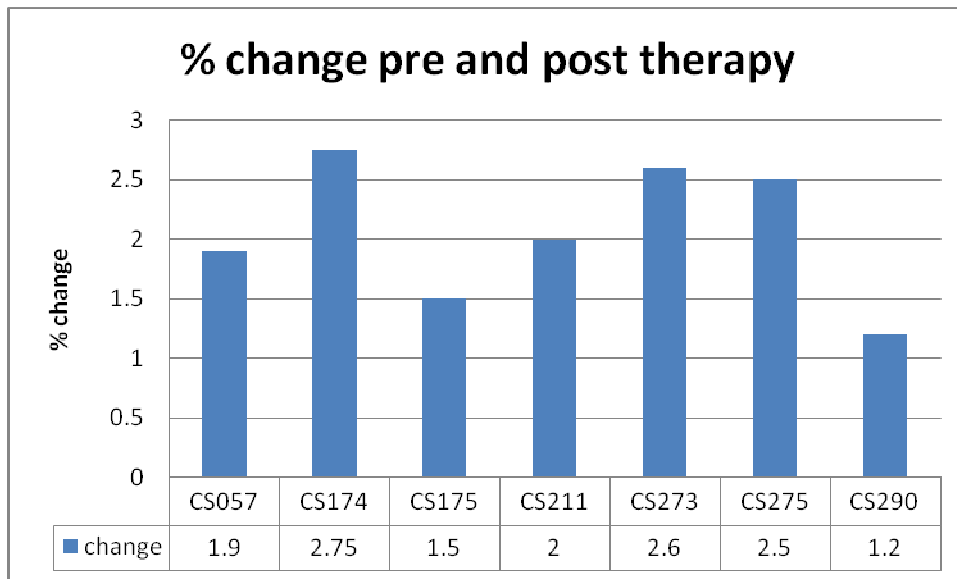
- SUDDS (young person's service)
- Criminal Justice (Llanelli)
- Hidden Harm (Carmarthenshire)
- Prism (by producing a specific protocol for working with risk and sharing information at Tier 2 level)
- WWSMS (by identifying specialist Tier 3 counsellors to work closely with the service)

### Young People's Service

We have received 11 referrals for the under 18 age group throughout the past 6 months. For the Under 18 age group we use the Young People's version of CORE (YP-CORE). YP-CORE is a shorter version of the adult CORE 34 and consists of a 10 item questionnaire to be completed at least pre and post therapy. The questionnaire does include questions on Risk so can be used at each session if Risk needs to be monitored. National benchmarks for this outcome measure are still being finalised but current data suggests that an effect size greater than 0.81, which is the UK average change pre and post therapy, and 1.1 which is the average change for young people accessing School Counselling Services in Wales would be a 'good' outcome.

Of the 11 young people referred to our service 7 completed pre and post therapy YP-CORE forms and the results are as follows:





Whilst this is a small cohort it can be clearly seen that the change in CORE scores is well above what would be expected from a similar client group attending counselling services in the UK so is a very good outcome in terms of reduction of anxiety and risk with the young people accessing the service.

### **Criminal Justice (Llanelli)**

This service is still developing and it is anticipated that counselling referrals will increase as the Foundation Group Work programme develops. In the past, the greatest number of non-attendees came from this client group with few actually engaging in any counselling. HG2G has developed a counselling assessment session for this client group to allow the counsellor to assess readiness for counselling and the client to experience what counselling is like. By this we intend to reduce the likelihood of failure to engage with the service and reduce the cost of DNA's.

Since the end of June when the service started 17 referrals have been received from this client group for counselling. 2 clients have completed their episodes of counselling and 9 are still in progress. Only 3 clients have failed to engage at all. We were unable to contact 2 clients and a third returned to prison. 4 clients were deemed inappropriate for counselling at this moment in time but can be referred back to the service at a later stage if needed. 3 clients are currently waiting to be allocated to a counsellor.

There is insufficient CORE information to report on this client group at the moment but a more detailed analysis will be provided in the Annual Report.

### **Hidden Harm (Carmarthenshire)**

This service has only just started and there is 1 client currently accessing counselling. This service will be evaluated more fully in the end of year report. To date HG2G has identified a small team of counsellors who will work specifically with clients referred via Carmarthenshire's Hidden Harm initiative. The counselling team will meet regularly with the teams to work in a multi-agency setting.

### **WWSMS Specialist Tier 3 counsellors**

This service is also just being developed. It arose out of a need identified by WWSMS for closer links to be established between WWSMS and the HG2G counselling team. HG2G will provide one specialist Tier 3 counsellor for Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. These counsellors will work very closely with WWSMS and will attend appropriate meetings to provide feedback as part of the treatment planning for clients accessing services at this level. Further details of this will be outlined in the end of year report. It is anticipated that the counsellors will be in place by January 2012.

### **Summary**

In summary, HG2G has demonstrated that the counselling service continues to be a well used, effective service. Notable points are:

- A greater number of referrals has been received this year than for a similar time period last year
- There has been a significant increase in CORE outcome data which has allowed for more valid data to be extracted and interpreted
- From this data we can conclude that clients do show improvement in mental well-being following an episode of counselling
- The counselling services is flexible and adaptable so can be tailored to suit specific treatment service and client group needs without increasing costs

**Appendix I – Referral by County and service:**

**Carmarthenshire 58**

Probation (Excluding CJ project)	4
Prism	14
DIP	6
Coastal	1
WWSMS	12
Sudds	9
Health & Social Care	8
Catalyst	4

**Pembrokeshire 50**

DIP	4
Prism	24
WWSMS	4
Health & Social Care	17
Sudds	1

**Ceredigion 9**

Prism	6
WWSMS	3

**Powys (Kaleidoscope) 17**

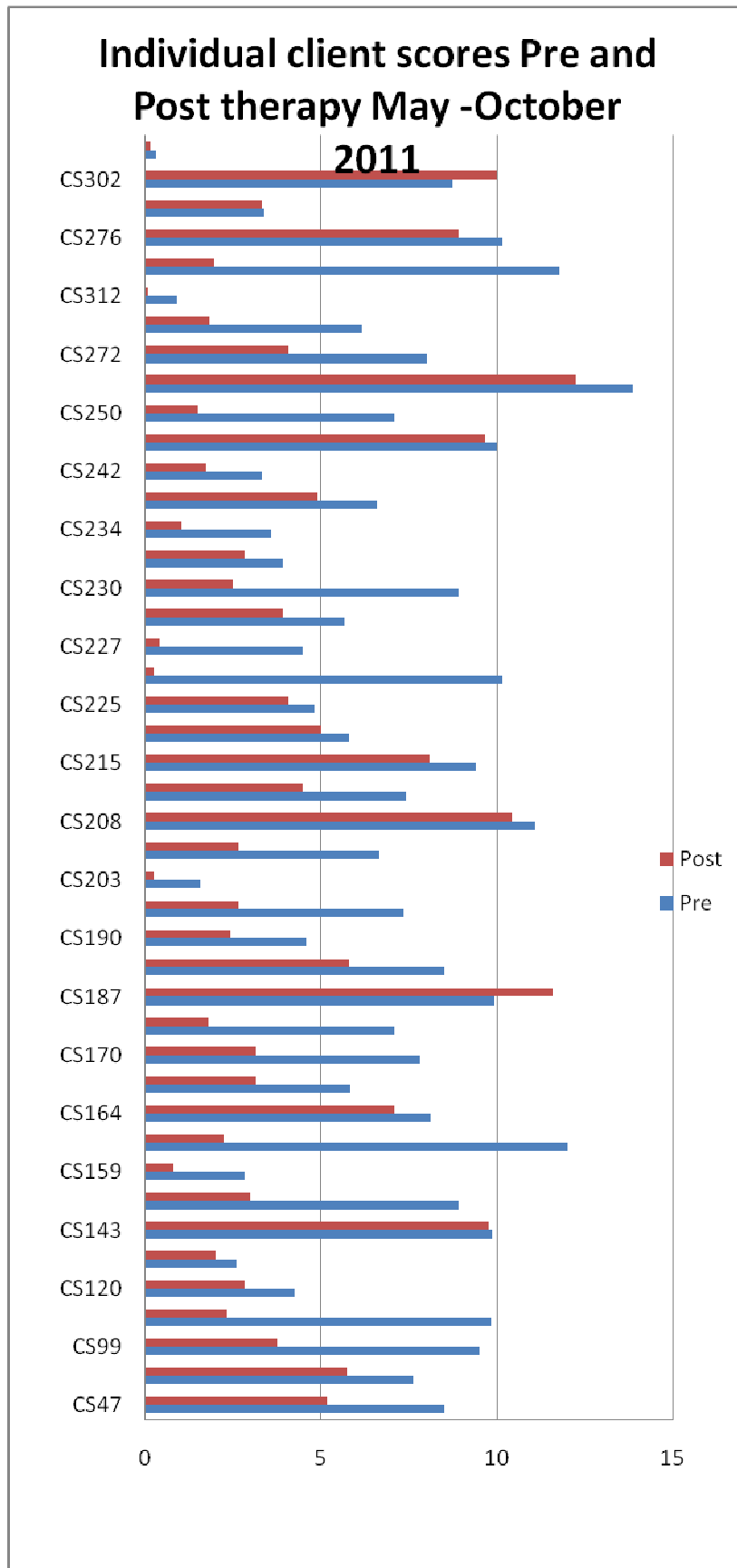
**Total 134**

**Appendix II – Client engagement with the service May-October 2011**

<b>No. of sessions</b>	<b>No of clients</b>	<b>% (2010 in brackets)</b>
<b>1 – 3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28% (34%)</b>
<b>4 - 6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37% (28%)</b>
<b>7 – 9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12% (22%)</b>
<b>10 - 12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23% (16%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Clients who we were unable to contact: 15 - .7%**

Appendix III – Individual client CORE data pre and post therapy May-October 2011 (N=43)



## Domain Outcomes compared with National Data 2010/2011

